

## **From WWII Berlin to Tennessee - The Saga of an Operation Paperclip Family Associated with the Founding of AEDC and UTSI**

The American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics Tennessee Section will host a talk by Mr. Winfried Goethert on November 20, from 11:30 to 1. His biographical talk is entitled: "From Berlin to Manchester" and will be at the University of Tennessee Space Institute's Cafeteria.

This year, being the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first manned lunar landing, there has been much attention focused on the U.S. Apollo/Saturn program and its German connections. Operation Paperclip not only brought German rocket scientists to America to help build our rocket program, but it also brought German aerodynamicists to help design our wind tunnels. Dr. Bernhard Goethert (known for the Goethert Similarity Rule for high-speed flows) arrived at Dayton under Paperclip. He was a leader in the design and initial operations of Tunnels 16T and 16S at the Arnold Engineering Development Complex, and was a key player in establishing the University of Tennessee Space Institute, eventually becoming its first Director. His son Winfried, born in pre-war Germany, is a child of Operation Paperclip. "Wimp", as he is known, will describe his family's saga that is intimately associated with Germany, the United States, and the founding of AEDC and UTSI.

Wimp's talk "From Berlin to Manchester" chronicles his family's movements after WWII in Germany, to avoid starvation and capture by the Russians, finally culminating in secret immigration to America. He tells of his memories of Allied bombing of Berlin in 1943 that interrupted his family's Christmas celebration. Wimp tells how through a secret government program, Operation Paperclip, he found himself living in America as an illegal alien. His family was interned at the U. S. Army Air Force base near Dayton, Ohio, where a new life began starting with learning English from the GI guards. After three years, the family relocated to Manchester, Tennessee. His talk continues until citizenship was eventually bestowed.



Mr. Goethert received an undergrad Engineering Physics degree from the UT-Knoxville and a Master's in Physics from UTSI. As an undergrad, he was employed part-time at the UT-Knoxville Research Hospital where he established an infrared spectroscopy capability for the medical research group. After graduating from UT, he had a 42-year career as a research engineer developing electro-optical instrumentation for flow measurements in AEDC's wind tunnels. For his final project, he joined an optical team tasked with developing a space environment testing capability in AEDC's large vacuum chambers. He retired from AEDC in 2006. Mr. Goethert was married to Lucie Gay Donnell (deceased '08) whose family has roots in Versailles Ky.