

A2932

St. Louis Gruetli Verein Records, 1850-1962

18 volumes; 4 folders; 1 box

Processed by Dennis Northcott, July 2011

REPOSITORY

Missouri History Museum Archives

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DONOR INFORMATION

Collection was donated by Mrs. Mary Mills in 2011

HISTORICAL SKETCH

The St. Louis Gruetli Verein was formed in St. Louis circa 1849 as a benevolent society for natives of Switzerland. The organization offered its members the opportunity to socialize with one another, kept alive the traditions and cultural heritage of Switzerland, and paid out benefits to its sick and deceased members. The exact relationship of the St. Louis Gruetli Verein and the St. Louis Schweizer Bund is unclear; however, it appears that the Gruetli Verein changed its name to the Schweizer Bund in the 1910s.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection consists primarily of record books of the St. Louis Gruetli Verein (and later the St. Louis Schweizer Bund) that contain meeting minutes, expenditures, earnings, and financial reports. The collection also includes 72 issues of Der Schweizer (1931-1940); cash books; an account book; a sick list; a membership diary; a record book of membership applications; and loose papers including event programs, legal documents, and receipts. Most of the collection is in German.

Record Books Series

- Volume 1 Record book of the St. Louis Gruetli Verein, March 16, 1871–November 16, 1876. Includes minutes, expenditures, earnings, and financial reports. (in German, 528 pages).
- Volume 2 Record book of the St. Louis Gruetli Verein, April 2, 1871–October 1, 1877. Includes minutes, expenditures, earnings, and financial reports. (in German, 374 pages).
- Volume 3 Record book of the St. Louis Gruetli Verein, November 23, 1876–June 9, 1881. Includes minutes, expenditures, and earnings. (in German, 528 pages).
- Volume 4 Record book of the St. Louis Gruetli Verein, June 16, 1881–July 15, 1886. Includes minutes, expenditures, earnings, and financial reports. (in German, 400 pages).
- Volume 5 Record book of the St. Louis Gruetli Verein, July 22, 1886–September 3, 1891. Includes minutes, expenditures, earnings, and financial reports. (in German, 401 pages).
- Volume 6 Record book of the St. Louis Gruetli Verein, September 10, 1891–December 30, 1897. Includes minutes, expenditures, earnings, and financial reports. Also includes two pages of accounts of death benefits given to women. (in German, 482 pages).
- Volume 7 Record book of the St. Louis Gruetli Verein, January 2, 1898–April 3, 1904. Includes minutes, expenditures, earnings, and financial reports. (in German, 468 pages).
- Volume 8 Record book of the St. Louis Gruetli Verein, April 16, 1903–November 22, 1906. Includes minutes, expenditures, and earnings. (in German, 300 pages).
- Volume 9 Record book of the St. Louis Gruetli Verein, November 29, 1906–January 20, 1910. Includes minutes, expenditures, and earnings. (in German, 302 pages).
- Volume 10 Record book of the St. Louis Gruetli Verein, January 4, 1912–December 27, 1917. Includes minutes, expenditures, earnings, and financial reports. (in German, 303 pages).
- Volume 11 Record book of the St. Louis Gruetli Verein, December 2, 1915–July 7, 1921. Includes minutes, expenditures, and earnings. (in German, 295 pages).

- Volume 12 Record book of the St. Louis Schweizer Bund, March 23, 1924–November 18, 1934. Includes minutes, expenditures, and earnings. (in German, 61 pages).
- Volume 13 Cash book of the St. Louis Gruetli Vereins, 1850-1871. Includes earnings and expenditures. (in German, 199 pages).
- Volume 14 Cash book of the St. Louis Gruetli Vereins, 1856-1868. Includes earnings, expenditures, and lists of members showing dues received or in arrears. (in German, 266 pages).
- Volume 15 Account book of revenues and expenditures, 1932-1934. (in German and English, 176 pages).
- Volume 16 Record book of membership applications, December 1, 1887–January 26, 1893. This book contains 266 membership applications (in German, with a translation of the text on the application [at the bottom of this finding aid]). The book is arranged chronologically. Most of the forms include the applicant's signature, name of town and canton of birth, birth year, occupation, address, and the signature of the member who is nominating the candidate.
- Volume 17 Sick list, July 1882–October 1900. Arranged chronologically. Entries in this volume include the member's name, address, date he became sick, date he recovered, and comments. (in German and English, 120 pages)
- Volume 18 Dienst-Buch des Gruetli Vereins in St. Louis Mo. [Membership diary for Gruetli Association in St. Louis, Mo.], 1861-1892. Entries in this volume include the member's name, birthplace (town and canton), birth year, occupation, date of his enrollment in the Gruetli Verein, changes of residence, dates of visitation of the sick and attendance at funerals, and other remarks regarding the member (i.e., appointed treasurer, suspended due to nonpayment of dues, etc.). Some entries include the member's date of death. Includes name index at the front of the volume. The back of the volume contains two separate lists: (1) Pages 294-297 contain a listing of the deceased members after the burial fund of \$300 for each took effect on January 1, 1878. This list includes the member's name, birth year, date of death, name of town and canton of birth, date of enrollment in the organization, occupation, and amount of burial funds distributed. (2) Page 302 contains a listing of the deceased wives of members since January 1, 1878. These entries usually include the wife's death date. (in German, with some English, 302 pages)

Loose Papers Series

Folder 1

1906 June 14 Program for the Swiss spring festival at Central Park, East St. Louis, Illinois. (in German, with English translation of title page)

Folder 2

1914-1962 Legal documents mostly of the St. Louis Schweizer Bund, primarily relating to Schweizer Turn and Concert Hall (Swiss Turner and Concert Hall), 3110 Iowa Ave., and the Schweizer Turnhalle and Schweizerhalle (Swiss Turner Hall and Swiss Hall), 2724 and 2726 Arsenal Street. (10 documents)

Folder 3

1930-1937 Loose documents removed from Volume 17. Includes five contracts of the St. Louis Schweizer Bund with the Musicians' Mutual Benefit Association for the hiring of musicians for dances, 1930-1934. Includes receipts with the following St. Louis businesses: Zeman & Sons, printers, 2527 South Jefferson Ave.; Triple C.C.C. Cigar Co., 2321 Arsenal Street; S.A. Langeneckert, cigars, 3755 Kosciusko Street; John J. Meier & Co., 206-208 Market Street, to P. Reichmuth, 2905 Nebraska; Schenberg's; Abeln Bros. Cigar & Tobacco Co., 3928-3930-3932 South Broadway; Kuna Bros., beef and provisions, 1819 Geyer Avenue; South Side Consumers' Dairy Company, 2921-2923 Salena Street; and Westliche Post, 1128-1130 Pine Street. Also includes several letterheads of the St. Louis Schweizer-Bund, which include an illustration of the Swiss Hall at Iowa and Arsenal Streets, and a typescript note of the St. Louis Swiss Club, 2726 Arsenal St., regarding the funeral of Anton Boesch. (25 documents)

Folder 4

1942 May 22 Program for the 35th anniversary spring concert and dance given by the St. Louis Schweizer Damenchor, Swiss Hall, Iowa and Arsenal, St. Louis, Mo.

no date Typescript sample funeral address (in German, with English translation [at the bottom of this finding aid]).

Der Schweizer Series

Box 1

Seventy-two issues of *Der Schweizer*, Official Organ of the North American Schweizer Bund, Volume 50, Number 1 (July 1931)–Volume 59, Number 6 (December 1940). The newsletter issues dated July 1931–June 1938 were published in St. Louis; the issues dated July 1938–December 1940 were published in New York. The text of the newsletters is part German, part English. (incomplete run; includes some duplicate issues)

[Translation of the printed text on the applications in the record book of membership applications, 1887-1893 (Volume 16). Translated by Manfred Thurmman, 2011.]

MODEL OF A PROPOSAL

To the Officials and Members of the “Grütli-Society”

The undersigned, after having examined the Constitution and the By-Laws of the Grütli-Society, wishes to become a member of this society, and promises, if admitted, to submit to the constitution and the rules of the By-Laws, as well as all modifications of the same.

His health is good;
His body without defects;
Place of Birth;
Canton;
Year of Birth;
When immigrated;
Occupation;
Unmarried;
Widowed;
Married;
Children; Land Property;
Address;

St. Louis, Mo. Day, Month, Year

Signature:

The undersigned can recommend the above candidate with the best of his knowledge as a worthy candidate.

Nominator:

[Translation of undated typescript sample funeral address (in Folder 4). Translated by Manfred Thurmman, 2011.]

Words for those assembled in mourning:

We stand here at the coffin next to the grave of a faithful, loving spouse, father, association brother and friend, in order to render him that last tribute, of love, attention and gratitude, for his earthly works.

He was in life a faithful friend, a good citizen, in our society since _____ a dear and well esteemed and well regarded member. It will be difficult to grasp the thought, that his voice will never be heard again. We will have to do without his presence in our circles and not press his trustworthy hand in ours, because his body has been removed and only his soul lives on in our hearts, where a monument of memories lives on.

Melancholy feelings cramp the chest by the separation of such a beloved relation and the words of a song ring in our ears: "It is decided in God's advice that what we love most, must depart because man must inevitably blame himself. It is the fate of all of us to sooner or later depart, the rich like the poor, the children like the very old, are not excused from the rough hand of death, without any regrets. Therefore we all must be ready at any time to depart.

Like the flower grows, blooms, withers and gives new seeds to the earth, just as the broken tree gives new sprouts, like in the eternal nature no atom is ever lost, but comes forth in a different form, so the departed will not stop to exist. This is the consolation that nature donates to us. We consecrate the dead with our reverence and attention, we gladly recall the virtues and preferences, on the good that he has sewn with the friendship that he has shown us.

The departed has worked with us for the achievement of the highest level of our country's society, which are: friendship, charity and unity.

So sleep well departed friend, rest softly from the struggles, worries and hardships of life; peace lives in the lap of mother earth, peace be with you.

Amen