

Koester Family



The Koester name was introduced to the Frankenmuth area when, in 1958, Angelus Koester, his wife Maria, and their son Walter, moved here from the Hudson Valley region of New York State. Angelus was born January 15, 1900 in the small village of Sittensen in northern Germany, located between Hamburg and Bremen. He was the second oldest child in a family of eight children. He was baptized on January 19, 1900. His parents were Herman and Margaret Koester. His father was the principal of the parochial school which Angelus attended for his elementary education. In his early youth he had a zeal for education and learning and achieved a better than average education for his day. The shadows of World War I and hard times in Germany made his mind and heart turn to America. It was not an easy journey and he was very ill from sea sickness when he arrived in the New York harbor. Here he boarded a train to Avon, South Dakota, where his sponsor, Claus Brandt, met him. A year later he was joined by his brother Adolph and his fiancée and wife to be, Maria Oerding, also from Germany.

Maria was the daughter of John and Elizabeth Oerding who were prominent farmers and land owners from Deinstedt, Germany. Angelus and Maria were married March 12, 1925 in Avon, South Dakota. It was here that four of their five children were born: Margaret, John, Henry and Elizabeth. They worked very hard at farming, raising their family, and learning the English language and the American way of life. Angelus made good use of his musical talent and was an organist at Zion Lutheran Church in Avon for most of his years there. His big and new interest, found in America, was his enjoyment of pheasant hunting.

The 1930's brought depression, drought and dust storms to the Dakotas, and in October of 1936, Angelus was forced to sell out everything.

Once again, Angelus, his wife and children, boarded a train, this time heading east to the Hudson Valley. Here friends and relatives, who had emigrated earlier from Germany, helped them to re-establish their lives and start a new living in dairy farming. It was here that the fifth child, Walter, was born.

In 1957, Angelus sold his dairy farm in Livingston, New York and came to Michigan. In 1958, he bought, what was formerly, the Edmar Bender farm on King Road, in the Frankenmuth area. He sold out seven years later and retired to live in Bay City, Michigan.

In 1983, Angelus and Maria moved to Frankenmuth and joined St. John's Lutheran Church. On January 27, 1988, Angelus died and was buried in St. John's Cemetery in Frankenmuth. Maria and two sons, John and Walter, continued living in Frankenmuth.

John and his wife Leone owned and operated Koester Builders and Koester Real Estate. Walter carried a supervisory position with Koester Builders from its beginnings in the construction industry.

Angelus and Maria's descendants include: daughter Margaret Wilson, her husband Leonard Gene of Springfield, Virginia, and their children Helen, Mitchell and Donna and Robert Wilson; son John, his wife Leone, and their children, Annette Nash, Paul Koester and Kathleen Koester; son Henry, his wife Eleanore of Ghent, New York, and their children Eileen DeCico, David Koester and Emilie Thierfelder; daughter Elizabeth, her husband Walter Sebald of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and their children John, William, Peter, Maria and Miriam Sebald; son Walter, his wife Karen, and their children Wanda, Scott and Michele.

As of 2005 there are 9 great-grandchildren.



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