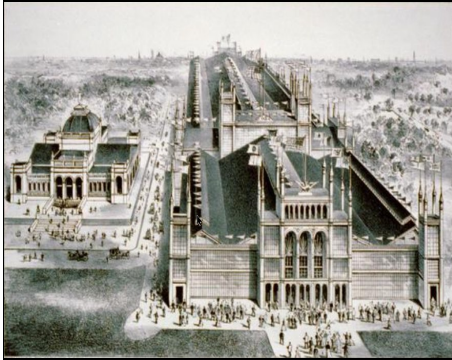
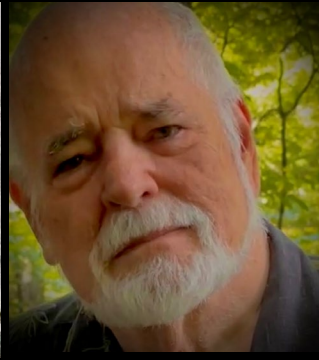


# Wagner 1876



Main Hall, Philadelphia Exhibition



Bayreuth Festival Opening

## Bayreuth and the American Centennial

Presented by Bill Shackelford

In 1876, two landmark events took place on opposite sides of the Atlantic: the opening of the Bayreuth Festival and the American Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. This program explores the historical context surrounding Bayreuth's founding and the first performances of the Ring cycle, placing them alongside developments in the United States during the same period. Focusing on the years leading up to 1876, it serves as a historical "prequel" to an upcoming fall presentation by **Joseph Horowitz**, whose recent work examines Anton Seidl and the flourishing of Wagnerism in America's Gilded Age.

**Bill Shackelford** is a Chicago-based writer, musician, and longtime member of the Wagner Society of America. He holds a master's in music performance from Indiana University and pursued additional study at Universität Hamburg and the Hochschule für Musik und darstellenden Kunst. He later studied with Robert Marcellus. He has performed with ensembles including the Chicago Camerata and has written extensively on opera for Opera (UK) and Opéra Magazine (Paris). He served for many years as editor of Wagner News, the journal of the Wagner Society of America. His work has focused on Wagner and his contemporaries within their broader historical and cultural context, with particular attention to transatlantic connections between Europe and the United States.

**Date: Sunday, May 24, 2026**

**Michigan Shores Club**

**911 Michigan Avenue**

**Wilmette, IL 60091**

**Cost: \$60.00 per person**

Direct questions and vegetarian requests to Bill Smith at [wrtsco@att.net](mailto:wrtsco@att.net) or call 847-256-1292

---

### Registration Form

Please pay by check with the attached slip by May 20, 2026, or online (see below).

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ No. of reservations: \_\_\_\_\_ x \$60.00 = \_\_\_\_\_ enclosed

**Make checks payable to The Wagner Society of America**

**and mail to: William Smith, P.O. Box 514, Wilmette, IL 60091**

**Online payment option for this event only: use Venmo.**

Please make the payment as a private setting and in the comments section include attendees' names.

