

ORAL HISTORY T-0002
INTERVIEW WITH HENRY BUSCHMANN
INTERVIEWED BY IRENE CORTINOVIS
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CORTINOVIS: This is Irene Cortinovic and today is May 19, 1971. Today I have with me in the Archives Mr. Henry Buschmann who came to this country from Germany in 1911, and that's what he's going to tell us about today.

BUSCHMAN: How I decided to come to the United States in 1911. My brother, Gustav, who had been here eleven years in St. Louis, came to visit me. I took off for two weeks and showed him Berlin and surroundings. So, one day we came out of the castle Sans Souci, built by Frederick the Great, and we came down the steps. We seen a big monument being erected. We stopped and read on the sign the inscription...which later on would be engraved on this monument for Frederick Wilhelm von Steuben. This monument was built by the United States. Paid \$50,000. It was dedicated to the Germans on account of Frederick Wilhelm von Steuben who was the general who had trained the army for George Washington. And while we read the inscription, my brother made the remark, "Steuben done all right for himself. Why don't you come to the United States?" I told him that I had no idea of coming there; so, in five minutes, I made up my mind, and the next day we bought a ticket on the North German Lloyd to St. Louis. So that time, Frederick Wilhelm von Steuben was honored by the American government who erected a Steuben monument in Washington in 1910, and a year later in 1911, in Potsdam, Germany. Now, when I came here, I started singing in church chorus in 1911 at the Evangelical Lutheran Zion Church on Twentieth and Benton. At that time, we had about twenty-eight singing societies. And about three years later, I joined the North St. Louis Bundeschor which had their own hall. It was an old church on Fourteenth and Howard. Later on, I joined the Apollo Singing Society which had their own hall on Ninth and Bremen. A few years later, I joined the Liederkrantz Club in which I have been singing now for forty-five years. And at the present time, I sing also in the Harmonie Singing Society, and I am a member there for twenty-five years.

CORTINOVIS: You've been singing a long time. Do you sing tenor, Mr. Buschmann?

BUSCHMANN: A long time. No. Second tenor. But I've sung second bass, too, already. I love to sing.

CORTINOVIS: Is your voice changing as you get older?

BUSCHMANN: It had changed already before I came here. I was twenty-four years old when I came here. I served in the German army under Kaiser Wilhelm.

CORTINOVIS: Did you sing in Germany?

BUSCHMANN: No. I had no time, because I was wandering from one city to another, you know. I must say, I didn't like it here when I came to St. Louis. The Union Station was okay, but when you came outside on Market Street, it was terrible.

CORTINOVIS: What made you join the singing societies when you first came here?

BUSCHMANN: I love to sing, you know. And I know I had a pretty strong voice, maybe not so good, but it was strong.

CORTINOVIS: Did you meet a lot of Germans at these other...

BUSCHMANN: Oh, yes. I joined the Deutschtheatverein. It had about 600 members. I had a good time in all these different societies.

CORTINOVIS: What kind of work did you do?

BUSCHMANN: I'm a painter and decorator by trade.

CORTINOVIS: Did you do that when you first came?

BUSCHMANN: Yeah, I learned that in Germany. In 1929, I went in business for myself. And now, I'm retired already for sixteen years. I live a good life.

CORTINOVIS: Very fine, you can't beat that. What I'd like for you to tell me is what St. Louis was like when you came, how many Germans were here, and if you had trouble meeting other people and getting acquainted in St. Louis.

BUSCHMANN: No, at that time, it was really easy, because we didn't have no automobiles. We had to take the streetcars and, therefore, we always got closer together, you know. You made friends much faster. As I say, all these singing societies, you know...we had no automobiles. We were forced to take the streetcar or walk.

CORTINOVIS: What did you do with your free time besides joining the singing societies?

BUSCHMANN: As I say, I was a painter and decorator and the singing societies had their entertainment. We did a lot of dancing besides singing, you know.

CORTINOVIS: Do you think that was one of the main reasons you joined one of these clubs? The dancing and singing? The fun and good times that you had? Did you drink a lot of beer?

BUSCHMANN: Oh, yes, yes. You could buy five glasses of beer for a nickel, because you went with a bucket to the saloon, and they just held it under the faucet till the bucket was full, and it generally contained about five glasses. It cost five cents.

CORTINOVIS: Tell me what you remember about St. Louis when you first came.

BUSCHMANN: Around Union Station, it was dirty. They had all those old building there, you know. They had rails hanging on the sidewalks and at night they pushed them inside. And it was the same way in front of city hall. This, of course, was alt torn down, as we know

now. It's a beautiful city now in certain parts; of course, we're not talking about these slums, you know.

CORTINOVIS: What kind of living arrangements did you make when you first came?

BUSCHMAN: I stayed with my brother and boarded. I paid him five dollars. This was cheap in those days.

CORTINOVIS: That was reasonable, then?

BUSCHMANN: Yeah. I could go to even cheaper places that was only four dollars a week...you know, some of them.

CORTINOVIS: When did you marry, then?

BUSCHMANN: In 1919, after the world war. But during the world war, I had to be a real nice boy, because we had to be registered with the police, and our fingerprints had to be on a card, and I was only allowed in certain zones. I couldn't pass no bridges. I couldn't go to Jefferson Barracks, anywhere, you know. I had my certain zones where I worked in.

CORTINOVIS: And you had to have permission to go from zone to zone?

BUSCHMANN: Yes, and a fingerprinted card in my pocket with my picture on it that I was Henry Buschmann.

CORTINOVIS: How big was this zone? Say, for instance, you lived in North St. Louis at this time...

BUSCHMANN: Well, I could go downtown, and as long as I didn't pass any bridges, I could go anywhere in St. Louis. But not to East St. Louis.

CORTINOVIS: Was this during the day or during the day and the evening?

BUSCHMANN: There were no restrictions in time.

CORTINOVIS: So, many people say that there was a lot of feeling against German-speaking people during World War I. By this time, were you learning English?

BUSCHMANN: Oh, yes, yes. I made it my business to learn English. I took private lessons, and at night I went to night school.

CORTINOVIS: And where was that?

BUSCHMANN: At McKinley High School in south St. Louis. I went about three years to night school there, had a wonderful teacher, and I learned pretty fast.

CORTINOVIS: Did you study anything else besides English?

BUSCHMANN: No.

CORTINOVIS: Were these lessons free?

BUSCHMANN: A small amount. It was very small what we had to pay for night school.

CORTINOVIS: You told me once before you can remember rocks coming through the window when you were singing.

BUSCHMANN: Yeah, I was singing in the North St. Louis Bundeschor in '16, '17 and '18, and one night, we were singing and rocks came through window, because the hate against Germany was terrific. Because the crowd had all kinds of names for us...the "Huns", the "butchers", and the "Prussians" were hated the most. I have to say that I'm a Prussian.

CORTINOVIS: Yes, I forgot to ask you. Were you born in Potsdam?

BUSCHMANN: No, I was born in Westphalia, but Westphalia belongs to the Kingdom of Prussia.

CORTINOVIS: It's in what would be the Eastern Zone of Germany?

BUSCHMANN: No, Westphalia is in the Western Zone, now. We're very close to Bremen and Hanover. We border right on the Dutch border.

CORTINOVIS: Did you ever experience any physical violence during World War I?

BUSCHMANN: No, not physically, but we had to be very careful that we didn't make the wrong move and say the wrong word.

CORTINOVIS: Did you ever see anybody beaten up or anything? BUSCHMANN: I know of one case in the neighborhood of Freiburg where they had the coal mines. He refused to buy any more liberty bonds; he had \$2,000 worth already. They hung him up in broad daylight.

CORTINOVIS: In St. Louis?

BUSCHMANN: No, in Illinois. Not far from Freiburg, in broad daylight, because he refused to buy any more liberty bonds at the coal mine. Nothing was done, because they knew who done it. After the way, they were taken to trial and they got several years of penitentiary.

CORTINOVIS: Well, for the purposes of this tape, I'm most interested in what happened in St. Louis. If you would go to these German halls where the singing societies met, did you have any trouble getting in and out, or did people make fun of you going in?

BUSCHMANN: No, not at all.

CORTINOVIS: During the World War I?

BUSCHMANN: During the War, yes; then we had to be careful.

CORTINOVIS: Is there anything else that you remember about the anti-German feeling in World War I?

BUSCHMANN: As I say, it was not hardly allowed to speak German aloud in public. Right away, we got pointed out.

CORTINOVIS: You mean, if you spoke German, say, on a streetcar?

BUSCHMANN: Yes.

CORTINOVIS: What would happen then?

BUSCHMANN: Well, I was talking one time with my friend on the streetcar, and we talked German, you know. They said, "Why don't you talk United States?" And, my friend...he was pretty fast on the trigger...he said, "Well, why don't you learn German? Then you could understand us." Of course, he was alone, and we were with two, so he didn't say anything. He let it go.

CORTINOVIS: Well, you didn't lose your job or anything?

BUSCHMANN: No.

CORTINOVIS: Did you have any trouble getting work?

BUSCHMANN: No.

CORTINOVIS: Because you were German?

BUSCHMANN: No, but I know they had spies on me. My boss, who I had worked for, he later told me that the secret service men had been and asked him what kind of man I was...if I could be trusted...if I could be bought, as a spy. But my boss told them, "No, Henry just wants to have a good time and make quite a bit of money, and he's satisfied with that. He's not mixed up in politics."

CORTINOVIS: So, you, yourself, didn't get into any trouble during World War I?

BUSCHMANN: Yeah, one time I did. If you allow me to tell this?

CORTINOVIS: Yes, I want you to.

BUSCHMANN: A lot of Germans neglected to become citizens, but I took out my first papers within the first two weeks. And when the five years were up to apply for citizenship, I did. And then the war broke out...this already was a world war, but I didn't think we would be taken in. A fellow named Brock...he was with some society...sent me a card. They wanted to have a meeting in order to send a petition to our congressman to become citizens during the war. Because the law was that we could not become citizens as long as these two countries, Germany and the United States, were involved in a war. So, I went to this meeting, and I was surprised that I was the only one in the military age, and the others were all old people up to 75-80 years old. And then Herr Brock, the secretary or the president of the YMCA, told us that we would form a committee and sign this petition. And I couldn't see it, so I walked out. That was bad; three reporters followed me and said, "Why did you walk out?" I said, "I'm satisfied with the law we have, and I'm not going to change it or to help change it, because

I'm satisfied." But that put me in bad. The next day I got a letter from the United States Marshall Lynch at that time, and I had to appear down there. And, of course, the papers were awful; they had it so turned around that it sounded bad...that I refused to become a citizen now...that I didn't want to fight against my own kinfolks in Germany. And then I was up against it. I looked for a politician and he knew me, and he spoke up for me to Marshall Lynch that there was nothing wrong, because I had done nothing wrong...because I had been satisfied with the law the way it existed. So, Marshall Lynch, a gentleman, told me, "I know this man stands up for you, he vouches for you. So, just go home, obey the laws and keep your mouth shut." So, I got out of that, "cause I know some other fellows were put in prison for a less violation than what I was supposed to have done, and stayed there for several months before they were released.

CORTINOVIS: Yes, what did they do?

BUSCHMANN: They were just under suspicion. One drove an automobile. They thought he made too much money...that he was paid off by the German government as a spy, you know. He was in jail for about four months.

CORTINOVIS: Do you think there was any truth to that?

BUSCHMANN: No, there was no truth in that, because I know the fellow. He died about two years ago. He was a nice man, but he made good money and he bought an automobile.

CORTINOVIS: Do you think there were any other German speaking people in St. Louis who were actually spies for the German government?

BUSCHMANN: Not that I know of. Not one. No.

CORTINOVIS: Was it in the gossip around in the people you knew? They didn't suspect anyone?

BUSCHMANN: I knew there were some under suspicion, but, as I say, I have no proof, and I didn't associate with anybody who could be bought as a spy.

CORTINOVIS: Was it ever possible for you to be drafted into the army of the United States?

BUSCHMANN: Not at that time. See, there was a law there. I mentioned it before. As long as we were involved in a war, we could not be drafted, because I was still a citizen of Germany. Therefore, they could not draft me. This meeting was called in order to change that law.

CORTINOVIS: Yes, I believe that law has been changed, because during World War II, non-citizens were drafted.

BUSCHMANN: My wife lost her citizenship...born in St. Louis...because she married an alien enemy in 1919, and there was a law for three years that she lost her citizenship because she married me, as an alien. So in 1926, she became a citizen again.

CORTINOVIS: What do you know? That's interesting.

BUSCHMANN: And the law was in existence for only three years.

CORTINOVIS: Did she regain her citizenship automatically?

BUSCHMANN: No. She had to pay for it. She had to go through the same rigmarole that I did to become a citizen again.

CORTINOVIS: She had to buy it. Well, that's interesting.

BUSCHMANN: When I wanted to become a citizen when the war was over, I was called before the judge, and they had all the strips from the papers from my record. When I seen those papers, you know, I knew what was up. And the papers were read in the form they were printed, of course. It was lies. The whole thing was misconstrued...was not at all the way I had said it in that meeting. So, when the judge seen it, he said, "You'll have to wait a long time before I make you a citizen. Get out of here." So, when the next fellow came in the chair next to Judge Cyer, and he was an Italian, and the judge asked him, "Do you believe in spaghetti?" And the Italian said, "I should say so." "Then you'll make a good citizen."

CORTINOVIS: Oh, so, you had to wait then to get your citizenship? When did you finally get it?

BUSCHMANN: In 1928.

CORTINOVIS: And your wife didn't get hers until 1929?

BUSCHMANN: No, it was before that. In '26, already. Because she was born here. She got it before me.

CORTINOVIS: Did you have to go to report every year like they do now? To the post office?

BUSCHMANN: No, not that time. I applied again in 1929 and, of course, they had all these slips out of the paper, but when the fellow he seen it, he was so nice. He said, "The war is over so long now. We forget about it." And he interviewed me, my knowledge of our laws and so forth, and I could handle them pretty correctly. I had no trouble.

CORTINOVIS: Did this make you feel bad when you were denied your citizenship?

BUSCHMANN: That was bad. I felt so bad.

CORTINOVIS: Did it make you feel bitter? In your heart? And what year did you first apply?

BUSCHMANN: I took the first citizenship papers out when it was only two weeks. And the first papers had to be five years old before I applied again. So, I applied in 1916. The war was going on already, but not between Germany and the United States.

CORTINOVIS: Then, it came up again? In what year?

BUSCHMANN: When the war was over, I was called in again to become a citizen. But then they had that against me.

CORTINOVIS: In 1919? So, you waited nine more years to apply?

BUSCHMANN: Yes, I had to wait, because I was refused. I had to apply 1928, again. I waited till 1928. As I say, the hatred was so great. Much greater during the first World War and the second.

CORTINOVIS: It was? Is there anything else you can tell me about your reaction or the reactions of the German community in World War I?

BUSCHMANN: The only thing I can say was that I came out of the cleanest city in the world and that was Berlin, Germany, which it was even claimed in the Post-Dispatch. And I would have gone back again, but when the war broke out, I couldn't get back. When the war was over, Germany was starving and they had plenty here, so I was forced to stay here.

CORTINOVIS: But you did think about going back?

BUSCHMANN: Yes. When I came here, at first I didn't like it. It was too dirty. All the smoke. They burned soft coal in those days. I thought it was terrible.

CORTINOVIS: But then after you got a job...

BUSCHMANN: I got a job when I first came, the first Spring. Of course, as a painter and decorator, I had to wait till the next Spring, but the whole Winter, I learned English.

CORTINOVIS: You thought about going aback at the beginning. Then you thought about going back after World War I, also?

BUSCHMANN: Then, as I say, Germany was starving. I went there on a visit in 1922, and they were still starving in '22. I made a tour on the Rhine and I couldn't get no mi lk and no ice cream which I liked so much.

CORTINOVIS: So, you thought you'd better come back?

BUSCHMANN: I was married then already, and knew I was coming back. Just went for a visit to see my folks, you know, 'cause I come from a big family of twelve.

CORTINOVIS: And was this your oldest brother that was over here?

BUSCHMANN: The oldest brother was here, and I was the tenth in the family. And I am the only survivor of the whole twelve.

CORTINOVIS: Oh, you were baby brother. Now, tell me, what about some of the other German-American societies that you belonged to.

BUSCHMANN: I know the German societies have suffered like alt the societies. I know they all have their troubles on account of the automobile, the radio, and television. That has driven

us apart.

CORTINOVIS: Yes. What societies did you belong to when you first came?

BUSCHMANN: First was the church on Twentieth and Benton, and then I joined the North St. Louis Bundeschor in '13, and then they gave up already in '22,; then I joined the Apollo Singing Society on Ninth and Bremen, and then we united with the Freiermaennerchor which was a group formed out of the free thought society on Twentieth and Sullivan. They had their hall. And then in '24, I sang most of the time in two societies. I joined the Liederkranz Club. and later on I joined the Harmonie Singing Society.

CORTINOVIS: And what year was that?

BUSCHMANN: That was...well, I'm an honorable member already twenty- five years ago.

CORTINOVIS: And you sang with both of those at the same time?

BUSCHMANN: Yeah.

CORTINOVIS: So, you would go two nights a week. You would go to the Liederkranz and Harmonie?

BUSCHMANN: Yeah, that's right. Sometimes I would have special rehearsals and concerts; sometimes, I would sing four or five times in one week.

CORTINOVIS: Now, besides the singing societies, what other kind of organizations did you join?

BUSCHMANN: Well, the Deutschtheatverein. I joined that in 1913. It was a strong society. We had about 600 members.

CORTINOVIS: And what kind of a society was that?

BUSCHMANN: The Deutschtheatverein supported the German theater. The theater was played at the Old Odeon on South Grand. And then they built the Victoria Theater on Del mar not far from Grand. The German theater stayed there through the first world war, but when the war was over, they had to close up, too. Then we played in the Eagle Hall on Jefferson and Lafayette for several years after the first world war.

CORTINOVIS: When you say "German theater", do you mean professional theater?

BUSCHMANN: Yeah, professional actors there. They all came from Germany, and then we had our theater. In winter, they played every Sunday night.

CORTINOVIS: They gave serious plays?

BUSCHMANN: Yeah, and operettas. I even took small parts.

CORTINOVIS: You mean, some of the members of this society would also take parts?

BUSCHMANN: In what society?

CORTINOVIS: This society that supported the German theater. Some of the members would also take parts?

BUSCHMANN: Oh, yes, prominent members...

CORTINOVIS: But the leading members were professional actors?

BUSCHMANN: Yeah. The actors were professional Lubbel.

CORTINOVIS: About how many years were German plays performed?

BUSCHMANN: They started before the beginning of the century. Then, as I say, they played in the Odeon up to 1914. Then to the Victorian Theater. Then they had to sell out there on account of the war. Then in the Eagle Hall and around '24—'25, they gave it up entirely. But the German theater society stayed in existence...the members...we were there mainly to support the German theater.

CORTINOVIS: Did you belong to any fraternal organizations? Insurance groups? Or anything like that?

BUSCHMANN: No, ma'am.

CORTINOVIS: Did you belong to any other German-American clubs when you first came?

BUSCHMANN: No, just the singing societies. And then, of course, the Steuben Society.

CORTINOVIS: Oh, yes. Tell me about the Steuben Society.

BUSCHMANN: The Steuben Society is all over the United States. We have a Steuben statue in Tower Grove Park which came to this country for the World's Fair in 1904. It was sold at the World's Fair to August Busch and from then, it was sold again to a Steuben member, Louis Allewell, and he donated this statue to the Steuben Society. And it was located in the Liederkrantz Garden, and a lot of people didn't know because it wasn't exposed to the general public inside the garden. Then the Liederkrantz Hall was sold about three years ago, and we had to give up the statue. I made the arrangements with the St. Louis Park Commissioners or Board of Directors to take the statue to the park, and they spent four thousand dollars to get it in the right shape again. And two years ago at the Steuben convention, we dedicated this statue in Tower Grove Park.

CORTINOVIS: What kind of a society is it?

BUSCHMANN: It's named for Steuben; he trained the army for General Washington.

CORTINOVIS: Yes, but what does the society do?

BUSCHMANN: We uphold German traditions.

CORTINOVIS: You meet?

BUSCHMANN: Yeah. Every three years, we have a convention. Last year, I was to the convention in Los Angeles, and three years ago, we had it in St. Louis. And that was the convention we unveiled the statue in Tower Grove Park.

CORTINOVIS: That was in 1969? Or in '68?

BUSCHMANN: I believe it was 1968.

CORTINOVIS: It was an annual convention?

BUSCHMANN: Yeah. And they come there from all over the United States. They are strongest on the East Coast, but Los Angeles and San Francisco are represented, too.

CORTINOVIS: Is there a chapter here in St. Louis still? And where do they meet?

BUSCHMANN: Yes, they meet once a week in the Schwabenhalle on South Jefferson.

CORTINOVIS: Do you go?

BUSCHMANN: Oh, yes. I'm there all the time, because I have been president of that organization years ago.

CORTINOVIS: Is it a fraternal club? For instance, tell me what you do at your meetings.

BUSCHMANN: Just uphold German traditions. If they want to make a law, like an immigration law that would hurt the German public, we have strong representation in the Congress. We have several congressmen and senators belonging to the Steuben Society.

CORTINOVIS: Oh, is that so?

BUSCHMANN: Even Dirksen from Illinois was a member of the Steuben Society.

CORTINOVIS: Who was that?

BUSCHMANN: Dirksen. Senator Dirksen.

CORTINOVIS: Senator Everett Dirksen.

BUSCHMANN: Yeah, Senator Dirksen. And Curtis, Representative in Congress, is a member today yet.

CORTINOVIS: Oh, Thomas Curtis. And I imagine that in some states, especially like Wisconsin...

BUSCHMANN: Oh, yeah, especially New York. I know quite a few, because I meet these fellows at the conventions which I generally go to. We have a steady office in New York.

CORTINOVIS: Yes, what are you doing now in the Steuben Society? What is current? For

instance, if you went this week or last week, what would they be talking about now?

BUSCHMANN: To see that we have better laws, you know; the laws are not enforced. We want law and order here. That is our main aim. To vote for the right people. To see that we get law and order again.

CORTINOVIS: Do you mean as far as crime is concerned?

BUSCHMANN: Oh, yes. And here and there, we invite speakers.

CORTINOVIS: Do you talk about possible candidates for the next election?

BUSCHMANN: Yes. We discuss the candidates that we think would be best for our country.

CORTINOVIS: Would you call this a political club?

BUSCHMANN: Yeah, it is a political organization. But it has to have a name. Before the first world war, they had the German-American...they called it the Deutsch-Amerikanische Nationale Bund...German-American National Organization. They had to disband through law by our Congress in 1917 during the world war because the hatred was so great against anything that was German. After the war was over, instead of putting new life into the German-American Association, we formed the Steuben Society. It's a replacement, you can say, for the Deutsch-Amerikan'schenatzionalebund.

CORTINOVIS: And what year was that?

BUSCHMANN: In '19. So, we celebrated our 50th anniversary here in '69. Now, I know, it was '69.

CORTINOVIS: That you had the national convention here?

BUSCHMANN: Right. We celebrated our 50th anniversary.

CORTINOVIS: So, you've been pretty busy in most of your spare time. You've been going to the Steuben Society, you've been singing with the Liederkranz and the Harmonie...

BUSCHMANN: Yeah, and I belong to a German shooting association. We call ourselves the "Schutzenverein." We have our shooting and give out medals for the fellows that shoot the best.

CORTINOVIS: Is this a pistol team?

BUSCHMANN: No, we have big rifles.

CORTINOVIS: And do you still meet?

BUSCHMANN: Ja, ja.

CORTINOVIS: And where do you do that?

BUSCHMANN: Most of the time, we meet at these people who have a big rathskellar. They have an air-rifle which can be used. Oh, it's a heavy thing. It cost \$1500 There's nothing cheap about it.

CORTINOVIS: About how often do you go to this?

BUSCHMANN: We practice once a month. And then we have our halls, you know...dances and picnics.

CORTINOVIS: It seems to me that all the societies you told me about .that all of them have a social aspect to them. You always have dances and picnics...

BUSCHMANN: Oh, yes, we come together and bring our ladies along. Two weeks ago, we had a kind of party in an Illinois restaurant, a dinner party. And after dinner, we had our music and danced. Oh, yes.

CORTINOVIS: I think the only other thing that I wanted to bring up today, that we haven't talked about, is that it seems to me that on the early programs of the singing societies which I've uncovered, that the music was a much more serious and classical than what was sung at the groups later on. Do you think this is true?

BUSCHMANN: Oh, yes. We had what I call real music. Now, you know, this modern music is not to our liking.

CORTINOVIS: You mean, the older members?

BUSCHMANN: Ja, we still have classical music.

CORTINOVIS: But it seems to me that what the singing societies sing now and, say, in the last twenty-five years, that the selections are more on the popular vein. Whereas old programs that I've examined from the 19th century would be the classical composers like Schubert and Bach and Gounod.

BUSCHMANN: Well, in some respects, we sing American songs, too, but we still don't practice these ragtime songs.

CORTINOVIS: I understand that, but what I mean is that it seems to me that the old programs are more classical, you might say, heavier, more serious music...

BUSCHMANN: Right, that is right.

CORTINOVIS: ...than what you're singing now days.

BUSCHMANN: Well, there's not much difference.

CORTINOVIS: No?

BUSCHMANN: Of course, they have new songs, and we send for them from Germany. We pick out something which we like and which we can perform, because our knowledge in

singing is not too great. Most of us can't read notes, but we learn just the same.

CORTINOVIS: From the others or from your accompanist?

BUSCHMANN: Ja, ja.

CORTINOVIS: Well, did we leave anything out today, do you think?

BUSCHMANN: No, I don't think.

CORTINOVIS: It seems to me you've lived a very happy life. Henry.

BUSCHMANN: Yes, I've traveled a lot. I traveled all over the world.

CORTINOVIS: That's wonderful.

BUSCHMANN: I made a trip around the world in eight days. That was wonderful. I'll never forget that.

CORTINOVIS: It seems to me you must have been quite financially successful to do that.

BUSCHMANN: I was successful in business.

CORTINOVIS: Did you have your own business?

BUSCHMANN: Ja, for thirty years.

CORTINOVIS: You came here without any money, didn't you?

BUSCHMANN: I had about \$800. That was my gift from my estate, a little farm at home. It was a beginning, anyhow. \$800 at that time meant quite a bit.

CORTINOVIS: How old were you, then?

BUSCHMANN: Twenty-four. I served in the German army for two years.

CORTINOVIS: So, you had worked in Germany...you had some experience.

BUSCHMANN: Yes, I learned my trade in Germany. And then I traveled from one city to another to gain more knowledge in our line of work.

CORTINOVIS: I believe you mentioned once before that you had been back to Germany...to Sangerfests.

BUSCHMANN: Yes, I even got the golden pin, because I sang sixty-years already. They kind of associated with the German Sangerbund and I got the gold pin. And I got the silver pin for twenty-five years and the gold pin is for fifty years.

CORTINOVIS: Well, do you ever go to the national Sangerfest in Germany?

BUSCHMANN: Yes, I've been to three of them. Two were in Stuttgart. And in '62, I had an invitation from Mayor Tucker to bring it to Dr. Engels, the president of the German Sangerbund to come to us here in St. Louis in '64 to our Sangerfest.

CORTINOVIS: Did he come?

BUSCHMANN: And he did come. He delivered the keynote speech in the Kiel Convention Hall.

CORTINOVIS: In 1964, that's when you had the Sangerfest here in St. Louis. The 25th anniversary of the national Sangerfest, or was it 45th?

BUSCHMANN: I don't remember how many years it was.

CORTINOVIS: There have been other national Sangerfests here, too.

BUSCHMANN: Oh, yes. Here in America, we have it every three years.

CORTINOVIS: In St. Louis, they've been held about eight or nine times, I guess.

BUSCHMANN: I know only two of them. They had it in '34 and then in '64.

CORTINOVIS: Yes, but there were some in the 19th century, too. I've seen programs. '72 was here and '88 was here. Have we covered everything? Can you think of anything else?

BUSCHMANN: Well, I believe...

CORTINOVIS: You're getting tired?

BUSCHMANN: No, I'm not tired. I enjoy this; it brings back a lot of things to my memory which I had almost forgotten.

CORTINOVIS: This afternoon you'll be thinking of even some more things. I certainly want to thank you very much.

BUSCHMANN: I've been ten times in Germany since the war, and I belong to a singing society in Germany yet, too.

CORTINOVIS: Oh, are you an honorary member?

BUSCHMANN: Ja, in my home town.

CORTINOVIS: We'll deposit this tape now in our oral history section. We are trying to take tape recordings of people who have an interesting story like you have. I certainly thank you for coming.