

KINGSTON MAENNERCHOR AND DAMENCHOR NEWS

Saengerfest Edition

March 2018

KINGSTON
MAENNERCHOR AND
DAMENCHOR, INC.

37 Greenkill Avenue

Kingston, New York 12401

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PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

Welcome to you all. It's amazing! We are celebrating our 150th anniversary in 2018. As part of our celebration year we will be hosting the 38th Saengerfest of the New York State Saengerbund on June 9th and 10th. We look forward to having you, our members and friends, join us as we celebrate this major milestone in the life of the Maennerchor.

In this newsletter you will find much information about the weekend's events along with quite a bit of historic information about the singing societies participating, the venues at which events will be held and about the New York State Saengerbund itself.

Our music director, Dr. Dorcinda Knauth will be directing the combined choruses in the mass chorus portion of the Saengerfest concert and our Assistant Music Director Sherry Thomas will be the accompanist. The other societies participating are from Binghamton, Buffalo, Poughkeepsie, Syracuse and Utica.

Finally we encourage all of you to support us financially by taking out an ad in our Anniversary Journal. Information on ad sizes and prices are in this letter along with a form for you to use in submitting your information. Please feel free to copy the form if you wish. You may also wish to make copies of this newsletter to share with friends as a way of expanding knowledge about our society.

Hildegard Edling

1897 New York State Saengerbund Inc. 2018

Immigrants from many lands contributed to the melting pot of American musical creativity. In the 19th century, at a time when the German community in the United States was most active, German singing societies, Saengerbunde, were formed to give testimony to the German-American eternal love of music, sociability and camaraderie.

In 1848 in Cincinnati, choral societies from Ohio, Kentucky, Maryland, and Indiana created the **Nord-Amerikanischer Saengerbund**. By 1881, there were 18 major German clubs and six different choral societies in Cincinnati. It is estimated that by 1908, there were 50,000 singing members in the entire Saengerbund. When new music by Richard Strauss demanded a larger scope of the choir, a recommendation was made to add female voices.

Singing societies in the cities along the Atlantic coast felt the Nord-Amerikanischer Saengerbund was too far to travel, so they formed their own **Nord-Oestliche League'** *North-Eastern League*, in 1850. In July of 1897, Karl Koch of Albany attended the Nord-Oestliche Saengerfest in Philadelphia and conceived the idea of forming a Saengerbund in upstate New York. At an annual meeting of the editors of the *German Newspapers Association*, Koch, a poet and the editor of the *Albany Sonntags Journal*, wrote an article calling for the establishment of such an organization. He was supported by Jacob Birkmayer, editor of the *Troy Freie Presse*, and John C. Schreiber, editor of the *Utica Deutsche Zeitung*.

In August of 1897, on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of the Troy Maennerchor, a number of societies pledged to this endeavor. In October of 1897, at its first convention in Albany, representatives from 22 societies signed the provisional constitution of the **Central New York Saengerbund** and elected its first officers.

Since then we have celebrated 37 Saengerfeste in Albany, Binghamton, Buffalo, Kingston, Poughkeepsie, Rochester, Schenectady, Syracuse, Troy, and Utica. Saengerfest celebrations were interrupted during World War I and resumed in 1922 in Troy. Later that year they celebrated their 25th anniversary at the Arion Hall in Syracuse.

For its first 41 years, the Saengerbund was restricted to male singers but various singing societies had already formed their own ladies' choruses. On 30 October 1938, Elsie Dossert of Syracuse organized these ladies' choruses into the **Vereinigte Frauenchore of Central New York**, *United Women's Choruses of Central New York*. The Saengerfeste were interrupted again during World War II and resumed in 1947 in Syracuse on the 50th anniversary of the Central New York Saengerbund. At that time the United Women's Choruses of Central New York presented the saengerbund with its first Bundesfahne. This tapestry was cherished and proudly displayed at official meetings of the Saengerbund for the next eleven years.

On the occasion of the 1959 Saengerfest in Rochester, the United Women's Chorus of Central New York presented a new Bundesfahne, based on an original design by Hans Brand of the Syracuse Liederkranz. This tapestry replaced the original which had been consumed by a fire that destroyed Germania Hall of

Poughkeepsie, where it had been temporarily stored. This new Bundesfahne was another masterpiece of the Kunststickerei of Baden-Wuerttemberg which had crafted the original tapestry.

In 1980, the 25th and final Saengerfest of the Central New York Saengerbund was held in Utica. After almost 30 years of discussion, the Central New York Saengerbund merged with the United Women's Choruses of Central New York in September 1980 during the convention in Syracuse and both organizations were united under the name of the **New York State Saengerbund**. The event was commemorated by the attachment of two richly embroidered banners to the Bundesfahne. With the uniting of the men's and ladies' choruses, the saengerfeste continued with the additional competition of mixed and ladies' choruses.

After the merger, the president of the United Women's Choruses, Carol Daly took the office of the first vice-president of the New York Saengerbund. Karl Haeussel continued as president of the new organization until his death in 1984. Mr. Haeussel's term was completed by Carol Daly who served as President for 8 years. In 1992 Werner Franz was elected President and he also served as President for 8 years. Herman Koelman was elected in 2000 and is serving his 6th term through 2018.

To commemorate the 100th anniversary, the 31st Saengerfest was advanced to 1997 and hosted by Utica. To celebrate the end of the Twentieth Century in 2000, our 32nd Saengerfest was held in Buffalo. In 2003, in celebration of their 135th anniversary, the Kingston Maennerchor and Damenchor hosted the 33rd Saengerfest. Poughkeepsie Germania (1850), our longest active chorus, celebrated their new Clubhaus by hosting the 36th Saengerfest in June 2012 and the Utica Maennerchor celebrated their 150th Anniversary by hosting the 37th Saengerfest in 2015.

Since the start of the new millennium, we have developed new approaches to enhance and improve the celebration of our German choral traditions:

- ❖ We have updated our processes and procedures, incorporated our organization, and became 501c3 Not for Profit compliant.
- ❖ We included youth chorus participation with the **Buffalo Spatzen, Kingston Engelchor, Poughkeepsie Germania Kinderchor, and the Utica Kinderchor** as part of our Saengerfest celebrations.
- ❖ With our aging and declining membership it became apparent that our tradition of competitive singing was no longer feasible. To sustain our Sängerfest participation we modified and revised our format to a two-day singing festival to be celebrated biennially.

In a tribute to Gemütlichkeit, Freundschaft, and Kameradschaft we are enthusiastically looking forward to continue our celebration of German-American musical heritage with the new two- day format at this, our 38th Saengerfest, hosted by the Kingston Maennerchor and Damenchor in celebration of their 150th Anniversary.

Debbie Thomas, Herman Koelman,
Archivist President

SAENGERFEST EVENTS

Saturday – June 9, 2018
2:00 – 4:00 p.m.
Mass Chorus Concert

Redeemer Lutheran Church, 104 Wurts Street, Kingston, New York
Free Will Offering

Saturday – June 9, 2018
5:00 – 10:00 p.m.
Banquet/Dance

Dance to the music of Gregory and the Brauhaus Band

SPAF (Saugerties Performing Arts Factory), 169 Ulster Avenue, Saugerties, New York
\$75.00 per person

Sunday – June 10, 2018
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Brunch

Ole Savannah, 100 Rondout Landing, Kingston, NY
\$30.00 per person

A \$100.00 badge purchase will give you entry to all events.
Purchase Deadline for Badges and Individual Tickets
May 15, 2018

Please make checks payable to the Kingston Maennerchor and Damenchor. Mail the check with the event purchased clearly stated in the memo line to the attention of Hildegard Edling at the Maennerchor's address. Feel free to call the Maennerchor at 845-338-3763 if you have any questions.

Those Were the Days: Histories of Saengerfest 2018 Event Venues

Ole Savannah

The large brick building at 100 Rondout Landing (once named Ferry St.) is now occupied by Ole Savannah, a popular Kingston restaurant. The building played a significant role during the rapid growth of 19th century Rondout, now designated as Downtown Kingston's "historic Rondout Waterfront District". (The villages of Rondout and Kingston merged in 1872 to become the City of Kingston.)

The 108-mile Delaware and Hudson Canal opened in 1828, linking Honesdale, Pennsylvania to Rondout's deep water port. Products shipped included coal, Rosendale (hydraulic) cement, bluestone, ice, lumber, bricks, and agricultural products via canal boats and barges; most products were destined for the rapidly expanding New York City market. Positioned between the Hudson River and the terminus of the D&H Canal, Rondout's waterfront became the most important port between Albany and New York City during the mid-19th century.

The Cornell Steamboat Company, founded in 1847 and incorporated in 1876, was based in the Rondout. Cornell became the largest marine towing company in the country, with a virtual monopoly on Hudson River towing from the 1880s to 1930s. Thomas Cornell and son-in-law Samuel D. Coykendall owned over sixty steamers (along with many other enterprises), had over 450 employees, based its businesses in the waterfront district, and used its "Rondout shops" for their vessels' maintenance and repairs. The beautifully restored Ole Savannah building housed the boiler repair shop; it fortunately survived Urban Renewal demolition of the 1960s.

Redeemer Lutheran Church

Ulster County's 1855 census shows 3426 immigrants from Germany, outnumbered only by the Irish at 8246. By then, half of Rondout's 6000 residents were foreign-born, bringing with them their languages, culture, skills, work ethic and religion. Imagine the profusion of sounds in this busy port – foreign languages and music, the clopping of horses' hooves, rattling wagons, church bells, and whistles of steamboats, trolleys and trains.

German-language worship services were first held in homes and social halls. The German Evangelical Lutheran Trinity Church of the Rondout (now Trinity Lutheran Church) incorporated in 1842; a cornerstone for the brick Gothic-style structure was laid in 1874 on the corner of Spring and Hone streets. English influence spread by the late 1870s; however, the congregation wanted services in German only. In 1897 a group of congregants left Trinity and founded the English-speaking Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Redeemer (now Redeemer Lutheran Church). Their Gothic revival building of marble and limestone at 104 Wurts Street was dedicated in 1913. Our Chor's director, Dorcinda Knauth, is currently the choir director of this magnificent church.

Saugerties Performing Arts Factory (SPAF)

The building at 169 Ulster Avenue, Saugerties, previously housed Saugerties Manufacturing Company (1895), and F.L. Russell Corporation (1943 – dissolved 2012), known for its iconic composition black and white marble covered note books – remember them from your school days? F.L. Russell moved to Mt. Marion, where Markertek is now located; a Liquidators factory then moved into the Saugerties site.

Erica and Gerard Price purchased the long-abandoned 55,000 square-foot factory for their Uniforms USA business. They transformed 14,000 square feet into a fabulous, chic event space. Saugerties Performing Arts Factory (SPAF) opened in 2011, with its 28-foot ceilings, abundant natural lighting, tranquil gardens, and many convenient amenities. The culinary expertise of their highly-acclaimed Chef Chris Ratel combined with their roomy, flexible space has become a popular site for all kinds of events.

Annemarie Harms

Participating Societies

Host society: Kingston Maennerchor and Damenchor

The Kingston Maennerchor and Damenchor has been meeting continually since its founding as the Rondout Social Maennerchor on February 22, 1868 in the Village of Rondout. In 1872 the Villages of Rondout and Kingston joined to form the City of Kingston and on January 26, 1887 the “Rondout Social Maennerchor” of the City of Kingston was incorporated by the New York State Department of State. The Petition of Incorporation stated that the object and business of the organization would be “the mutual improvement of the members through social interests and the cultivation of vocal and instrumental music.” At the time of incorporation there were 61 members and over the years membership has fluctuated between 90 and 140 members.

The Maennerchor maintained various meeting places in the Rondout area of Kingston until February 4, 1940 when it dedicated the current building on Greenkill Avenue. As with many of the societies participating in this Saengerfest, the Maennerchor’s name underwent several changes. What began as the Rondout Social Maennerchor became the Kingston Maennerchor, Inc. in 1950. The change to our current name came on February 19, 1968 when the Ladies Auxiliary which had been formed in 1932 became an equal partner.

With the growth of membership and activities more room was needed. A 40’ addition was built and dedicated in 1978 at the 110th Anniversary celebration. Another milestone in the growth of the Maennerchor occurred in the summer of 1997 when the adjacent property to the north was purchased. The building on the site was demolished and a much needed parking lot was developed.

As the Maennerchor has grown over the years, and with more and more non-singers joining, the by-laws have evolved to reflect a growing interest in promoting German language and culture. In that respect our chorus currently performs two concerts a year one of which is a sing along specifically structured to involve audience participation. Our bi-weekly Stammtisch is open to all who wish to improve their knowledge through conversation and the monthly Kaffeeklatsch offers the opportunity to learn about the many areas of Germany through music. We encourage everyone interested in German music and/or culture to come to any one of our events and learn more about this vibrant member of Kingston’s diverse ethnic community.

German Club of Binghamton

On February 19, 1897 the “Germania Maennerchor of Binghamton New York” was incorporated by five gentlemen of Germanic background. Their purpose was to gather together the German population of Binghamton and vicinity interested in singing and music. On September 13, 1927 they applied to become members of the Central New York State Saengerbund and participated in their first Saengerfest in 1928. In that same year the name was changed to the Germania Maennerchor and the Ladies Section of the Germania Maennerchor was formed. Another major step occurred in 1930 when property was purchased and their current hall was built. They have expanded their activities and are especially known for their dances and breakfast in the woods.

Buffalo Schwaben Chor

Begun in 1880 as the Schwabische Saengerbund, the Buffalo Schwaben Chor continues to be a leading ethnic singing society in western New York. They have twice undertaken an extensive concert tour of Germany, once in 1980 with 55 members and the second time in 1983 with 85 singers. They stayed in private homes in the host cities and enjoyed being able to share how important it was to them to keep German song and culture alive in the United States. Their active “away from home” performances have included the Lancaster Opera House and guest chorus in Toledo and Youngstown, Ohio; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and in Midland, Ontario. Here in New York they have successfully competed in many Saengerfeste, proudly winning prizes in all categories.

Poughkeepsie Germania Singers, Inc.

The Germania singers are the oldest, continuously active German-American chorus in upstate New York and were founded on May 1, 1850 as the Germania Singing Society by Adolph Kuhn. They were incorporated on April 27, 1871 as “Germania of Poughkeepsie” with a ladies auxiliary being formed in 1910. Beginning in the late 1940s Germania has periodically encouraged children to sing and perform. These groups were long-lived with some of those young singers and musicians still involved in German societies today. Under the direction of Julius Hochmuth they also had an orchestra which accompanied the chorus in many of their concerts. This very community oriented society continues to be extremely active today.

Syracuse Liederverein

The society known today as the Syracuse Liederverein was formed in 1999 when the Syracuse Liederkranz and the Deutscher Gesangverein (men’s German a capella group) combined. The original group was founded on September 12, 1855 and is the oldest existing singing society in Syracuse. Today the Liederverein is small in number but large in their involvement in the New York State Saengerbund. One of their members is the NYSSB Treasurer and another is the Archivist. They are very involved in German cultural activities in the City of Syracuse and can be seen and heard at concerts held by other German choruses.

Utica Maennerchor

The charter of the Utica Maennerchor adopted in 1865 states that “The purpose of the club shall be to promote German and American choral singing.” Today the Utica Maennerchor is one of the last surviving institutions established by a vibrant German immigrant community. The chorus made its first public appearance in April 1865 at a ball in Utica and on April 26 of that year they sang at Union Station as President Abraham Lincoln’s funeral train passed through Utica from Washington to Illinois. Currently they have men’s, women’s and mixed choruses which sing in both German and English. They regularly hold concerts at their hall and participate actively in Saengerfeste.

OFFICERS AND STAFF 2018

President	Hildegard Edling
Vice President	Jefferson Davis
Treasurer	Angela Hartrum
Recording Secretary	Christa Scheitz
Corresponding Secretary	Terry Strini
Financial Secretary	Annemarie Harms
Archivist / Historian	Bruce Wolf
Trustee 2018	Christa Kohler
Trustee 2019	Alina Nitschner
Trustee 2020	Donna Wolf
Honorary President	Dorothy Birmingham
Honorary President	John Bruening
Honorary President	Herman Koelman
Honorary President	Ernie Mann

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Bar	John Bruening, Jeff Davis
House	Walter Vogt, Richard Edling
Music	Hildegard Edling
Good and Welfare	Marion Holm
Kaffeeklatch	Alina Nitschner
Stammtisch	Michael Scheunemann
Scholarship	Edith Borchardt

THANK YOU TO ALL OF THE NEWSLETTER SUPPORTERS:

Ken Darmstadt and Darmstadt Overhead Doors;
Vinnie & Annemarie Werling; Inge Martin; Juergen
and Rosemarie Kleuker; Ernest and Hanna Mann

MAENNERCHOR

37 Greenkill Avenue
Kingston NY 12401

38th Sängerfest Program Journal
Journal Booster List (1 Line Booster \$5.00 – 2 Line Booster \$8.00)
Deadline May 1, 2018

Name (Please Print) _____

Name (Please Print) _____

Solicited by: _____

Total number of names on this page _____

Please return with payment by May 1, 2018 to:

Kingston Maennerchor and Damenchor

37 Greenkill Ave Kingston, NY 12401

Kingston Maennerchor and Damenchor, Inc.
37 Greenkill Avenue, Kingston, New York 12401
845-338-3763

New York State Saengerbund Saengerfest 38
June 9 & 10, 2018

This year the Kingston Maennerchor and Damenchor, is celebrating its 150 years of preserving and promoting German song and culture. A highlight of our anniversary celebrations will be hosting the 38th New York State Saengerbund Saengerfest. Please consider placing an ad in the 38th Saengerfest Program Journal to help us support our traditions through this event and milestone.

Instead of a Journal ad I prefer to donate \$ _____ to support the Saengerfest

JOURNAL RATES

Full Page (5.5"x8.5")	\$100.00
Half Page (vertical or horizontal)	\$ 75.00
Quarter Page – Business Card	\$ 50.00
2 Line Booster	\$ 8.00
1 Line Booster	\$ 5.00

JOURNAL AD DEADLINE – May 1, 2018

JOURNAL CONTRACT

I hereby authorize and contract a _____ page advertisement in the New York State Saengerbund 38th Saengerfest Program Journal. Payment of _____ is enclosed.

Authorized by: _____ Date: _____

Business/Agency: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone _____ E-Mail _____

Please make check payable to: Kingston Maennerchor and Damenchor. Mail completed contract, camera ready ad and full payment to the attention of Hildegard Edling at the above address.