

Honoring Erich Kunzel By Dr. Don Heinrich Tolzmann

Erich Kunzel (1935-2009) conducted the National Symphony Orchestra on PBS every Memorial Day for many years and was known world-wide as the "Prince of Pops" as Conductor of the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra. Born in New York City, he was a great German-American.

Aside from conducting the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra and appearing on PBS for many years, Erich Kunzel conducted many other orchestras, including the Boston Pops. The home of the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra in Cincinnati was Music Hall, which is located in the old German district known as Over-the-Rhine.

Kunzel's dream was to locate the School for Creative and Performing Arts (SCPA) in Cincinnati in the Over-the-Rhine district just a block or so from Music Hall. In addition to this, he helped raise funds for this endeavor. Unfortunately, Erich Kunzel recently passed away as a result of cancer and will not see his dream soon come to fruition.

Many sought to honor him for all he did for the city of Cincinnati and the world of music. So, the street in front of Music Hall was given the additional name of "Erich Kunzel Way" by the Cincinnati City Council, while at the same time retaining its name as Elm Street.

An additional honor was sought by many to name the SCPA School after him, with the final result that the building complex of the school will be named the Erich Kunzel Center for Arts & Education.

As President of the German-American Citizens League of Greater Cincinnati, I appeared at the November meeting of the Cincinnati School Board, stating: "Maestro Kunzel's efforts not only spearheaded financial support for the construction of SCPA, but they also led to its location in downtown Cincinnati near Music Hall in historic Over-the-Rhine, the home of his beloved Pops Orchestra."

Kunzel was a good friend of the German-American community and proud of his German heritage. Although it was hoped that the new school would bear his name, the compromise reached does place his name on the building complex in Over-the-Rhine and most likely will become generally known as the Erich Kunzel Center for Arts and Education.

German-Americans in Cincinnati, therefore, can be proud to have done their part in obtaining this honor for Maestro Kunzel, a great German-American, who was well known throughout the world.

A collection of his recordings was just issued entitled "Erich Kunzel - Cincinnati Pops Orchestra: The Legacy Collection."

It contains a selection of fifteen of his favorite musical pieces, concluding with "Stars & Stripes Forever," by John Philip Sousa, who also was of German descent.



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MARDI GRAS – KARNEVAL – FASCHING By Ernst Schwab

The Germania Society introduced the Rhineland type "Karneval" to our Queen City's vast array of German cultural gems in 1964. Germania is a society of German heritage and was incorporated the same year.

"Karneval" originated from the time of feudal or aristocratic despotism in the early medieval period. It came alive in the form of "Jesters Entertainment" on the courts of the royal establishment. At that time the common people were mostly considered serfs living in drudgery. They got through it by entertaining themselves with ballads and clownish acts. They mimicked their overlords satirically with barrel talk.

Different customs were developed throughout the lands. Some would even carve their own wooden mask. They made different costumes for the themes they created through the rituals and ceremonies. Some examples of themes that were created were: Driving out old man winter, Sweeping away anger and frustration, and Beating the devil. They would rid themselves from satanic beliefs by dancing around effigies until exhaustion. Cleansing their souls before Fat Tuesday ended all foolish activity. Things went back to normal after Ash Wednesday. After the day of fasting they started to live less meager without meat, especially in Catholic areas.

Since the Renaissance, Karneval became a folklore type custom. It became a colossal expression of hilarious plays. They would make fools of the prince and princess. Their elaborate courts would mockingly trivialize the arrogance of feudalism and stern authority. "Rose Monday" and "Fat Tuesday" celebrations highlighted the end of the Karneval season.

Karneval, Fasching, Fastnacht, Fasnet, Mardi Gras, as well as the Latin Carnevale of Rio de Janeiro are all celebrations that came from the same origin.

About 150 years ago, Karneval became a full seasonal adventure, which was titled the "fifth season". Traditionally, Karneval starts on the 11th day of the 11th month at 11:11. The season also called session, starts with the resurrection of Hoppeditz, a clownish personification of Karneval, or Mardi Gras. An official "Karneval Opening Ball" is held on the following Saturday (unless of course the 11th falls on Saturday). Ceremonially a new Prince is coronated at the opening ball. The new Prince along with his chosen princess with reign for the entire session.

The magnification of 11/11 relates to the number eleven with meanings ranging from superstition to more or less logical connotations. The 14th century medieval conception of "Eleven" derives from the creation of an Orden (medal) by count Adolph I of the Rhineland city of Kleve. The orden was awarded to a "fool" who would ridicule himself the most. Celebrations for this occasion were held for 11 days.

During the French revolution of 1789 the letters ELF put together had a special meaning. The E stood for Equality, L for Liberty, and F for Fraternity. The German word Elf is defined as eleven. The ruling body of any Karneval organization is called the "Elferrat". The Elferrat is a council of eleven men who organize all events within the season (session).

The 11 Ratsmembers (council) are mostly deserving members, some with long standing records of participation. Elferrat wearing formal attire accompanied with jester caps and are decorated with service orders (medals). The jester caps traditionally have long pheasant feathers on them. Friendship and Comradery among each other are virtues of Karneval. Loyalty to your Society is a prerequisite a life commitment.

The Germania Society's Elferrat created for their Karneval Session three events. First the Karneval Opening Ball is held in November, secondly, the Masquerade Ball and last but not least the Kehraus ball. The "Sweep out Ball (Kehraus) closes out the Karneval season before Ash Wednesday with the hilarious funeral of Hoppeditz.

It is not mandatory to wear a costume to the Masquerade ball, however the essence of a masquerade ball is to be participating in the hilarity of a castle like atmosphere. To be incognito adds more fun and might surprise others after the unveiling. Watch the German Events calendar in this publication for the dates and times of the Karneval Dances at Germania.

THIRTEEN COLONIES, LOCK STOCK AND BARREL

By Gerry Houchell



Many older Americans have heard the phrase "You bought it Lock, Stock, and Barrel." The terms Lock, Stock, and Barrel date back to America's early Colonial days when a Musket or Pennsylvania Long Rifle (Kentucky Long Rifle) was among the most important items owned by a family or an individual. Sometimes called a Firelock, the weapon provided a means to defend oneself and family against attack and put food on the table. Owning such a weapon was essential to survival on America's frontier, and to the outcome of America's Revolutionary War.

Symbolically, the connection between Colonial America's fight for Freedom and the Musket and Pennsylvania Long Rifle is strong. Lock, Stock, and Barrel means buying into an idea, no half measures. The will to fight for Liberty, owning a weapon and accoutrements such as lead and powder, and the willingness to sacrifice everything, no half measures, provided the means for Patriots to free the Colonies from the rule of England's King George III.

Southwest Pennsylvania's German, Swiss, and French Gunsmiths and their families were called on by The Committee of Safety, located in nearby Phila



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delphia, to manufacture and repair everything from Cannon, Swords, Muskets, and Rifles.

German Gunsmiths, in particular, played a major role. Men such as Johan Jacob Messerschmidt, and Jacob Dickert are famous for producing fine Pennsylvania Long Rifles, weapons well know for their superior accuracy over British and French Brown Bess and Charville Muskets. Kentucky Long Hunters adopted the rifle and the weapon became famous as the Kentucky Long Rifle, though not one was built in Kentucky until after the Revolutionary War.

The symbolism runs deep. America's Colonial Gunsmiths, supported by their families, produced and repaired thousands of Muskets and Rifles that represented the era's crude level of engineering and technology. The likelihood of the weapon firing successfully was always in doubt, as was the outcome of the equally crude, fledgling Democratic Republic that Colonial Patriots were striving to build. To make either work dependably requires a deeper look at the similarities between the weapon of the day and the Thirteen Colonies seeking Independence.

To fire, the weapon requires two separate, complex actions, made up of 13 steps, ironically, the same number of Colonies fighting in America's Revolutionary War. What a coincidence and miracle that either worked successfully. With so many successful actions of the Flintlock required, it comes as no surprise that the weapon often failed to fire. The Thirteen Colonies, each with its own local government, often different economic interests, differing ratios of Protestant religious beliefs ranging from Pacifism to full acceptance of violent actions required in War, created conditions that left the outcome of the Revolution in doubt.

For the Musket or Long Rifle to fire requires a Lock with just the right ratio of force between Frizzen and Hammer springs, and just the right hardness between the Flint and Frizzen surface. When these components are right, Iron particles of the Frizzen plate ignite the Pan's Priming Powder in the same way that Colonists with just the right grit, love of freedom, and will to sacrifice combined to ignite a Revolution.

The first action is to load the main charge into the bottom of the Barrel, requiring five steps: first pour the correct, measured amount of Powder into the Barrel, second, remove the Ramrod from the Stock, Third, tamp the Wadding and Powder with the Ram Rod, into the bottom of the Barrel, fourth, remove Ball and Patch from the Patch Pocket and place into the Barrel, fifth, tamp the load securely into the bottom of the barrel.

The second action is to prime the Pan with Powder, requiring eight steps: first pull the Hammer to Half Cock,

second, pull the Frizzen Plate forward away from the Pan, third, pour primer Powder into the Pan, fourth, pull the Frizzen Plate securely onto the Pan, fifth, point the weapon downrange, sixth, pull the Hammer to Full Cock, seventh, take aim, eighth, pull the Trigger, doing so touches off the Powder in the Pan.

A small hole in the barrel, called a touch hole, provides a path through which heated gas from the Pan's ignited Powder is delivered to the main powder charge; an explosion will take place inside the Barrel.

The thirteen Colonies with fire brand Patriots such as Patrick Henry, Samuel Adams, and cooler heads of Benjamin Franklin, George Washington and George Wythe provided the equivalent of the Muskets Charge, all that was needed was an incident to cause ignition.

Resentment against British taxation, trade restrictions, and quartering of troops in Colonists homes provided the "main charge" of the Revolution that was "touched" off; exploding the Minute Men and frontier Militias, and Colonial Regiments, carrying their Muskets and Flintlocks into action.

The Colonial Musket or Pennsylvania Long Rifle, with its many parts that had to be in just the right balance, was similar in many ways to the conditions necessary for the thirteen Colonies to succeed in bring about a Democratic Republic.

- Gerry Houchell
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