

The German Society of Maryland Honors Dr. David Denisch at its 2006 Awards Banquet

118 members and guests of the German Society of Maryland, including 12 Maryland German teachers and 18 students from McDaniel College, gathered in the Adlersaal of Zion Lutheran Church on October 28 to honor Dr. David A. Denisch and the group of dedicated people who have worked with him to ensure the preservation of The Schifferstadt Architectural Museum in Frederick, Maryland.

In 1729 a German immigrant and ancestor of Dr. Denisch named Joseph Brunner settled with his family in the area now known as Frederick. He built a house for himself and his family in 1756 and named it "Schifferstadt" in honor of his native city in Germany. Dr. Denisch has been a leader in a long and highly successful effort to preserve this house as an example of German architecture from this period and keep it open to the public at designated times with the help of volunteers. In recognition of his continued efforts to preserve the memory of his German pioneering ancestors, the German Society of Maryland selected Dr. Denisch to be honored at the 2006 Awards Banquet.

The principal organizers of this gala evening were Brigitte Fessenden, President of the German Society of Maryland and Dr. Mohamed Esa, Chair of the 2006 Awards Banquet Committee. Other members of the committee were Bärbel Otto, German Society Office Manager, as well as Dr. Maureen Helinski and Theodore Potthast, who are members of the Board of Directors of the Society. The evening began with a social hour that included an elegant assortment of hors d'oeuvres and fresh fruit. While this part of the program was under way, Governor Robert Ehrlich, Jr., who is a member of the German Society of Maryland, stopped by and visited for a short while to congratulate the honorees and greet the guests, a gesture that was very much appreciated by all.

President Fessenden and Dr. Holger Roggelin, Pastor of the Zion Church, graciously welcomed the guests and thanked them for

attending this special event. Robert Fritzsche, AIA, a member of the German Society Board, led the guests in singing the national anthems of the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States of America. Then Reverend H.J. Siegfried Otto gave an inspirational invocation that preceded the dinner.

The dinner hour was enhanced by a continuous slide show featuring numerous congratulatory messages to Dr. Denisch and the Schifferstadt Architectural Museum from Maryland and Greater Washington, DC, organizations such as the Alpine Dancers & Singers, the Frederick Sister Cities Association, the Maryland/DC Metro Chapter of the American Association of Teachers of German, the Association of German-American Societies of Greater Washington, DC, and the German Club at McDaniel College. In addition, there was a congratulatory message from the Hon. William D. Schaefer, Comptroller of the State of Maryland, and other similar messages from personal friends and supporters of Dr. Denisch and the Frederick County Landmarks Foundation. An example of the affectionate and appreciative tone of these messages can be found in this tribute that was submitted for the banquet program by Sarah Osborn and her family from New York City:

You have brought history alive.

You inspire us to follow our dreams,

as our immigrant ancestors followed theirs.

Thank you for your ideas!

Your passion for Schifferstadt is contagious.

The Awards Ceremony that followed dinner was a very joyous event. The mood was set for the presentation of the awards by a beautifully compiled video depicting scenes from the entire history of the house called "Schifferstadt" and its surrounding area. The video was created by Dr. Mohamed Esa and narrated by his wife, Andrea Shalal-Esa, and further enhanced by background music.

After the conclusion of the video, Sarah Brackbill, President of the German Club at McDaniel College, congratulated the honorees on behalf of her organization. Then Jeffrey Glock and Merl Arp, Vice Presidents of the German Society of Maryland, introduced Dr. Denisch and Ms. Sarah Matthews, President of the Frederick County Landmarks Foundation, who would accept the award on behalf of the Schifferstadt Museum. Then President Fessenden and Dr. Esa presented Dr. Denisch and Ms. Matthews with inscribed plaques.

The pinnacle of the Awards Ceremony came with the presentation of two certificates of appreciation that had been sent from Germany by the City Hall and City Council of Schifferstadt, Germany, and signed by Klaus Sattel, Mayor of the City of Schifferstadt, and Ursula Heberger, Chairwoman of the Friends of Frederick. These certificates recognized and honored the achievements of Dr. Denisch and his associates. The first certificate of appreciation and recognition was bestowed upon Dr. Denisch. The second certificate was presented to the Schifferstadt Museum and its dedicated staff. This certificate was received by Ms. Matthews.

The members of the German Society of Maryland Board of Directors would like to express their grateful appreciation to everyone who supported this event by attending the banquet, purchasing advertising space in the program, and/or providing assistance in any way. They also wish to thank the following organizations and businesses for donating funds and/or complimentary merchandise that helped to enhance the banquet and the awards program: Maryland/DC Metro Chapter of AATG; Zion Lutheran Church of Baltimore; the German Club of McDaniel College; the German Information Center; the Goethe-Institut Washington; the Swiss Embassy; Amerika Woche, Haribo USA, and the City of Frederick.

Further information about the Schifferstadt Architectural Museum in Frederick, Maryland, can be found at

www.FrederickCountyLandmarksFoundation.org

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