

# Bernthal Family



he Bernthal family history goes back to the year 1533, a very old family that existed at the time of Luther. They were in Switzerland in the Canto of Bern (Bern-thal). In 1654 several brothers migrated to the state of Württemberg Schwaben, Germany.

There they started a village they named "Bärenthal" which still exists today. Thomas and Konrad Bernthal were married in Bärenthal.

Johann Thomas Bernthal, the son of Konrad, was the first Bernthal recorded as living in Rosstal, Germany. He died on June 18, 1761, a very old man. His son, Georg Konrad, was a cartwright and died on August 14, 1788. His son, Johann, continued the cartwright trade but died at age 33 on March 25, 1793. His son Georg Martin born Oct. 23, 1787 married Kunigunde Siebentritt, who died at childbirth in 1819. Johann Martin then married Anna Barbara Bloss (1791-1855). They had eight children who all immigrated to America.

Johann Leonard Bernthal was born in Rosstal on September 27, 1821. He and his sister, Kunigunda (b.1824), and 13 other immigrants were the pioneer settlers of Frankenmuth, arriving in August 1845. On the voyage, Kunigunda married Johann Konrad Weber on the ship "Caroline".

In 1846, Johann Leonard arranged to have his parents, George Martin and Anna Barbara, and the rest of his brothers and sisters, join him in America on the farm west of the church, on Tuscola and Beyer Roads. This included:

Johann (April 7, 1820 to May 2, 1905) married to Kunigunde Bierlein.

Friedrich (Sept.1, 1825 to 1862) married to Margaretha Reif.

Georg Konrad (Feb. 28, 1828 to Dec. 5, 1893) married to Margaretha Barbara Hildner.

Anna Barbara (Feb. 12, 1830 to March 31, 1872) married to John Michael Gugel.

Katherina (Mar. 28, 1833 to August 28, 1833) married to John Jacob Roth.

Georg (Nov. 9, 1837 to 1913) married to Augusta von Renner. He was pastor of St. Michael's Lutheran Church in Richville, Michigan from 1862 to 1912.

On October 10, 1848 Johann Leonard married Maria Margaretha Veitengruber (b. 1827). The couple was blessed with nine children, three of whom died at birth. In 1867, as the family grew, he bought a farm east of Frankenmuth at 12615 Junction Road, leaving the Tuscola Road farm for his brother Georg Konrad.

Johann Leonard and Maria's children were:

George Leonard (b. 1853) married Margaretha Schwab. They had five children.

Margareth Barbara (b.1856) married Peter Kern. They had nine children.

George Michael (b. 1858) married Regina Schluckebier. They had six children.

Johann George (b. 1861) married Katherina Schluckebier. They had five children.

Maria Kunigunda (b. 1865) married Johann Jacob Woelzlein. They had four children.

Rev. Johann Conrad (b. 1867) married Anna Schluckebier. They had six children.

Johann Leonard was active in the church. In 1847, he was selected as lay delegate to accompany Pastor Craemer to Chicago for the organizational meeting of the Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and other states. In his late 70's, he frequently walked six miles to Richville to visit his brother George, who served 50 years as pastor of St. Michael's Lutheran Church. Johann Leonard died January 7, 1911, and Maria died November 14, 1905.

Both of the Bernthal homesteads are still in the family. Herb Bernthal and his wife Frances live on the Georg Konrad homestead on Tuscola Road and Hildred and his wife Shirley live on the Johann Leonard Junction Road homestead.



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