

Eröffnung des Käthe-Beutler-Hauses am 24.03.2021

Käthe-Beutler-Haus Dedication.

Remarks from Frederick Beutler.

Ich wünsche das Ich diese Rede auf Deutsch halten kann. Aber 86 Jahre nach meiner Auswanderung ist das nicht mehr möglich. Ich muss nun nur English weitersprechen.

I am Doctor Beutler's first-born. Born in 1926, I was named Friederich Joseph. In America, I am known as Frederick and am usually called Fred. My siblings Ernest and Ruth are deceased, but ten second generation descendents are here, as well as numerous members of the third generation descendents, and even some of their children.

Let me first thank those who made this wonderful occasion possible. There are too many to acknowledge individually, but special thanks go to Professor Thomas Kammertöns.

I - and all my family - owe special gratitude to Professor Hildebrandt. Her scholarly and yet readable research publications gave me many new insights regarding my mother's life. I was especially impressed that, early in her career, and unbeknownst to me, my mother had been an effective researcher. I sometimes jokingly said that Professor Hildrebrandt knew more about my mother than I did. Nevertheless, I would like to offer some special personal thoughts regarding my mother.

My mother was a doer. Her family was wealthy, and it would have been easy to follow existing custom by simply staying home prior to finding a suitable husband. She could have dabbled in art, or developed her considerable musical talent. Instead, she undertook demanding medical studies. Following these with assisting a famous physician researcher, and finally opening her own practice. I am more of a dreamer, and one of my earliest memories involved my getting dressed, very slowly, because my mind was elsewhere. Mutti - which is what we called her, came in and said "Tu etwas."

After my father died, she was the glue that held the family together. Many of her grandchildren who loved her, as well as some of her great-grandchildren, are with us on this festive occasion. Even in her old age, she gave piano lessons — including to her close-by grandchildren - and deplored that she was so old that she could no longer be productive.

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I also think of my mother as a stoic. In Berlin, we had several servants in an opulent apartment, but as soon as we emigrated to America, without complaint she performed became a “Hausfrau” in a modest flat, caring for her husband Alfred as well as myself and my siblings Ernie and Ruth. Her brother Karl, to whom she was devoted, was murdered by the Nazis at the Mauthausen slave camp in 1942, but her grief was very private; she told me only many years later. After my father died in 1962 my mother moved to California. She said that she had always hated Milwaukee, where we had lived for over twenty-five years. This came as a surprise since she had never complained. When nearing ninety, she was hospitalized for a minor stroke, and x-rays showed that the head of her femur was crushed, but she had never complained, even though it must have been painful for several years.

Being a stoic meant that my mother seldom expressed strong emotions. But after she died I came into possession of a hand-written journal. Its contents brought me to tears. For in this journal, which exclusively covered the first year of my life, she freely expressed all the love she had for me, her first-born.