

Stromer Family



he Stromer family name came to Frankenmuth in 1888 through William Stromer, a tintype photographer. He set up a studio on Main Street and went about photographing generations of memories for his customers, including portraits, weddings, and other occasions. He was also instrumental in establishing Frankenmuth's local newspaper.

William was born May 12, 1870 in Aurich, Germany. He, his sister Meta, and their brother Ferdinand, came to America when they were very young so that the boys could avoid serving in the military.

William was vagabonding, looking for the ideal place to settle. At first he chose Texas, and then he lived in New Orleans, Louisiana and Yankton, South Dakota.

William's parents left Germany and he eventually joined them in Bay City, Michigan. His father, Carl Gottlieb Johann Stromer, was a tailor. His mother was Rinste nee Euchen Stromer. Carl's grandfather served in the War of 1812 with Wellington against Napoleon at Waterloo.

William left Bay City and lived just east of Frankenmuth in Vassar for a while. When he arrived in Frankenmuth, he became associated with the Frankenmuth Products Company, which was later known as the G. Heileman Brewing Company. He also got involved in local politics, the Germania Club, the Grey Fox and the "Arbeiter Verein" (Workers Association). At one time he studied for the ministry in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, but left because he didn't like it.

Eleven years after he arrived in Frankenmuth, William married Marie Fischer on December 29, 1899. The couple had three sons but only Carl survived. Carl worked in the brewery business and married Lena Nass.

Carl and Lena had four children: Ann Johnson, Meta Hollingsworth, William Stromer and Christine Smith.

William's great grandchildren are: James W. Johnson, Robin Clark, Virginia Snellgrove, John Johnson, Michael and Martha Hollingsworth, Michael and Brian Stromer, Deborah Jozwiak, Michele Elwart and Kimberly Smith.

William's great-great-grandchildren are: Ashley Nicole Stromer, Lena and Jody Clark, Angela Powell, Adam Snellgrove, Jennifer, Jimmy and Jessica Johnson, and David Elwart.

William's great-great-great-grandchildren are Gavin and Mackenzie Powell, Kaitlyn Snellgrove, Cheyenne and Robin Anilase Clark.

In the early 1900s, William struck up an acquaintance with a Bridgeport druggist named Edward Wallace Gallagher. Gallagher promoted his syrups, salves, ointments and other remedies in a hand printed weekly bulletin that many Frankenmuth people read. He included local news and comments.

William organized a group of businessmen who were interested in establishing a newspaper in Frankenmuth. They convinced Gallagher to leave Bridgeport and begin a newspaper here because "no one in Frankenmuth could speak English well enough to take on the job". Gallagher printed the first issue July 12, 1906. The Frankenmuth News celebrated its 100th publication year in 2006.

William Stromer died August 20, 1956 at the age of 86. His wife Marie died September 24, 1965. William's brother, Ferdinand, became a minister and lived in Bay City. Through his efforts the Lutheran Children's Home was established for homeless children.



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