

## Austrian-American Council "Conference in Albuquerque and Santa Fé, New Mexico", November 4-7, 1999

This conference was held from November 5 to 7, 1999 at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. During previous conferences of Austrian organizations from Canada, the U.S. and Mexico, at which ACC-President Bonner had been an important voice, it had been agreed to found the Austrian North American Council. Its goal was to establish close relations and to meet and exchange ideas to further strengthen and enhance cultural and educational programmes. This spirit of continental cooperation led to the invitation of the Councils of Canada and Mexico to this conference by the Austrian-American Council's president Juliana Belcsak. The conference was also attended by representatives of the *Auslandsösterreicherwerk* (President Fritz Molden) and the Austrian *Weltbund* (President Gustav Chlestil).

The educational segments consisting of many interesting papers were co-chaired by Professor Peter Pabisch and President Juliana Belcsak. During the deliberations it was decided to share a common logo design displaying the flags of the three participating countries. Each country's logo would show its national flag prominently in the centre. Some of the issues discussed dealt with the problems of an aging membership and the danger of losing what has been built over the last 40 years. Another important issue was funding. In his speech, Roland K. Pirker talked about his fundraising experiences. The Austrian societies and clubs in Canada have agreed to make a \$100 annual donation to the Council. Ninety uninterrupted weeks of charity bingo events have yielded \$50,000 for the Austrian-Canadian Council. These monies now pay for the 2,500 copies of *Oe Culture*, published three times a year, which are mailed to our members by our partner, the Austrian Embassy in Ottawa.

One of the highlights of the conference took place in the rotunda of the State Capital in Santa Fé, when His Excellency Dr. Peter Moser, the Austrian Ambassador to the U.S., decorated Mr. Richard Erdoes with the Austrian Cross of Honour for the Sciences and Arts. Richard Erdoes is an Austrian immigrant to the U.S. who has written numerous articles for leading American magazines including the prestigious *National Geographic Magazine*.

Present at the ceremony was also a Sioux Indian by the name of Milo Yellow Hair who is a member of the U. N. Human Rights Commission in Geneva. He honoured - in Viennese German! - Mr. Erdoes by speaking about his humani-

tarian work. He also paid homage to Austria for the recognition which he and his people received in the 1970's by the former Federal Chancellor of Austria, Dr. Bruno Kreisky, who was the first leader with the vision to recognize indigenous people around the world, thereby setting an example for other leaders to follow. Mr. Yellow Hair spoke of his love of Austria and the continued connection with it through his Viennese wife, a teenage daughter, and his other "child", a bison-buffalo which he had brought to Austria as a gift. He then related a humorous anecdote about his buffalo. After not having seen his buffalo for quite some time, he could not believe his eyes when he finally did. So he decided to study the animal's daily routine for a few days. One eve-



Left to right: Fritz Molden (President of the *Auslandsösterreicherwerk*), H. E. Dr. Peter Moser (Austrian Ambassador to the U.S.), Richard Erdoes (recipient of the Austrian Cross of Honor for Sciences & Arts), Milo Yellow Hair (Sioux Native), Juliana Belcsak (President, Austrian American Council), Dipl. Ing. Gustav Chlestil (President, *Weltbund der Österreicher im Ausland*), Gerhard Bonner (Past President, Austrian-Canadian Council), Prof. Peter Pabisch (University of New Mexico). Second row: Gregor Reitmeyr (representative of Austrian-Mexican Council), and Roland K. Pirker. Photo credits: Rollframe, R. Pirker.

ning he noticed an old lady arrive with a loaf of dark rye bread under her arm which she then fed in its entirety to the buffalo. Then he understood fully why his "child" had become so big: It had become hooked on Austrian food!

After several days of intensive discussions, the presidents of the American and Canadian Councils invited each other to sit on the other's board and to keep exchanging ideas and making use of the Internet.

Dr. Kurt Fürst

## Raising funds for good causes at bingo events in Ottawa



Bingo on November 15, 1998. Left to right: B. and R. K. Pirker, V. Franovic (Manager, Overbrook Bingo Palace), R. Pirker, and K. Bradley.



Bingo on January 23, 2000. The bingo players Photo credits: Rollframe, R. Pirker.



Bingo on January 23, 2000. Left to right: Roch Brazeau, Helga Tawia, Roland K. Pirker, George Fyke, Emilie Fyke, Dan Ivey, and Ljiljana Franovic. Photo credits: Rollframe, Vlado Franovic.



Bingo funds go to a good cause. November 14, 1999. Left to right: F. Marth and R. K. Pirker hand donation to Maria Virjee (President, SOS Children's Villages Canada). Photo credits: Rollframe, R. Pirker.

## SOS Children's Villages Canada, SOS Canada 30th anniversary, and SOS International 50th anniversary celebrations



The Austrian Alpine Singers (Toronto) and Willi Platzer (conductor) on Parliament Hill. June 23, 1999. Photo credits: Rollframe, R. Pirker.



The Alpine Singers music group in concert at the Ambassador's residence. June 23, 1999. Photo credits: Rollframe, Petty Lemon.

## Quebec City: Eugen Kedl - Canada's premier photographer

Eugen Kedl arrived as a young photographer in Quebec City in 1954. Only three days after his arrival, he found a job as a commercial photographer; his second position was in aerial photography. In this job, he flew all over the province of Quebec and began to develop an intense love for the province and this country. Two years after his arrival in this country his wife Gretl - also from the Burgenland - joined Mr. Kedl.

Aerial photography kept Mr. Kedl busy for five years. But although exploring the land and discovering new places was fascinating, the noise of an airplane engine never became music to his ears, and so he quit. In 1961 he formed an association with a local photographer with whom he did mainly portraits and commercial photography. Soon major companies became their client, and their association flourished until his partner left for health reasons.

With Gretl's help, who took complete charge of the administrative part of the business, they continued to prosper. They opened a sales department for high-quality photographic materials, established their own photolab, and served the province with large-size photos - a pioneering accomplishment in this field.

In 1968 Mr. Kedl undertook his first "photomission" to the north - Povungnituk - with the main interest to document well-known carvers and the way of life of the Inuit people. Large-size photos were shown in 1970 at the *Völkerkundemuseum* in Vienna. From then on Mr. Kedl and his wife took every opportunity to travel and take photos of the country and its people. They were called on to illustrate various types of publications like *Petit Flore Forestière du Québec*, *Les Moulins à Eau du St-Laurent* and *L'Assemblée du Québec*, and others.

To commemorate their 25th anniversary in Canada, they prepared a photo exhibition - probably the largest ever shown in Canada - *Hommage au Québec* - a collection of about 130 large-size photos (up to 4' x 8'). It was an immediate success, and after touring in Quebec the exhibition was shown in Eisenstadt, Vienna, Rome, Milan, Edinburgh, Paris, Bayreuth, in Switzerland, and finally in Moscow. Their first book was published in 1984, *The St. Anne Basilica*. A special edition was given to the Pope on his visit to Canada, as were all officials present. In 1985 a book about Quebec City became a bestseller, and when Quebec was named World Heritage Center, a photo exhibition was put on in its honor in Quebec City Hall. This collection was later purchased by the Quebec Government and has been shown throughout the U.S.

Over the years a memorable number of books have appeared, among them *Images Inuit du Nouveau-Québec*,

*Québec par Kedl*, *La Côte-Nord*, and *La Gaspésie*, are part of a continuing series on Quebec's regions.

As a millenium project, the Kedls produced *Canada in a Thousand Pictures*, which was Gretl Kedl's idea and for which her support was most important. A dream came true with this eight-pounder containing 1,150 photos of Canada from the Atlantic to the Pacific and the tip of Ellesmere Island. It should give all Canadians an idea of the beauty of our land and the people who have the privilege to inhabit it. A large photo exhibition of 140 images from the book is currently traveling across Canada.



All these projects have only been possible because their son André and daughter Evelyn joined the company and are taking responsibility for everyday business. The Kedls have founded an Austria-oriented wine tasting club and every year organize a *Grand Bal Viennois* from which the profits go to children in need; a grant is also given to an arts student, in particular in music, who wants to continue his or her studies

Mr. Kedl has received an astounding number of awards and medals, among them the "Medal of the Assemblée Nationale" (1993), the "Medal Horace Viau" of the Richelieu International Foundation (1994), the "Certificate of Honor of the City of Quebec" (1986), the "Silberne Ehrenmedaille der Burgenländischen Handelskammer" (1995), the "Ehrenmedaille des Burgenlandes" (1996), and the "Ehrenmedaille für Kunst und Wissenschaft der Republik Österreich" (1998).

In 1991 Mr. Kedl regained his Austrian citizenship. The Kedls have four children and six grandsons.

## Austrian-Canadian Council: Summary of activities, 1995-2000

The Austrian Canadian Council:

- created an umbrella organization for Austrian-Canadians, and organized periodic nation-wide gatherings (Ottawa 1996, Edmonton 1998);
- established a charitable foundation to permit it to promote Austrian studies and Austrian culture in Canada by sponsoring various scholarly and cultural activities;
- established the Austrian-Canadian Business Club (ACBC), which, among other things, is implementing the Canada-Austria Young Workers Exchange Programme;
- led negotiations for the foundation of a Center of Austrian Studies at a Canadian university with the co-operation of the Austrian Federal Government and the Conference of Austrian University Presidents (1996-98);
- established of a series of "Austrian-Canadian Council Dissertation Prizes," which it began awarding annually in 1997;
- co-sponsored the academic Conference, "A Hundred-Year Retrospective of Austrian Literature," held at Concordia University, 27-28 September 1996;
- co-sponsored the International Symposium on Sigmund Freud, held on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the publication of Freud's *Civilization and its Discontents*, held at McMaster University, 23-25 September 1999;
- assisted in the mounting of the Canadian premiere of the opera *Der Kaiser von Atlantis*, by Viktor Ullmann, at the Na-

tional Arts Center, Ottawa (October 1996);

- sponsored a symposium and master classes on *schrammel music* for students from Quebec and Ontario with the Ottawa Schrammel Quartet (June 1999);
- co-sponsored a series of cultural activities (choirs, musical ensembles, etc.) in Ottawa to celebrate the 50th anniversary of SOS Children's Villages (June 1999);
- co-sponsored the exhibition "Michelangelo to Picasso: Master Drawings from the Albertina Collection," at the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto (January 2000);
- was the primary sponsor of *The Austrian Immigration* volumes published by Carleton University Press in 1996;
- founded (1998) and continues to publish the cultural magazine, *Oe Culture*, which appears three times a year.
- is the publication co-sponsor of the proceedings of the literary conference, "A Hundred-Year Retrospective of Austrian Literature," to appear shortly with University of Alberta Press;
- has sponsored a series of radio programmes with Austrian content on the CBC (1999-2000) and several private radio stations;
- has sponsored occasional lectures on Austrian or Austrian-related subjects by prominent individuals; and
- has helped organize charitable fund raising events for worthy causes and has used its position as a charitable foundation to channel targeted donations directly to contributors' intended beneficiaries.

## Meeting of the Austrian-Canadian Council in September 2000

The Austrian-Canadian Council and the Council Foundation are planning to conduct the next meeting of members and supporters in the southern Ontario region of Guelph-Kitchener on the Labour Day weekend (September 1-4, 2000).

We are preparing an extensive program:

1. Membership: Meeting of all members, friends and supporters to receive a full report on activities since the last meeting in Edmonton and a full discussion of all matters concerning the activities of the Council and the Foundation.
2. Election of the Board of Directors and appointment of officers, regional Vice-Presidents, and any official required for future projects.
3. Full reporting on all existing and projected internal affairs of the Council (financial, organisational, program, personnel, special projects, etc.).

4. Visit to Austrian-Canadian companies in the area with guided tours, where applicable.

5. Excursions and dinners at special places of Austrian interest, such as the Inniskillin Winery, the Royal Botanical Garden and the Continental Austrian Club, Burlington, and a "Weekend Afternoon in Toronto" with a major cultural presentation and afternoon tea.

Coordinator for the conference is the Canadian Austrian Society of Toronto (41 Tallon Road, Weston, ON, M9P 1M6) and its executive, Mrs. Christine Meyer, President, and Mr. John R. Raschke, Past President.

We strongly urge you to notify us early of your participation and ask for any suggestions to be included in the agenda by contacting CAS at (416) 242-2972 or by fax at (416) 242-2378.