

**RETIREED MEN'S ASSOCIATION OF GREENWICH, Inc. (RMA)  
invites you to attend its meeting on Wednesday, Dec.3, 2014.  
First Presbyterian Church, Lafayette Place, Greenwich, CT.**

**DR. JOEL BLATT**

**THE UNIFICATION OF GERMANY AND ITS ROLE IN THE  
COMING OF WORLD WAR ONE**



The formal unification of Germany into a politically and administratively integrated nation state officially occurred on January 18, 1871 at the Versailles Palace's Hall of Mirrors. Princes of the German states gathered there after the French capitulation in the Franco-Prussian War to proclaim Wilhelm of Prussia as Emperor Wilhelm of the German Empire. Prince Otto Edward Leopold von Bismarck was the mastermind of German Unification and the first Chancellor of the united nation.

Bismarck caused Germany to transform from a loose network of 39 states into the strongest industrial nation of Europe. The unification of Germany had a tremendous and lasting impact on European and world balance of powers.

Bismarck made Germany the strongest military power on the continent, but his actions set in motion events leading to World War One. Many countries harbored resentment toward Germany, particularly the French who were humiliated by the Treaty of Frankfurt at the end of the Franco-Prussian War. Bismarck also manipulated several other countries, and bad feelings just don't go away. In order to prevent Germany from entering into foreign wars, Bismarck's foreign policy created a secret alliance with Austria-Hungary and a triple treaty with Russia, Austria and Germany, which gave rise to a tension within the continent resulting in Europe plunging into war following the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria.

Dr. Joel Blatt has been teaching European history at UConn-Storrs and UConn -Stamford for 35 years. He considers teaching a "constant search to understand more" and enjoys the spontaneity of the classroom where he never knows what questions his students will ask and where his interchanges with them will lead the discussion. A four-time recipient of the UConn- Stamford Campus Outstanding Teacher Award, Dr. Blatt teaches Modern Western Traditions and Personality and Power in the 20th Century, which focuses on European leaders Joseph Stalin, Benito Mussolini, Adolf Hitler, Winston Churchill, noted anti-fascist Carlo Rosselli, and John F. Kennedy and the Cuban Missile Crisis. He also co-teaches a course on the Holocaust. Professor Blatt received his Ph.D. in history from the University of Rochester and his B.A., from Cornell University. He has published a book which he edited on *The French Defeat of 1940: Reassessments* (1998). He has also published a number of articles on France and Italy between the two world wars and is presently working on two books. He has received a number of grants from the UConn Research Foundation, and has served a Provost's Fellowship.

**Our business meetings begin at 10, and our speakers are scheduled for 10:30. No Charge, and No Reservations are required. For additional information, call Bernard Schneider, 203-698-2558;bgsesq@gmail.com. See our website greenwichrma.org.**