

Diedrich Family



he mid 1840's marked the arrival of Frederick Diedrich, one of the early German settlers to arrive in Saginaw County. Born in Mecklenburg, Germany in 1821 and looking for an economic opportunity, Frederick left Germany in 1840, arrived in New York, and worked his way to Saginaw. He worked hard, saved, and then purchased an 80-acre farm in Blumfield Township in 1850 that was deeded as a Land Grant from the State of Michigan to Frederick Diedrich for a price of \$110.00.

The new county of Saginaw was a land of almost seasonal wet spells. The land looked like a vast swamp with fields of trees. The first county meeting was held in 1835 at the house of E. Davenport in the Village of Saginaw. Census reports of Saginaw County indicate 892 people in 1840, 2,609 in 1850, 12,693 in 1860 and 39,097 in 1870. Blumfield Township was founded in 1853 and Frankenmuth, which had been part of Bridgeport Township, became a separate township in 1854.

It is interesting to note that history reports that there were no pigs in 1832. However, a story is told that an early settler went to Pontiac, Michigan to purchase a number of swine and drove them all the way from Pontiac, through the Flint area, to the Saginaw Valley. In so doing he stopped overnight with his pigs at an Indian encampment on the Flint River. The Indians wanted the pigs. In the morning, when the settler started herding his pigs towards home, the Indians appeared to block his way, so the settler, displaying the courage that was so necessary for the early settlers, leveled his rifle and pulled aim on the first Indian. The Indians then allowed him to continue with his pigs.

Frederick Diedrich (1821-1898) married in 1857 and had three children:

Frederick (1859-1919); Mrs. August (Fredericka) Johnson (born 1856); and Mrs. Ada Krick.

The Diedrich family was very proud to be a part of the German Lutheran families living in the Saginaw Valley. Frederick farmed the property for 48 years and turned the land into a most prosperous farm. After his death, his son Frederick II took over the operation.

The marriage of Frederick Diedrich II to Julia Bader of Reese in 1898 was blessed with seven children: Julia Distler, Edna Voyer, Elenore Hack, Arthur, Clarence, Herbert, and Frederick III.

After the father's death, Frederick III helped his mother with the farm until his marriage to Esther Schultz in 1924. He continued farming after his marriage but also helped his wife's family at their family business, Fritz's Corner Hotel in Richville. In 1933, he became owner of the property. Fred and Esther had two children.

Fred and Esther's daughter Norene married Howard Fischer whose parents owned the Henry Fischer Hotel in Frankenmuth (now the Tiffany Bar).

Fred and Esther's son Donald married Marlene Mueller in 1956, went into partnership with his parents and upon their retirement, purchased the business in 1972, which is today Fritz's Family Restaurant and Catering Service. Don and Marlene have three children: Debra Frahm of Frankenmuth, Frederick of Reese and Thomas of Richville. Fred and Tom help run the family business.

The original family farm on Block Road is now owned by a great-great-grandson who also makes it his home. Fred and Esther retired to a home in Frankenmuth.

