



**Wolter v.Tiesenhausen**

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## **Family Letter 2018**

### **Of the v.Tiesenhausen Family**

#### **Content**

In Memory of Space Pioneer Georg v.Tiesenhausen

Invitation to Family Reunion 2019

Trip with Maria v.Tiesenhausen

We commemorate our Deceased

Family News

#### **In Memory of Georg v.Tiesenhausen**

June 3rd, 2018 Georg v.Tiesenhausen passed away in Huntsville, Alabama after a blessed life of 104 years. He was son to Felix Tiesenhausen and grandson to the Livonian district administrator, chamberlain of the Russian Empire, and

member of the imperial council, Heinrich Tiesenhausen, who was a committed reformer of the Livonian Knighthood. His sister Ursula was for a long time a driving force in our family and worked successfully over decades as our genealogist. Most notably Georg Tiesenhausen belonged to the pioneers of the manned space flight. He was part of a group of scientists around Wernher v. Braun first at the Laboratory of the German Army in Peenemuende and later for the North American Space Agency NASA.



In an extensive appreciation of his life's accomplishments published in the „Frankfurter Allgemeinen Zeitung“ it was written: Tiesenhausen studied at the Academy of Engineers in Hamburg, was called to duty in the German Army and dispatched to the Eastern Front in 1941. As a prospective engineer, he was allowed to continue his academic education. Following a successful graduation with outstanding results in 1943, he was dispatched to the Laboratory of the Army in Peenemünde. There he worked on the development of the first ballistic missile, the so called V2.

After the war, when Wernher v.Braun and 117 other German scientist decided to offer their knowledge and their experience to the USA, Georg Tiesenhausen stayed in Germany. After his release from war imprisonment he worked as truck driver, auto mechanics, photographer, office clerk and chauffeur, until in 1949 he finally found work as an engineer for a company which produced hoist gear for ships.

In 1953 he followed the invitation from Wernher v.Brauns to the USA and supported the work on the development of the Redstone-Rocket. While this was a military project, the developers were conscious that this rocket could also be used as a launch vehicle for a space flight. In 1958 NASA was founded and two years later the Redstone facilities in Huntsville became the „Marshall Space-Flight-Centre“. As soon as in 1962 more than 6.000 scientists worked there, among them 1.700 Germans.

Under the lead of Wernher v.Braun the Mercury-Program was developed which later became the basis for Apollo-Missions. The German engineers from Peenemünde, and with them Georg v.Tiesenhausen, contributed significantly to the first landing on the Moon. One of their successes was the development of the Saturn Rocket which until now is one of the strongest launch vehicles for space crafts. Also, the first vehicle to drive on the Moon, the Lunar-Roving-Vehicle (LRV) was developed by this group. Specifically, in the development of this vehicle Georg v.Tiesenhausen played an important role.

In the article in the „Frankfurter Allgemeinen Zeitung“ it says: „Although the scientists had no practical experience about the environment and the surface of the Moon when they developed the LRV, the vehicle was adapted perfectly to the given conditions. This included the extreme temperatures, the low gravity and the uneven surface. The Moon Rover was equipped with a navigation device which could lead the astronauts back to their Lunar Module, as well as with cameras and communication devices. The vehicle was powered by zinc batteries. To save room the LRV was folded during flight and unfolded itself automatically upon landing. Given the vehicle was 1969 vintage, its technical capabilities were revolutionary.“

The NASA historian Brian C.Odom stated: „With Georg von Tiesenhausen a remarkable generation of scientists vanishes. They had an extraordinary sense of what was possible in space flights. The mentality and mode of operation of the group around Wernher von Braun has coined NASA until today. “

## **Invitation to the Family Reunion 2019**

Families in general and with them also the Family organizations dwell on regular meetings and personal exchange. Generating the necessary preconditions

for such exchanges is probably the most important mission of the steering committee of our family.

In this context the chairman of our family Andreas v.Tiesenhausen writes: It is important to use the days that we have to celebrate the opportunities as they arrive. After having celebrated our last family reunion during our rewarding and interesting trip to Lithuania, we plan to have our family reunion in 2019 again at Schloss Hoehnscheid close to Kassel in Germany. There, we will have the chance to meet again as a family, to keep up with each other and to celebrate together.

Please note the date and plan your other commitments accordingly, so that we have the chance to bring together as many family members as possible. We have a reservation from **Friday May 10 to Sunday May 12, 2019**. It is my experience that arriving at Schloss Hoehnscheid already the Friday evening is a good idea, as it provides the opportunity to use the time to get settled in and to start catching up with other family members. I fondly remember our last family reunion when we sat outside around the camp fire with good talk and red wine until late in the night.

Arriving Friday is also recommended as the calculation of the Hotel for the room charge is based on the usage of two nights for a defined number of rooms. At the last family reunion, we did not meet this threshold which led to a surcharge of 1000 Euro. Should we face a similar problem next year, we will ask the hotel to add the surcharge to those rooms that were only occupied for one night.

We will follow up this preannouncement in due time prior to May next year with a formal invitation to all family members we can reach thru email.

## **A trip with Maria v. Tiesenhausen**

Many of you only know Maria von Tiesenhausen, born von Keudell as widow of the submarine commander, decorated with the Ritterkreuz medal, Dietz von Tiesenhausen. She descends from an old Northern Hessian noble family who had its ancestral seat at Schloss Wolfsbrunnen close to the German city of Eschwege. Her mother was a daughter to the famous sculptor Georg Kolbe, whose workshop and living quarters in Berlin became after the war what is now known as Kolbe-Museum. Waldheim in Saxony in Germany was the city where

Kolbe was born, so it was a close thought to Maria to give paintings and sculptures from her private possession in Vancouver to Waldheim.



To display the works adequately, the city renovated a building under monument protection at the Niedermarkt and fitted it up to meet the current requirements for the exposition. Numerous family portraits, documents and photos give a very personal character. The composition of the art works and the inclusion view axis allow an inspiring impression to the spectator. It is a beautiful exposition which succeeds in combining the balance between personal views of the family and opening the view for outsiders.

Maria's visit was an emotional highlight for the city officials of Waldheim who welcomed the donator with heartfelt warmth and proudly led her thru the beautifully renovated rooms of the exhibition.

Sabine Röder

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## **We commemorate our deceased**

Ilse Gohs, born Baronesse v.Tiesenhausen died February 5, 2018 aged 90 in Stickholm, Sweden. She was widow to Sven Gohs and daughter to parson Hans Carl v.Tiesenhausen. We will miss her and will remember her as charming and always well humoured participant of many family reunions.

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Karin Dorothea Antonie v.Platen, born Freiin v.Tiesenhausen died October 15, 2018 aged 74 in Wolfratshausen close to Munich. Our sympathy is with her husband Axel v.Platen, her daughter in law and her three grandchildren. In a very moving ceremony in the protestant church in Wolfratshausen her family and many friends paid their last respects to the deceased.



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## Family News

Gabriel Emanuel LePage was born November 22, 2017 in Grande Prairie in the Canadian province of Alberta. He is son to Darcy LePage and his wife Katrina, born Freiin v.Tiesenhausen, who is daughter to Andreas und Elaine v.Tiesenhausen. The family congratulates and wishes luck and health to the new family member.

\* \* \*

The senior of our large family, Hans Heinrich Freiherr v.Tiesenhausen celebrates his 104th birthday on December 16, 2018 in Vancouver. The whole family congratulates and is happy about, despite a walking handicap, the good health of the 'birthday boy'.

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Above are the 49 descendants and their partners of Elisabeth und Berend v.Tiesenhausen. They had gathered July 28, 2018 in Dreieich-Buchsschlag close to Frankfurt in the garden of Sabine and Hans Gerd Roeder to celebrate the

100th birthday of their mother, grandmother and great grandmother. Only two grandchildren and two great grandchildren could not make it to the party.

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Some confusion was caused at the beginning of this year when an information was found in the internet that in Rimbey in Canada an Odin Faclan Tiesenhausen was born as son to Katie and Konrad Tiesenhausen. When our cousin Teresa investigated the story, she received the following answer from the young mother:

*“Actually, that's a rather weird story. My husband's father - ahem - in a compromising situation with law enforcement several years ago. In an attempt to fly under the radar, he plucked a name out of the phone book and decided to use that instead. Naturally all the kids got stuck with the name as well. He's fallen out with the rest of the family and we discussed doing a legal name change to something more authentic but it's a lot of trouble to go through. o no, I very much doubt that we're related, although I appreciate the interest. I did not know that our little guy was quite that famous. Katie von Tiesenhausen”*

This teaches: not all what is called Tiesenhausen, has necessarily a Tiesenhausen inside.

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