



Heinrich Schiller (Germany), President 1980 – 1988

Joachim Wieler, Weimar

Thanks to the Editor of this book for the invitation to continue the series of IASSW Presidents with Prof. Dr. Heinrich Schiller, MSW. It is an honour to pay tribute to one of my role models as a social worker and social work teacher and to a friend of many years.

When I ponder the title of this portrait, I have the feeling that life for one world sounds a bit like a life sentence, and that is intentional. In fact – at least to some extent – it is true. It certainly didn't always seem easy for Heinrich, and not all of his decisions were popular. But he certainly lived it and will hopefully continue „...to give us, in this world, many more impulses“, as one of his biographers wrote on the occasion of his eightieth birthday. And here we are: Several quite lengthy biographies have been written about Heinrich Schiller and it would seem a little redundant to just add another one. Besides, Heinrich has written a comprehensive autobiographical life story, which I highly recommend, because what could be more interesting than his own un-manipulated account (Heinrich Schiller 1999)? But it is in German and thus not accessible to everyone who might be interested. So, my intention is to summarize from the available materials and then – since Heinrich is very much alive! – look him up and interview him for a very fresh update. So the beginning of this biographical project dates back just a little while.



The interview took place before the 18th World Congress of the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) 2006 in Munich. I visited him for several reasons: 1. To pay tribute to someone whose life was largely dedicated to international relations and thus to international social work. 2. For an update on his everyday life and – despite his advanced years – his current involvement in social work issues. 3. In particular to find out about his involvement with IFSW and IASSW, and 4. To get warmed up for a talk show that I was designated to moderate at the Munich Congress. Let me elaborate on these points but in reverse order, beginning with our acquaintance from almost the time when the modern IFSW was founded.

A Personal Warm-Up

Since 1960 I had the great privilege of many direct encounters and indirect contacts with Heinrich Schiller. I read about him and his work on Social Group Work (Heinrich Schiller 1966) when I was studying social work in the early 1960s. I tried to study at „his“ school in Nürnberg, Germany, where he was teaching at that time. Unfortunately, that did not work out. But nonetheless he became a sort of role model and I am sure not only for me! Now he is still involved on many levels and stages after he was emerited a good many years ago as President and Professor of the Protestant School of Social Work (the Evangelische Stiftungsfachhochschule in Nürnberg).

It is in his role as a model – as a *Vorbild* – that he made a great impression on individual students, social workers and on the profession as a whole. Many of us followed in his footsteps, and in doing so I want to focus on Heinrich's life and get to the bottom of what may have motivated him a) for social work and b) for international social work. Was it – partly perhaps – that he grew up under unusual circumstances and political turmoil, i.e.

- growing up bilingually because his father had spent fifteen years in England,
- his parents being of Christian and Jewish background,
- his early childhood in children's homes,
- membership in the Christian boy scouts while it was still possible, as an alternative to the Hitler Youth,
- as a mixed Aryan-Jewish family facing disadvantages even though they were not deported,
- his irregular school experiences in war-torn Berlin,
- the follow-up in a nearly destroyed and soon divided city and then
- the challenges of so-called re-education following WWII,

which led Heinrich first into practical social work functions and then into professional training?

The end of WWII left parts of the world in a shambles. It ended the darkest period in German history. Heinrich's life in literally ruined Berlin went on, it also started „from scratch“ and it needed to be reorganized.

Transitions

Building on previous experiences and particularly on youth work and scouting, Heinrich began teacher's training in the eastern part of the divided city of Berlin, in the Soviet Sector. Soon he was arrested in East Berlin for distributing critical leaflets, questioning political and administrative practices at the university, and in 1949 he left the Humboldt University in East Berlin. Parallel to his involvement in neighborhood groups and youth committees in West Berlin he continued his studies at the Free University (*Freie Universität*) in the US Sector. At that time it was still possible to move from one part of the city to another. At the Free University, he turned more towards group aspects of education and also to social psychology, the study of small group phenomena.

The reeducation schemes that were offered by the Allies were soon a welcome opportunity for young adults to get engaged in various international activities. Heinrich was one of those who was lucky and took advantage of them. Earlier as a boy scout he had been enthusiastic about the international aspects of the youth movement (*Jugendbewegung*) but travels to other countries was tightly controlled during the Nazi period. In 1949, within the framework of an exchange program of the National Social Welfare Assembly, Heinrich was invited to study social work in the United States. Being invited to go overseas and study social group work in

Minnesota, Minneapolis, USA, seemed to set him on a new course – maintaining his deepfelt social ambitions and studying professional social work as a career.

Within two years he was able to finish with a Master in Social Work degree (MSW). And what made it particularly important for him: He did it under the guidance and leadership of a refugee from Germany, Professor Gisela Konopka, world-wide known as „the mother of social group work“ and with countless publications in more than a dozen languages (Konopka 1988, Schiller 1998 and 2004a, Wieler/Zeller 1995).

Heinrich Schiller did not limit himself to social group work but extended his studies also to social case work and community organization and thus to the developing generic or integrated approach to social work methods. He did practical social work during his concurrent field placement. He not only benefited from supervision in his own field work in the United States but was able to apply it to other field work students. He was among the first to adapt supervision as a secondary method in social work to the needs in Germany and he still writes about it (Schiller 2006 a).

Learning and Teaching

In 1951 Heinrich returned to Germany and the following ten years were filled with more learning, teaching and conceptualizing social work training. He attended seminars at Erlangen University and taught at the School of Social Work in Nuremberg. At the age of 27 he was younger than some of his students. Together with the director of that school, Dr. Dora von Caemmerer, he developed an integrated concept of social work methods that was influenced by his experiences in the USA but adapted to the particular needs in Germany. This unique approach was adopted in many social work schools throughout Germany.

He finished his own PhD in 1963 and published his dissertation on „Social Group Work as a Method in Social Work“ - *Gruppenpädagogik als Methode der Sozialarbeit*“ (Schiller 1966). Group work as such was not new in Germany, but the adaptation to social work with a broader view than education, pedagogy or „*Erziehungswissenschaft*“ as *the* leading discipline for social work had a different meaning.

With the joining of down-to-earth social work practice and a high level of abstraction, Heinrich set an early example of putting the two together: pragmatism and and at the same time social work theory. Therefore, another target for change in the German scenario of social work education was very closely related to narrowing the gap between practice and theory. In this context, he stood firmly for the necessary increase of experienced social workers to train their own successors. His own observations in other countries had lead him to his own guideline in this respect: „The development of a profession necessitates academically educated and trained teachers of their own profession“ (Kock/Kersting 2004, p. 17).

The large majority of professors teaching social workers in Germany (I estimate at least 75 percent of them, J.W.) are not social workers themselves and in order to earn a PhD in social work or a DSW (doctor in social work), they will either need to go abroad where that is possible or find departments of social sciences at the traditional German universities that are open to specific social work topics and closely related research. Only the traditional universities in Germany are entitled to award doctorates of any kind. Yet, the vast majority of social workers up to now have not been trained at the traditional universities. In order to understand these developments I will interject a very brief discourse that may be familiar for

some of you in countries where social work education has not been a longstanding and integral part of tertiary education at university level.

A Quick Detour on Some Aspects of Social Work Education in Germany

Social Work in Germany has been taught mainly at special schools since 1899. One reason given by pioneers of social work, and particularly by Alice Salomon (1872-1948): The level of abstraction is too high at the university level or – vice versa – people with university degrees were presumably not inclined to do the down-to-earth work that typical social work requires. Besides, while dedicated women (through *Frauen- und Mädchengruppen für soziale Hilfsarbeit*) were engaged in practical social work with concurrent lectures from 1893 onwards, and when the first school of social work – with a one year full time program – was opened by Alice Salomon in 1899 in Berlin, women in Germany were not allowed to study at universities. This changed in 1908. Still, only a few universities have offered courses on social welfare since that time, i.e. in the area of child welfare and related statistics and usually with less field work experience than in the „lower“ schools of social work (*Soziale Frauenschulen*). Since then the struggle has continued regarding the establishment of a unified approach in social work training and education. This does not mean that there are not good examples of how the two can and did meet. Just to mention one example: Hertha Kraus, another international figure in social work, who was forced to leave Germany (Schirmmacher 2002), studied „*Fürsorgewissenschaft*“ at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University in Frankfurt on the Main. She received a PhD there and became well known in social work, a) in practice at the age of 23 as the youngest social worker with a PhD as the head of the Public Welfare Department of Cologne as well as b) in teaching in the USA as an emigré social worker, in writing about social casework and in establishing community centers in Germany after WWII.

This split between *more abstract* university training and *more practical* training at special schools lasted until 1971, when a dual approach in social work training was established in western Germany, with a majority of Universities of Applied Sciences (*Fachhochschulen*) and the existing traditional Universities. After the unification, these changes were extended to the eastern part of Germany, where new social work programs were started in 1991. This entire process was an upgrading of all social work training to the tertiary level of education, but still with a significant difference, namely that only the traditional universities have the privilege to prepare social workers with the necessary credentials – i.e. the doctorate – that are fundamental to foster and eventually create an acknowledged profession and a science in its own right. In other words, there remains a double standard in social work education that Heinrich and others are working hard to overcome. With this, back to Heinrich Schiller.

More Impact Through Leadership and International Engagement

There is a long „ladder“ of Heinrich’s career to leadership and his involvement in international social work. Fifty years ago, when he was a young teacher of social work in Nuremberg, he was delegated to participate in a rather important International Conference of the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW) that took place 1956 in Munich, which was the first such conference in Germany after the war. ICSW, as one of the international NGOs, represents private and public social work agencies or in other words: the field of social work practice (www.icsw.org). Members of the International

Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW), representing the schools and training institutions of social work (www.iassw-aiets.org) also attended this conference. And it was during this conference that – after much preparation – the final step was taken to set up the

International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) the organization representing professional social workers around the world (www.ifsw.org). All three organizations have their roots in one of the largest international conferences, the Quinzaine Social in 1928 in Paris.

Heinrich remembers concrete experiences that seem almost irrelevant, which we laugh about when we discuss them today. During the fiftieth anniversary of IFSW which took place 2006, again in Munich, where it was founded, he was on a panel with VIPs from the three international bodies mentioned during the opening ceremony. He told us with a lot of humor:

„I took part not only at the ICSW Conference, but also at the foundation meeting of IFSW. In those days I was not yet a member of a social work professional organisation, because I had problems choosing between more than ten different organisations in Germany many of which did not even accept men for membership. Therefore this conference was of great interest to me because suddenly I was a member of a world-wide organization, in which they accepted even men.“ (DVD of the IFSW Congress Opening Ceremony 2006).

One of the goals of IFSW had been to support the unification of professional organizations in every country because they were divided by gender, ethnicity, religion, focus on methods (i.e. case work or group work) etc. Some countries were faster and more successful in forming unified professional associations than Germany, i.e. the USA in 1955 and the UK in 1965. Therefore he worked hard for a unified and strong profession „at home“ and also in other countries. His life work took several different directions and more challenges lay ahead of him.

Father, Head of Schools and First Foreign Assignment

Besides finishing his academic degrees and establishing his position in professional social work, he founded his own family – together with Erika, his longstanding friend from scouting times - and they had three sons. In 1961 He became the director of the School of Social Work in Nuremberg, but soon he ventured out into the world again.

As the Director of the Public School of Social Work he tried to fuse three small social work schools into one but the bureaucratic process proved to be difficult and lengthy. Then the United Nations offered him a position as visiting professor at the Thammasat University in Bangkok, Thailand. This was connected with the status of a diplomat and enabled him to go with his entire family. For one year (1965/66) he had two particular assignments: a) the implementation of Social Group Work into the curriculum and b) the establishment of counselling and continuing education as part of the reform of residential care in Thailand.

Back in Germany the efforts to upgrade social work education to the tertiary or university level were still underway. When in 1971 most of the „Special Schools of Social Work“ (since 1920 *Fachschulen* and after 1960 *Höhere Fachschulen* in West Germany) were transformed into Universities of Applied Sciences (*Fachhochschulen*), Heinrich was the first President of the Protestant School of Social Work in Nuremberg. He was first instated by the church for one year and then re-elected by the school for four terms until his retirement in 1987. These were twenty years of activity in the German educational system under still difficult circumstances and also in the international field, which needed to be regained after the NS dictatorship. Here is again a very brief excursion to one of the consequences for our profession.

After 12 years of fascism (1933-1945) educational responsibility and the power connected with it were decentralized in Germany by the Allies after WWII – and they still are. Germany's sixteen federal states have educational sovereignty and it is therefore rather difficult to make reasonably centralized decisions concerning standards that are accepted on the federal level and are also compatible with EU standards and beyond. The discussion regarding federalism versus centralization, the search for and the outcome of reasonable and nation-wide consensus, continues to this day and this is certainly of utmost importance to the definition of social work as a unified profession and training for it.

As Head of his school Heinrich Schiller was an active member of various boards of deans, directors, rectors and presidents of schools of social work, and the boards of private and church related schools (i.e. *Rektorenkonferenz kirchlicher Fachhochschulen – RKF* and *Rektorenkonferenz Evangelischer Fachhochschulen - REF* etc.) where the above problems and challenges were discussed. When many of the schools were still headed by women, Heinrich was the first man, who was literally, to use the nowadays rather controversial term: Chairman of the Advanced Schools of Social Pedagogics (Höhere Fachschulen für Sozialpädagogik - HFSP) in Germany from 1968 – 1970. Meanwhile, we are sorely aware in Germany that gender trends have shifted. Many more students as well as practitioners in social work are women while teachers and administrators are mostly men.

Through these responsibilities in the various committees, on the basis of his solid involvement on the national level and also through his overseas experience he was predestined to become more involved in international complexities.

On The Executive Committee of IFSW

Heinrich Schiller's efforts to unify the rather diverse scene of professional associations lead to his nomination by one of the former German Associations of Social Workers (*Deutscher Berufsverband der Sozialarbeiter – DBS*) and in 1972 he was elected as representative to the Executive Committee of IFSW.

It is impossible to describe everything that happened during that period in detail. He took part in international conferences in more than 30 countries, he participated in the planning of several and was in charge of the Regional Conference of IFSW in Vienna 1977. One of the major tasks that he described in different biographical accounts was the organizational development of the International Federation of Social Workers, which had been hosted in Europe and in the United States before it became a relatively independent organization.

Partly under the leadership of Käthe Rawiel, the only German president of IFSW (1968-1972), who had also been trained as a social worker in Germany and in the United States, IFSW had moved its headquarters to Switzerland with Catherine Chuard as the first hired Secretary General. When this position became vacant, Heinrich Schiller, together with Oyvind Tutvedt from Norway and Gerhard Mensinga from the Netherlands, formed the search committee for a successor. They made the inspired choice of Andrew and his wife Ellen Mouravieff-Apostol, a team that was extremely successful for many years. IFSW, evolved from the International Permanent Secretariat of Social Workers (IPSSW) with 12 countries in 1956 now encompasses more than 80 countries with nearly 500,000 social workers from around the world (www.ifsw.org).

One central professional theme Heinrich describes is the formulation of the first International Code of Ethics in Social Work that was internationally accepted 1976 in Puerto Rico. In his notes for our talk show in Munich last year he remembered:

„I recall the difficulties we had among all the members of IFSW to agree and accept a common code of ethics. I was the one who was elected to formulate – from the existing codes in the USA, the Netherlands and other countries – a first acceptable proposal and only after long discussions and deliberations were we able to define the first international code of ethics“ (Schiller 2006 b).

In the negotiations for the follow-up world conference in Israel, there was concern in some countries as to whether or not all countries could participate. Heinrich told me that

„... some colleagues were worried that social workers from some countries may not be allowed entry into Israel.“ He and others were able to persuade a majority of board members of IFSW and IASSW to go ahead with the planning. As it turned out, the conferences in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem turned out to be very successful. The supporters were not only acknowledged for their optimism but another one of the international conferences was conducted 1998 in Jerusalem.

His involvement with IFSW speaks for his closeness and identification with practical social work, but it also created a sort of dual identification and identity. All the issues dealt with in the professional organization were extremely important for social work training and education as well. He represented both sides and was encouraged by both the schools and the professional association. *„It was also cheaper for both organizations...“* he commented with a smile during the talk show.

As an experienced teacher, head of school and chairperson of various school associations in Germany, he was nominated for the presidency in the International Association of Schools of Social Work.

President of IASSW from 1980 until 1988

The first possible link with IASSW that Heinrich remembers is an anecdote that he told me when I was working on my dissertation about Alice Salomon, the first president of IASSW, and I was looking for eyewitnesses. *„Yes,“* he said, *„ I most likely met her once. It must have been when I was around five years old and during the founding time of IASSW. The International Committee of Schools of Social Work, as it was called first, had just been founded 1929 in her school in Berlin and she was the first elected president. At that time I was in some kind of a preschool program there when a Grande Dame with an important name and function visited our institution. She was fairly tall and slender and from all the descriptions and the stories I had heard of her, it must have been her!“* The anecdote may be apocryphal but it marks an important development in his life that lay ahead of him. Who would have thought that little Heinrich would follow in Alice Salomon's footsteps and become – after Salomon – the only German president of IASSW until now?

The different stages of IASSW and the detailed development will be described in many of the contributions about Presidents and Secretary Generals, so I will focus on a few highlights as well as dimmed lights during his two terms of office. I will start with the International Congress of IASSW in Hongkong 1980. Due to a typhoon along the coast of China he almost did not make it to Hongkong on time. It was an election by mail ballot and *„... my election*

was celebrated with the Board of IFSW and the German delegation high above the water overlooking Victoria Harbour and Kowloon. But at that time I told my friend Joachim Wieler: „This will not be an easy presidency’, and I was right!“ (Schiller 1999, p. 312).

It was there at the General Meeting that a European Region of IASSW was founded. A good example had been set much earlier by the Scandinavian countries, where a very active „Nordic Committee“ existed. *„Together with the representative from the Netherlands, John Vissers, I had contributed to this long overdue union... (together with the „Nordic Committee“, J.W.)... by drafting the bylaws for the extended European Region of IASSW. This activity possibly added the votes of the European Schools to my election as President (Schiller 1999, p.311).“ We were particularly happy and proud in Germany, because it had taken many years before someone from Germany followed in the footsteps of Alice Salomon. Hopes and enthusiasm ran high. It had taken more than 35 years to rebuild enough trust for someone from Germany to be elected into this office. Even the German Government took note and was supportive by providing a travel grant for his two terms of office.*

Let us briefly recall: With beginnings at the Quinzaine Social in Paris in 1928 the „International Committee“ was officially founded in Berlin 1929. It was on the 12th and 13th of June, to be exact, that 15 persons from 7 countries negotiated the details, accepted the by-laws and thus officially founded the International Committee of Schools of Social Work. The celebration took place in the roof garden on top of Alice Salomon’s school of social work (Wieler 1989). When the Nazis pressured Alice Salomon to give up her presidency she put this before the international board and was repeatedly reinstated as president. As time went on under Nazi rule the German schools left the International Committee. Shortly after WWII Alice Salomon pleaded with the board to invite the German schools, but the board understandably decided to wait until the schools applied for membership of their own accord. This happened again in 1951 when the schools had recovered from the aftermath of the war.

Later, the International Secretariat of IASSW had its home base in New York City under the long-lasting leadership of Katherine Kendall as Secretary General. When Marguerite Mathieu from Canada succeeded her and Heinrich was president in his first term the Secretariat moved once again to Europe, to Vienna in Austria into one of the schools of social work. This turned out to be somewhat risky because the funding for new quarters by the Austrian Government was decided year by year and was thus a matter of hope and good luck. The slow deterioration of the US\$ (the currency in which all membership fees were collected) did not help to maintain a solid financial foundation. *Aside from this: „ ...the financial means of IASSW, just as in ICSW and IFSW, came from the inviting countries and the registration fees for the international congresses. ... Some income for a variety of projects particularly in Africa, Asia and Latin America came from other international organizations and foundations and from the World Bank“ (Schiller 1999, p. 312). The activities continued.*

As one of the concrete changes for the annual board meetings between the world conferences, Heinrich suggested and succeeded in combining the board meetings with the regional conferences: a) for economic reasons, b) to stay in close contact with the membership and c) to do it – whenever possible – conjointly with the sister organisations IFSW and ICSW.

The next three World Conferences took place 1982 in Brighton, UK, in 1984 in Montreal, Canada, and in 1986 in Tokyo, Japan. Until then, the conferences were organized by inviting well-known speakers on congress themes (invitational papers). This format was changed for the first time in Brighton by having a theme, in this case „Education For Social Work

Practice: Selected International Models“, followed by a call for papers. This approach paved the way for more decentralization and participation. Another change that Heinrich highlighted in his memoirs, had to do with the drifting apart of the international organizations – perhaps a negative side of an otherwise emancipatory process. In other words: at times some members of ICSW have understood themselves as the „elders“ in international development and IASSW and IFSW as the „offspring.“ But over the years the „children“ have grown up and all three need to remember their common base. Or as in Heinrich’s words: Brighton was a historical congress,

„ ...because Chauncey Alexander, the President of IFSW, and I were successful for the first time in merging the two organizations into a joint international congress. On the basis of my experience in both organizations I could never understand why teachers and practitioners of the same profession needed to discuss their issues separately” (Schiller 1999, pp. 312-313). His pledge to support future joint congresses of the social services (ICSW), the schools of social work (IASSW) and the professional organizations (IFSW) was even more pronounced during the talk show at the Fiftieth Anniversary of IFSW in 2006 – this was seconded by the former president of ICSW, Dirk Jarré. At the moment, as it appears now, the International Conference in 2110, again in Hong Kong, will be held conjointly by all three organizations.

Defining and finding consensus on the content of social work training and education in the international context has always been and is one of the central, if not the most important challenges for IASSW. Therefore, the formulation of a position paper for „IASSW Standards for Social Work Training“ that gradually emerged during Heinrich’s terms of office must be considered a milestone in this respect. Experts from all world regions participated in this endeavour and set the pace for continued improvement of this open-ended document.

Concerning world politics during his terms of office: the emerging hope and the changes with Glasnost and Perestroika led Heinrich and the new Secretary General, Vera Mehta from India, to start consultations with colleagues in Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary.

Less fortunate were the ongoing political conflicts in South Africa: *„Our friends in the Scandinavian schools demanded stronger positioning vis á vis the Apartheid Government and the exclusion of the member schools. The Board of IASSW found this to be too harsh because the schools were clearly struggling for human rights in South Africa. This divisive issue lead to heated discussions and almost split the organization. A tight vote for the exclusion of the schools was hard to digest and the following controversies with IFSW unfortunately resulted again in separate conferences in 1988“* (Schiller 1999, p. 314). It is good to know now that Apartheid ended soon after this and South Africa and its schools were gladly reinstated.

And there was also a „storm“ on the home front. The plans for the 1988 conference were geared for Berlin and I recall the enthusiasm in the Organizing Committee. Preparation was in full swing but the German government refused to cover the major expenses to make this conference possible. Austria jumped in and Heinrich comments on this with a tone of disappointment in his reflexions: *„It was a shame that a relatively small country, Austria, was able to drum up the necessary finances while relatively rich Germany was unable to do so“* (Schiller 1999, p. 314).

As the record shows, these eight years were indeed not the easiest ones for Heinrich, but after he passed on the „baton“ to his successor, Ralph Garber of Canada, he summed up his experiences:

„There is no question that these activities and travels to so many countries and the human contacts involved belonged to the most interesting and rewarding experiences of my entire professional life“ (Schiller 1999, p. 311).

At the end of his active commitment in various worlds but with the vision of One World, Heinrich Schiller was awarded high honours by the German government (*Bundesverdienstkreuz 1. Klasse*) for his tireless engagement and his achievements in the field of national and international social concerns.

As a dedicated social group worker, Heinrich was made an honorary member of the Association of Social Work With Groups.

Life After Retirement

As stated at the beginning, one of the biographical accounts on Heinrich ended with the hope that he will continue to be with us for many more years. Now at the age of 83, he is not only with us but is still amazingly active in contributing from his rich experience.

He is still lecturing on various topics, for instance in the German Section of the Association of Social Work With Groups – AASWG (*Society for Social Group Work*) and in the Gilde Soziale Arbeit (*Guild of Social Work*). He is still participating in special events such as the opening ceremony of the 18th International Congress of IFSW in Munich 2006 (Forum Sozial 2006). He is writing for professional journals on social work methods, i.e. on the primary ones, the trio of Case Work, Group Work and Community Organization (Schiller 2004 b), on supervision as a secondary method (Schiller 2006 a) and is also engaged in biographical work on his professional models, i.e. Gisela Konopka (Schiller 1998 and 2004 a). Long before he became a guide for special and very interesting tours through one of the oldest and very beautiful Protestant Churches – the *Lorenzkirche* – in Nuremberg, Heinrich was on the Church Board for eighteen years and representative to the City Church Council. He participates in monthly services concerning current social issues. And Heinrich is still performing on stage, singing and playing the guitar, his performance interspersed with critical evaluations of his comprehensive repertoire from the German Youth Movement (*Jugendbewegung*). His songs have been recorded on several impressive and informative CDs including inspiring commentaries and they also exist on DVD. Heinrich, as an excellent and daring athlete, used to make handstands on the railings of bridges. I am glad that he assured me that he will not do that any longer. But what other surprises does he have in store for us?

Even though Heinrich's family is not often mentioned in this portrait, they were very present and engaged in his work, and they share many of his memories and concerns. I personally experienced and appreciate their great hospitality! He mentioned them in his German self portrait and this may well be repeated in English, as his final words in his own and in this account:

„The above contribution is dedicated to my beloved wife and my three sons who patiently and with a lot of humor dealt with the disadvantages of my frequent absences from home.“

Let me second this dedication, not in order to have the last word, but while I have written this for all of our colleagues, I like to finish with a personal note to you, Heinrich, and also to your family.

Exploring and making sense of discoveries, and turning knowledge into responsible social action have been driving forces in your life. You have demonstrated that it can be done with energy and with patience. You have set an admirable example for many of us. So keep on scouting – in the best sense of the word! This is what I wish you and Erika and also your extended family in the coming years and beyond.

Literature

Forum Sozial 2006: 50 Jahre IFSW – Weltkonferenz in Muenchen. Journal of Deutscher Berufsverband für Soziale Arbeit (German Association of Social Workers (DBSH)), 4.

Kock, W. and Kersting, H. 2004: Heinrich Schiller wird 80 Jahre alt, in: *Social Group Work Mobile*, 2, p. 17.

Konopka, G. 1988: *Courage and Love*. Edina, MN: Burgess Printing Co..

Schiller, H. 1963: *Gruppenpädagogik (Social Group Work) als eine Methode der Sozialarbeit*. 3rd Ed.. Wiesbaden-Biebrich: Haus Schwalbach.

Schiller, H. 1983: Current Situation and Trends in European Social Work Education, in: *International Social Work*, 3, pp. 1-6.

Schiller, H. 1997: Soziale Gruppenarbeit in Deutschland. Persönliche Erinnerungen und Erfahrungen, in: Nebel, G. and Woltmann-Zingsheim, B. (eds.): *Werkbuch für das Arbeiten mit Gruppen. Texte und Übungen zur Sozialen Gruppenarbeit*. Aachen: Kersting-IBS, pp. 277-327.

Schiller, H. 1998: Gisela Konopka. Klassikerinnen der Sozialen Arbeit, in: *GiSA, Rundbrief Soziale Arbeit – Gilde Soziale Arbeit*, 2.

Schiller, H. 1999: Heinrich Schiller * 17.10. 1924, in: Heitkamp, H. and Plewa, A. (eds.): *Soziale Arbeit in Selbstzeugnissen*. Freiburg i.Br.: Lambertus Verlag, pp. 281-321.

Schiller, H. 2004 a: Gisela Konopka (1910-2003). Klassikerinnen der Sozialen Arbeit, in: *Social Group Work Mobile*, 2, pp. 18-23

Schiller, H. 2004 b: Case Work, Group Work, Community Organization. Ein wohltönender Dreiklang, auch noch für die heutige und zukünftige Soziale Arbeit, in: *Forum Sozial*, 3, pp. 25-27.

Schiller, H. 2006 a: Unpublished notes for the Talk Show during the Opening Ceremony of the 18th International Congress of IFSW.

Schiller, H. 2006 b: Supervision als Instrument der Personalentwicklung, in: *GiSA, Rundbrief Soziale Arbeit – Gilde Soziale Arbeit*, 2, pp. 61-72.

Schirmacher, G. 2002: *Hertha Kraus – Zwischen den Welten*. Frankfurt/Main: Peter Lang – Europäischer Verlag der Wissenschaften.

Wieler, J. 1989: The Impact of Alice Salomon on Social Work Education, in: *Fachhochschulen für Sozialarbeit und Sozialpädagogik (Universities of Applied Sciences for Social Work and Social Pedagogy)* (eds.): *60 Jahre IASSW – International Association of Schools of Social Work – eine Festschrift*. Berlin: Fachhochschule für Sozialarbeit und Sozialpädagogik, pp. 15-26.

Wieler, J. and Zeller, S. (eds.) 1995: *Emigrierte Sozialarbeit – Portraits vertriebener SozialarbeiterInnen*. Freiburg i.Br.: Lambertus Verlag.

Websites

International Association of Schools of Social Work – IASSW (www.iassw-aiets.org)

International Council on Social Welfare – ICSW (www.icsw.org)

International Federation of Social Workers – IFSW (www.ifsw.org)

Author's Address:

Dr. phil. Joachim Wieler, Professor emeritus of
University of Applied Sciences Erfurt
Department of Social Work
Merketalstrasse 19
D-99425 Weimar
Germany
Tel: ++49 3643 503217
Email: wieler@fh-erfurt.de / j.wieler@t-online.de

**Social Work
& Society**