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## GOETHE NEWS AND NOTES

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Burkhard Henke, Editor  
Davidson College

### *FROM THE EDITOR*

Aside from news and updates regarding the *Goethe Yearbook*, our book series, conference panels, and the latest on next year's Atkins Conference, this edition of the newsletter includes a report on the recent business meeting (we are doing well) along with an announcement of several essay prizes (about which we are delighted). We thank Simon Richter for his many years of service on the editorial board of our book series, and are happy to share good news from members.

If this number of the *Goethe News and Notes* is longer than usual, it is because we are very fortunate to have two founding members help us recall our society's history. Ted Bahr's and Meredith Lee's accounts of the founding and early history of the Goethe Society of North America are included here as an addendum to the newsletter but they are much more than an afterthought. Not only do they make for an engaging, even personal read, but they also provide an institutional memory that speaks of the same kind of initiative, generosity of spirit, and commitment to scholarly exchange that still helps us flourish today. Thank you, Meredith and Ted, for providing us with these stories, and thank you all for your continued

commitment to the Goethe Society. You can find Meredith's and Ted's reports on our web site, too.

Burkhard Henke  
Davidson College

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### *FROM THE PRESIDENT*

Members of the Goethe Society gathered this year in San Diego at the German Studies Association convention where there were inspiring panels on Goethe, some sponsored by the Society such as "Goethe at Play," others emerging spontaneously. Vice President Catriona MacLeod together with the Directors at large, Heidi Schlipphacke and John Smith, awarded prizes for the best essay at the annual reception. This year we thank Elizabeth Powers, long-time Goethe Society member and scholar, for her endowment of the Richard Sussman Essay Prize for the best essay on Goethe's contribution to the sciences and the history of science during the *Goethezeit*.

Many of us are sad to see Simon Richter step away from the editorial board of the Goethe Book Series at Bucknell

University Press. Simon has had tremendous influence on the growth of the Goethe Society. He was the first editor of the *Goethe Yearbook* after Thomas Saine retired. Later he became president of the Society. Simon has always been very conscious of his responsibility to carry forward the intellectual aspirations of the first members of the Goethe Society and he has been kind in passing along that sense of continuity to the scholars who have come after him. With an ear to Simon's recollections about the older generation, we sent out a call for recollections about the first years of the Goethe Society. Meredith Lee and Ehrhard Bahr have gathered together their memories to recount the practical and intellectual goals in founding the North American Goethe Society. You can find their histories included here in this newsletter.

The next conference of the Goethe Society will be held November 3-4, 2017 at Penn State University. A full description of the overarching topic "Re-Orientations around Goethe" was included in the previous newsletter and a formal Call for Papers will be published later this fall. We look forward to your joining us next year. Penn State University is serviced by the University Park Airport (SCE), which has connections to major airline hubs. We look forward to proposals for individual papers and collective panels. More information will be coming soon.

Daniel Purdy  
Pennsylvania State University

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## *FROM THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY*

Greetings from Maine (where we have another gorgeous fall)!

Writing this note, I am still inspired by the great panels on "Goethe and Play" at this year's GSA (organized by Elliott Schreiber and Edgar Landgraf). But it is already time to think ahead to next year! GSA will meet in Atlanta, October 5-8, 2017. Please send me proposals for GSA panels no later than November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016!

Meanwhile, we can look forward to two exciting panels at the MLA 2017: one, on "Goethe and Refugees," organized by Karin Schutjer and me, and one on "What Goethe Heard," organized by Mary Helen Dupree in collaboration with the Executive Committee on 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century literature. Panel proposals for MLA 2018 will be due December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016!

Informal discussions at GSA suggested that there are many ideas for new initiatives, as well as questions and suggestions, hibernating among you! Please send all of them my way, including but not limited to new programming, ideas on recruiting more members, collaboration and support. Email me at [btautz@bowdoin.edu](mailto:btautz@bowdoin.edu).

Best wishes,  
Birgit

Birgit Tautz  
Bowdoin College

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## 2016 BUSINESS MEETING

On October 1, 2016, members of GSNA gathered at the GSA conference for our annual business meeting and cash bar. President Daniel Purdy ran the business meeting, beginning with a report on overall standing of the society, programming initiatives such as Global Goethe and the preparation of the next Atkins Goethe Conference. The conference will take place November 3-4, 2017 on the campus of Penn State University. Daniel, and our two directors-at-large, Heidi Schlipphacke and John Smith, have begun the planning process. Heidi and John are looking forward to paper and panel submissions on “Re-Orientations around Goethe.”

Heidi, John, and Vice President Catriona MacLeod formed the Prize and Awards committee this summer, reading many excellent essays on Goethe, his century, and interdisciplinary inquiries of *Goethezeit*. Catriona read the wonderful citations detailed in her report. She presented the prizes to two winners in attendance, Heather Sullivan and Howard M. Pollak-Milgate. We all were gratified to honor such robust and exciting scholarship, not only in the award-winning essays but also in the *Goethe Yearbook* and in the book series.

Elisabeth Krimmer reported on the upcoming volume of the *Goethe YB*, and I read Karin Schutjer’s report on the book series. Please see Catriona’s, Elisabeth’s, and Karin’s reports in this newsletter to read about all the recent and forthcoming innovative projects.

Finally, Christian Weber assured us of the society’s financial strengths in his

report, including discussions about introducing multi-year membership options. Attendees floated various ideas of interest and concern to the GSNA, and we wrapped up by my calling attention to recent books by members and upcoming, society-sponsored conference panels at MLA and ASECS, all of which are an excellent complement to the stellar panel series at GSA (on Goethe and play, organized by Elliott Schreiber and Edgar Landgraf).

Birgit Tautz  
Bowdoin College

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## 2015 ESSAY PRIZES

This year we were in the fortunate position to be able to award two prizes for the Goethe Society Prize for the best essay on Goethe or the *Goethezeit* published in 2015.

Our first of two prizes goes to Stephanie Hilger for her original and fascinating article “Orientation and Supplementation: Locating the ‘Hermaphrodite’ in the *Encyclopédie*,” published in Volume 22 of the *Goethe Yearbook* (2015). In her essay, she looks closely at entries on the hermaphrodite in various editions of the *Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (1751-72). Hilger deftly situates her analysis of attempts to represent the hermaphrodite within the contemporary discussion of queer phenomenology, that is, positionality and orientation. In an elegant, bold and convincing manner, Hilger highlights the tortured project of defining and

representing the hermaphrodite, a figure that, according to Enlightenment thought, should not really exist. Hilger masterfully lays out the placement and optics of various entries on the hermaphrodite, revealing the seemingly competing tendencies of referencing mythical representations of hermaphrodites and representing ambiguously gendered anatomies in accord with the 18<sup>th</sup>-century scientific turn. In light of her nuanced readings of Enlightenment attempts to fix and understand the intersex body, Hilger concludes that the “Encyclopedic Age – what Foucault calls the Classical Age – is classical also in the sense that it reveals its anchoring in those Western foundational myths that it purports to transcend” (183). For those of us interested in encyclopedism and the organization of knowledge as well, we will find here intriguing observations concerning the hybrid/hermaphroditic form of the encyclopedia itself. Hilger’s essay provides a compelling intervention into scholarly discussions of the hermaphrodite that usually focus on this figure in the 19<sup>th</sup>- and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, offering a window onto this figure’s pivotal place within shifting paradigms for understanding the human body, sex and gender.

The second winner of this year’s GSNA prize for best essay will not come as a surprise to most of us who have been reading new work in Goethe studies these past years, indeed decades. The prize goes to Heather Sullivan for her essay, “Nature and the ‘Dark Pastoral’ in Goethe’s *Werther*,” also published in the *Goethe Yearbook* 22. Heather has been at the forefront of employing ideas from “ecocriticism” and demonstrating the mutual benefits of reading Goethe

through its lens. Far from a rote “application” of a method, however, she simultaneously thinks with Goethe’s own conceptions of nature. Most important in this essay, as in many of her others, she looks not just at Goethe’s *theoretical* pronouncements on science but on his literary production. She takes Timothy Morton’s statement seriously that in writing and thinking about ecology, the *form* matters as much as the content. In this essay in particular, she concentrates on what she terms “dark pastoral” in Goethe’s *Werther*—a term she coins after Morton’s “dark ecology.” This focus allows her to bring out the deep ambivalences in Goethe’s conception of nature (echoed in the varieties of natural descriptions). Furthermore, her reading challenges the typical subjectivist approach to the novel and to nature in the novel (as a mere reflection of poor Werther’s states of mind). Precisely her fusion of theory, science, and literature makes her essay stand out.



Heather I. Sullivan and Catriona MacLeod

We also decided to award an honorable mention to an exceptional paper by Jacob Denz, “Rigorous Mediacy: Addressing Mother in Hölderlin’s ‘Am Quell der Donau,’ ‘Die Wanderung,’ and ‘An die Madonna,’” which appeared in *MLN*.

Denz convincingly interprets the womb, via analyses of this figure in Kant and Hegel, as a synecdoche for the maternal, ultimately a synecdoche itself for a notion of organic totality that presents a crisis for Hölderlin. Denz’s sophisticated and highly original close readings of the Hölderlin poems are each a tour-de-force, offering a model for the kind of sustained close work with literature that yields profound insights into the creative and reading processes alike. Denz situates nuanced close analysis within a discussion of some of the pressing philosophical questions of the time in a manner that provides a riveting and utterly enlightening reading experience.

We are extremely fortunate to have a new prize this year, the Richard Sussman Prize for scholarship on Goethe or the *Goethezeit* more generally and science.

Howard M. Pollack-Milgate’s highly innovative essay “Gott ist bald  $1 \cdot \infty$  – bald  $1/\infty$  – bald 0”: The Mathematical Infinite and the Absolute in Novalis” appeared in the journal *Seminar* in February 2015. In lucid prose, Pollack-Milgate offers an elegant exegesis of Novalis’ understanding of the infinite. Novalis’s concept of *Potenzierung* is daunting. This essay is a *tour de force* of sorts, for it makes a clear and compelling case to scholars of Romanticism and lay readers alike for a reconceptualization of Romantic notions of the infinite in terms

of an emerging science of calculus. Pollack-Milgate shows us that Novalis studied early texts on calculus and that he then borrowed the language and thought presented by mathematicians to conceive of the infinite in a dual manner, as the meeting, so to speak, of the curve and the line, of the differential and the integral. Pollack-Milgate deftly connects mathematical and philosophical conceptions of the infinite to poetic ones, showing us that “the infinite allows for contradictions to be resolved (as in the meeting point of parallel lines or asymptotes)” (68). As complex as this topic sounds, Pollack-Milgate’s masterful presentation of it manages easily to convince that calculus serves as an illuminating allegory for Romantic notions of the infinite.



Howard Pollack-Milgate and Catriona MacLeod

Thanks to the special section of the *Goethe Yearbook* 22 on “Goethe and Environmentalism” there were numerous excellent essays on Goethe and science and so we are happy to offer, in addition to the inaugural Sussmann Prize, an honorable mention to Fred Amrine for his essay, “The Music of the Organism: Uexküll, Merleau-Ponty, Zuckerkandl,



and Deleuze as Goethean Ecologists in Search of a New Paradigm.” Amrine brings together a wonderful range of 20<sup>th</sup>-century thinkers—the subtitle of his talk is quite a mouthful!—in order to demonstrate the way they have been exploring and “normalizing” a “paradigm shift” (à la Thomas Kuhn) that Goethe helped to initiate. All of them offer a different, non-mechanistic, non-binaristic approach to nature. In this essay, as in so much of his other work that likewise deserves honorable mention, Fred has made a powerful case for the *Aktualität* of Goethe. We could say that Goethe planted the seeds that have blossomed in so many later thinkers, or that Goethe played the theme that has undergone many wonderful variations. Indeed, that latter metaphor is particularly apt in this case because the specific way Fred ties these thinkers together is through their use of music as a way of talking about natural phenomena.

Catriona MacLeod  
University of Pennsylvania

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*FROM THE YEARBOOK*  
*EDITORS*

Vol. 24 of the *Goethe Yearbook* is currently being copy-edited and will be on its way to the printer soon. This volume will feature a special section co-edited by John Lyon and Elliott Schreiber on the “Poetics of Space in the Goethezeit,” with contributions on blind spots as projection spaces in Goethe’s *Elective Affinities* (Tove Holmes); on the

topography and topoi of Goethe’s autobiographical childhood (Anthony Mahler); on disorientation and the subterranean in Novalis (John Lyon); on selfhood, sovereignty, and public space in *Die italienische Reise*, “Das Rochus-Fest zu Bingen,” and *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (Joseph O’Neil); on Goethe’s theater of anamnesis and the exposure of the temporal subject in *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (Colin Benert); and on spatial mobilization and tactical displacements in Kleist’s *Berliner Abendblätter* and the “Tagesbegebenheiten” (Christian Weber).

In addition, there are original contributions on the horror of coming home in Caroline de la Motte Fouqué’s “Der Abtrünnige” (Sara Luly) and on Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi’s *Eduard Allwills Papiere* (Monika Nenon); on genre and mourning practices in two poems by Karoline von Günderrode (Stephanie Galasso) and on absolute signification and ontological inconsistency in E.T.A. Hoffmann’s *Der Sandmann* (Gabriel Trop).

We are extremely pleased that the *Goethe Yearbook* is able to collect so many far-ranging contributions from a diverse group of scholars year after year. Thank you to all who have submitted, thank you to all who read submissions for us. We are now accepting contributions to Vol. 25. As always, we hope to hear from many of you and particularly welcome contributions by younger scholars.

Submissions should reach us by late May, preferably earlier. Manuscript submissions should follow the *Chicago Manual of Style* and confine themselves to less than 35 pages. For specific

questions about scholarly citations, please consult the *Yearbook's* style sheet.

The entire run of back issues continues to be available on Project MUSE.

Adrian Daub  
Stanford University

Elisabeth Krimmer  
University of California at Davis

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### *FROM THE BOOK REVIEW EDITOR*

As always, I encourage you to let me know if there are particular areas of research that you are interested in reviewing for the *Goethe Yearbook*. Please send books for review and suggestions for books for review to:

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### *FROM THE EDITOR OF THE BOOK SERIES*

The monograph series currently has several projects at different stages in the

pipeline. Meanwhile we were very busy over the summer reviewing proposals.

We have one announcement: Simon Richter has resigned from the board because of his workload related to other important commitments. The choice was hard for Simon: he has been involved with the series since its founding. He deserves our tremendous thanks for this service as well as for all of his many other contributions to the ongoing vitality of the GSNA. I'm also very grateful to our continuing hardworking board members: Jane Brown, Martha Helfer, and Astrida Tantillo.

We remain, as always, very eager to see your proposals. Please send a prospectus and sample chapter to me by email. You're also welcome to send an optional introduction, if available. Our entire editorial board evaluates proposals and generally responds within 4-6 weeks.

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### *NEWS FROM MEMBERS*

*Proserpina* by Goethe and Seckendorff had not been performed since its 1778 premiere in Weimar. But on October 14 it was heard again on the Weis Center Stage at Bucknell University along with a new electro-acoustic composition on Goethe's text by Paul Botelho. This is all part of GSNA member Annie Randall's

project *Proserpina: Two Monodramas* (1777 and 2016).

Here's what *Proserpina* looks like in the Goethe/Seckendorff version of 1777-78—not seen by anyone since that time (!!)—played by the New York Baroque Orchestra:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xmpf10A2d0s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xmpf10A2d0s). And here's what she looks like in the 2016 electro-acoustic version:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=AqL2hhyNLSs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AqL2hhyNLSs). See an overview of the project on Annie's web site, under the tab "Current Research" here, [annierandall.blogs.bucknell.edu](http://annierandall.blogs.bucknell.edu).

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In other news, we are pleased to announce that Past President W. Daniel Wilson has been awarded the Reimar Lüst Award for International Scholarly

and Cultural Exchange from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. Supported by the German Foreign Office and the Fritz Thyssen Foundation, the award carries a prize of 60,000 euros. It also entails an invitation to collaborate with other scholars at the University of Göttingen and the Foundation for Weimar Classicism.

Dan Wilson's research focuses on literature, culture and society of eighteenth and nineteenth-century Germany. He is currently researching a book on the politics of the Goethe-Gesellschaft in the Weimar Republic and the Third Reich. He reports that he has come across some interesting things about the Goethe Society of America (in New York), which was an Ortsgruppe of the Goethe-Gesellschaft. It turns out that the American "branch" was very important for Nazi cultural politics. More to come!

[www.royalholloway.ac.uk/aboutus/newsandevents/news/newsarticles/danwilsonmajoraward.aspx](http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/aboutus/newsandevents/news/newsarticles/danwilsonmajoraward.aspx)

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### FROM THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

In an ongoing effort to increase the strength of the society, the GSNA is looking for new members. If you know of any scholars or other interested parties who are interested in the Age of Goethe, but are not yet members, would you please encourage them to join the society? We are particularly interested in recruiting younger scholars – current and



recent graduate students – to ensure the society’s future for decades to come. Joining is simple, just visit the Membership page on our web site. Thanks for your support in this endeavor.

Christian Weber  
Florida State University

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**DUES**

If you have not done so already, please send your 2016 dues to the Secretary-Treasurer, Christian Weber, or use PayPal on our web site (a modest fee will apply). Dues are payable in each calendar year according to the schedule below. The GYB is sent only once this obligation is met.

junior member (non-tenured faculty)	\$25
senior member (tenured faculty)	\$35
patron (please consider becoming a patron)	\$100
emeritus	\$10
student	\$10
institution	\$40

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## *ADDENDUM: EARLY HISTORY OF THE GSNA*

It is with great gratitude that we publish here (as well as on our web site at [goethesociety.org/about/history](http://goethesociety.org/about/history)) two detailed accounts of the founding and early history of the Goethe Society—one by Ted Bahr, Professor Emeritus of German at UCLA, and the other by Meredith Lee, Professor Emerita of German at UC Irvine.

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### **Timely Observations: Early History of the Goethe Society of North America**

By Ehrhard Bahr

Your invitation to contribute to the history of the Goethe Society of America is most welcome. In first place Christa Sammons should be mentioned as archivist of the Society. She has accepted and deposited files of the Society in the Speck Collection of Goetheana in the Beinecke Library at Yale University since 1997. The Society should inquire, if she will be able to continue after her retirement at the Beinecke Library. Some procedure should be developed with the Beinecke Library in order to obtain access to GSNA documents in the collection and to catalogue new documents. There should be a complete set available of *Goethe News and Notes* since 1980, when the first issue was mailed. The newsletter and Thomas P. Saine's preface to the first *Goethe Yearbook* of 1982 are among the best sources for the history of the Society. See also the Newsletter Archive on the Internet.

The Goethe Society started with an ad that I (Ehrhard Bahr) had placed in the MLA newsletter in the late 1970s that invited scholars interested in founding a Goethe society in the United States. A sizable number of some forty prospective members responded, among them the late Thomas P. Saine. The major credit for getting the Society off the ground and running goes to him. He inserted an ad in *The New Republic* to invite a lawyer to donate her/his service to get the Goethe Society of North America incorporated in the state of California as a non-profit, tax-exempt organization. It was Mr. Timothy Lundell, of Campbell, California, who volunteered his services. Together with Meredith Lee as the Society's Secretary-Treasurer, they obtained tax-exempt status from the state of California and also from the Internal Revenue Service (see Saine's "Preface" to *Goethe Yearbook* 1 (1982): vii-viii). The final name of the Society was chosen to avoid legal conflicts with the title of the American Goethe Society of Washington, D. C. that was founded in 1927, but did not pursue organized research.

Although the Goethe Society presented numerous sessions at ASECS, the German Studies Association and the MLA, it was touch and go between 1979 and 1982 to establish the Society's status as a new member in the field of literary studies. There was only the newsletter *Goethe News and Notes* to keep the members informed. The impressive logo was provided by Elliot Offner who was printer at Smith College. The newsletter was edited at UCLA and mimeographed and mailed by Meredith Lee at UC Irvine. An additional inspiration was the 12-volume translation of Goethe

collected works, published by Suhrkamp in New York between 1983 and 1988 with Victor Lange, Eric A. Blackall and Cyrus Hamlin as editors. In this context it was most beneficial to have Victor Lange as President. His endorsement as officer of the Society contributed to its international reputation.

With the publication of the first volume of the *Goethe Yearbook* in 1982 the insecure status of the society came to an end. The founding editor was Thomas P. Saine (1941-2013) who negotiated the contract with Camden House as publisher and edited the first ten volumes between 1982 and 2001 (the last volume together with Simon Richter). With the second volume of 1984 a review section, edited by Hans R. Vaget, was added. Saine provided the continuity necessary to a successful editorship. See *Goethe Yearbook* 21 (2014): xi-xviii and Meredith Lee's moving obituary in *Goethe Jahrbuch* 130 (2013): 310-12.

For a conclusion to the early history of the Society, I suggest that the rumor of Cold War machinations involved in the founding of the Society should be put to rest. As executive secretary I had informed various international Goethe societies, including the Goethe Society in Weimar which in return offered space to report proceedings of the Society in their *Goethe Jahrbuch*. West Germans expressed dismay at the news, fearing that added international prestige was bestowed to an East German institution. The complaint was not based on facts. The Society was founded to provide a forum for Goethe scholars in North America. Obviously their research was to be primarily written in English, but also articles in German were to be

accepted (see *Goethe Yearbook* I [1982]: vii). The membership of the Society voted to follow the example of the English Goethe Society which did not submit reports of its proceedings to Weimar.

For the tenth anniversary of the Society in 1989 I had approached Karl-Heinz Hahn, the president of the Goethe-Gesellschaft in Weimar, as speaker. He accepted the invitation, but was not able to come. He died in February 1990, highly respected and mourned in both East and West. The noted historian Peter Gay substituted to speak on his behalf x at the 1990 MLA convention in Chicago. His topic was "Goethe—Discovered and Recovered." Then President Christoph E. Schweitzer endorsed the cooperation with the Goethe Gesellschaft in Weimar (see *Goethe News and Notes*, XI, Spring 1990).

Ehrhard Bahr  
Professor Emeritus of German  
University of California, Los Angeles

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### **Personal Recollections: Early History of the Goethe Society of North America**

By Meredith Lee

The Goethe Society of North America (GSNA) has been a scholarly fellowship for over 35 years. I am pleased to share my recollections about its founding and earliest years. This narrative is deliberately informal and personal. I

have integrated here some excerpts from my tribute to Tom Saine previously published in the *Goethe Yearbook*.

The four co-founders of the society are Thomas P. Saine (1941-2013), former professor emeritus, University of California, Irvine; Hans R. Vaget, professor emeritus, Smith College; Ehrhard Bahr, professor emeritus, University of California, Los Angeles; Meredith Lee, professor emerita, University of California, Irvine. There is a certain pattern to our academic titles that I am sure you have already detected. Gratefully, and a reason for celebration, the Society is today in the steady and creative hands of an impressive cadre of younger scholars.

The story begins at Yale University and quickly moves to the University of California, Irvine. Tom Saine became my colleague at UCI when he arrived from Yale University at the University of California, Irvine, in 1975 as an Associate Professor. I had come to Irvine from Yale a year earlier, fresh out of graduate school. We had barely known one another in New Haven. Tom had been an undergraduate at Yale, then a graduate student, Assistant Professor and, finally, an Associate Professor. With a young family and a demanding research agenda, he arrived in Irvine to join an expanding German Department in a university that had first opened its doors only ten years earlier. Within a year he was promoted to Full Professor and named the department's chair. His academic ambitions dovetailed perfectly with the department's press to establish a top-flight graduate program.

Tom quickly became a friend. Far more important than the Yale connection was

our shared interest in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and in Goethe. He was generous in his invitations to join his family on weekends. He proudly shared volumes from his ever-expanding personal library – he was an avid collector -- and he loved to talk late into the night about the intellectuals and theological radicals of the German Enlightenment. He happily introduced his friends to one another. Among the department's steady and impressive list of guest professors are several whose professional relationships with Tom had been or would be transformed into personal ones, marked by mutual intellectual regard. I am thinking particularly of Hans R. Vaget, Uwe-K. Ketelsen, Hans-Wolf Jäger, and Bengt Sørensen, all guests in that first decade.

The Goethe Society of North America was born in this milieu, a product of heady evening conversations about the state of Germanistik, in general, and American Goethe studies, in particular. I suspect we were continuing a conversation that had its roots in New Haven. Tom's closest academic colleague and friend at Yale was Jeffrey Sammons. In his seminars and informally, Jeff had repeatedly and persuasively advocated an American Germanistik with opportunities and obligations that did not merely duplicate contemporary German intellectual topics and conflicts, an issue of particular importance to him in the context of his Heine scholarship and its fractious disputes. On a visiting appointment in Cincinnati shortly before coming to Irvine, Tom had seen at first hand the early vitality of the Lessing Society and admired Ed Harris's leadership. Now in Irvine the question of how best to stimulate research on Goethe and his age



in the American university setting became a regular topic over dinner and extended evenings. Hans Vaget's guest professorship at UCI in winter and spring 1979 proved a powerful catalyst. Ehrhard Bahr, a committed ally from our sister campus UCLA, happily joined the project as a founding member. It was decided to define a new professional society that would seek to chart an intellectual course apart from the cultural politics shaping much of the work on Goethe in East and West Germany, one that was arguably bolder and certainly less indebted to maintaining a national image. It would actively promote English-language Goethe scholarship and its *Yearbook* would become a prominent venue for fresh engagement with Goethe and his contemporaries.

As plans for the society took shape and its initial leadership was identified, the *Yearbook* editorship was claimed by Tom. He was serving a term as book review editor for the *German Quarterly*, which had moved to Irvine when our colleague Ruth Kluger (then Ruth K. Angress) became its editor. Tom clearly savored the challenge and the expanding contacts with Germanists across North America. In person Tom could be laconic, even gruff and dismissive. But in his written communications he was capable of extraordinary prose, compelling, clear and candid. Work began on the *Yearbook*, which would first appear in 1982. Hans Vaget became the founding book review editor, adding reviews in the *Yearbook's* second volume (1984).

"Founded in 1979"? The new society made its first academic appearance at the 1979 MLA in San Francisco, not yet

official. Papers were read by Ehrhard Bahr, Marlis Mehra and Hans Vaget. Meredith Lee chaired the session. Tom Saine convened a meeting about the proposed society, an idea that met a ready response.

Some other early steps should be recalled:

A letter went out from Tom inviting founding sponsors to launch the society and its *Yearbook*. The list of those who responded, each donating \$100, is found in the first five volumes of the *Yearbook*. Tom kept a handwritten ledger recording donations, which he soon handed over to Meredith Lee as Secretary-Treasurer. The founding members are:

- Ruth K. Angress
- Ehrhard Bahr
- Gustav Beckers
- Frederick Beharriell
- Jane K. Brown
- Gisela Brude-Firnau
- Gloria Flaherty
- André von Gronicka
- Mary Gies Hatch
- Robert R. Heitner
- Robert Helbling
- Victor Lange
- Meredith Lee
- William J. Lillyman
- Ulrich Maché
- Gerwin Marahrens
- Heinz Moenkemeyer
- Hugo and Herta Mueller
- Charlotte S. Neisser
- S. B. Puknat
- Frank Ryder
- Thomas P. Saine
- Jeffrey L. Sammons
- Hans-Jürgen Schlütter
- Christoph E. Schweitzer
- Ingeborg Solbrig
- Robert Spaethling
- A.G. Steer, Jr.
- Roger Stephenson

- Rita Terras
- Frederick Ungar
- Hans Vaget
- Wolfgang Wittkowski
- Erich O. Wruck
- Heinrich Henel (in Memoriam)
- Heinz Politzer (in Memoriam)
- Carl F. Schreiber (in Memoriam)
- Oakland University
- William A Speck Collection of Goetheana, Yale University
- Two Anonymous Donors

The society needed a name and a logo. The first thought was American Goethe Society, conceived as a complement to the English Goethe Society. We soon discovered that the name was already in active use by a small circle of scholars and friends of Goethe in Washington, D.C. The problem proved to be a fortunate prod to more careful thinking about membership and audience. The name Goethe Society of North America was chosen with deliberate recognition of the larger American-Canadian scholarly community who would become its core. Hans Vaget arranged for sculptor and typographer Elliott Offner to design the logo for the society.

The new society needed to be established as a non-profit organization in California. Tom placed an ad among the personals in the *New Republic*: "Seeking California attorney, preferably acquainted with Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Margarethe, Faust or Mephisto to undertake medium-size task as labor of love for perpetual recognition. Intrigued?" The ad was answered by Timothy Lundell, an attorney in Campbell, CA, who proceeded to draft Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws. They were filed and approved. In October, 1980 Tom Saine and Meredith Lee signed the documents that officially

established the GSNA as a non-profit organization in the state of California, with tax-exempt status.

Tom reviewed publishers for the *Yearbook* and identified James N. Hardin and Günther J. Holst and the new imprint of Camden House. They both offered him good advice as he negotiated a publishing contract and brought the first volume into print. A beneficial relationship was established that continues to be one of strong support. Ten Goethe scholars, all teaching in US and Canadian universities, were named to the first Editorial Board:

- Stuart Atkins, University of California, Santa Barbara
- Max L. Baeumer, University of Wisconsin
- Peter Boerner, Indiana University
- Mark Boulby, University of British Columbia
- Jane K. Brown, University of Colorado
- Liselotte Dieckmann, Washington University
- Hans Eichner, University of Toronto
- Heinz Moenkemeyer, University of Pennsylvania
- Albert R. Schmitt, Brown University
- Hans R. Vaget, Smith College

An administrative structure was needed. Adopting the Lessing Society model, the new society was to be directed by an Executive Secretary who would be responsible for its administration and growth. A Secretary-Treasurer would handle dues and other financial matters, including memberships. From among prominent North American Goethe scholars a president and vice president would also be sought, with the idea that their actual administrative engagement would be kept minimal. Ehrhard Bahr became the first Executive Secretary, administering the fledgling society.

Meredith Lee was elected the first Secretary-Treasurer.

The other founding officers were also named. Victor Lange, Princeton University, agreed to serve as the founding president and Christoph Schweitzer, University of North Carolina, as the first vice-president. They would each serve eight years in these founding capacities, with Chris Schweitzer succeeding Victor Lange in the presidency in 1988.

Ehrhard (Ted) Bahr in his role as Executive Secretary worked quickly and successfully to affiliate the new Goethe Society with the MLA and ASECS as Allied Organizations. A long-standing proponent of interdisciplinary work, Ted also assured ties with the German Studies Association (until 1984 the Western Association for German Studies). The society's business meetings were established as part of MLA programming. Ted created and published *Goethe News and Notes*, the society's newsletter, which appeared twice yearly on the buff/yellow paper that became its signature. He also created promotional pamphlets and actively worked to expand membership. To profile Goethe scholarship in the US and Canada, Ted, together with his former student Walter K. Stewart, then an assistant professor at California Lutheran University, created a North American bibliography of Goethe dissertations that appeared over several installments in the *Goethe Yearbook*. Outreach to younger scholars was a priority.

Do we remember how new computers were back then? Tom set a great deal of the *Yearbook* text himself, delighted by

the new possibilities he was discovering in word processing. After 1984 Meredith Lee computerized the membership records, using a data program that Gerry Kleinfeld, Executive Director of the German Studies Association, recommended to her. All this was done on floppy disks. The actual distribution of the *Yearbook* became a UCI German departmental group undertaking. Boxes of the newly printed volumes arrived at the loading docks and had to be unpacked, repackaged into padded mailing bags, labeled and sent off.

Very soon after the society's launch it became evident that some changes were needed. Tom struggled with the publication schedule. He loved the process of editing, which he tightly controlled. He would repeatedly slow down the appearance of *Goethe Yearbook* volumes, if necessary, to guarantee the quality to which he aspired. He would not be hurried under any circumstances. The *Yearbooks* he produced were distinguished by their quality and intellectual breadth. The first appeared in 1982 and after that at roughly 2-year intervals. Meredith Lee, on the other hand, was tasked with collecting dues even in those years when no *Yearbook* appeared. And, indeed, the modest dues were not capable of sustaining the costs of an annual publication. Members, on the whole, were generous in their understanding. Uwe-K. Ketelsen, professor for Germanistik in Bochum and UCI visitor in the early 1980s, became the society's treasurer in Europe, an indispensable role in the attempt to bridge the gap between two very different banking systems and understandings of professional society membership. (In later years when the account was no

longer needed and subscribers were far fewer, the account's balance was donated in the name of the GSNA to the fund established for the rebuilding of the Anna Amalia Library in Weimar after the disastrous 2004 fire.)

The founding of the Goethe Society of North America and its first decade coincided productively with two other important scholarly initiatives to strengthen Goethe's profile in the American cultural landscape and academy. The first was the UCI Focused Research Program on Goethe, created by UC-Irvine colleague William J. Lillyman, an amazing administrator as well as a serious scholar. After his first year as UCI German department chair he was appointed Dean of Humanities in 1973 (and in 1981 he became the campus's Executive Vice Chancellor). Never serving in a GSNA-leadership function, Bill nevertheless promoted its development by providing significant support to the fledgling society and its *Yearbook*, as well as research funding for UC Goethe scholars. Adapting a shared-research model widely used in the natural sciences in the University of California system, he won multi-year funding for Goethe research in California. Supplemented by an NEH grant that he also secured, Bill mounted a major Goethe conference on the Irvine campus in 1982 marking the 150th anniversary of Goethe's death. When the conference proceedings appeared in 1983 as *Goethe's Narrative Fiction: The Irvine Goethe Symposium*, they showcased the vitality of North American Goethe scholarship, in general, and confirmed Irvine as a site where new Goethe scholarship was a priority.

The second was the decision by Siegfried Unseld, the head of Suhrkamp Publishers, to expand into the North American market. For Goethe scholarship the most important result of this comparatively short-lived venture was the twelve-volume English-language edition of *Goethe's Collected Works* (1983-88; with the signature Andy Warhol portraits of Goethe adapted from Tischbein commissioned by Unseld on their covers). An editorial board led by GSNA president Victor Lange, Eric A. Blackall, and Cyrus Hamlin headed the project; an impressive group of North American Goethe scholars edited the individual volumes.

After the establishment of the GSNA and the successful appearance of the first two *Yearbooks*, administrative priorities shifted. Now the question was how to stabilize the society, assure a steady growth, prepare for the first major shift in leadership in 1988, and, after that, renew both programming and membership. The original constitution and by-laws proved to be too clumsy for effective governance and membership participation. The original notion that the president and vice-president would not need to be activists in the society's governance yielded rather quickly to greater engagement as the individuals filling the positions embraced the new leadership opportunities. Meredith Lee rewrote the by-laws and shepherded the membership's review and vote, creating the governing structure that is the basis for today's executive committee with elected officers and at-large members. Sustaining the early excellence of the *Yearbook* remained a top priority.

This is the “story” of the GSNA up to the mid 1980’s. Tom continued as editor of the *Yearbook* until 1999, coediting his final volume 10 (2001) with his successor Simon Richter (University of Pennsylvania). Tom became Vice President of the GSNA 2001-02; health problems prevented his succession to the presidency. After 1985 Hans Vaget passed on the book review section to Jane K. Brown (University of Washington), who held the position 1986-91. Hans served as Director-At-Large 1989-91 within the revised organizational structure. He was elected vice president 1998-2000 and served as president 2001-03. Chris Schweitzer acceded to the presidency after Victor Lange’s service, assuring that the important first transition in leadership was seamless. An enthusiastic supporter from the very beginning of the GSNA, Chris proved a solid anchor. Ehrhard Bahr served as Executive Secretary 1980-88, then vice president 1992-94 and president 1995-97. As Executive Secretary he was succeeded by Frederick Amrine (University of Michigan). Meredith Lee served as Treasurer 1980-93, Executive Secretary 1994-98, vice president 2003, and president 2004-06. She worked together with Ehrhard Bahr to expand the society and create openings for younger scholars by supporting regional MLA and ASECS programming. In the 1990’s they also organized several regional Southern California Goethe symposia at the William Andrews Clark Memorial Library (with the assistance of its director, UCLA historian Peter Reill), which soon attracted national and even international participants.

Jane K. Brown, although not one of the four GSNA co-founders, was an early

and essential contributor to the GSNA’s growth and stature: a member of the first Editorial and Advisory Board of the *Yearbook*; the second book review editor, succeeding Hans Vaget, 1986-91; the second vice president, succeeding Chris Schweitzer, 1989-91; president 1992-94. A guest professor on the Irvine campus in 1986, Jane shared Yale roots with Tom Saine and Meredith Lee. In her undergraduate years at Radcliffe she had forged special ties with Harvard Goethe scholar Stuart Atkins, who in the intervening years had relocated to the University of California, Santa Barbara. In summer 1990 she and Yale scholar Cyrus Hamlin, who then served as a GSNA Director-at-Large (1989-91), led an NEH-funded summer institute at UC-Santa Barbara on “Goethe’s *Faust* in the Humanities Curriculum” from which the idea for the 1992 international conference on “Interpreting Goethe’s *Faust* Today” emerged. The GSNA joined the multiple sponsors of the conference and published the revised proceedings as a special issue of the *Goethe Yearbook*. The volume proved to be the first of several publishing projects that the GSNA would sponsor, including a collection of Stuart Atkins’ essays and the GSNA book series, where Jane later succeeded founding editor Astrida Tantillo (University of Illinois, Chicago).

In 2005, at the 25-year anniversary of the official founding of the Goethe Society of North America, its early history was recalled on an MLA panel chaired by Meredith Lee with Tom Saine and Hans Vaget as speakers. Meredith created the summary of officers posted on the GSNA website and maintained since 2005 as the society’s record by Webmaster Burkhard Henke (Davidson



College; a UCI Ph.D.). She also created the record of GSNA programs at national meetings (MLA, ASECS, GSA) from the beginning to 2005. It, too, is on the website. In celebration of the GSNA's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, both of these documents were shared with leadership of the international Goethe Gesellschaft in Weimar, where Meredith served 8 years on the Board of Directors. A collegial relationship between the GSNA and the Goethe Gesellschaft, begun even before the re-unification of Germany, continues today; however, like the English Goethe Society, the GSNA remains an independent entity without formal ties to the Weimar-based institutions. Most of the GSNA newsletters and governing documents have been preserved in digital form on the society website. Some other materials from the first 25 years have been moved to New Haven, where Christa Sammons, at Ted Bahr's request, agreed to evaluate them and archive documents of significance.

I would like to add a concluding comment: The long and happy career as a teacher and a scholar that I have enjoyed at UCI has included a significant number of administrative positions, capped by 11 years as the university's Dean of Undergraduate Education. Alongside my work as co-founder of UCI's award-winning Campuswide Honors Program, the time and effort invested in the founding and nurturing of the Goethe Society of North America has brought me the greatest satisfaction. Institutions truly matter and leadership within them takes effort and imagination that is not immediately rewarded. I hope you all know how enormously valuable a gift to our profession you are making, as you sustain and enhance the GSNA over the next decades with your service and leadership.

Meredith Lee  
Professor Emerita of German  
University of California, Irvine