

Austin - Host city of the
**2025 German-Texan Heritage Society
Annual Conference**



September 19 & 20, 2025

St. Paul Lutheran Church

located at

3501 Red River St. Austin, Texas 78705



Our Speakers

Our speakers include:

Friday



Dr. Daniel Gelo: Professor of Anthropology (Emeritus) UT San Antonio & Author



Dr. Christopher Wickham: Professor of German (Emeritus) UT San Antonio & Author



Bernard Meisner Ph.D. CCM: Lecturer based in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex who has completed coursework of the National Institute for Genealogical Studies, the Texas Institute of Genealogical Research, and attended the Genealogical

Research Institute of Pittsburgh, completing courses in Irish, German, and Pennsylvania Research, Digital Research Skills, and Practical Genetic Genealogy. Co-leader of the Dallas Genealogical Society's German SIG, and a member of the Texas State, the Germanic, and the National Genealogical Societies.

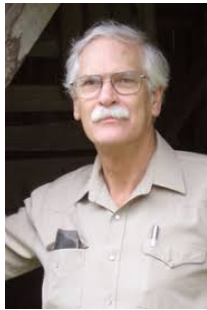
Benno Engel: Native of Luckenbach, Texas, B.S. in Education and M.A. in German from Texas Tech University, Taught German at New Braunfels High School for 40 years. Past President of the Wurstfest Association, served as a member of the planning committees for New Braunfels' 150th and 175th anniversary celebrations and has served on the Board of Directors of the Sophienburg Museum and Archives, and the New Braunfels/Braunfels Partnership Committee.



Kevin Klaus: With a background in Anthropology, Archaeology, and Public History from the University of New Mexico, he has served as one of the lead researchers in the Texas General Land Office Archives and Records Program Area for 23 years. For several years, he has focused his attention and research on the German Collection and the early German settlers that came to Texas

under the Adelsverein. In November of 2023, Kevin was elected to the board of the German Texan Heritage Society.

Saturday



Dr. Jim Kearney: Assistant Professor of Instruction - School of Undergraduate Studies at UT Austin, Author/Editor of books on Germans in Texas



Lloyd Shenberger: Member of the national board of the Palatines to America German Genealogy Society. Treasurer of the Pennsylvania Palam chapter and the Washington Cemetery Historic Trust. Past Treasurer of the Genealogical Society of Kendall County. Researches 18th century German immigration in Pennsylvania and 19th century German immigration to Texas



Jen Stanford: Jen is an IT professional, a member of the Hermann Sons Home Association Board (which consists of 2 members from each of the 8 San Antonio lodges) representing the Brunhilda Lodge. She is a fifth-generation member of Hermann Sons, the great-great-granddaughter of Fritz Schilo who served as the Grand President of Hermann Sons of Texas and was a prominent German-American leader in San Antonio during the 1930's. She has been researching the history of the Hall where she also tends bar in the historic Hermann Sons Rathskeller Bar.



Jim Burnett: Holding a bachelor's and master's degree from Texas A&M University, Jim's career was with the National Park Service doing historical research and supervising a living historical farm and as Chief Ranger at Colonial National Park in Virginia. He is the author of three books and more than fifty short articles and is a member of American Society of Journalists and authors.

GTHS 2025 Annual Conference Schedule

Friday

9:30 – 1:00	Registration opens. Lunch is on your own.
Time TBD	Early bird tour of TX General Land Office (12 person limit)
1:00 – 1:30	Welcome and Information
1:30 – 2:30	Dr. Daniel Gelo/Dr. Christopher Wickham: <i>Theodore Specht</i>
2:30 – 3:30	Bernard Meisner: <i>Early German Settlements in Texas, 1831-1860</i>
3:30 – 3:40	Break
3:40 – 4:40	Benno Engel: <i>The Founding of New Braunfels and the Sophienburg Museum & Archive</i>
4:40 – 5:40	Kevin Klaus: <i>Farewell to the Old World</i>
6:30 Social:	Social gathering / dedication of the new Stairway @ GTHS HQ

Saturday

8:00 – 9:00	Registration and snacks/pastries
9:00 – 9:15	Welcome and Introductions
9:15 – 10:15	Dr. Jim Kearney: <i>The Adelsverein</i>
10:15 – 11:15	Lloyd Shenberger: <i>German Immigration in the 19th Century</i>
11:15 – 11:25	Break
11:25 – 12:00	GTHS Membership Meeting
12:00 – 1:30	Lunch on-site by Ines Mosley
1:30 – 2:30	Jen Stanford: <i>Sons of Hermann Hall and the Rathskeller</i>
2:30 – 3:30	Jim Burnett: <i>Saltgrass Prairie Saga – A German American Family in Texas</i>
3:30 –	Remainder of the day Closing of the on-site meeting.



The Texas General Land Office

