

Stories of Silent Night at GAHC

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“Stories of Silent Night” or Stille Nacht as it was originally written in German in Austria almost 200 years ago. This is the theme of our annual holiday exhibit opening Saturday, November 10th at the German American Heritage Center.

The lyrics were written by Joseph Mohr in 1816 in a poem form which he took to Franz Gruber to compose music for two voices, a guitar, and a choir for the Christmas eve mass in 1818 in Oberndorf Austria, near Salzburg. There are many stories and suppositions on why the song was written hastily for guitar and not for organ. Some say mice ate away at the organ and other say it was just in disrepair. It was performed for many people at the St. Nicholas church, which later flooded and is now replaced with the Silent Night Memorial Chapel. Here, hundreds gather each year to remember the creation of this song of peace. The song is now translated into over 300 languages and is used to celebrate Christmas all over the world!

The exhibit tells this story in detail, showing images of the key players and places. We have a space to listen to the song in many languages, crafts for kids, and costumes of several different cultures that we feature in our holiday traditions portion of the exhibit. Special thanks to the Silent Night Society, The Swenson Center, Viva Quad Cities, the Putnam Museum, and Dr. Carl Phillip von Maldeghem, Director of the State Theater of Salzburg, Austria.

The exhibit runs through January 6th, Three Kings Day and is located just off of the Centennial Bridge at 712 W 2nd St. Davenport, IA. Admission is \$5 Adults, \$4 Seniors, and \$3 Kids ages 5-17. Free for members. GAHC is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10am till 4pm and Sundays 12pm to 4pm. For more information contact Kelly at 563-322-8844 or kelly.lao@gahc.org.