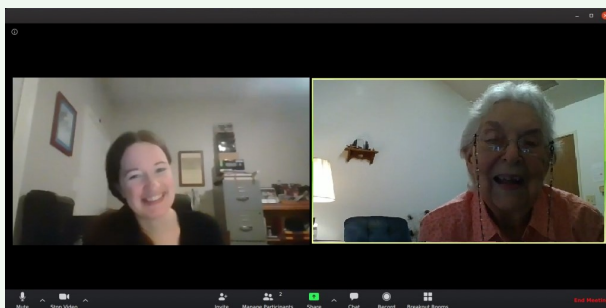




Texas German interviews expanded to online format



**Florence “Flo” Farek from Schulenburg, TX
being interviewed on Zoom**

The TGDP has made some exciting changes in our approach to field research due to restrictions in travel and in-person meetings caused by COVID-19. In April 2020, we started conducting interviews remotely by phone or by using Zoom (a popular online video conferencing software). Due to our

positive experiences, we will continue to offer remote interviews into the future, though we are also looking forward to conducting in-person interviews again in the near future.

Not everything has changed, however. The initial part of our interview process remains the same. We still rely on word-of-

mouth and recommendations to find people to interview. Once we find people who are open to being interviewed, we figure out a time and place to meet. In the past, this was typically a local museum, church, school, nursing home, or a speaker’s house. On the day of the interview, we would drive to the interview location (as close as Leander or Pflugerville or as far away as Houston or San Angelo) to set up our recording equipment and interview them. Interviews closer to Austin would take an afternoon to com-

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TGDP becomes part of new Research Cluster on Multilingualism at UT’s Linguistics Research Center

During the summer of 2020, the [TGDP](#) began collaboration with other UT Austin projects documenting and analyzing multilingualism in Texas. Housed at the [Linguistic Research Center](#) (LRC), the TGDP and the [Texas English Linguistics Lab](#) joined forces with three oth-

er like-minded projects interested in research on multilingualism in Texas: [The Texas Czech Legacy Project](#), the [Texas Polish Dialect Project](#), and the [The Spanish in Texas Corpus Project](#). Under the umbrella of the LRC, members of this new Research Cluster on

Multilingualism engage in research focusing on the varieties and impact of language and language use within political, social, economic, and legal discourse. As a first step, all five projects are currently compiling primary source materials such

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TGDP MILESTONES 2019–2020

- ◆ The TGDP has interviewed 47 new speakers since December 2019.
- ◆ Due to spending restrictions caused by the pandemic, this year’s newsletter only appears in electronic format.
- ◆ In July 2020, the TGDP received a very generous gift from an anonymous donor. This gift is funding the TGDP’s Graduate Research Assistant during the current academic year 2020-21. We are very grateful for this support.
- ◆ TGDP members presented academic talks at conferences in Edinburgh (UK), New Orleans, Austin, Mannheim (Germany), and Hamburg (Germany).

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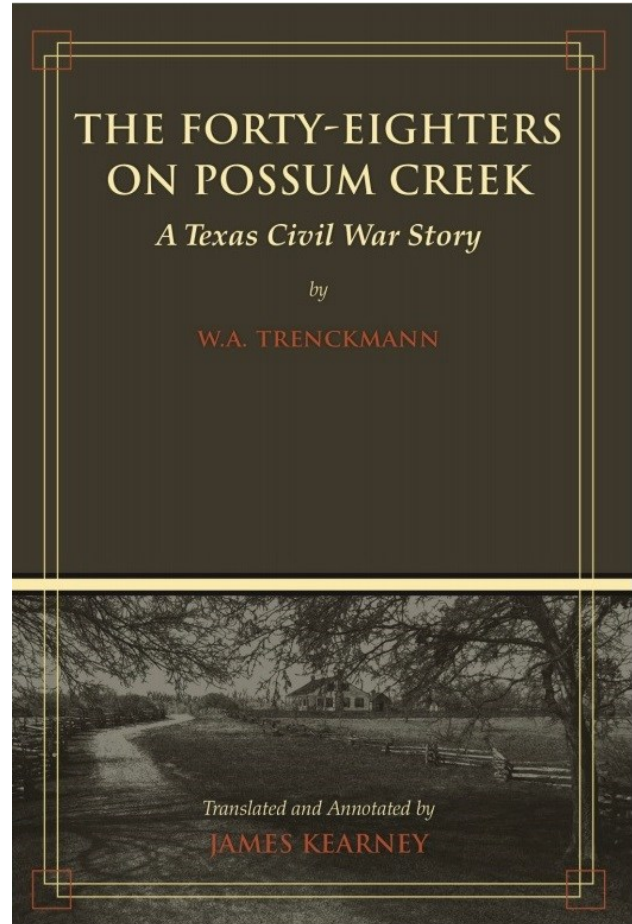
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The Forty-Eighters on Possum Creek: A Texas Civil War Story

The Forty-Eighters on Possum Creek is an annotated translation of *Die Lateiner am Possum Creek; A Texas Civil War Story* by the Texas German educator, publisher, and legislator, W.A. Trenckmann. His book, a combination historical novel, *roman à clef*, and *Bildungsroman* treats the hard choices faced by the German settlers of Possum Creek during the Civil War. These settlers were largely political refugees from the failed European revolution(s) of 1848; men and women who had been inspired by democratic ideals in the Old Country that they then transferred to the situation they found in Texas. For many, slavery was the great fly in the ointment. In the book, the young hero Kuno Sartorius has just turned eighteen and is faced with conscription into the Confederate army. What to do? He is torn between his beloved teacher, who is appalled by slavery and hates the Confederacy, and his father who feels it his son's duty to serve even in a bad cause. To complicate matters, his sweetheart, the daughter of his teacher, sides with his father. The young hero, Kuno, is based loosely on the author's older brother, Hugo, and indeed most of the characters (and situations) are historical. In extensive endnotes, Dr. Kearney has identified and related all the characters and

situations in the novel to actual people and events. The issues raised are perennial for any democracy and the author offers no easy answers. To Dr. Kearney's knowledge, this is only one of two Texas Home Front novels in Texas literature written by a contemporary and it therefore occupies an important place in our literature. The other novel, oddly enough, was also written by a German, namely *Ein verfehltes Leben* by August Siemering. With many wonderful vignettes of Home Front life, from rich plantation owners to humble squatters, the book is a delightful window into those troubled times; indeed, a window that extends well beyond the small, self-contained German community of Possum Creek to include the broader Anglo community as well. "Possum Creek" stands for the historical Lateiner community of Millheim, Texas, in Austin County where Trenckmann was born and came of age. Trenckmann serialized his novel in his newspaper *Das Bellville Wochenblatt* in 1908. This is its first appearance in translation. Statehouse Press released the book in June 2020 and it is available in the Texas A&M Press Consortium catalog and also at Amazon.com.



Update on generous donation from the Alkek Foundation

As we reported in last year's newsletter, the Albert and Margaret Alkek Foundation made a generous donation to the TGDP in 2019 to support a Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) working for the Texas German Dialect Project. This financial support enabled us to hire Margo Blevins as GRA from August 2019 to August 2020. During this time, Margo managed the TGDP by coordinating the

various undergraduate and graduate students transcribing and translating Texas German interviews, conducting dozens of interviews with Texas German speakers, working with programmers of UT's Liberal Arts Instructional Services to improve the TGDP's database, working on creating an on-line course on Texas German history, language, and culture, and
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Research Cluster on Multilingualism at UT's LRC, cont.

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as electronic corpora for research, teaching, and outreach. A crucial aspect of this research is the documentation of Texas heritage languages, some of which are currently in danger of extinction. The LRC is a natural incubator for this type of interdisciplinary effort because of its decades of experience managing successful linguistic research projects. Founded in 1961, the LRC conducted research on Machine Translation for

35 years before realizing the vast potential of the internet as a platform for linguistic resources tuned to the interests of specialists and non-specialists alike in the mid-1990s. Among the LRC's freely available online offerings, [Early Indo-European OnLine \(EIEOL\)](#) provides a collection of lesson series serving as linguistic overviews of many of the most ancient Indo-European languages such as Old English, Hittite, Latin, Old Russian, Sanskrit, and Tocharian.

These series strive to provide an introduction to the basic structures of the respective languages, highlight issues of scholarly debate, guide readers in the reading and analysis of texts, and situate the languages and their documents within their cultural and historical context. The series assumes no

special knowledge of the languages or linguistics on the part of the reader yet provide a foundation both for pursuing linguistic study as a specialist, or for incorporating the fruits of close study of frequently inaccessible ancient texts into lines of inquiry and interest in a range of disciplines.



The University of Texas at Austin
Linguistics Research Center

Texas German in Namibia

Six members of the Texas German Dialect Project were scheduled to travel to Windhoek, Namibia, in March of 2020 to attend the 3-day long conference "German Abroad 4," the follow-up conference to the first three German Abroad conferences in Vienna (Austria), Austin (Texas), and Erfurt (Germany). TGDP members were scheduled to deliver presen-



tations on a diverse range of topics, including "The forms, meanings, and functions of *mit* in Texas German," "The Jasper-

Ferdinand Dialect," "How reliable is the Eikel data?," "Rhotics, /u:/, and diphthongization in Texas German," "Lexical domains of

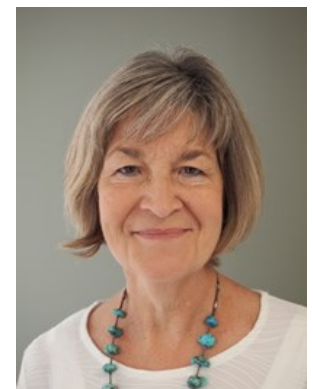
English use in Texas German," and "Functions of auxiliary *tun* in Texas German." Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic led to travel restrictions and German Abroad 4 had to be canceled on very short notice. German Abroad 4 has been rescheduled for September 2021.

Featured TGDP alum: Karen Rösch

Dr. Karen Rösch is a native Texan and received her PhD in Germanic Linguistics at the University of Texas in 2009. In 2002, she heard about a professor (Dr. Hans Boas) who was interviewing German speakers in the tiny Texas Ger-

man community of Doss where she lived. Because her grandmother was a Texas German, she became interested in the TGDP and offered to host and conduct interviews at her home. This led her to the decision to write her dissertation on

one of its varieties spoken mainly in Medina County, Texas Alsatian, and was the start of a lasting relationship with the TGDP. In 2014, she was offered a position at Indiana University-Purdue University in Indi-
cont. on p. 8



Dr. Karen Rösch



Cowboys in Lederhosen: *A new online course on Texas German history, culture, and language*

The TGDP team is currently developing a new college-level online course on Texas German history, culture, and language. This is part of the TGDP's educational outreach mission, and is an expansion of the educational outreach workshops that the TGDP has hosted at UT Austin in 2017, 2018, and 2019.

The new course, called *Cowboys in Lederhosen*, aims to highlight how intertwined history, culture, politics, identity, and language are through an exploration of the case study of the development and evolution of German settlements in Texas. The course will be filled with authentic materials such as Texas German fam-

ily letters, recordings from Texas German interviews, and articles from historical newspapers, as well as video lectures by well-renowned experts in the field, such as UT's own Jim Kearney and Walter Kamphoefner, a professor of history at Texas A & M. The course is split into four time periods. The first part covers the period of the arrival of the first substantial wave of settlers from German-speaking areas of Europe. The second discusses the period of the Civil War, the second wave of immigration, and the establishment of the German Belt in Texas. For the third part the course moves to the events related to WWI

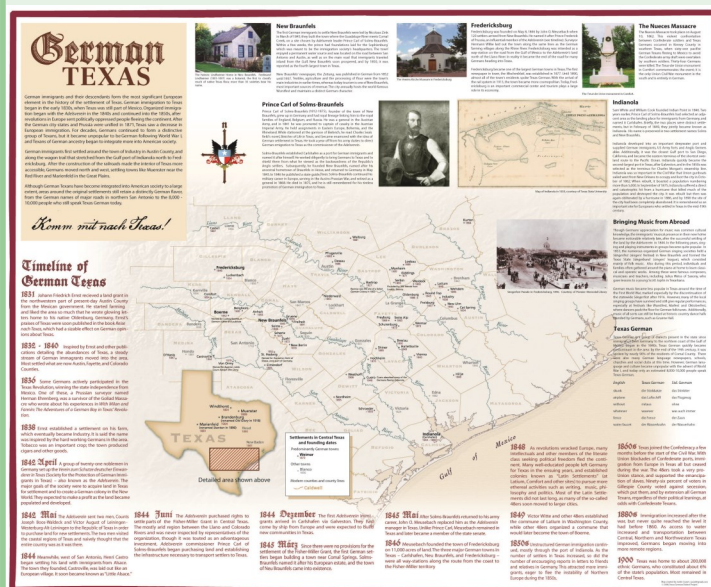
and its aftermath, including anti-German sentiment and questions of what it meant to be an "American". The final section deals with the time period stretching from WWII through today, including the decline and maintenance of Texas German, the preservation of Texas German culture and language, and the connections which exist between Texas and German-speaking Europe today. Each of these time periods will have explicit historical, cultural, political, and linguistic topics, helping to highlight how these different aspects are interrelated and affect each other.

This course will be taught in English and no previous

knowledge of German is required. It is currently being developed in such a way that it can be taught online if necessary, but will also be able to be taught in person. We aim to teach the course during the next academic year.



Members of a 19th century Texas German shooting club



The German Texas map is available exclusively from the TGDP for \$40.00 (includes shipping and handling). See enclosed order form for details.

Featured: Texas German Map

Show your Texas German pride and contribute to the Texas German Endowment at the University of Texas at Austin by purchasing one of our high-quality prints of the history of German immigration into Texas!

Donated for fundraising purposes by mapmaker and German American Justin Cozart, this **beautiful 34"x28" map** includes a chronology of the history of Texas Germans dating back to 1831, when Johann Friedrich Ernst first fell in love with the Hill Country and wrote a book about it, *Reise nach Texas*. It also explains key concepts in German immigration, such as the role of the *Adelsverein*, an organization that was instrumental in the settling of Texas, the founding of Texas German towns, basic differences between Texas and Standard German, the popularity of German music, and more. **Contact the TGDP for yours today!**

Support the Texas German Endowment at the University of Texas at Austin: Purchase a Texas German Map!

The Texas German Dialect Project (TGDP) is proud to offer a **beautiful 34x28" map** of German Texas for purchase (**see previous page for image**). Surrounding the map of Central Texas are several paragraphs about important Texas German people, places and events, and an extensive timeline of German Texas from 1844 to 1900. The maps cost **\$40.00 each, including shipping** in a 36" cardboard tube mailer via USPS.

Please fill out this order form completely and return with payment to:

Department of Germanic Studies
Texas German Dialect Project
1 University Station C3300, Burdine 336
The University of Texas at Austin
Austin, TX 78712

All proceeds from this map benefit the Texas German Endowment. Delivery will take 2-3 weeks.

Billing information:

Name (Last, First) _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Home Phone _____ Other Phone _____
Email _____

Would you like to include a donation amount of your choice with your purchase?

(Donations are tax-deductible.)

☐ **Yes!** I have added an extra donation in the amount of \$ _____ ☐ No

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Form of payment:

☐ **Check** enclosed made payable to University of Texas at Austin. Please write "Texas German Endowment" in the memo line.

☐ **Credit card:**

☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover ☐ American Express

Credit Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____

Name on Card _____

Shipping address: ☐ Same as above ☐ Alternative address - indicated below

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Signature x _____ **Date** _____



TGDP remote interviews, cont.

cont. from p. 1

plete, while interviews further away would take an entire day or sometimes multiple days, requiring an overnight stay at a hotel. This is how the TGDP has interviewed more than 850 Texas German speakers across the Lone Star State since 2001. Today however, instead of meeting in person, interviewers and Texas Germans meet over the phone or on the computer.

While we look forward to offering in-person interviews again in the near future, remote interviews have been a wonderful alternative and have allowed us to continue with our mission of collecting and preserving Texas German history and heritage while travel and visitation restrictions are in place. Remote interviews allow for greater flexibility. An interview can be broken up into multiple, shorter conversations on different days, which can be more comfort-

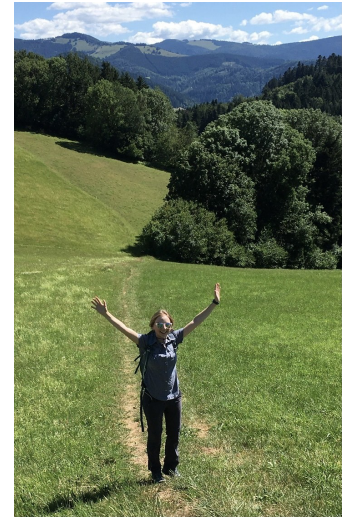
able and convenient for some speakers. In addition, an interviewer can talk with people throughout Texas in the same day without spending the majority of the day driving. There are some locations that are more challenging for interviewers to get to because of their distance from Austin, but when driving time is no longer a concern, it becomes much easier to interview more people in different corners of Texas.

That being said, meeting in-person has its advantages. It allows interviewers to record using high quality audio and video equipment. In addition, Zoom requires a high-speed internet connection as well as a computer or phone with a microphone and a camera, which not everyone has access to. Since April 2020, we have interviewed 20 Texas German speakers remotely. If you know of any Texas German speakers, please contact us.

New TGDP Team Member:

Mia Orlandella

Mia Orlandella joined the TGDP in September 2020 as an undergraduate research assistant. She is an undergraduate student at UT Austin double-majoring in business finance and German. She started taking German classes in high school and decided to continue pursuing her passion for the language at UT after participating in a life-changing exchange trip to Amberg, Germany. Mia became interested in the TGDP after learning about the project through an intro to linguistics course taught by Dr. Marc Pierce. Aside from the TGDP, she is involved in the Germanic Studies Department as the president of Delta Phi Alpha Ger-



Mia Orlandella

man Honors Society, DJ and co-host of the German radio show *Es Klingt Wie Deutsch*, and as an officer for the German club. She looks forward to learning more about the Texas German dialect and culture while working with the TGDP.

New TGDP Team Member: Bradley Weiss

Bradley Weiss is a second year PhD student in the Department of Germanic Studies at UT Austin. Originally from Kansas, he has a background in Classical Languages and Linguistics from his undergraduate studies at the University of Kansas, and studied German linguistics at the graduate level in South Korea before coming

to UT in the Fall of 2019. His research interests include historical linguistics, multilingualism, speech island communities, and heritage languages. Before joining the TGDP as Graduate Research Assistant to manage the project in September 2020, Bradley conducted field work with speakers of Low German dialects in Io-

wa and Illinois, as well as with Korean speakers of German who migrated to Germany as guest workers in the 1960s and 1970s. Before joining the TGDP as a Graduate Research Assistant, Bradley helped conduct interviews with Texas German speakers as a TGDP volunteer.



Bradley Weiss

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AS REPORTED BY



Plans for 2021

- ◆ Record more Texas German speakers.
- ◆ Continue work on comparative German speech islands archive and make it available to the public.
- ◆ Develop a concept for producing a museum exhibition on Texas German language, culture, and history.

Alkek, cont.

cont. from p. 2

overseeing the creation, production, and mailing of the 2019 TGDP newsletter, among many other things. We are extremely grateful for the generous financial support from the Alkek Foundation as it has enabled the TGDP to continue its mission of interviewing as many remaining Texas German speakers as possible (the dialect is expected to go extinct in the next 20 years) and archiving these interviews for future generations while at the same time educating students and the general public about the impact of German immigration on the history, culture, and languages of Texas.



Margo Blevins with Calvin Rode and his sons Anthony, William, and Edward at Rode's in Fredericksburg, Texas

Rösch, cont.

cont. from p. 3

anapolis and discovered that there were similar small German-speaking communities there. Using the TGDP as a model, she created the Indiana German Dialect Project (IGDP) in order to document and preserve the disappearing German dialects spoken there. Her Indiana and Texas German recordings are currently housed in the Texas German Dialect Archive (TGDA), along with recordings of other German dialects spoken in North America.

TGDP website improvements

The TGDP has added some small improvements to its website, www.tgdp.org in an effort to make it more user friendly. Drop-down menus have been added to the main menu, the resource lists have been restructured to make them easier to find, and several webpages have been added, including a brief introduction to Texas German history, an archive of our past newsletters, and a showcase of previous TGDP presentations and publications.



The improved drop-down menu feature on the TGDP website