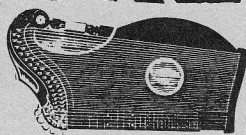


# Zither Newsletter

## OF U.S.A.



Fall 1987

FRANZ SCHWARZER - MISSOURI ZITHER MAKER

by Thomas M. Davis and Franz R. Beinke

*Reprinted from October, 1965 issue, the Missouri Historical Review. Thomas M. Davis MS Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. Franz R. Beinke, Union, Missouri is Schwarzers "grandson". Although never legally adopted, Mr. Beinke's mother, Theresa Grohe Beinke, was raised by the Schwarzers. His father worked in the zither factory and Mr. Beinke played as a child around his fathers workbench. Slightly abridged.*

When visitors to the 1873 International Exhibition at Vienna strolled into the large Industrial Palace they were surprised to see the Gold Medal of Progress, the highest award of the Exhibition, displayed in the American musical instruments area on a small table containing three zithers. Zither displays were not new to European Exhibitions. The zither was the German-speaking peoples national instrument, and Vienna was the

### Weekend Tour of FRANZ SCHWARZER ZITHER Exhibits

You are cordially invited to join us for a weekend tour of two Schwarzer zither exhibits on November 21 and 22. First we will go to Washington, Missouri where the Schwarzer Zither Co. operated to see the zithers and memorabilia at the Washington Public Library. Overnight stay there at a Victorian Bed and Breakfast, and on to Jefferson City, Missouri the next day to view the exhibit at the State Museum, Capitol Building. Call Janet, 312-631-2854 for additional details.

\*\*\*\*\*  
 introduction of new materials and contrivances". Inside the sounding hole of the winning instruments a small white label read FRANZ SCHWARZER, MANUFACTURER OF ZITHERS, WASHINGTON, MISSOURI.

Just as the award of the Gold Medal to an unknown American came as a surprise to zither makers in Europe, it may also surprise Missourians to learn that Franz Schwarzer lived and worked in Washington, Missouri. Schwarzer's factory, during the peak years of production employed about 25 men. His instruments were sold in large numbers, not only in his country, but in every major nation in Europe and in such places as Chile and Peru. By the time the factory closed in the 1920's over 11,000 Schwarzer instruments - twenty types of zithers, mandolins and guitars - had been produced.

Most of the information about Schwarzers early life is contained in a small packet of letters which were preserved by Theresa Grohe Beinke. Schwarzer's papers, factory records and publications, photographs, etc. on which this article is based have been presented to the State Historical Society of Missouri, Columbia by Franz Beinke, co-author of this article. Schwarzers father, Anton, was a building contractor and furniture maker in Olmutz, Austria. None of the letters refer to his mother, Maria Strand Schwarzer, who apparently died shortly after Schwarzers birth on October 8, 1828.

\*\*\*\*\* zither capitol of the world.  
 \* Six separate journals devoted  
 \* to zither enthusiasts were pub-  
 \* lished in that city; the world's  
 \* most famous concert zitherists  
 \* studied there; Anton Kienzl,  
 \* the "Stradivari of zither makers"  
 \* and winner of the Gold Medal  
 \* Award at the 1867 Paris Exhibi-  
 \* tion, had his factory there.  
 \* But of the more than thirty man-  
 \* ufacturers who entered zithers,  
 \* only the American made instru-  
 \* ments were singled out for re-  
 \* vealing "significant progress  
 \* in new inventions and in the



editorial page editorial page editorial page editorial page

When we started the ZNUSA (sounds like snoozah) we wondered if we could generate enough material to keep the pages filled up. Quite the opposite is happening! Thanks to your avid and sincere interest, we have plenty of material. Our decisions of which items to use for each issue are painful - we'd like to put them all in, and we will eventually. We value all of your contributions, comments, music, etc. Keep them coming in!!

We have several articles here which are in German, and need to be translated. Any volunteers?

This Fall 1987 issue developed into a "Franz Schwarzer Commemorative" issue from many sources. Our student, Ruth Cvikota, had the published composition of Franz Schwarzer's, "Josephinen Landler" in amongst the music in her zither case, purchased years ago here in Chicago and incidently, zither strings packaged in Franz Schwarzer labels. Jack Bourdess called from Omaha to say he had stopped in Washington, Missouri on a trip in that direction and discovered the public library there had a collection of zithers and information. That connection led to the librarian sending us a full packet of information on Schwarzer and their preservation efforts there. The Missouri State Museum was on the ZNUSA mailing list, but we didn't know why until we got a copy of their announcement regarding the Schwarzer zither exhibit. News had also come in from Donald Ockleman of Davenport, Iowa and Robert Stykemain of Toledo, Ohio. Sensing a groundswell of interest, we decided to devote a good portion of this issue to Schwarzer. Hope you enjoy it!

**OOOPS!!!** We had some post office problems with the Summer 1987 issue. If you did not receive yours, or it arrived badly damaged, please let us know and we'll send a copy immediately.

The Zither Newsletter of the USA is published and edited by Janet Stessl as a service and information link for zither players in the United States of America. Your comments, articles, listing of events, classified ads are welcome. Subscription rate is \$8.00 annual. Advertising rates: business card \$10, 1/8 page \$15, 1/4 page \$25. Newsletter is published quarterly, on or about February 1, May 1, August, and November 1. Copy requested six weeks prior to publishing.

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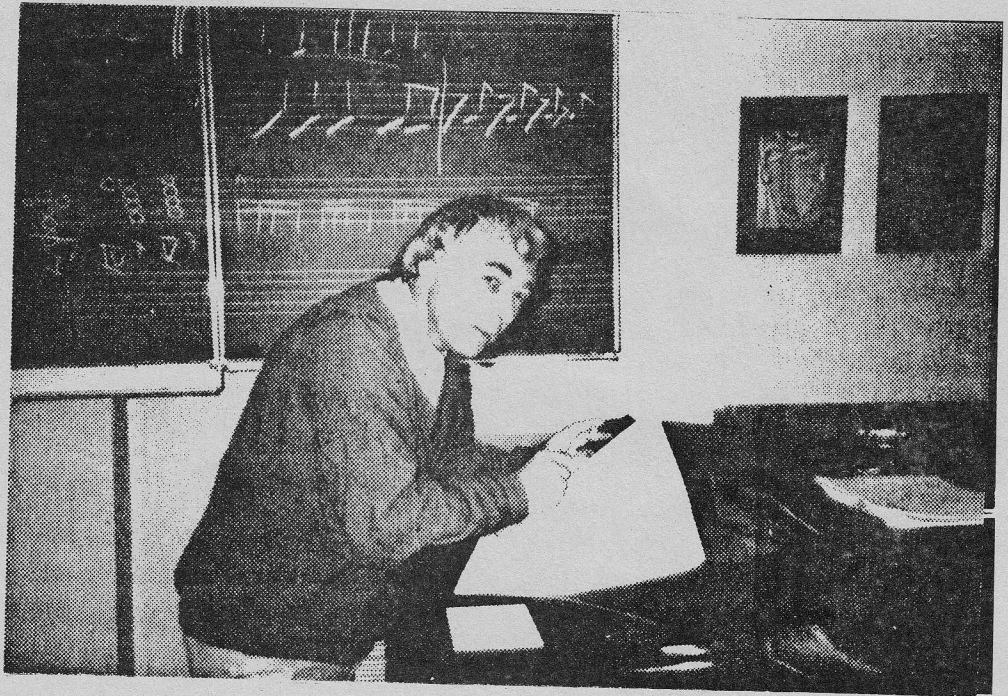




The Teacher's Table  
by Janet Stessl

We attended a zither seminar sponsored by the Landesverband Bayern-Süd of the Deutschen Zithermusik Bundes at the Bayerische Musikakademie, Schloss in Marktoberdorf during week of September 7 - 11 this fall. The seminar had two groups: 10 participants were students of zither, and the other 25 participants were zither players interested in becoming licensed zither teachers. The Bavarian government has a system of certifying zither teachers, (and almost everything else) and this seminar was the first of five seminars preparing teachers to take the examination. The other four seminars are planned over a period of the next two years.

The theme of this seminar was entertainment music, and featured a lecture series and group sessions with Freddie Golden. He is a Dutch band leader of note, active in radio and television work in the Netherlands who has developed an interest in zither music. The book *Andere Saiten* which was offered as a bonus with the first issue of this newsletter, is Freddie's work. Book 2 of that set deals with Latin American rhythms on the zither. Those of us acquainted with the Popp/Lägel Trio will recall the Pennsylvania Medley which



Freddie arranged for them. Some of his other numbers include *Four Little Blues*, *Song for Eileen* and *Sensitive Strings*, just to mention a few. The last night of the seminar featured a "rock" zither piece Freddie had just composed for zither trio. His lectures reviewed samples of entertainment zither music - from that staple of the zither diet, *Third Man Theme* and many varieties of popular music being played on the zither today, some poor, some good.

The other highlight of the seminar was a lecture series given by Frau Lilli Grünwald Brandlmeier, daughter of Richard Grünwald, eminent zither composer and teacher. We were honored to be in her small group and to have private lessons with her. Her lecture



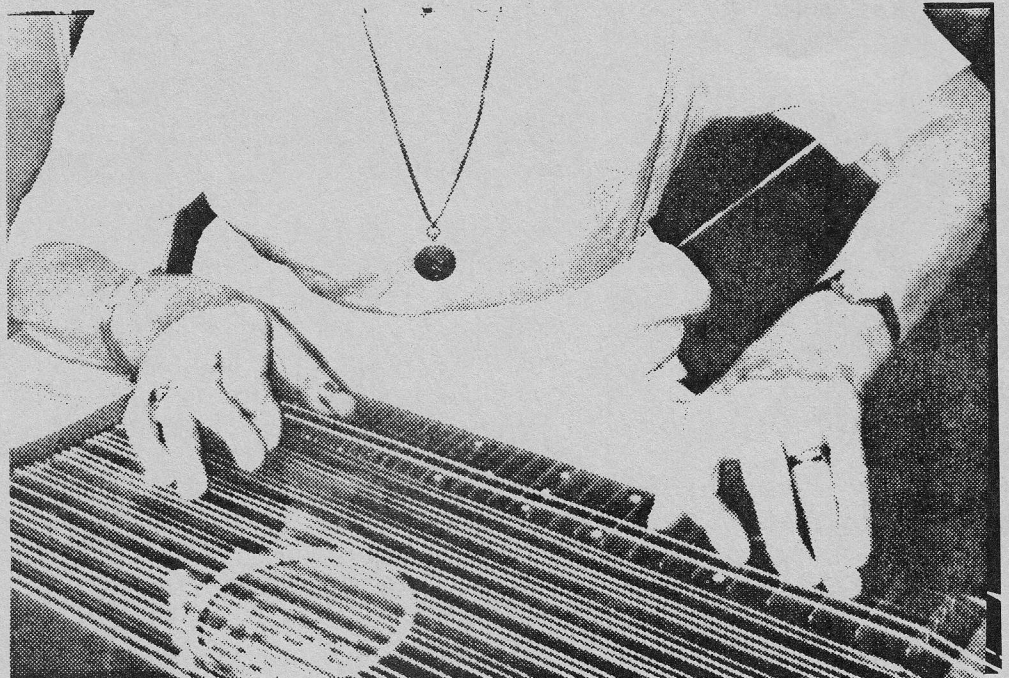
## The Teachers Table - Continued



series for the whole group reviewed basics of zither instruction: body position - bridge of zither at middle body, slight angle on table, body at slight angle to zither, feet flat on the floor, left foot slightly advanced. Right hand position - comfortably resting on bridge, fingers moving in smallest arc possible, second and third fingers bent in from second knuckle, fourth and fifth slightly rounded, operating together. Left hand position determined by placing thumb on 7th

fret and placing other fingers behind it, turning hand in toward yourself, as though you are looking at your watch, keeping it rounded so that fingers operate without moving hand. Photograph below of Frau Brandlmeier's hands detail these positions. The video tape which we produced earlier this year with the Popp/Lägel Trio incorporates these methods and we are even more confident that it is a good teaching tool for those of us here in the United States who do not have access to zither teachers in good supply and quality. She also made us think about more relaxed playing, and string dampfing.

Which brings us to the next big question. If we are to perpetuate zither music here in USA, we must have more zither teachers who can effectively guide and inspire new players. How many of you are teaching, or would like to teach? We have heard from some of you. We regularly get requests from people looking for zither teachers - so let us know if you are teaching so that we may maintain an accurate referral service. A workshop on "Teaching the Zither" will be included in the FIGA Convention in Baltimore, July '88.





## FOLK DANCE

Some of you zither players may be interested in a related field and want to subscribe to the Gauzeitung, a newsletter publication of the Gauverband Nordamerika, Inc., an association of folk dance, plattler organizations throughout the country. Information about affiliated club events, authentic costumes, historical perspectives are included.

The Gauzeitung may be subscribed to for \$12 per year. Contact Wilhelm Banzhaf, Editor, 18 Lincoln Hwy West, Jeanette, PA 15644.

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## FREAK ACCIDENT INJURES

### SOFIAN ZAPF

Sofian Zapf was seriously injured three weeks ago when a large tree branch fell on him as he crossed a street. His back was broken, and he has been paralyzed from the waist down since the accident.

We miss his personal attention to orders for strings, zither questions, and of course, the many performing appearances he does in the Philadelphia area.

At this writing he is being transferred to a different hospital for further treatments. We wish him a speedy recovery. Send cards and letters to the store address — his family and associates will see that he gets them.



Japan Zither Society

## KARL JANCIK ZITHER SOLO & QUARTETT OF VIENNA TOKYO CONCERT APPEARANCES

The Karl Jancik Zither Quartett of Vienna will be presented in two concerts in Tokyo sponsored by the Japan Zither Society. On November 6 they will appear at Ongakuna-Tomo-Hall (250 persons) and on November 10 they will appear at Yomiuri-Hall (1,100 persons). On November 11 the Society will sponsor a party honoring the Jancik Quartett at the Hotel Grand Palace in Tokyo with the members of the Japan Zither Society.

On September 19 the Society conducted its own Zitherfest concert which was attended by 1,300 persons. The concert consisted of 20 numbers including zither solos, duets, and ensembles of various instrumentation for each piece.

It is encouraging to see such an interest in zither music developing in Japan. The president of the Japan Zither Society, Toshiko Naito, is to be congratulated on her many activities.

We're hoping some of us will meet next year at the Zither Music Days in Augsburg, at the German Zither Society.

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# Karl Jancik

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
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## Milwaukee Zither Club Concert

On Sunday, October 11, 1987 the Milwaukee Zither Orchestra gave their 45th Fall Concert under the baton of new conductor Alfred Clauss. The selections performed were as follows: Wiener Skitzzen (Kellner), Die Veilchen vom Kochelsee (Freundorfer), Ein Ausflug ins Gebirge (Wormsbacher), Am Schönen, Blauen Tegernsee (Stattler), Auf der Zwieselalm (Krettner), Schneewitchens Brautfahrt (Grestenberger), Blüten im Lenz (Küfner), Waldvöglein (Bicherl), Märchenreigen (Glatzhoffer), Bleamerl von der Martinswand (Hoenes).

They also featured a vocal duo, Elfrieda Häse and Heidi Schlei, mother and daughter, singing to Heidi's zither accompaniment. Nice! The second half featured Doug Towne who displayed his collection of lutes of various sizes, gave a brief history and explanation of the lute, and played several selections. He mentioned the large body of music (50,000) available for lute, and we are reminded that many zither players in Europe are exploring this fertile field and utilizing this resource. Since the lute is also a plucked instrument, and an early predecessor to the zither, the lute music transcribes well into zither music.

The Milwaukee Zither Club, with Hans Gassner, President, and his helpmate and wife, Rose Gassner, Secretary, are to be congratulated for maintaining zither music traditions in Milwaukee. We were happy to see more zither players in the orchestra - total of seven. Hermann and Heidi Nunnemacher are stalwart members of the club and are also to be congratulated for their constant devotion to zither. Keep up the good work!!!

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## CALENDAR

## TWO IMPORTANT DATES

## FIGA AND DZB

**Current - December 31, 1987** - Exhibition of Schwarzer Zithers, Missouri State Museum, Capitol Building, Jefferson City, Missouri. Open daily 8:00 - 5:00.

**November 8** - Chicago Zither Club Fall Concert and Dinner Dance. Tickets advance only \$22.00. Call Erna Kandler - 312-825-5166.

**November 20 - 21 - 22** - Tour of Schwarzer zither exhibits and sites, Washington and Jefferson City, Missouri. Call Janet Stessl - 312-631-2854 for details.

**November 18** - One day zither seminar, sponsored by South Bavarian region DZB. Burghausen, West Germany

**December 27** - Holiday Open House and Zither Musicale at Stessl's home. 6173 N. McClellan Ave. 3:00 - 6:00. RSVP 312-631-2854

**March 6** - Chicago Zither Quartett - Chamber Music Concert - Amana Arts Guild, Amana, Iowa

**April 24** Chicago Zither Club Spring Concert. See contact above.

**July 6 - 10, 1988** - Fretted Instrument Guild of America national convention. Holiday Inn Inner Harbor, Baltimore, Md. Details and reservation forms next issue.

**October 30 - November 1, 1988** - Zither Music Days, Quadrennial Congress of German Zither Society (DZB) and 25th Anniversary celebration: Historical concert, Fest Concert, Youth Concert, International Concert. Augsburg, West Germany.

**November 1 - 2, 1988** - International seminar held in conjunction with Zither Music Days (above) for foreign participants.

**November 13, 1988** - Chicago Zither Club Fall Concert - 75th Anniversary celebration.

It may look like alphabet soup, but these two events next year are important - and we would like as many of you as possible to participate.

The FIGA (Fretted Instrument Guild of America) national convention in Baltimore, Md. next July 6 - 10 is a gathering of around 700 plucked instrument players - banjos, mandolins, and guitars. We want to add zither to that list.

**Good news** is that Johannes Popp and Lothar Lägel of Munich Zither Trio are planning to come and conduct workshops everyday and perform in the evening concerts. Frau Lilli Grünwald Brandlmeier has also been invited, and we hope she will be able to attend.

You are cordially invited to perform in the concerts, if you wish, and we hope to do an all zither orchestra at the convention. You do not have to be professional to perform here - its all among friends. There is ample time all day long for workshops, rehearsals, informal groupings, jam sessions, and just having fun!

In Fall, 1988 we have the important gathering of zither players in Augsburg, West Germany of the German Zither Society (DZB). This will be a momentous occasion - an opportunity to hear mucho, mucho zither music - and stay for the seminar to learn a little more about our beloved instrument. We are planning to have a Chicago group perform in the International Concert. More are welcome to perform.

We have a few names of people who are planning to attend both or either event and we hope the list grows. Please let us know if you are planning to attend.



### Our Readers Write

"We enjoyed Mr. Bourdess' visit. It was terrific to meet someone who plays the zither! To us, they are part of Washington's history and something to be proudly displayed in a glass case. It was a revelation to be reminded that zithers are actually playable musical instrument with a lovely sound. I was impressed with the skill required to play one.

The Schwarzer home is on the National Register of Historic Places. The house has several unique features including a lyre-design porch railing and a parquet entry hall made from scraps from the zither factory. The house is privately owned, but has been open on house tours."

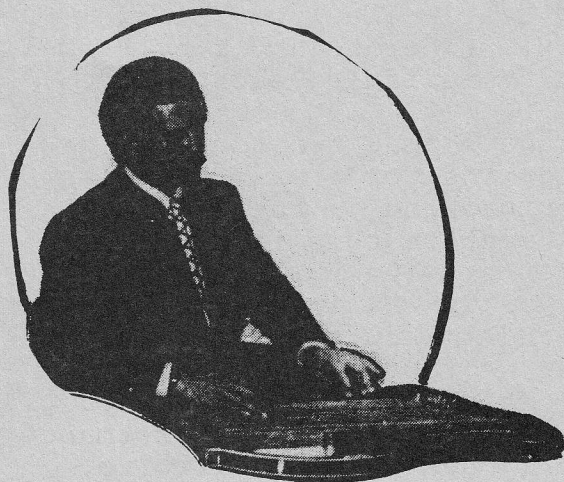
Carolyn Witt  
Librarian  
Washington, Missouri Public Library

*(Editor's Note: Carolyn is requesting permission to visit the Schwarzer home on Saturday, November 21 when our tour visits Washington.)*

To this date, I'm still the only performing soloist here. I'd like to ask a question of the readers. "Who is the youngest performing zitherist in a restaurant currently in America?" I'm 32 years old and play at Juergens Bakery once a week.

I've discovered William Huggins and his student, Trudy Hoenie, so there may be three zitherists playing Vienna Tuning in Columbus.

John Roeder  
Columbus, Ohio



*Editors question: Which one is the "real" John Roeder?*



Our Readers Write - - Continued

"How did you ever learn to play the zither? A question asked so many times, especially among American circles. What can you say? You responded with a simple answer like, "I loved the instrument and wanted to play it". But, unfortunately it was not that simple with me.

The year was 1926. My parents decided I should learn to play the zither. So, the search began for an instructor. The search ended when I was introduced to Sister Juliana of the Convent Damenstift near Osterhofen (a little town in Niederbayern where we lived). I still remember that day very clearly. I had to stand in front of her while she was playing Du, Du, Liegst mir im Herzen and sing because she told me if I couldn't hold a tune, she couldn't teach me. Evidently, she was satisfied. I started taking lessons the following week. There I was, 12 years old, entering into a world of lessons and practice. I wasn't anyone's protégé or overly enthusiastic, but my parents succeeded over my protesting and excuses, and I made progress.

Now, 11 months later, my parents decided to move to the U.S. . . . that is when the lessons ended. With all the excitement and worries in the new land, the zither laid dormant. It was not until I reached 19 when the day came that I went to Yorkville (a German section of New York) to a restaurant called Rheinland. There was a zither player named Hans Schaden playing beautiful dance music. I said to myself, "You are a fool if you don't get back to practicing!" and I did and rescued what I had learned. By being really serious with the zither, it brought me a feeling of satisfaction and was overwhelmed with the fact that others enjoyed it also. My biggest surprise came while I was playing a few years ago at a party in New York. Liberace and Tony Randall came over and signed my songbook with "beautiful music, Carl".

In closing, I would like to mention that I have two sons who are musical, Carl on the guitar, and Ron on the Cordovax (Accordian Organ). Ron, while attending college, had one of the biggest Rock bands in the area. The reason I mention this is that now he is composing his own Landlers - what a switch. I will send him your video tape, being that he lives in Washington State and I wouldn't have the chance to teach him how to play. I want to compliment you on the fine job done on your video cassette. The instructional part is very good. The Munich Trio is fantastic. Too bad a lot of zither players will miss out on this performance. I already added the Schonauer and Boarischer to my repertoire.

Carl Mittelhammer  
Bergenfield, New Jersey



## NOTES HEARD HERE AND THERE

**Bill Pagels** played for a promotion of the German-American Festival in Toledo, Ohio on August 19. **Dr. George Beichl** and **Sofian Zapf** played at Rittenhouse Town, Pennsylvania on September 26. Rittenhouse Town is a little village of seven houses along Monoshone Creek and once was a bustling colonial village of 40 buildings. It is the site of the first paper mill in the 13 colonies. Sofian and George played outdoors in beautiful weather, had fine food and imported beer. 250 people attended. **Bob Stykemain** played September 19 and 20 for the Pioneer Crafts Fair at Kenton, Ohio. **Leonard Zapf**, zither, and **Lenny Zapf**, string bass, played at Cannstatter Volkfest Verein Banquet in Philadelphia on October 16. **Sofian Zapf** played on June 24 at the unveiling of the Staatsvertrag painting at the CIGNA Museum and on July 1 reception at the Hofman House restaurant following the world premier of Missa Pacis. He received commendation from the Austrian Consul General of Philadelphia for these performances. **Janet Stessl** will play November 4 for the opening of a new factory of the Austrian company Ebner Industrieofenbau in Wadsworth, Ohio. **Sepp Diepolder** will be playing at the Matterhorn Restaurant in Tampa, Florida from December 26 - February 14. Then **Sepp** and **Heinz**, his brother, are off to play at World's Fair Expo '88 in Brisbane, Australia in a Bavarian restaurant there. **Janet Stessl** played October 24 for the Centennial Ball of the Luxembourg Brotherhood of America with honored guests Hereditary Grand Duke Prince Henri and Hereditary Grand Duchess Princess Maria Theresa of Luxembourg as foreign dignitaries. **Kathi Kurzenberger** keeps a busy schedule: she plays Sundays at the Wunderbar, Antioch, Illinois, Wednesday's at Dieter's Restaurant, in Woodstock, Illinois, and Friday's at Hans' Bavarian Lodge, in Wheeling, Illinois.

Newsletter  
Foreign Office

The Zither Newsletter of the USA is proud to announce that Johannes Popp of Munich, West Germany, has agreed to be the European representative.

Mr. Popp will be in charge of foreign subscriptions, advertisements and coverage of European zither events for our paper.

He may be contacted at telephone 089/714 12 39 or by mail at Pflingstrosenstr 11, D-8000 München, 70, West Germany.

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# 20. Leise rieselt der Schnee

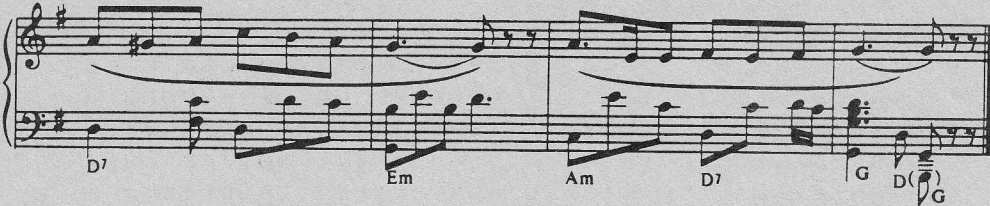
*Andantino*

Eduard Ebel (1839-1905)

1. Lei - se rie - selt der Schnee, — still und starr ruht der See, —  
 2. In den Her - zen ist's warm, — still schweigt Kum - mer und Harm, —  
 3. Bald ist hei - li - ge Nacht, — Chor der En - gel er - wacht, —



1. weih - nacht - lich glän - zet der Wald, — }  
 2. Sor - ge des Le - bens ver - halt, — } Freu - e dich, Christkind kommt bald, —  
 3. hört nur, wie lieb - lich es schallt, — }



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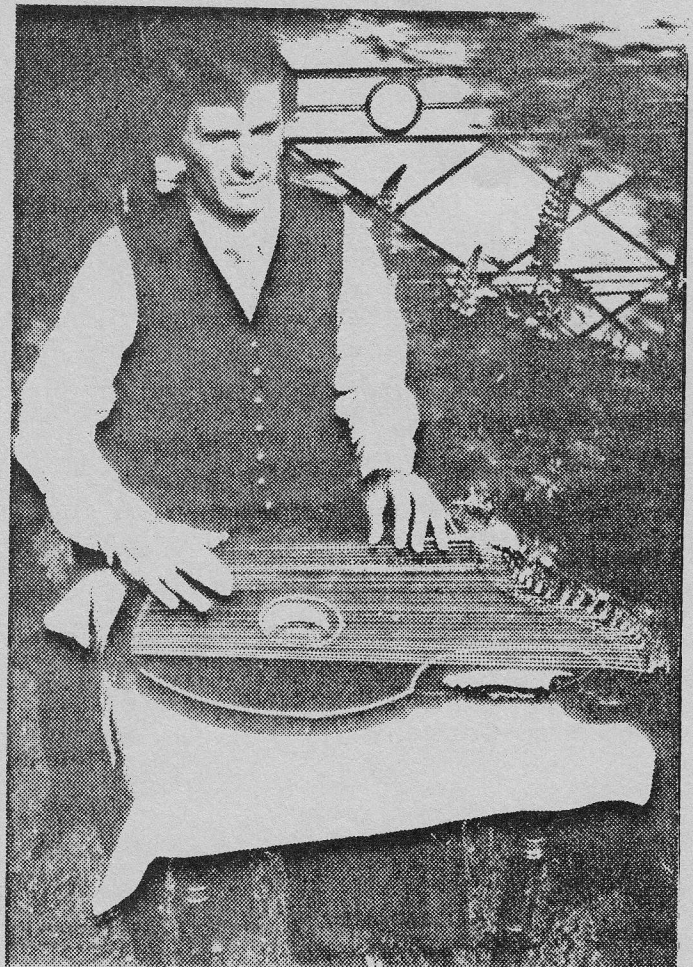
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Continued from page 1 - Schwarzer

It was not until the 1840's that the small German craftsmen were replaced by the larger shops of the accelerated German industrial revolution. Although Anton Schwarzer's business was not extensive, he was successful enough to send Franz to the Olmutz Gymnasium and later to the Vienna Polytechnic Institute. The boy studied in Vienna for three years, and after his graduation in 1846 returned to his father's shop in Olmutz. Schwarzer's activities for the period from 1846-1850 are little known. According to the Olmutz newspaper fragment, during this time he first learned to play the zither and began experiments in the improvement of its design. He apparently studied with two relatively famous composers of zither music, Ludwig Ritter von Ditrich and Carl J. F. Umlant. These names appear several times in the Schwarzer papers, but nothing further about them is known. They may have been relatively famous figures to dedicated zitherists, but of little importance outside zither circles. Nearly every zither player at some time or another composed zither music; Schwarzer himself wrote numerous pieces, three of which were published in Leipzig.

The decade of 1840-1850 in Austria was a troubled one. The decline of the handicraft system, the population movement from rural areas to the increasingly large industrial centers and the nation wide strikes and riots of the starving villagers in 1844 and 1845 contributed to the general economic crisis which culminated in the Revolution of 1848. In a letter from Innsbruck, August 9, 1850, he wrote his father that although he "can't complain about wages . . . nothing can be saved of them". In July, 1852 he was living in Tepplitz, but the master tradesman for whom he worked had refused to pay him. Schwarzer's experience was not unusual, for as Theodore S. Hamerow has described this period, "everywhere the income of the artisan fell, hours of labor increased, and work became scarce, as one master after another was forced to dismiss his journeymen to keep his own head above water". Schwarzer earned little during these years and seldom liked the company of his fellow workers.

Schwarzer may have frequently traveled to Brunn (about 20 miles from Olmutz) when he lived with his father, or he may have worked there during these years, for in that city, on March 1, 1859, he married a relatively well known young actress, Josephine Petterera. Miss Petterera's family were professional actors; her father was associated with the court-theater of Karlsruhe and later directed the Municipal Theater in Frankfurt; her older brother, Anton, was the director of the Koenigliches Hof-Theatre of Brunn. Josephine made her acting debut at the Kursaal-Theatre in Bad Ems, where the local drama critic complimented her. One of the most attentive members of the audience at Bad Ems was the German Kaiser, Frederick William IV who awarded Miss Petterera the "honor" of greeting her during his morning walks.

Whether Josephine continued acting after her marriage is not known. In later years members of the family remember her saying that Anton Schwarzer did not exactly approve of Franz's marriage to an actress, although this attitude reflected the feeling of the provinces and not of larger cities. One fact, however, suggests that she did continue her stage work, at least for a time. When the Schwarzers came to this country five years after their marriage, they had a substantial sum of money. They brought with them several large pieces of furniture and trunks for which the freight would have been quite high. Schwarzer immediately paid for the land which he bought in Warren County, and they had enough money for living expenses for nearly two years. During the period between the last letter (1852) and his immigration, he may have found more profitable work.

During the spring of 1864, the Schwarzers immigrated to the United States, settling on a farm near Holstein, Missouri. Why Schwarzer came to this country is not clear. He does not seem to have been motivated by the usual reasons for immigration. Although he was in Vienna during the height of the disturbances which led to the Revolution of 1848, there is no indication that he sympathized with the aims of the revolutionaries. In the late 1850's and early 1860's many Germans came to this country because it was impossible to make a living in their homeland. Schwarzer, however, does not seem to have been forced to come to this country for economic reasons. Nor did he come to this country to make zithers. During the years of his journeyman work, Schwarzer made furniture. The letters of the 1850's indicate he was working on chests, bureaus, and other pieces of household goods. Zithers are not mentioned. Even after Schwarzer left the farm where he first settled, the zither making he did was incidental to the wood working which occupied most of his time. All evidence suggests that Schwarzer came to this country not to establish a zither factory, but in pursuit of wealth and position. Schwarzer's knowledge of living conditions in



Missouri apparently was limited to the idyllic existence which Gottfried Duden had described in his letters. Schwarzer knew Duden's book. Members of the family remember his mention of it, and all evidence indicates that he came to this country and settled in Missouri because of Duden's work. When Schwarzer arrived in New York he purchased land sight unseen in the general area where Duden lived. Every aspect of Schwarzer's subsequent life indicates that he immigrated because he saw himself as a large land holder with little to do except ride over his estate and oversee his workers. The house which he later built in Washington, his extensive formal gardens, his patrician tastes, his paternal relationships with his employees of the zither factory - all these indicate the essentially aristocratic tastes of the man. His educational and artistic background, and his wife's relative social position and professional attainments suggest that the Schwarzers came to this country expecting to find a congenial life where a small investment would bring large returns.

Schwarzer was not the kind of man to be motivated by wanderlust, nor was his wife the kind of woman who would substitute a cultured life for that of a pioneer woman. They must have been chagrined to discover that they had bought a two room log cabin with a dirt floor instead of a comfortable home that the New York land speculator had described to them. The land around Holstein was not the neatly fenced, well kept land of the Austrian highlands.

He later admitted his initial disappointment with Missouri, but like many immigrants he was ashamed to return to Austria and admit his failure, though he evidently considered the possibility of returning. Fortunately, Aloisisi Thanheiser of Olmutz willed the Schwarzers 525 florins (\$300) in the fall of 1865, which perhaps helped them through the next year. However, by the fall of 1866 or the spring of 1867, the Schwarzers gave up the land and moved across the river to Washington.

The first record of Schwarzer in Washington indicates his interest in old world customs which had been established in this country. At the first meeting after the Civil War of the Washington Turn Verein on October 9, 1865, Schwarzer became a member, as noted in the History of the Washington Turner Society, compiled by the Historical Committee (1900). Throughout his life Schwarzer was active in the Turn Verein. He was Director of the Turner Dramatic Section of the Society from 1886-1888 and "particularly good in singing roles". Mrs. Schwarzer is also listed as participating in the various dramatic productions. He also helped establish the Liederkranz sometime during 1867 or 1868 and apparently became its first director. The record of Schwarzer's first real estate transaction in Washington is dated September 1, 1869. During these early years he made his living by returning to the woodworking trade. His most notable product at this time was the altar for the new St. Francis Borgia Church, completed in 1868. No picture of the altar survives, but Schwarzer's working sketch for it has been preserved.

When Schwarzer came to Missouri he brought a zither with him and continued his playing. A poem dated October 1868 recorded the presentation of a baton to him by the members of the Washington Liederkrans for providing music on "the golden strings of the zither". His zither making remained incidental to his furniture work, but he made an occasional instrument and revived his interest in the problems of design. Schwarzer probably began to devote his full time to zither making in the winter of 1869. One of his first zithers, made about 1866 - 1867 is on display at the Missouri State Museum in Jefferson City. It has all the marks of a "homemade" instrument; the tuning pegs are those of the piano adapted to the zither; the frets are of a brass-like metal; and there is no inlay. Every part of the instrument could have been obtained in Washington. However, by 1870 he had constructed an instrument with German silver frets, standard zither tuning pegs, and mother of pearl and wood inlay on the rosewood top. All of these items must have been ordered from suppliers in Europe, probably in Vienna, and they indicate that Schwarzer was making more than an occasional instrument. On May 8, 1872 he bought additional property and borrowed \$1,000 from the Washington Building and Loan Association to build the original zither workshop, a small brick building measuring 18' x 30'. Like most European immigrants, Schwarzer still craved the recognition of his homeland, and he spent much of his time preparing three zithers for the Vienna Exhibition. In 1879 and 1885 he purchased additional lots making it possible to build a new factory extending to the east of his property.



The number of instruments that Schwarzer made during the years between the Gold Medal award and the construction of the new factory building cannot be definitely determined. It was not until the summer of 1885 that he stamped, at the upper end of the fretboard, a serial number for each instrument, and recorded the number, the purchaser and special instructions regarding tuning and inlay. The serial numbers of the record books beginning in July, 1885 start at the figure 2,000, indicating that Schwarzer estimated that he had made about 2,000 instruments in the period 1868 to 1885.

The significance of Schwarzer's contributions to the evolution of the zither may best be seen in the history of the instrument. By the end of the 18th century the Scheitholt, with an increased number of strings and a larger and more resonant body had evolved into the forerunner of the modern German zither. American manufacturers also produced an instrument called a "zither" that is relatively easy to play. In a small booklet called "Suggestions for the Proper Care of the Zither" written about 1900, Schwarzer comments; "Owing to the widespread interest that has manifested itself in the German zither in this country and the wonderful growth in the popularity of this beautiful instrument, the market has been flooded with imitations such as the "Guitar Zither", "Columbia Zither", "American Zither", etc. Please do not class the German zither with these imitations." Schwarzer's attitude reflects the contempt of a fine craftsman for a machine made instrument, and of the musician for an instrument that offered the artist no possibility for producing other than very simple music.

Schwarzer's contribution to the evolution of the German zither may be summarized in three general areas; experiments with structural reinforcement and sound patterns, the introduction of two new classes of zithers; and his artistry in design and decoration. The basic problem in construction of a zither is the conflict between the space needed for a sounding chamber and the space taken up by structural reinforcement. The average tension of a tuned zither string is thirty pounds; on the conventional instrument of slightly over two feet in length, the total tension of the 32 strings is nearly half a ton. The tendency for a zither to "buckle" is further aggravated by the type of wood necessary for the sounding board (the back). In every case, as with the piano, spruce is used. In comparison to maple or walnut, it is relatively soft wood and therefore adds little in terms of reinforcement to the frame. The grains of spruce run in parallel lines and sudden changes in temperature cause the wood to split because the grain provides little resistance to cracking. To further complicate the problem of reinforcement, when the sounding hole is cut in the top of the instrument, any added strength which might be gained by a solid piece of wood is lost.

The obvious answer to the problem of tension and subsequent buckling is to reinforce the instrument by numerous braces on the inside. But each brace added within the zither reduces the total area of the sounding chamber, and, at the same time, distorts the tone quality. In order to make an instrument which could withstand the rigors of American climate yet still provide as much sounding space as possible, Schwarzer developed a series of internal braces to supply the strength needed and also allow for the unimpeded flow of sound waves. In 1891 Schwarzer further contributed to the reinforcement of the sounding board and the creation of a better tone quality by adding to the back of the zither a series of braces which he called the "piano back".

Schwarzer also invented two new types of instruments. As the history of the zither indicates, the major change in the instrument from the five string Scheitholt had been the addition of more accompaniment strings. But each time more strings were added, the width of the instrument had to be extended to provide a point to attach the extra strings. Further, as accompaniment strings were added, in order to produce the deeper tones of the contra bass, the strings had to be lengthened, adding again to the bulkiness of the zither.

Schwarzer solved this problem by introducing a "column" or "pillar" and curving the upper end of the instrument. He called this basic type the "harp" zither. The various modifications of it were the "Columbian", Arion-Harp" and the "Lady Zither". The record books of the factory showed that he tentatively introduced the model in 1885, and when it sold well, he began to make large numbers of it. He made only four of these instruments



Schwarzer . . . . .

in 1885, fifteen in 1886, and from 1887 when he made forty-five, it became the third most popular instrument he produced. He finally settled on the name "Arion-Harp" Schwarzer's second major invention of type was patented August 28, 1893 and was called the "Table Zither."

Perhaps Schwarzer's most significant contribution to zither manufacturing was the artistry of the woodworking and inlay of his instruments. The tone quality of a zither is neither increased nor diminished by the embellishment of the instrument, and the extra time and expense necessary to create an elaborately decorated instrument are not adequately compensated for by the price. Yet Schwarzer created instruments which were not only commercial, but products of art. Every part of the Schwarzer zither was carefully cut by hand, each piece was patiently sanded and formed to fit the instrument and the zither was slowly assembled, allowing ample time for the glued pieces to dry before the next step of construction began. A thin coat of shallac was brushed on the instrument and allowed to set. Then, with a fine pumice stone the instrument was rubbed until the surface was free from all impurities. Even on the cheapest instrument this process might be repeated as many as 20 or 30 times.

Schwarzer's most popular instrument was the Concert Zither, Style A with 32 strings. Nearly 3,000 instruments of this model were sold - price \$19.00. Schwarzer's finest models sold for from \$600 to \$1,000. The column, shell and scroll of the most expensive instrument were executed in ivory by a world famed Bavarian sculptor, the inlayings of "gold, silver, criede, white, green, and variegated mother of pearl" were cut out and inlaid - nearly 5,000 tiny mother of pearl pieces were used to make the designs on the top of the instrument.

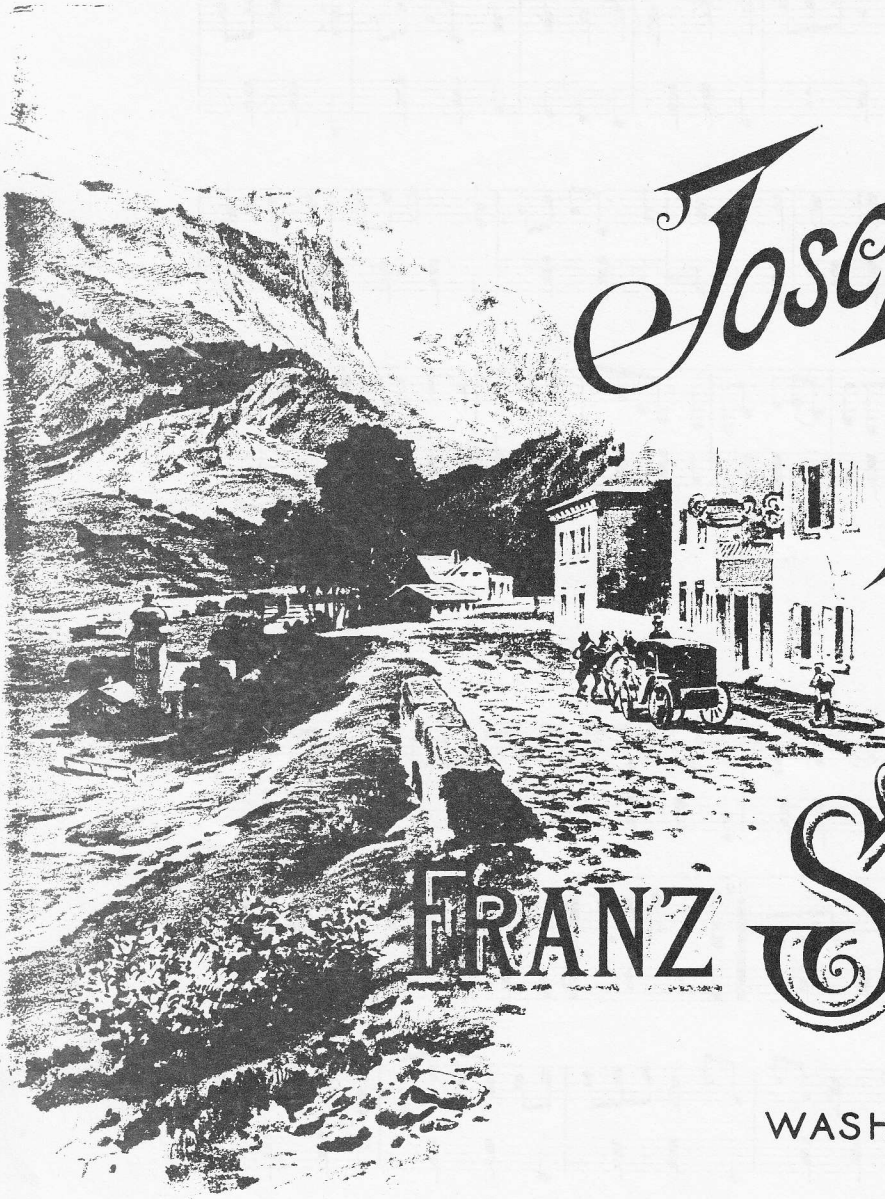
Over 6,000 instruments, more than half the total output of the factory, were made between 1885, the year the record books begin, and 1904, the year of Schwarzer's death. When the new factory building was completed in 1885, Schwarzer probably employed only 4 or 5 craftsmen and 2 or 3 apprentices, but by the early nineties, the total working force numbered some 25 men, 8 of whom were craftsmen. There was no specialization. Each of the eight worked on any instrument, perhaps as many as 15 or 20 at a time, allowing for glued pieces and finish lacquer to dry. Skilled workers received \$10 per week for six working days. The peak years of production were 1890-1895, averaging more than two instruments per day. During this period Schwarzer introduced new styles of zithers, several modifications of existing types, added mandolins, guitars, cello zithers (sometimes called zither melodian) and a new type of Streich (bow) zither to his list.

Schwarzer's income during these years can only be approximately estimated, but it was enough to satisfy the dream of wealth and position which brought him to this country. By late 1893 he had purchased all lots of Block 19 and three more lots to the east of the factory. He spent large sums for various shrubs and plants on the factory grounds, employing one and sometimes two, full time gardeners. He built a greenhouse on the north side of the factory and converted the original workshop into a "relic" house, filling it with Indian artifacts and curios of all kinds. His family lived well and entertained a large number of out-of-town visitors.

Instrument making was not Schwarzer's only source of income. In addition to the sale of strings, the factory also did repairing and special order work, made zither tables, small objects d'art, sold imported mandolins, guitars and violins and related activities. No will was recorded at Schwarzer's death, but the 1920 inventory of the contents of the factory alone revealed net resources of \$17,350 and this was 20 years after the most profitable period of production. Herman C. Grohe inherited the factory after Mrs. Schwarzer's death in 1912, and until his retirement because of ill health in the early 1920's he was able to keep the factory open. For a period of about 10 years he produced enough instruments to keep 2 or 3 workers in the factory. Although Mrs. Grohe tried to keep the factory in operation after her husband's death in 1925, there was not enough market for zithers to make the work pay. Mrs. Grohe permitted one or two of the older workers to remain in the factory during the 30's and 40's. With the help of A. W. Schepp, Mr. Grohe had introduced the "Perfecta" model zither and later, in the 30's Tony Godetz, a Chicago zither maker designed the "Concert Grand" model, which was produced for a short time. There were enough unsold and used instruments left in the factory to account for the sales from the time of Mr. Grohe's death until the factory was torn down in the early 1950's.



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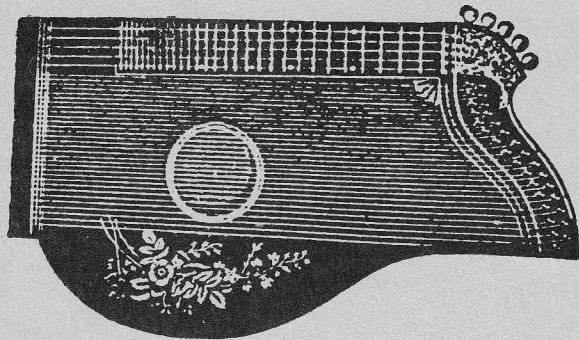
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