Garden Visits in: Hessen, Germany.
June 9 – 16, 2003

By AHS International Membership Chair Gisela Meckstroth
## American Hemerocallis Society National Officers

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### Editorial Policy
The American Hemerocallis Society is a non-profit organization, and the American Hemerocallis Society Region 2/Great Lakes Newsletter is published for the benefit of American Hemerocallis Society members residing in Region 2. As such, the editorial focus of the publication centers on:

- Hemerocallis.
- AHS and Region Two events.
- Region Two members and hybridizers.

Submissions are encouraged. The editor reserves the right to edit for space, grammar, and focus on the three criteria cited above.

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**Membership Rates**

- Individual (1 year) .............. $18.00
- Individual (3 years) .............. $50.00
- Dual Membership (1 year)* .... $22.00
- Dual Membership (3 years)* .. $60.00
- Life Membership ................. $500.00
- Dual Life Membership .......... $750.00
- Youth ................................ $8.00

Dues are to be paid by January 1 of each year.  
Make checks payable to the AHS.

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P.O. Box 10  
Dexter, GA 31019  
gmencer@nlamerica.com

* Dual Membership means Two persons living in same household.
Earl
ysix, I made up
my mind to travel as much
as I could possibly manage,
and manage it I did, in
deed.

Well, this has been a
most interesting and busy
“traveling” summer for me,
and I am so grateful to be
married to a man who is
also interested in daylilies
and who, therefore perhaps,
understands my daylily and travel passion. Summer
started with a trip to Germany to attend my class
reunion and to visit daylily gardens in mid June.
Then came the AHS National Convention, one day
afterwards to wash clothes and to pick up more
funds, and it was time to drive to Collinsville,
Illinois, with Rosemarie Foltz from Canton, Ohio, to
enjoy the wonderful gardens of our Region Two
Summer Meeting. A few days later came our MCDS
daylily show where I helped as placement chair then
came, judging daylily shows at Southwestern
Michigan HS and the Ohio DS. Once more a day at
home to wash clothes, repack suitcases, pick up
more funds, and off it was with Region 2 member
Janice Clark (also an MCDS member) to
Amsterdam for daylily garden visits in Belgium and
Germany for the combined Hemerocallis Europa–
Perennials Society/Specialty Group Hemerocallis
meeting in Holland.

A detailed description of those garden visits will
be posted in full color on our Region 2 web pages
(http://www.ahsregion2.org) about the end of
October. Another full-color report about the interna
tional visitors at our 2003 AHS National Conven
tion in Charlotte, North Carolina, can also be
viewed there.

Special thanks to RVP Ed Myers for giving
permission and encouragement for the posting of this
travel tale.

DO YOU KNOW ...
that daylilies grow along the Internet Highway and that you can...
  ▪ Surf the Net and learn more about daylilies.
  ▪ Visit our Region 2 web pages and local club links at:
    http://www.ahsregion2.org
  ▪ Visit the American Hemerocallis Society Web-Site at:
    http://www.daylilies.org/daylilies.html
  ▪ You can “travel” to many interesting daylily sites by clicking on links on the
    AHS Web Site. If you don’t have a computer, visit your local library. Friendly
    librarians will be glad to help you navigate the high seas of the Internet.
AHS and the Gesellschaft der Staudenfreunde (GdS)/Fachgruppe Hemerocallis (Perennials Society/Special Interest Group Hemerocallis) have an agreement to exchange their organizations’ periodic Journals. Editor Barbara Poschmann, the GdS publication’s “Yellow Pages” section, had written a stimulating article in the April 2003 issue about gardens in the Kassel surroundings that included a Hänsel and Gretel garden. I had grown up just east of the city in the tiny, “Fiddler on the Roof” like village of Wickenrode, and I quickly decided that I could combine a June 14 class reunion, with stops at relatives’ and childhood friends’ homes, and with visits to daylily gardens.

I e-mailed Barbara to see if I could visit her own garden and Dora Peter’s Hänsel and Gretel garden. I also e-mailed my itinerary, explaining that my German friends and relatives tend to make fun of my typically, fast-paced American, “with flying hair” style visits, an expression she had used in her article to describe her own hectic schedule during the shepherding of garden visitors. She graciously offered to make all arrangements for me, and I was surprised to learn that the Hänsel and Gretel garden was located a mere two miles from Wickenrode where I would be staying overnight with a childhood friend. Good, this garden visit would fit right into my tight travel schedule.

June 10, Arrival in Frankfurt and Drive to Fulda.
What a smooth ride from Columbus, Ohio, through Washington, DC., to Frankfurt. On to visit my

A view of Gudrun’s quaint village, Eyershausen. Eyershausen lies slightly north of Goettingen.

I have admired my sister-in-law’s patio area for many, many years. These are rounds of a tree trunk set in sand as if there were bricks or stone. They have lasted for over 25 years. I have seen these same tree-trunk rounds used as driveway pavers all over middle Germany but not here in the USA.

Gudrun Tillmann-Budde found this charming farmhouse and garden in the small and quaint village Eyershausen, about 1-1/4 hour’s drive north of Kassel, Germany.
brother, his wife, and my niece in Fulda, about 1-3/4 hours’ drive northeast of Frankfurt.

**Wednesday, June 11, Eyershausen**

Hemerocallis Europa’s Vice President Gudrun Tillmann-Budde and I had worked via e-mail on some registration fee concerns during the last two years, and when she heard that I was visiting Kassel, she explained that her garden was only a short hour’s drive north of that city. How could I not squeeze in this visit to her summer farmhouse in Eyershausen! Of course, my Americanized mind works at a low 65 miles an hour driving speed, not at the no-speed-limit on autobahns that translates to about 90-110

Gudrun welcomed me with a most refreshing drink she had made herself from Elderberries. She collects the fresh blossoms, steeps them in sugar water. The resulting syrup is then mixed, as needed, with water. The drink transported my mind right back to childhood in that region of Germany in the 1930s and 40s, we kids gathered the blossoms of so many trees, shrubs, and flowers that were either used

miles per hour. Kassel is about 100 miles north of Frankfurt, and after leaving Frankfurt at 10:30 am, all I had to do to was “make tracks” and drive about 100 miles an hour in my tiny, but mighty, mighty rental Mercedes (a Diesel), appropriately called *Elk* to call attention to its midget-size dimensions.

Without upper speed limits, even I, an elderly driver, can indeed cut down distances to size—in comparison to our speed limits in Ohio, that is. I learned quickly how to drive “with flying hair” and arrived on schedule at 12:45, just in time for Gudrun’s deliciously prepared Mittagessen (lunch).

Gudrun’s summer home (she resides in Berlin during the cold months) is typical of farmhouse construction in the northern middle Germany area. It is a Fachwerkhaus, much like the board and batten construction used in the Middle Ages, a building method that was also typically used in the English city of Chester. All the farm houses and shops are tightly clustered together, and the farmers travel by tractor or wagon to the various small fields surrounding the village. The entire small village of Eyershausen is about 3 streets wide, and Gudrun’s farmhouse is located on the outside street, allowing her fairly long back yard to stretch right up to the outlying farm fields where black and white cows roamed the pastures.

All of you readers know what the words “Daylily Passion” imply. Here you are looking at just one example. Gudrun rented the garden of neighbors next door! How lucky can one get to find seedling-planting ground right next door!
What a beautiful sanctuary she has found and has continued to develop. There are many perennials and shrubs, including hostas, selected roses, lilacs, lavenders, daylilies, and an Elderberry bush. Each spring Gudrun gathers Elderberry blossoms. She steeps them in sugar water for a few days, making Elderberry syrup. As a welcoming and cooling refresher, she mixed some of this syrup for us, transporting my memories right back to childhood summer days when this was one of the customary soft drinks; none of us kids new what soda pop was. After a tasty asparagus soup and strawberries, she showed me the very first-open, single blossom of an

Eremurus plant (see photo) and told me that she took it to be a welcoming sign from her flowers to me.

Despite the bit early-in-the-bloom-season date, scapes on most of her daylily clumps were up, loaded with unopened buds. Some of them were in bloom already, and quite a few of those were her own seedlings. Hers is quite a large garden, and I estimated that it might be about 100 feet wide by about 250 long—more than enough space for most gardeners—but not quite enough for budding hybridizer Gudrun. We walked through her slightly sloping garden, out the back gate and walked down a small lane to a neighbor’s property. Last year, she had discovered that the owners of the farmhouse parallel to hers, but one garden over, were not interested in working the ground. So, Gudrun uses that land for

Gudrun’s rose garden section. She specializes in older, heritage roses.
International Daylily Gardens: Germany

Daylilies on the roadside on the way back from Eyershausen to Kassel. Sadly, the owners of the property were not home to tell the editor/writer what these were.

Gudrun’s “Sun Garden.” She has placed a garden table with chairs on this paved sun patio and has built several trellises to screen off this additional hideaway spot.

Cows are grazing on the hillside. What a beautiful view from Gudrun’s terrace and living room windows.

One of Gudrun Tillmann-Budde’s extra early blooming seedlings.

Gudrun’s “Sun Garden.”

her seedlings. Among the seedling beds, she grows a row of pepper plants, each one’s roots covered by a square of “landscape felt,” a material I had never heard of or had ever seen. Gudrun says that she spends almost every summer day working from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., weather permitting. I could easily understand her enthusiasm. She has found her heavenly cottage in the middle of a most beautiful German countryside.

Time to look at the clock! I promised to be at my girlfriend’s home no later than 5:30 p.m. Cranking up the mighty tiny Mercedes-Elk, I drove back through small villages to reach the autobahn again—and spotted daylilies along the roadside in a small village. Lovely, lovely. I stopped to take a slide or two and talk to the owners, but these were not home, and the neighbors knew nothing about these golden treasures. The drive to and from Gudrun’s village of Eyershausen is simply exquisite. The curved roads took me through several small, typically North Hessen farming villages and a larger town, Bad Gandersheim. Driving on these narrow streets allowed me to almost touch the shops, houses, and barns on either side of the street. The roads led right
across market squares, then again through the hilly farmland. Any American who wants to see the Germany of the Grimm Fairytales, must visit Hessen, the area north of Frankfurt.

Wickenrode, Oberkaufungen, and Kassel-Wilhelmshoehe

Driving south on the Autobahn and anticipating heavy traffic around the fairly large city of Kassel, I exploited the “no upper speed limit” laws once again and reached my little hometown village, just east of Kassel, within 1 hour and 15 minutes.

A clump of the tetraploid daylily ATLANTA MOONLIGHT (Petree 1982) I sent in the early 1990’s greeted me at Wilma and August’s garden gate. Although it is a mid-season bloomer, its first blossom would open in just a few days. Daylilies seemed to bloom extra early here this year, in Germany’s hottest summer since 1947. I wished that I could stay long enough to see them bloom there, where I spent my childhood years with geese and ducks walking the village streets right along with us kids.

Wilma and August waited with a cold, cold beer for me and showed me the new additions to their garden. Most impressive were crescent shaped forms made from a cement-gravel mixture, which they had used to build a soil-retaining wall. The hollow stones are put in place and are then filled with soil into which the perennials or annuals are planted. Metropolitan Columbus Daylily Society Member Janice Clark and I spotted the same stones used in similar ways in western Germany during a second trip to Europe this summer.

Wilma also grows orchids on her cool marble windowsill on the east side of her home. The orchids’ air roots had grown out of the bottom of the pots and had spread out over the cool sill and were hanging over its edge much like the fringed lacy curtain covering the window panes above the plants. Wish I could do that here in Ohio despite our gas forced-air heat. Their heating system uses water-steam radiators.

Of course Wilma and August wanted to know why I would want to visit a garden in the village down the road? Who owned it? Dora Peter? Laughing all around. Don’t you remember Dora Peter? No, I did not (Peter is her married name). Well, it was Dora who went to our same school with us all and who also was born and raised in our little village.

No kidding, it is really a small, small, very small world.

Thursday, June 12, Dora Peter’s “Hänsel and Gretel” Garden in Oberkaufungen

Early lunch waited for me at Wilma’s sister Leni and her husband Ludwig Peter’s home. I walked down what used to be a much steeper (childhood memories) road past the school building in which my

Wouldn’t you need bread crumbs to find your way out of this “Hänsel and Gretel” garden if you were 5 years old?
Photo: Barbara Poschmann
father had taught and in which we had all been pupils, turned the corner towards Leni’s home sitting on a hillside (here in Ohio we would call such a middle Germany hill a mountain), then stopped at another childhood girlfriend’s home. Irmtraut walked me through her garden full of gooseberry-, red currant-, and black currant bushes, and together we remembered the good old days when it was the children’s chore to pick the fruit. Wilma and Ludwig’s garden showed off the most beautiful and vigorous begonias even in this hottest of summers. Just about every house in Wickenrode has and always has had a garden. Most are still used to grow vegetables and fruit intermixed with flowers.

After lunch I walked back to a multi-apartment home across the school building where five more of my childhood girlfriends lived back then and where four of them still live there most of the year. Oh, memories and more memories. I know that my love of gardening began here. Small English daisies still grow in their garden just as they had in the 1940s. Wild flowers bloom all across the small lawns; no weed-free “Kentucky Blue” turf here. Tiny, tiny little daisies and the tiniest buttercups, a sure sign that the soil layer is thin and lean, typical of the hilly area, and that fertilizers have not been used.

In the early afternoon I drove, slowly this time, two miles from this higher elevation down the 2-lane county road, flanked by higher hills on both sides, towards the Kassel basin into the small village, called Oberkaufungen. How often had we children walked this road during the World War II years when no buses ran and only our village butcher owned a car!

I maneuvered through the narrow village street, up the steep hill on the right, turning left into a one-lane path that dead-ended in a two-car parking spot. A modern home, fenced in by what Germans know as a Jägerzaun (a “hunter’s fence” made from small, 2-3 inch branches, nailed together in diamond-cross fashion), waited on the thickly wooded downhill slope. The Hänsel and Gretel garden. No doubt about it! Dora came to the gate and invited me in. In honor of the visitor from faraway Ohio, she had baked a plate full of a special kind, but well-known German cookies with a sugar icing; that are called Americans.

GdS “Yellow Pages” Editor Barbara Poschmann, her neighbor and new GdS Member Hans Mades, “Hänsel and Gretel” garden owner Dora Peter, and Barbara’s Mother kriemhild Schneider enjoying Dora’s refreshments.

Pieces of basalt, that were found during the coal mining work, were placed strategically in Dora Peter’s shade garden. Photo: Barbara Poschmann.

Hans Mades is explaining something important to Gisela and GdS “Yellow Pages” Editor Barbara Poschmann. Photo: Provided by Barbara Poschmann.
Soon, Barbara Poschmann arrived bringing along her mother, Kriemhild Schneider, and her neighbor Hans Mades. We toured the large and rocky shade garden admiring the many plants, natural rock formations, and the large rock collections placed strategically throughout the shade garden. Dora’s husband had been manager of the local coal mine, and their home sits high up on the hills above the coal mine. Any unusual rocks that had been unearthed over than long span of mining years were moved to this garden and positioned so that they would draw any visitor’s eyes right to their architectural beauty. Alas, although a clump of STELLA DE ORO (Jablonski 1975) was bloomed out, the other daylily clumps in the garden were not blooming yet.

Dora served cool drinks, and I had brought along a “Memories 1934-1946” album of those years I had lived in Wickenrode. Now, Dora was able to recognize me as one of the little ragamuffin playmates. Small, small world. So much for a strange visitor from a far away foreign country!

Time to leave, too soon again. I followed Barbara’s car who—out of courtesy for my American style of driving—drove at about 65 miles per hour towards her large, beautiful home and walled garden on the western outskirts of Kassel.
The Poschmann’s garden in a large Kassel villa suburb of Wilhelmshoehe.

Lovely, lovely details in the Poschmann garden, from interesting tree trunks, tree bark to numerous paved walkways. Photo: Barbara Poschmann.

The Poschmann’s cat sleeping beside the little brook that winds its way through their large, large garden. Photo: Barbara Poschmann.

Interesting plants growing along the brook in the Poschmann’s garden.
She and her husband had moved to this home earlier this spring, but no one would ever have guessed that. This is a mature, beautifully landscaped estate-size garden with all kinds tall trees, rhododendrons, climbing roses, bush roses, daylilies, grasses, and all sorts of perennials. Lots of containers sat along paths and on the terrace areas, and Barbara explained that she had turned down all travel offers this year so that she would be able to tend her plantlets sown from seeds that she received from the GdS and HE seed exchanges. Daylily seedlings are among them. Some of them came from the AHS International Seed Bank and were donated by AHS E-mail Robins. Again, I observed so many different-from-over-here garden-art items. Interesting white, large-globe tall and low outdoor lighting fixtures I had not seen before, plant stakes so decorative but which also are not available over here in our Midwest. The sun was beginning to set, and it was time to rush off to meet my brother an hour’s drive to the west so we could do some genealogical research the next day, visit another high-school friend’s garden, and attend my class reunion.

**Friday, June 13, Haine, on the Eder River.**

My Brother Karl-Heinz, who is a retired professor in Fulda, and I met at an inn, “Der Hessische Hof,” in Frankenau near Frankenberg on the Eder river.
My class reunion was held in another very small village between Frankfurt and Kassel, and after an early morning get-together at the old school, I met—for the first time since 1952—a classmate whose father, it turns out, had been a daylily hybridizer until his death a couple of years ago. What a shame that I missed getting to know him! However, her husband continues to take care of his father-in-law’s daylilies. My mind noted, “click, click, click, …another excellent reason to plan my next visit.” After a delightful day spent reminiscing about our high school years, I drove to the next village about 2 miles south and stayed in a wonderful small inn in the village where my father had been born and raised. Flowers, flowers everywhere! Flower boxes on every window. Thirty Euros for the night included a buffet breakfast. What a beautiful spot.

Back on the Autobahn speeding towards Frankfurt to make it in time for lunch at childhood friend Gretel’s winter home (she is one of the five sisters from Wickenrode). She proudly showed off the daylilies (ATLANTA FULL HOUSE, Petree 1984) I had sent her some years ago and which she had divided so that several clumps now grow in her garden. They were just about to begin to bloom.

During my September 17, 2002, visit of her garden, one scape had been blooming. At my expression of surprise about such late-date blooming, she proudly explained that she had watered the daylily every single day from the end of July on so they would bloom during my expected September visit. There you go, believing something will happen may be more than half of it, isn’t it.

Off to visit my nephew and his family in a northern Frankfurt suburb. Long talks, overnight stay, and driving early the next morning to the airport’s car rental return on the very last drop of Diesel oil. Then takeoff to Washington/DC where I volunteered my seat on the 26-seater connector plane to Columbus, Ohio.

I can always use another free flight for AHS board meetings or national conventions, or next year’s Region 2 Summer Meeting in Wisconsin. Meantime, while I waited for the next flight to Columbus about three hours later, I replayed my mind’s tape recording of these precious experiences.

A shared love of daylilies allows us to build bridges of friendship spanning national boundaries and oceans.