



Princeton Alumni Association of Germany

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The Nassoons on Tour in Europe

By Frederick Hall '09

Sitting in the Frankfurt airport about to board our return flight to the States, I was running through all of the things that we had to do: had we gotten everything out of our rooms, did we leave anything in the cars, does everyone still have his passport? All of the other Nassoons were reading, listening to music, taking a nap (it was very early in the morning!) or more likely talking about our varied experiences over the past week.

The Nassoons are Princeton's oldest a cappella group, so over the course of our sixty-seven years we have been to many places: Jordan, Taiwan, Mexico. Each trip, though, is special because it is an entirely new group of people enjoying it. This trip has produced so many memories for us that it has been a defining experience for us.

This year, we were fortunate enough to be able to travel all over Germany and Austria, fortunate not only in what we were able to see but also in how we were able to see

it. We met Mr. Peter Klopff in the Heldenplatz in Vienna; got a tour of Vienna from Ambassador and Mrs. Schulte; we took a tour of Vienna's Konzerthaus with Ms. Monica Jeschko; saw a fashion show in Traunstein; experienced Carnival in Konstanz with the Schlegel-Volz family; and performed once more in the Holzhausenschlösschen. We enjoyed every performance we gave and loved every person that we met.

And along the way, we had just as interesting a time. Driving manual transmission cars on the autobahn was a unique experience for us. It started the first day, when one of the cars could not seem to stop stalling, causing us to go our separate ways until we all got to Vienna – six hours later. When traveling to Schloss Neubeuern, one of the cars missed the actual road and found itself driving on the bike path. But my favorite road story (probably because I did not experience it) was the car that could not find

Schloss Gaienhofen, traveling at 160 km/hr on the autobahn, and once even driving on the wrong side of the highway.

But the memory that lasts longest for me is from our performance at the Bettina-schule in Frankfurt. A girl in her second to last year wanted to ask me about what it is like to study history in university. Talking to her reminded me all over again why I am a student and why I enjoy it so much. I'm not sure she will apply to Princeton, but I hope she still feels the same way about history when she is as old as I am now.

The Nassoons have been amazingly fortunate to have found an organization so willing to assist us. The Princeton Alumni Association of Germany has made our experiences over the past two years possible. We hope that we have made you as happy to have supported us as we are happy to have been able to be with you.



From Internship to Senior Thesis

By Matthew Martin '08



Occasionally, a person's life may have the greater potential to explain a time period or a region in addition to merely describing an individual's experience. Encountering a person who meets this criterion demands not only the recording of his or her memories but also an understanding of how this individual's life uniquely fits into history and enhances our comprehension of it. Dagmar Westberg, longtime resident of Frankfurt am Main and friend of the PAAG, is such an individual. Born in Hamburg in 1914 and having lived in Hamburg and Berlin for most of the Third Reich, examples from her life changed the way I think about the Nazi regime. Consequently, her life story became one of the focal points of my thesis, which concerns itself with Hamburg's unique position in Germany in the expressions of Jewish life and resistance during the Third Reich.

In order to understand this position and where Frau Westberg's lived experiences fit in, I devote the first chapter and the introduction to background. I briefly explain Hamburg's political status and the stages of the Nazi seizure of power in the city. I also cover the example of the firm Beiersdorf, to which the Westberg family has familial connections—Oscar Tropolowitz, who made the firm into an international corporation, was the uncle of Frau Westberg's mother, Gertrud. Beiersdorf is also an interesting case in its own right, given its success despite its "Jewish" element and the rampant "Aryanizations," the forced takeover of Jewish business.

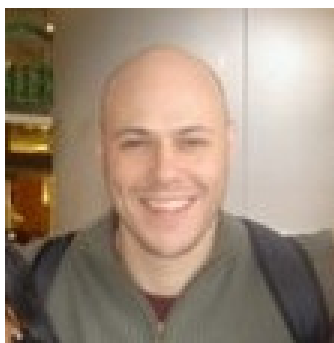
The second chapter treats Jewish life in Hamburg, beginning with a brief explication of the historically highly integrated status of Hamburg's Jewish community. After this preliminary, I discuss the patterns of Jewish life in Hamburg after 1933 while also describing the increasingly oppressive legislation of the Nazi government. This is where the example of Frau Westberg and the Westberg family comes in—Frau Westberg's mother was fully Jewish. Their experiences comprise my case study of the chapter. Through these examples, it is possible to highlight contrasts between history "from the ground up," or a socially-based history, and history from an institutional standpoint. Frau Westberg's example also allows me to come to a new understanding about Jews, "partial Jews," and the Nazi regime in Hamburg.

The final chapter looks at a different aspect of Hamburg's distinctive position in Germany, which manifested itself in the resistance effort. The inspiration for this

section came from reading the book *Wagen und Winnen: Ein Hanseatisches Kaufmannsleben im 20. Jahrhundert* by Dr. Helmut Kruse. I begin with a study of the various motivations behind resistance actions before moving on to organized resistance groups and personal acts of opposition. The second part of the chapter looks at resistance through the eyes of the Nazi police and justice organs by examining acts of resistance recorded in police reports and court cases. I was able to access these documents during a research trip to the Hamburg State Archive. It is useful to include this section because it informs us what the state considered to be resistant (sometimes treasonous) actions. This approach supplements our understanding of such actions, which we usually experience through the eyes of the revolutionaries.

Perhaps seemingly disparate themes, I believe that these two topics are related since they are both outgrowths of Hamburg's own unique historical experience. The two subjects also reinforce my claim that Hamburg continued to occupy a distinct space even during the Third Reich, remarkable for a regime that aimed to standardize everything under its control. Understanding that these exceptions existed in Hamburg—and that other exceptions most likely existed in other locations—is necessary in order to fully understand the workings of the Nazi machine as well as how the regime affected individuals. 🇩🇪

The Last Person in the World I Ever Thought Would Live in Europe (me)



By Josh Cohen '97

I grew up in Carmel, NY, a small town about 60 miles north of Manhattan. I spent my college years at in Princeton and then moved to Manhattan and worked for a variety of companies over a period of ten or so years. Life in NYC was great but one day I had a frightening revelation: I had spent virtually my entire life within a 60 mile radius of Katz's

Delicatessen, Joe's Pizza and Rockefeller Center. On the positive side of this, I was never more than an hour away from corn beef sandwiches, New York style pizza, and, well, Christmas-time ice skating. On the negative side, even though New York is one of the great cultural centers of the world, I couldn't get over the feeling that I was missing out on what the world had to offer. At some point I made a decision to make a change. And so, I moved to Germany in September 2005 to complete the last semester of my MBA (from NYU) at the University of Cologne.

Fast forward a year and a few months later - Nov 2006: I'm sitting in the Princeton Club of NY with none other than David Fisher, Class of 1969, discussing the possibility of my getting involved with him in founding a software-based technology start-up in Germany. Over the past year or so I had finished up my MBA in Cologne and had worked for 6 months at MTV in Berlin. Things had been going well for me in Germany, so why not stay longer?

Fast forward another 3 months - January 2007: David, I and a few others (among them Peter Fabian, Class of 2004) are moving at lightning speed trying to get Darmstadt-based iPharro Media GmbH off the ground. If all goes as planned, David will establish the company as Interim/ Founding CEO and pass the torch over to me in 6 months.

Fast forward another year or so - February 2008 (apologies for the clichéd remote-control reference, it's the last I assure you): I am sitting in a plane on the way back from Singapore where I have had a number of meetings set up in my capacity as CEO of iPharro Media, the thriving Darmstadt-based company with 19 employees and a world class technology. I'd never been to Asia before. And now, as a result of some contacts through the Princeton Alumni Network, I actually have a number of business contacts there who are interested in what the company does. If that seems like it was a quick summary of one of the most interesting periods of my life then it

should - it seems to have happened at about that speed for me.

Now for a shameless company plug: the iPharro MediaSeeker technology, developed at the Fraunhofer Institute in Darmstadt, can automatically monitor and identify video content from any video source. Our biggest customer, Nielsen Media, for example, uses MediaSeeker to detect when and where advertisements are broadcast on TV in real time. We are one of the few companies in the world who possess such a technology - called video fingerprinting and I am quite sure

that our technology is the most accurate and efficient.

Beyond the thrill of establishing this thriving company, living in Germany has been a great experience for me. I have a number of close friends here and after two year of perseverance, with the help of a dictionary and a copy of the day's Zeitung, I can speak the language pretty well. I eat Müsli for breakfast, Brötchen for lunch, and drink Milchkaffee four times a day. I open "Die Zeit" every Thursday with eager hands to see which articles I'd like to attack (i.e. translate) during the week. I see the world through different eyes. Some of my

opinions, political and otherwise, have shifted. Others have not but I am at the very least more sensitive to and aware of other points of view.

No matter where I wind up in 1 year, 5 years or even 10 years, all of these experiences are a part of me and will remain so. But for now, I am still enthralled with the idea that I can wake up every day and experience whatever new and exciting things Germany has to offer me. There seems to be an unlimited supply. 🇩🇪

Princeton Admissions for the Class of 2012

By Leslie Frfr. v. Wangenheim '85

The decisions for the class of 2012 were released April 1st The applicants have gotten their news, either by accessing the decision on-line or in the form of a "fat" envelope in the mail!

Germany, as a region, has 4 admits and 2 waitlisted. I have contacted those alumni who interviewed these individuals separately.

With a total of ca. 70 applicants from, or processed/interviewed in Germany, we come to 5.7%. Last year we also had 4 admits and 2 waitlisted, the percentage being higher as we had fewer applicants.

Regardless of the statistics, all of you made the admissions process for each and every one of the applicants a far more human and understandable process. I can certainly tell you that the feedback which came over my desk was heartening and encouraging. Not only did we leave a positive impression of Princeton and Princetonians, eliminating some

of the rather vague mystique surrounding the institution, but we also promoted the idea that an education overseas, in this case in the United States, is something well worth considering. We are, as interviewers, very possibly better than the State Department could ever be in diplomacy. I compliment and thank you all. Whether your candidate was admitted or not, he or she will have gone through this process believing that someone cared about their hopes and dreams. Corny as it sounds, it is true.

I thank you all and the University thanks you. All of you are busy people with employment, family or both which fill your time. You all made time for these interviews; time you may not have had to spare. It was worth it for the University, for the applicant and hopefully for each of you.

Those students who have been accepted live strewn about Germany, making it quite impossible to try to stage one reception or Princeton send-off. I will try to coordinate with Dave Fisher and with the candidates

themselves in an effort to get as many of them and of you all together, as possible.

Please see the University press release below for more details about the Class of 2012. I am sure you will find it very interesting.

<http://www.princeton.edu/main/news/archive/S20/71/02Q45/index.xml?section=topstories>

Should you have any questions about the decisions, the wait-list or the process or should you have any suggestions for next year's interview process, please contact me. If you would like to volunteer to help with a region of Germany (Berlin, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Stuttgart) or you know of hidden but willing alumni currently in Germany, please let me know, as well. The numbers grow each year; my capacity to organise is reaching its limits!

With a final Thank you to you all and all the warmest wishes. 🇩🇪

Summer Work Program 2008 Going Into the Home Stretch

By David T. Fisher '69

This year's crop of Princeton Summer Work Program applicants is one of the most impressive in my memory. We have over 30 applicants from 14 different countries seeking summer internships in the German-speaking parts of Europe. The resumes of these students are quite remarkable and make it clear that Princeton is not only in the nation's service but truly in the service of all nations.

It is gratifying to see that the Princeton German Department continues to attract such a wide variety of talent defying the overall downward trend in enrollments in German language courses around the world. The Princeton Summer Work Program is a major factor in maintaining that attractiveness. Last year, for example, we placed an advertisement in the issue of the *Daily Princetonian* that goes to incoming freshman announcing that the PAA of Germany is committed to providing a summer internship to every Princeton student interested in learning German. This year we had the highest number of enrollments in

German 101 in 15 years. In addition we have a record number of 44 participants in the Princeton Munich Program. The chain of causality is quite apparent; the choice of language to fulfill the language requirement is often rather arbitrary – if a student has the prospect of a paid internship in Europe, that can tip the scales in favor of German.

The significance of this phenomenon is illustrated by an article that appeared in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* on the 20th of March, 2008. The article described the German federal government's concern that, according to a McKinsey study commissioned by the German Foreign Ministry, the number of people learning German in the world has dropped by three million in the last five years. This amounts to a fall in enrollments of 17%. Despite subsidies of about 130 million Euros a year the number of people learning German in the world is tiny and falling. The McKinsey study sees this as a matter of great concern for the German government not only for cultural but also and primarily for economic reasons.

According to the study, the majority of employees of DAX companies, for example, lives outside Germany; even at Deutsche Post and Deutsche Bank more than half of the employees are non-Germans. For this reason a large pool of foreign German-speakers is considered to be a critical factor for German economic growth.

Contrast this overall picture to the situation at Princeton; in the same time period enrollments in German courses in Princeton have more than tripled. And it is not just anyone taking German courses but a fair proportion of future leaders from around the world. It seems indisputable that we have here an immanently cost-effective solution to a serious problem. This solution is scalable and we seek the support of all of you in accomplishing that. At the time of this writing we have 18 interns placed but could still use a few more jobs. Next year we expect a tsunami of internship applications. Both internship opportunities and donations to finance non-paid internships are greatly appreciated. 🇩🇪

Upcoming Events

Save the Dates!

**Book Presentation with Prof. Paul Krugman
May 19, 2008 in Frankfurt**

**50th Anniversary of the Princeton Summer Work Program
With Minister-Counselor for Public Affairs Dr. Helena Kane Finn
June 28, 2008 in Berlin**

**ALUMNI SCHOOLS COMMITTEE
GERMANY**

GIVING BACK AND GOING BACK

**PROMOTING PRINCETON
PROMOTING EDUCATION
PROMOTING EXCHANGE**

**ALUMNI INTERVIEWERS
WANTED**

JUST AN HOUR OF YOUR TIME

**MOTIVATE
PROMOTE
INFORM
LEARN
GIVE**

**INTERVIEW PERIOD:
JANUARY, FEBRUARY, MARCH**

**PLEASE CONTACT:
LESLIE V. WANGENHEIM
LVW@WANGENHOME.COM**

**The PAAG heartily welcomes new
members !**

**Download the application form
from our website**

<http://tigernet.princeton.edu/~paag664/>

Impressum

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