

THE NEWSPAPER THAT COULDN'T DIE

A HISTORY OF THE HIGH SCHOOL NEWSPAPER WITH TWO UNUSUAL NAMES

By Bob McQuitty, NAA Historian Emeritus

In the 20th century it seemed that every high school had a school newspaper which, if it did not bring very much true news to the students, did offer a record of what the students were doing and thinking. In many high schools today there may be an online publication but few have a print newspaper. Nürnberg American High School has a school newspaper tradition that is almost 50 years old, and a print version of its alumni newspaper is still being published.

In the course of that time, there have been two very different but interesting names for that newspaper. One of those names proved **inappropriate** and the other has been **imperfectly understood**.

A school named Erlangen High (the next year Nürnberg High School) was born in a private residence in Erlangen in October 1946. On Jan. 22, 1947, there appeared the first issue of a weekly four-page mimeographed newspaper called the *Army Brat*. In its last issue for the first school year, the paper claimed to be the first successful high school newspaper in the European Theater. **Dick Regnier**, editor, and **Miss Claris Glick**, sponsor, had reason to be proud — though the sports teams were not as successful. See editorial cartoon at right.

In the fall of 1947, the school moved to 19 Tannenstrasse in Fürth. The next school year, the Nürnberg Tigers, whose school colors had been red and white, became the Nürnberg Green Devils because there were no red jerseys available. By 1950 the Nürnberg green and white Eagles had been created. In the spring of 1952, the American students moved into a new building on Fronmüllerstrasse, the school that most NHS alumni attended.

Although the *Army Brat* flourished for the next seven years, there was grumbling behind the curtain.

In May 1953, the last issue of the *Army Brat* was published. Alas, the descriptive name “Army Brat” wasn’t considered appropriate.

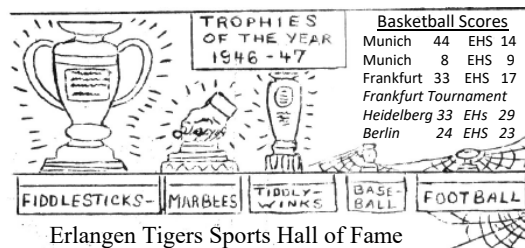
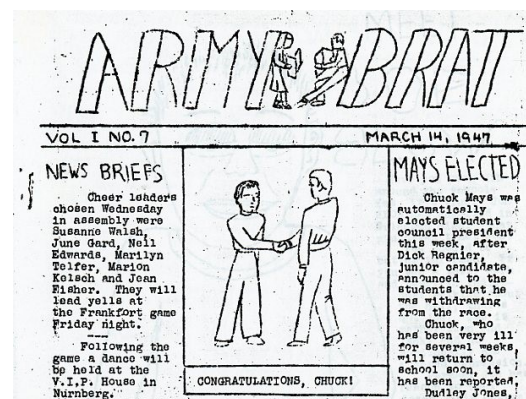
Barbara “Buzz” (Wickstrom) Chandler, ’55, was a coeditor when the newspaper’s name was changed. Chandler remembers that the administration or perhaps some students — or was it “Headquarters?” had suggested that the newspaper staffers should come up with a more appropriate name, something without a negative connotation. The staffers then held a contest to rename the paper.

The name chosen was not a common newspaper name like “Post” or “Times,” nor was it a name that alliterated like *Mustang Messenger* (Munich High School) or made some reference to the school: *Berlin Bear Facts*. The chosen name was the *NHS Trichter*, a German word meaning “funnel.” The person who offered the winning name is believed to be long-time teacher of French and German at the school, **Dr. Peter Kroner**, a Romanian native and graduate of Erlangen University.

In December, 1953 the *Army Brat* was quietly changed to the *Trichter*. The flag had the Nürnberg city crest on the left, a funnel in the middle, and an eagle on the right. This flag, with some variations, has been used to the present.

The originality and appropriateness of the name *Trichter* has not, however, always been clearly understood.

‘Army Brat’ Proved Inappropriate,
‘Trichter’ Imperfectly understood



An unscientific survey: This article appeared in 2nd issue of fall of 1971.

What is a Trichter?

Holly Sanger – a puzzle or tunnel
Norm Hawkins – a funnel
Brenda Andrews – a trick
Fritz Garrison – the Nürnberg news
Ted Seaman – a funnel
Connie Bowser – a trick
Marian Shepard – a public hanging
Bobby Sledge – reading is interesting
Don Behrman – a baby tractor

Of course, some of the respondents were trying to be cute, but this survey shows the problem of using a German word: only 2 of 10 got it.

Through the years, editors of the *Trichter* struggled to explain how a funnel relates to a newspaper. In 1957, Editor **Ethel (Walske) Lapitan**, '58, offered this explanation:

During the Middle Ages, Nürnberg was the most important trade center in Europe because nearly all the trade routes to the Orient passed through the city. Because all important cities need important people, Nürnberg began acquiring some of its own. Such famous men as Albrecht Dürer and Hans Sachs came from this great city.

With the coming of these noted people came the saying, '*Er hat die Weissheit mit dem Nürnberg Trichter eingegossen bekommen.*' Freely translated, this means 'He has gotten his wisdom poured in with the Nürnberg funnel.' This funnel is said to be used to pour knowledge into the heads of the citizens of Nürnberg even today.

Therefore, we use **our** Trichter to pour knowledge of what's going on around the school and dorm into the heads of the students here at Nürnberg High.

The second part of this explanation makes good sense but the first part does not. What does Nürnberg being an important trade center have to do with explaining how a funnel relates to a newspaper?

When **Robert McQuitty** arrived at NHS in the fall of 1958, he was unfamiliar with the tradition of the *Trichter*. McQuitty suggested a name change for the newspaper. What he actually said was reported to be "Trichter! That is the dumbest name for a newspaper I have ever heard." Though some staffers thought McQuitty probably needed some knowledge poured into his head via the Trichter, they agreed to running a contest to name the paper. **Luckily, no one entered the contest!**

In the fall of 1970, the Trichter name was challenged again. Newspaper staffers asked their readers for a new name. This time they even supplied three names to choose from: the Eagles' Eye, the Eagle Review, or the Eagle Spread. Once again, the students did not respond. As the Dec. 4, 1970, issue of the NHS *Trichter*, said, "**No one seemed to want it changed.**"

Before the 70s, the *Trichter* was essentially a mimeographed newspaper, with occasional printed issues, an expensive job done by German printers. Beginning in the fall of 1971, under the sponsorship of **Norene Mathern**, it became a four-page monthly printed by the off-set process.

Throughout the early 70s, the *Trichter* editors tried to keep the tradition of the newspaper's name alive by printing a brief history in the first issue of each school year. The first issue of the fall of 1971 put it this way:

A bit of history will describe how this newspaper received its name. During 1947, it was entitled the "Army Brat." Headquarters later suggested that the paper be named after something symbolic of Nürnberg. Staffers found that 14th century Nürnberg was a noted cultural center, and it was said that culture had been "funneled" into the city. Therefore, the paper was named *Trichter*, the German word for 'funnel.'

This explanation is somewhat helpful, but the idea of culture being "funneled" into the city does not lead one to conclude that a German word for funnel makes sense as the name for a newspaper. As late as the 60s, the postcard at right, which could be bought in the Nürnberg Marktplatz, was more helpful. It shows medieval teachers funneling knowledge into the head of a student.



Despite controversy, the name *Trichter* and some idea of its origin and meaning continued to be preserved into the 80s. Issues in the 80s are sparse to nonexistent, but the Jan. 1986, *Trichter* is lively, creative, and full of news.

In the fall of 1989, the long standing *Trichter* name was trashed and people unknown came up with *The Eagle Eye*. The next year *The Word* was born and apparently lasted for three years. In November, 1993, *The Eagle Flyer* was born, only to die in 1994.

In 1995, as everyone knows, Nürnberg High School closed forever. But the name and tradition of the *Trichter* did not die!

In 1988, one year after the first reunion of NHS alumni in Atlanta, Georgia, **Terry Jorgensen, '62**, who had almost single-handedly staged the event, wanted to advise the alumni that a second reunion was planned for Dallas, Texas, in 1990. Using one of the primitive word-processing programs of the time, Terry produced, printed, and mailed out to alumni across the U.S. an eight-page paper entitled NHS *Trichter*, Stateside Edition. Thus the *Trichter* was reborn as an alumni newsletter, complete with Nürnberg crest, the funnel, and an eagle on the flag.

In the early years of the NAA *Trichter* and of desktop publishing, a number of people cobbled together the far flung interests of the rapidly growing association. After Jorgensen edited the first years, **Mary Ann Hare** took over followed by

Gila (Ervine) Montfort. In 1994, **Betty Griffith Qualley** and **Barbara Carter Jenkins** brought more stability to the publication and emphasized the early history of the school. After three years, they were succeeded by **Karen K. West-Burt**, who, for five years, continued to stress news about the triannual reunions and chronicled the slow, agonizing end of the Nürnberg High School era.

In 2001, **Dr. Robert McQuitty**, who had taught English and journalism at NHS from 1958 to 1962, took over editorship of the *Trichter*. In an uncommon tone of voice for him, he quietly admitted he had been wrong about the newspaper's name.

In 2006 **Pat (Knighton) Gibson, '62**, took the reins of the *Trichter* for the next 13 years.

In 2019 the newspaper that couldn't die has been alive as the voice of the Nürnberg Alumni Association for 30 years. It is still funneling memories into the heads of its loyal alumni.

Der Nürnberger Trichter, sicher und schnell, macht die Köpfe hell!

NHS
Trichter
STATESIDE EDITION

Vol. 1, No. 1 Nürnberg Alumni Association, Inc. December 25, 1988

DALLAS SELECTED AS 1990 REUNION SITE!

My friends...I am your host. Mr. Roarke. Welcome to Fantasy Island. Well, we may not have a Host that pitches rich, corinthian leather, but we will indeed be experiencing a weekend fantasy...and if you start dreaming right now...you are 99% there already!! But let's take you for a spin around the 'island' to help you start your planning stage.

We'll be staying at the Radisson Suite Hotel, so accommodations will be similar to last year's site, except more plush. We can arrive up to two days prior to, and stay up to two days after the official reunion, for the same low price. The actual dates are June 23-25, 1990, at Arlington (Dallas suburb), TX. In case you wish to correspond directly with the hotel, as many of you did last year, their address is Radisson Suite Hotel Arlington, 700 Avenue H East, Arlington, TX 76011, (817) 640-0440.

Jennifer O'Loughlin, Sales Manager, has sweetened our reunion offer with complimentary cook-to-order breakfast, complimentary cocktails from 5-7 p.m. daily, access to the indoor pool, spa, sauna, and steam-room. Each two-room suite includes two phones, two TV's, free in-room movies, and wet bar with refrigerator. Children will stay free if rooming with their parents, which should encourage ya'll to "brang 'em 'lawng!!" If all this hasn't motivated you yet...then let's say

hello to your wallet...it's a package that'll only set you back \$79. for a single, and \$89.00 double occupancy. Should you like to room with someone while traveling alone, contact your roommate to make arrangements, then drop a line to Gila Erving, who will be spearheading our arrival team at the hotel. There'll be plenty of planned activities, which we will alert you to by written itinerary. But, for

(Continued top left page 7)

"Well, Padnah... ATLANTA shore was one great time!"

"Yup! Now ya'll start plannin' for BIG D. Ya hear!!"

First issue of the NHS *Trichter*, Stateside Edition

School Newspaper information

Class Years, Editor(s), Advisors, Extant Issues

Abbreviations Used: pp = pages cf = complete file

Vol	Class Year	Editor	Advisor	Extant Issues
<u>THE ARMY BRAT</u>				
1	46-47	Dick Regnier	Claris Glick	17
2	47-48	Peggy Segur	Leamer	7 cf
3	48-49	Eddie Thompson	unknown	6
4	49-50	Ann O'Roark	John Charlsen	7 cf
5	50-51	Richard DuVal	Warren Robbins	2pp
6	51-52	Kay Slek	Vivian Howes	6
7	52-53	Ed Temple	Mrs. Duquette	7
<u>THE TRICHTER</u>				
8	53-54	Chuck Baerman	Arleen Dodez	2
		Barbara Wickstrom		
9	54-55	John Seitz	Werner Rosin	2
10	55-56	Frances Manbeck	Hendricks	2
11	56-57	Floyd Plowman	Werner Rosin	4
12	57-58	Ethel Walske	Dave Johnson	8 cf
13	58-59	Phyllis Thomas	R. McQuitty	8 cf
14	59-60	Barbara Longsworth	R. McQuitty	12 cf
		Elaine Hudson		
15	60-61	Elaine Hudson	R. McQuitty	11 cf
16	61-62	Terry Jorgensen	R. McQuitty	12 cf
17	62-63	Diana Lewis	Donna Lou Elliott]	4
18	63-64	Diane DeYoreo	Joe Ferguson	7
19	64-65	Stuart Diamond	Dee Hawkes	3
20	65-66	NO ISSUES EXTANT		0
21	66-67	NO ISSUES EXTANT	Leora Thompson	0
22	67-68	unknown	Leora Thompson	7
23	68-69	unknown	Leora Thompson	6
24	69-70	John Kamensky	Leora Thompson	6
25	70-71	John Kamensky	Leora Thompson	7

Vol	Class Year	Editor	Advisor	Extant Issues
26	71-72	Cindy Perry	Norine Mathern	9 cf
27	72-73	Cindy Perry	Norine Mathern	9 cf
28	73-74	Tim Johnson	Norine Mathern	9 cf
29	74-75	Lisette Chevalier	Norine Mathern	7
		Jasmin Gerer		
30	75-76	Jasmin Gerer	Norine Mathern	7
		Craig Dixon		
31	76-77	NO ISSUES EXTANT		0
32	77-78	unknown	unknown	1
33	78-79	NO ISSUES EXTANT		0
34	79-80	unknown	unknown	2
35	80-81	NO ISSUES EXTANT		0
36	81-82	NO ISSUES EXTANT		0
37	82-83	NO ISSUES EXTANT		0
38	83-84	NO ISSUES EXTANT		0
39	84-85	NO ISSUES EXTANT		0
40	85-86	Mary Ann Jackowich	J. Madden	1
41	86-87	NO ISSUES EXTANT		0
42	87-88	NO ISSUES EXTANT		0
43	88-89	NO ISSUES EXTANT		0
<u>THE EAGLE EYE</u>				
44	89-90	Deborah Walker?	Unknown	0
<u>THE WORD</u>				
45	90-91	unknown	Michelle Pell	2pp
46	91-92	NO ISSUES EXTANT		0
47	92-93	NO ISSUES EXTANT		0
<u>THE EAGLE FLYER</u>				
48	93-94	unknown	Cathy McAdams	3
49	94-95	NO ISSUES EXTANT		0

The Truth about der Trichter

The legend of the funnel lives on in Nürnberg
and in the NHS Alumni Association



Der Nürnberger Trichter
Sicher und schnell,
Macht er,
Die Köpfe hell!

The Nürnberg funnel,
Safely and quickly,
It makes
The heads bright!



Why is *Trichter* an original and appropriate name for a newspaper? To find out we have to do some research. It is certainly different from common newspaper names like *Press*, *Post*, *Times*, *Chronicle*. In USAREUR most of the high schools chose names that alliterated and/or reflected their mascots: Berlin HS *Bear Facts*, Munich HS *Mustang Messenger*, Wiesbaden HS *Smoke Signals*.

Though the name of the NHS paper does not reflect the school's mascot, it certainly relates to the city of Nürnberg. In *All About Nürnberg*, a tourist booklet by Gisela N. Friedberg and Mildred M. Brown published in 1957, the authors say that prior to World War II, "Many of Nürnberg's curios and cultural pieces were displayed in the five-cornered tower of the Burg. Among these was the 'Nürnberger Trichter,' which hung from the ceiling in an upper story room."



This medieval copper engraving showing three pedagogues using a funnel to bestow knowledge is in the Nürnberg City Library.

Although the funnel in the castle did not survive the war, the legend of the Nürnberg funnel lives on and to this day, postcards featuring it can be bought in the city's Marktplatz.

The legend of the Nürnberg funnel lives on because it reflects a paradox. On the one hand, it reflects man's desire to educate and to become educated and to become educated as easily as possible, but on the other hand, it suggests it really isn't easy – as every one of us can attest.

In Germany the idea of a funnel being used to impart knowledge is very old and goes back at least to 1545 when Michael Stifels made reference to a Trichter in his textbook *Deutsche Arithmetika*.

But the best known reference occurred in the next century in 1647 when Nürnberg city councillor Georg Philipp von Harsdörffer published a famous textbook called *Poetischer Trichter*. It describes how the art of German poetry can be poured or funneled into a person within six hours. The author says, "As wine is put into bottles by means

of a funnel to prevent the loss of any of the precious liquid, so also we can use the funnel to impart pearls of wisdom.”

With his book Von Harsdörffer seemed to make the claim that anybody could become a poet simply by reading his book. The Nürnberger were not taken in. The popular name of the book became *Nürnberger Trichter*, a name which mocked Von Harsdörffer’s book and method of learning.

And the doggerel verse which can be found on today’s Marktplatz postcards continues to suggest that becoming wise isn’t easy. One might think that the verse was born in Von Harsdörffer’s time, but there is no historical evidence supporting this claim. Indeed, the late **Randy Reitler**,⁶⁵ researched this topic in the Nürnberg City Library for the Stateside *Trichter* in 1996. Randy asked the head historian in the archives where the verse quotation could be found. The archivist reportedly chuckled and said, “It’s probably a commercialized saying created in the 20th century, but it sure sounds good.”

On the postcards, the motto of the NHS *Trichter* is translated in English as “The ‘funnel’ of Nuremberg is said quickly to make people wise.” The French translation is “L’entonnoir de Nuremberg, moyen légendaire et infaillible d’éclairer les esprits.” Both translations, it seems, fail to “over set” the full meaning of the German.

A literal translation of the German, using the most common English equivalents, would be, “The Nuernberg funnel safely (or reliably) and quickly makes the heads bright.” But to fully understand the German and see how the verse applies to the NHS *Trichter*, we need to consult a large German-English dictionary.

A person with a “heller Kopf” is a clear-headed person. As a verb, “hellen” means ‘to clarify, elucidate.’ “Kopf,” in addition to its basic meaning of ‘head,’ also means ‘brains, abilities.’ Furthermore, there is the idiomatic expression, “einen auf den Trichter bringen,” which means ‘to put a person on the right way or track.’ So one uses the Nürnberg funnel to put a person on the right track, to make him a clear-headed person whose brains or abilities are thereby clarified and elucidated.

Trichter alive on the Internet

The idea of a Trichter to aid learning sounds like a good idea to some German educators selling their products on the Internet.

One site – with tongue in cheek – suggested that the Nürnberg Trichter was a model for modern learning.

In 1990 a German language school in Nürnberg took the name **Institut Der Trichter**. On its web site was a page devoted to the history of the Nürnberg Trichter, from which much of this research came.



Giant Nürnberg funnel advertising the housing project in the Tilly-Park Quarter of Nürnberg.



Restaurant in Nürnberg: Do you see the name?

**Der Nürnberger Trichter
macht Dummköpfe lichter.
Can you translate this?**

Thus the NHS *Trichter* is like the Nürnberger Trichter in that it funnels bits of opinions, interesting and unusual doings of its alumni, information about the Association, memories of good times gone by, and even a few laughs in order to elucidate the NHS alumni, faculty, and friends, make them more clear-headed, and definitely put them on the right track to enjoying the “Freundschaft” of all being associated with a great high school.

Market Place Postcard

Bakery
of the Nürnberg Funnel

Company has existed since 1863.

If you lack wisdom in
some things,



you should get the funnel
from Nürnberg. *

*freely translated

Mit dem Nürnberg Trichter wird eher scherzhaft eine mechanische Weise des Lemens und Lehrens bezeichnet.

The Nürnberg funnel jokingly describes a mechanical way of learning and teaching.

Original versions of these articles appeared in the *NAA Trichter*, summer 2003, pp. 11-13.

These historical articles were revised and posted on July 15, 2019.