

Geuder Family



The Geuder family has been traced to the 13th century in Nürnberg. They were a prominent family in one of the most prosperous and progressive cities of its time in Germany.

A Geuder family castle near Nürnberg is still owned by a family descendant. In the oldest parish church in Nürnberg, St. Sebald, there is a window of the Geuder family dated 1379. Close by the church is Geuder Street. A Geuder beer is also still produced in Germany.

Johann Michael Geuder came to America about 1848 from a small village in the heart of the Steigerwald, named Pruehl, which is in Franconia, Germany, about 30 miles west of Nürnberg. He had been the organist at the Lutheran Church in Pruehl. Johann Michael came to Ohio, where he married and then returned with his wife to Dittweiler, Germany. He later brought her parents, brothers and sisters to America and settled on a farm near Eldred, Pennsylvania.

The first Geuder to enter the Saginaw Valley was Johann Adam Geuder, presumed to be a first cousin of Johann Michael. Johann Adam came to Saginaw around 1847 and started a blacksmith shop on North Niagara Street. He was a charter member of Holy Cross Lutheran Church.

When a pastoral candidate from Germany arrived at Holy Cross, the congregation was not sure they could support him. The author of "Church Bells in the Forest", Theodore Graebner, quotes Adam as saying, "*We certainly can do it if we have the will. Among the children of Israel eleven tribes had to support the twelfth. There are twelve of us, should we not be able to support the thirteenth. I shall give a month's earnings for the support of the pastor and will offer him a home to begin with.*"

In 1849, Adam married Anna Graebner, the sister of Henry Graebner, the pastor who accompanied the original settlers to Frankentrost in 1847. Adam and Anna had three children: Mary, who married Charles Rummel; Regina, who married Henry Schwartz; and William Michael, who married Carolina Schaper. Adam and his family moved to a farm in Frankentrost in 1858 where he died three years later.

Johann Michael Geuder's great-great grandson, Frederick William Geuder came to Frankenmuth in 1976 as an administrator for the Frankenmuth City Government. In 1978, he was appointed the second City Clerk for Frankenmuth, a post held for almost ten years.

Fred had grown up in nearby Saginaw, attended Holy Cross Lutheran School, Arthur Hill High School and received a Bachelor of Business Administration Degree from the University of Michigan. While in Frankenmuth, Fred was a member of the Bavarian Festival Board of Directors and served as Bavarian Festival Parade Chairman for two years. He was a member of the St. Lorenz Male Chorus and later a member of the Mixed Choir.

Soon after Fred arrived in Frankenmuth his parents, Don (died in 1991), and Betty Geuder, moved to Frankenmuth upon Don's retirement. Don had been an Environmental Health Officer for Saginaw County. Don was a member of the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the Disabled American Veterans. Betty worked as a cashier in the Saginaw County Treasurer's Office. Their children included Fred, Franck, Sally and Donette.

After moving to Harbor Springs to become City Manager in 1988, Fred married Kay Clave of Petoskey.



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