

# Baum Family



he Baum name was brought to the Frankenmuth area in 1888 when Andreas Baum came from Germany. Typical of many immigrants who traveled to America, Andreas was seeking economic opportunity. Andreas Baum was born in 1858, in Lambrecht, Germany, the son of a poor working class family. At the age of 30, young Andreas made the journey to America as a stowaway. Hiding under a life boat was not an ideal way to sail on the long voyage that lasted 50 days. Halfway through the journey Andreas was captured by one of the crewmen and put to work peeling potatoes along with other duties. He truly did “earn his way to the new land.”

Upon arriving in America, Andreas was alone and homeless. He had no job and no connections for finding a job; but with much determination he set about pursuing employment on his own.

Andreas came to Frankenmuth where he found a job at the Woolen and Knitting Mill. The Mill produced blankets, socks, yarn, mittens and wool batting from local wool. A cider and jelly works plant was also located in front of the Mill as a seasonal enterprise.

Andreas “Americanized” his name and became Andrew Baum. Andrew married Mary Margarete nee Hoffman Felgner on March 3, 1892. Margarete was the daughter of George and Eva nee Rummel Hoffman, one of Frankenmuth’s pioneer families. The couple was blessed with five children: Selma Einfalt, Hubert Baum, Esther Eischer, Laura Kueffner and Ruben Baum. They lived at the top of the hill on Main Street in Frankenmuth. The home was torn down after 1995 and is now the site of Spring Hill Suites by Marriott.

Andrew and Hubert Baum worked in the Cider Mill around 1912. August through December was the busiest time when farmers were bringing in their apples and grapes.

After the fruits were pressed, the customers would bring home their juice. The Cider Mill also bought produce from the farmers. Fine products such as cider, sour grape jelly, apple butter, jams and dietetic jellies were made and sold from this produce.

Esther and Laura Baum worked at the Woolen Mill during World War I and into the early 1920’s. During that time the Mill had a contract to produce products for the government. The wool mittens were made by hand while socks were done on a machine. Esther and Laura each made 18 dozen socks a day, starting at 7:00 a.m. and working until 6:00 p.m., with an hour for lunch, and earning \$18.00 a week. The rush was in the spring at shearing time. Raw wool was washed and disinfected. After processing, it came off as yarn for making socks, mittens, blankets, etc. Yarn was obtained at the Mill by the Red Cross for use for amputees and other veteran patients at Percy Jones Hospital; some was shipped overseas where cloth was in short supply.

As tourism was becoming a way of life in Frankenmuth, Laura Baum Kueffner happily adjusted to the busy Main Street in front of her home at the top of the hill. Her love for handiwork – sewing aprons, crocheting doilies and afghans, knitting sweaters and hats – for other people gained her many long-time friends. “Aunt Laura”, as she was fondly called by many, had faith in the Lord, a love for life, and a positive attitude which she joyfully shared with all the lives she touched.

Andrew died in 1923, at the age of 65. Mary Margarete died in 1926, at the age of 66. Andrew and Mary are buried at St. Lorenz Cemetery near large pine trees – a fitting place of rest, as the English translation for BAUM is “tree”.



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