

Hilpert Family



he Hilpert family, unlike all other families featured in the guestrooms, has never lived in Frankenmuth, Michigan, nor even immigrated to the United States. The Hilpert family is important to this community in that Karl Wilhelm Hilpert was the First

Mayor of the City of Gunzenhausen-Middle Franconia Bavaria, Federal Republic of Germany, (Frankenmuth's Sister City). Gunzenhausen was officially adopted as Frankenmuth's Sister City in 1962 as part of the "People to People" Program. This German city, of over 17,000 residents, and Frankenmuth have more than the German language in common. They are able to compare farming and industry, history, culture and religion. The state church of Gunzenhausen, St. Marien, is Lutheran. Frankenmuth's beginnings started with a Lutheran church group.

The First Mayor Hilpert was involved in the establishment of the "People to People" Program in 1962. He has given strong support to the Sister City relationship since 1962. His support is shown by the many impressive receptions given to the many Frankenmuth groups who have visited Gunzenhausen.

Karl Wilhelm Hilpert, son of Margaretha Eva nee Wieser and Johann Michael Hilpert, (butcher and host) was born on February 11, 1932 at Altenmuhr (now Muhr am See). His grandparents were Margarete Babette nee Amslinger, a housewife, and Johann Michael Hilpert, a farmer. The great-grandparents, Johann Michael and his wife Anna Barbara nee Rühl Hilpert, did farming.

Karl Wilhelm Hilpert was baptized at St. Johannes Church in Altenmuhr in 1932 and moved with his parents to Gunzenhausen in 1933. It was there he was confirmed at the church, St. Marien, in 1946. After elementary school, and until 1960, he was trained as an industrial merchant at Stadywerke Gunzenhausen in financial bookkeeping, calculation and purchasing.

On January 4, 1958, Karl Wilhelm married Gertrud Sofie nee Gerbing at the Evangelium Stadtkirche St. Marien. Their marriage has been blessed with three children: Doris Barbara born in 1960, a teacher with two sons; Christoph Wilhelm born in 1963, a management expert at a bank with two daughters; Anja Uta born in 1969, a marketing bank employee with two daughters.

Since 1960, Karl Wilhelm was employed as the purchase leader and authorized agent at the standard Elektrik Lorenz AG (ITT). He was also responsible for material purchasing and technical service at the most important employer in the city of Gunzenhausen with 1700 employees.

In 1968 he became managing director of the Federal Bureau of Civil Defense for the administrative region of Middle Franconia for the Technical Support in case of catastrophes (THW).

On May 1, 1978, Karl Wilhelm was elected First Mayor of the City of Gunzenhausen. He was First Mayor for three legislative periods (18 years) until April 30, 1996. He was also Chairman of the Community-Federation "Altmuehlsee". For 42 years from 1960 until 2002 he was an elected member of the rural district council of Gunzenhausen and Weissenburg-Gunzenhausen.

Through the years, Mayor Hilpert has given numerous gifts to the Frankenmuth Museum, Schools, City and Library. He has made numerous visits to Frankenmuth with his family. Whenever any Frankenmuth resident visits with the Sister City Gunzenhausen, Mayor Hilpert is the first to greet them and give them gifts.

Mayor Hilpert has proven to be a real friend and a positive strength to the Frankenmuth/Gunzenhausen Sister City relationship.



Researched & Compiled by Bavarian Inn Lodge
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