

Fischer Family



he name Fischer was brought to Frankenmuth from Neuendettelsau, Germany in the 1850's when Johann Michael Fischer, a farmer, made the voyage to America.

Johann Michael was born July 5, 1832 in Neuendettelsau. He grew up in Germany at a time when jobs were scarce, crop failures were common and young men were required to enlist in the military service. It was nearly impossible for the lower class to get a marriage license since the laws required grooms to have certain assets before they could marry. So many young men "escaped" to America where economic opportunity was coupled with adventure.

The voyage to the United States was difficult for many of the early settlers. In addition to their personal belongings, they had to pack their own food for the journey plus their own bedding and cooking utensils. They stored their supplies in brandy barrels to prevent molding. Their provisions included zwieback (dry bread), potatoes, beans, smoked fish, salt pork, ham, sausage, rice, coffee, tea, prunes, and other dried fruits. They also took a supply of wine.

One of the most difficult decisions was the agreement on the amount of food to take along. No one knew at the onset of any voyage how long it would take. Some ships crossed the ocean in six to eight weeks depending on the weather, while others took longer. The only provision the shipping company provided for its passengers was water in limited quantities.

Sea sickness was a common problem throughout the voyage. Lice quarantined some of the immigrants to their cabins as did smallpox and the fever. Once the passengers arrived in New York Harbor there was still more traveling ahead.

Most settlers took steam ships, sail ships, trains, and wagons before they finally arrived in Frankenmuth.

The settlement was part swampy and part hilly. Land initially sold for \$2.50 an acre. It was good soil for farming, but first it had to be cleared of the huge trees and brush. It was back breaking work from sun up until sun down.

Johann Michael married Maria Barbara nee Ittner June 24, 1860 at St. Lorenz Lutheran Church in Frankenmuth. She was born in 1834.

The couple had six children: Johann Georg was born in 1861 and confirmed in 1874; Margaretha Katherine Louise was born in 1866; Eva Barbara was born in 1868; Johann Gustav was born in 1873; Johann Ernst was born in 1875; and Margaretha Barbara Ann was born in 1877.

All of the children were confirmed at St. Lorenz Lutheran Church. They were raised on the family farm on Beyer Road between Roedel Road and Baker Road in Frankenmuth Township.

The fourth child, Johann Gustav, worked in the Canadian forests as a lumberjack prior to settling on a farm on Block Road. He married Katharina Margaretha Barbara nee Hildner January 9, 1898. They had five children: Linda Roedel, Edwin Fischer, Milda Loesel, Clarence Fischer, and Arno Fischer.

The second child, Edwin Fischer, married Hulda Dorothy Caroline nee Stern.

Johann Michael died February 28, 1913 at the age of 80 years. His wife Maria Barbara died in 1907. Both of them are buried in St. Lorenz Cemetery.

