

= Sängerfest =

Sängerfest , also Sängerbund @-@ Fest , Sängerfeste , or Saengerfest , meaning singer festival , is a competition of Sängerbunds , or singer groups , with prizes for the best group or groups . Such public events are also known as a Liederfest , or song festival . Participants number in the hundreds and thousands , and the fest is usually accompanied by a parade and other celebratory events . The sängerfest is most associated with the Germanic culture . Its origins can be traced back to 19th century Europe . Swiss composer Hans Georg Nägeli and educator Carl August Zeller , both protégés of Swiss educator Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi , established sängerbunds to help foster social change throughout Germany and Prussia . University students began to choose the art form as an avenue for political statements . As the sängerfest concept gained popularity and spread around the world , it was adapted by Christian churches for spiritual worship services . European immigrants brought the tradition in a non @-@ political form to the North American continent . In the early part of the 20th century , sängerfest celebrations drew devotees in the tens of thousands , and included some United States presidents among their audiences . Sängerbunds are still active in Europe and in American communities with Germanic heritage .

= = History = =

= = = Europe = = =

Students of Swiss educator Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi , a proponent of social reform , applied his teachings when founding some singing groups as an instrument for cultural change . One of his students was Carl August Zeller , who helped establish the sängerbund movement throughout Prussia in 1809 . Pestalozzi 's protégé Hans Georg Nägeli was a composer , music teacher and songbook publisher who made numerous journeys across Germany from 1819 to encourage the formation of male singing groups for social reform . Nägeli established several sängerbunds in Switzerland , which became the inspiration for the 1824 establishment of the Stuttgarter Liederkranz . Following the 1819 Carlsbad Decrees in Germany , male @-@ only choral celebrations with hundreds or thousands of vocalists were popular with the masses and often part of political events .

Composer Friedrich Silcher was directly influenced by Pestalozzi and Nägeli . He began using large choirs to express political viewpoints at least as early as 1824 when he and a group of Tübingen University students performed La Marseillaise to commemorate the storming of the Bastille . In 1827 at Plochingen , Baden @-@ Württemberg , several male @-@ voiced choirs combined for a regional liederfest . Sängerfests were part of the Hambach Festival of 1832 .

Christian church organizations known as Christlicher sängerbunds adapted the sängerfest for religious gatherings and helped spread its popularity throughout Europe , North America and Australia . They became popular in late 19th century Russia among Mennonite congregations . On 30 May 1893 , a sängerfest of seven choirs was held in Rückenau in Molotschna , Ukraine . On Sunday , 29 May 1894 , the all @-@ day Russische Saengervereinigung was held in Rückenau under the direction of Polish conductor Friedrich Schweige with assistance from Aron Gerhard Sawatsky , director of the Andreasfeld Mennonite Brethren Church . Beginning on 3 May , Schweiger traveled across Russia rehearsing choirs . On 29 May there were breakfasts for attendees , an estimated 50 vocal presentations by individual choirs , prayer services and sermons , lunch for 2 @, @ 000 people and afternoon snacks .

= = = North America = = =

Mennonites established the northwest Philadelphia section of Germantown in 1683 . The Philadelphia Männerchor founded by German immigrant Phillip Matthias Wohlseiffer in 1835 was the first German @-@ American singing society organized in the United States where the sängerfest began to evolve as a form of civic entertainment . In 1836 , Wohlseiffer founded the Baltimore

Liederkrantz , which became the first to accept women members ( 1838 ) . In 1846 , the Philadelphia , Pennsylvania group and the Baltimore , Maryland group performed together at a public sängerfest . The " Brooklyn Daily Eagle Almanac " of 1891 listed numerous sängerbunds in the Brooklyn , New York area . On 21 June 1901 , the Nord @-@ Amerikanischer Sängerbund presented a sängerfest in Buffalo , New York at the famous Pan @-@ American Exposition ( where 25th President William McKinley was shot by Leon Czolgosz in a reception line in September 1901 ) . A group in Buffalo hoped to help pay the expenses of the fest by forming the Buffalo Sängerbund Company , selling 1 @,@ 600 shares of stock at \$ 25 each .

In 1838 , the Cincinnati Deutscher Gesangverein was formed in Ohio , followed by the Cincinnati Deutsch Liedertafel in 1844 . The Gesang und Bildungsverein Deutscher Arbeiter formed in 1846 and was the first Cincinnati group that allowed women . Groups from Ohio , Kentucky , Maryland and Indiana created the Nord @-@ Amerikanischer Sängerbund in 1849 for a sängerfest hosted by Cincinnati , featuring the music of German composers . By 1908 , it was estimated that 250 @,@ 000 German Americans belonged to musical organizations , and 50 @,@ 000 of those belonged to the Nord @-@ Amerikanischer Sängerbund . The first post @-@ Civil War sängerfest in Columbus , Ohio took place 29 August ? 1 September 1865 at Schreiner 's Hall and the Opera House . Each arriving sängerbund was escorted to the hall by the Eighteenth regiment of the United States Infantry . There were an estimated 400 singers entertaining 12 @,@ 000 to 15 @,@ 000 attendees . The closing day was celebrated with pomp and circumstance .

The first sängerfest in Texas was held in 1853 in New Braunfels , and was held annually until 1860 when conflicting loyalties about , and participation in , the American Civil War caused a 10 @-@ year gap in the events . The San Antonio Männergesang @-@ Verein was formed in 1847 , the New Braunfels Gesangverein Germania formed in 1850 , and the Austin Männerchor formed in 1852 . On 4 July 1853 in San Antonio , the San Antonio Männergesang @-@ Verein sponsored an Independence Day celebration attended by the New Braunfels Gesangverein and the Austin Männerchor . The New Braunfels Gesangverein invited everyone to meet in New Braunfels on 16 ? 17 October 1853 for its first Texas Sängerbund . In 1854 , the aggregate sängerbunds formed the Texas State Sängerbund . The San Antonio Beethoven Männerchor was organized in 1867 by Wilhelm Thielepape , assistant conductor of the San Antonio Männergesang @-@ Verein . After the surrender of the Confederacy in 1865 , Thielepape raised the Union flag of the " Stars and Stripes " over the historic Texan battle site and former church mission , the Alamo in San Antonio and distributed wine and songbooks . The all @-@ male Houston Sängerbund was founded on 6 October 1883 and chartered in 1890 . It affiliated itself with Der Deutsch @-@ Texanische Sängerbund . In 1887 , founding member Carl C. Zeus served as principal of the organization 's German @-@ English school .

22nd and 24th President Grover Cleveland , his wife , and guests took a special train from Washington , D.C. on " Independence Day " , 4 July 1888 , forty miles northeast to see a Baltimore event . Cleveland had friends who were members of the sängerbunds . 27th President William Howard Taft attended the 1 July 1912 event in Philadelphia . On 15 June 1903 , 26th President Theodore Roosevelt and Ambassador Herman Speck von Sternberg attended a sängerfest of 6 @,@ 000 individual singers at Baltimore 's Armory Hall . All 9 @,@ 000 seats were sold out . President Roosevelt delivered an address praising the German culture and the sängerfest tradition . The Northeastern Sängerbund presented selections by composers Herman Spielter , David Melamet , Carl Friedrich Zöllner , E.S. Engelsberg , Felix Mendelssohn and Richard Wagner .

When Newark , New Jersey , hosted the 21st National Sängerbund , held on 1 ? 4 July 1906 in Olympic Park , 25 @,@ 000 people showed up to hear the music , many arriving on chartered trains . Only a few thousand were able to get into the hall , and 2 @,@ 000 were standing . Five thousand singers from more than a hundred sängerbunds representing forty cities from New Jersey , New York , Maryland , Pennsylvania , and Delaware competed for a \$ 20 @,@ 000 prize offered by Kaiser Wilhelm II . Park vendors offered souvenirs , refreshments , games , and a carousel .

Germans began emigrating to Canada through Nova Scotia , where they helped found the town of Lunenburg in 1753 . The sängerfests were first performed in Kitchener , Ontario , in 1862 . The community events included the standard concerts and meals , with drama presentations and athletic

entertainment sponsored by the local Turnvereine clubs . For the next 40 years , sängerbunds and sängerfests spread throughout Ontario . Pennsylvania Mennonites began settling in Ontario in the late 19th century . Alberta and Saskatchewan host annual Mennonite sängerfestes .

In 1916 at his sentencing for bigamy , Count Max Lymer Loudon related another misdeed from his past . Loudon claimed he had been hired by a group of wealthy German Americans with a secret fund of \$ 16 @,@ 000 @,@ 000 to take 150 @,@ 000 German reservists , disguised as sängerbunds , across the Canada ? United States border for a coup d'état of Canada , on behalf of Kaiser Wilhelm II . If they drew suspicion , they were prepared to " sing at a moment 's notice . " It was his loyalty to America , he claimed , which caused him to desert the Kaiser 's singing invasion force .

= = Current events = =

Although some local festivals were canceled or suspended during the two world wars owing to rising anti @-@ German sentiment , the triennial Sängerbund tradition has largely survived and many communities in areas with a significant German @-@ American population have Sängerbund today .

Two major German @-@ American singing associations are the Nordöstlicher ( North Eastern ) Sängerbund and the much larger Nord @-@ Amerikanischer ( North American ) Sängerbund ( which , contrary to the name , also includes a few choruses from southern states ) .

Nordöstlicher Sängerbund : The 49th Sängerbund was in Lancaster , Pennsylvania in 2006 . The 50th Sängerbund , hosted by the Washington Sängerbund , took place on the 2009 Memorial Day Weekend in Washington , D.C. The 51st Sängerbund , hosted by the Lehigh Sängerbund , took place in June 2012 in Allentown , PA . The Bloomfield Liedertafel hosted the 52nd Sängerbund in 2015 in Pittsburgh , PA .

Nord @-@ Amerikanischer Sängerbund : The 61st Sängerbund of the Nord @-@ Amerikanischer Sängerbund was June 2013 in Milwaukee , Wisconsin with over 1300 singers . The 62nd Sängerbund will take place May 27 ? 29 , 2016 in Pittsburgh , PA .

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