

## Local Visitor Offers Comparison Of German, American Lifestyles

By MARY C. HARRIS  
Staff Writer

A generation ago, a little girl named Alice delighted in making the trip from her home in Wilmington, and later Princeton, N. J., to the Warrenton home of her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. H. R. (Shorty) Geddie. Now, as an adult, Alice Smithey Spindler crosses the miles from Munich, West Germany to re-establish her bonds with Warrenton and to introduce her children to an unknown part of herself and of their own heritage. Mrs. Spindler is the daughter of the late Doris Adams Smithey, stepdaughter of Geddie who resides on Halifax Street in Warrenton.

Warrenton was always a magical place for the child Alice and the years have not faded that early impression, which seems also to have passed to her children, 10-year-old Elisa and 12-year-old Richard. They spent the month of August renewing ties of family and friendship, visiting places of interest, and enjoying the freedom that Warrenton affords.

Their stay in the States has been flavored also by time in New York City where Mrs. Spindler's brother, Bryan Smithey, lives. Smithey accompanied them to Warrenton for the August visit.

In an interview last week, Mrs. Spindler described the fascination which New York held for her children. "They loved it," she said. They were particularly impressed with the buildings, their vastness and variety, in contrast to the general uniformity of structures in Germany, where the building laws are very strict.

Their travels have also taken them to enjoy the sun and surf at quiet Holden Beach near Wilmington. Mrs. Spindler indicated that she has attempted to acquaint Elisa and Richard with as many aspects of American life and landscape as a month's time allows.

Every trip to Warrenton, which she tries to schedule every two years, includes a side excursion to "Airlie," the Halifax County childhood home of Mrs. Spindler's grandmother. "Airlie" holds a special attraction for her as it brings numerous beautiful early memories to surface.

It was in 1970 that Mrs. Spindler moved with her German husband, a lawyer, to Munich from Chicago, where she had attended college and taught school. She had met him at the University of Chicago, and they had married in Warrenton's Emmanuel Episcopal Church.

Having spent her life almost equally divided between the American and German cultures, Mrs. Spindler last week offered several comparative insights.

She complimented highly the "excellent school system" in Munich, where she teaches part-time and where Elisa and Richard will attend the fifth and sixth grades, respectively, from September 18 until July 31. Elisa attends the school where her mother teaches, a school which emphasizes languages; whereas Richard is a scholarship student at a private school which concentrates on math and science.

Standards are high in German schools. The students, who naturally grow up speaking German, begin studying a second language in the first grade and add third and fourth languages in the seventh and ninth grades. At the end of fourth grade, which

is graduation from grade school, students who have attained a 2.5 or better average on a scale from one to six may enter the gymnasium, which includes grades five through twelve. Those students who do not qualify must enter vocational school, where they may study until graduation or which may serve as a transition from grade school to the gymnasium. There is much pressure to succeed, and Mrs. Spindler observed that the high suicide rate among school-age children is one unfortunate statistic of that pressure.

She sees an advantage in the fact that following grade school, students may choose the gymnasium they will attend, depending upon their areas of interest, a concept similar to that of the "magnet school" in a nearby North Carolina system.

Mrs. Spindler is pleased that her children are experiencing exposure to many nationalities. She feels that their open-view and apparent lack of prejudice have been nurtured by these opportunities.

Elisa and Richard especially enjoy the freedom offered by the spacious home and yard of their great-grandfather in Warrenton. "In general, German people do not cater to children. There is a 'no-no,' very disciplined attitude toward young people," Mrs. Spindler stated. In some places children are not allowed to play outside between the hours of one and three in the afternoon because people may be sleeping. On a recent afternoon in Warrenton, the Spindler children were observed having a pleasant time with neighborhood children in the Geddie backyard.

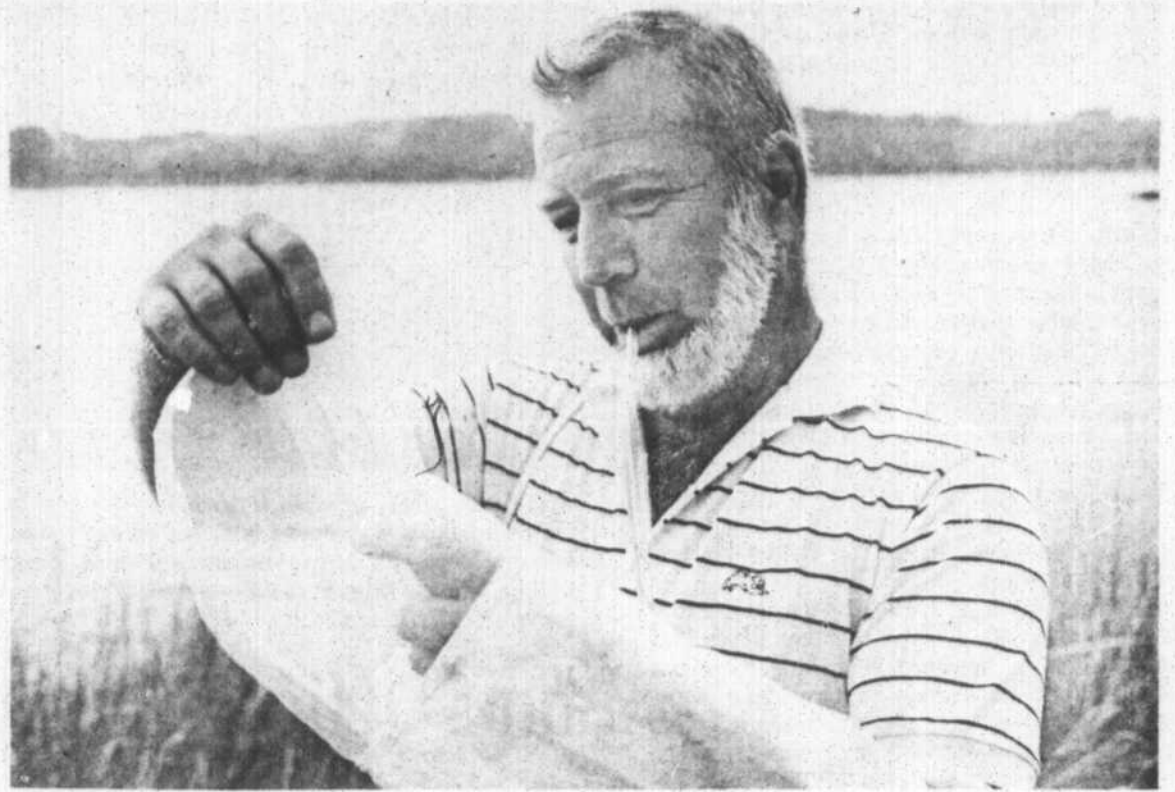
Upon her arrival in Germany, a new wife in a new country, Mrs. Spindler was surprised by the warm and positive attitude with which the German people related to Americans. She recalled how her local grocer assisted her, speaking in broken English to help her understand. After the passing of what he considered to be sufficient time of orientation, he said to her in effect, "Okay, that's it! Now we speak in German."

And German she now understands and speaks fluently, as a result of her studies and, of course, living in the German culture. Her perfect English is spiced with a trace of German accent.

Although she appreciates the warmth with which she has been accepted in Germany she admitted missing the openness of American people. She related that among the Germans, there seems to be a limit beyond which it is difficult to tread in getting to know one another.

In answer to the inevitable question of any plans to return to the United States to live, Mrs. Spindler indicated that the "door is open" on that subject. She would like for her children to attend college in this country, and yes, she does nourish some desire to return to live, possibly even in Warrenton. She is depending upon the passing of years and intuition to suggest to her an answer to that question.

For now, she is content with her life in Munich, West Germany and pleased that her children are reaping the benefits of education offered by the schools there and by their exposure to different peoples. She is certain, however, that her life will always allow time for visits among the "friendly and open" people of "peaceful, quiet" Warrenton.



Entomologist B. A. Foote draws in a breath and dozens of flies he's netted in a Cape Cod, Mass., salt marsh. The flies then travel through a tube to a

collecting vial. A filter prevents Dr. Foote from ingesting the insects. The scientist is surveying hundreds of fly species along the Atlantic coast.

## Beaches Abuzz With Special Flies

By BARBARA S. MOFFET  
National Geographic News Service

You probably didn't notice, but the flies that pestered you at the beach this summer were not the same kind as those buzzing around at home.

And anyone who traveled the length of the Atlantic coast may have encountered hundreds of different fly species. Bar Harbor, Maine, for example, has as many as 15 species on its coastal rocks alone.

At the other end—in Florida—mangrove swamps, sandy beaches, salt marshes, and rock pilings provide a living museum of coastal flies, members of a highly evolved group known as higher flies. For entomologist B. A. Foote, Florida's diverse habitats were an ideal launch pad for a survey of East Coast fly species.

### Neighbors Vary

"On a sandy beach, the flies are usually different from those on nearby rock pilings and definitely different from the array of species in a salt marsh," Dr. Foote explains. "Even one salt marsh can have scores of species."

This spring, near a man-made rock barricade on

a north Florida beach, Dr. Foote discovered a new genus of flies, a member of an obscure family known as Asteiidae. Moving up the coast, he turned up three new species. Fly species vary in traits such as body size and wing pattern, but higher flies are hard to tell apart at a glance; most are less than a quarter-inch long.

Still, identifying a new genus or species isn't so surprising. "If you're talking about insects that have been intensively studied, like butterflies or beetles, finding new species is difficult," Dr. Foote says. "But there just aren't many specialists looking at flies."

Dr. Foote, a professor of biological sciences at Kent State University, has chased flies across most of North America, including Alaska, and has discovered about a dozen new species. His East Coast study is supported by the National Geographic Society.

Dr. Foote set up this year's tour to zero in on 15 or 20 families of long-neglected coastal flies, part of the large group known as acalyptate Diptera. Alto-

(Continued on page 2B)

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### School Menus

Sept. 10-14  
All schools will be served the same lunch menu, with Norlina and John Graham Middle Schools and Warren County High School having a second choice.

**Breakfast**  
**MONDAY** — Pork barbecue/bun, baked beans, creamy cole slaw, pickle chips.

**TUESDAY** — Baked ham roll, macaroni & cheese, Southern style green beans, fruit cocktail.

**WEDNESDAY** — Beef-a-roni, tossed salad with dressing, school baked roll, fresh apple.

**THURSDAY** — Crunchy fish, cole slaw, French fries w/catsup, roll, sliced peaches.

**FRIDAY** — Taco w/cheese, tomatoes/lettuce, Mexican corn, cinnamon bun.

**Breakfast**  
Breakfast will be served grades K-6.

**MONDAY** — Honey bun, juice, milk.

**TUESDAY** — Buttered toast, bacon/jelly, juice, milk.

**WEDNESDAY** — Cereal, banana, milk.

**THURSDAY** — Ham roll, juice, milk.  
**FRIDAY** — Poptart, juice, milk.