

Veitengruber Family



The Veitengruber family would certainly be high in contention if a single family were to be chosen as having the largest number of descendants from one immigrant couple. The family name has been extended to eight generations of ancestors of Johann Michael Veitengruber and Anna Maria nee Auernhammer who arrived in Frankenmuth in 1846 – the year after the German colony was founded.

The couple's descendants are known to number more than 2,000 persons as of the year 2005.

The Veitengrubers had a distinct advantage in establishing their enormous lineage in America. Unlike most of the early settlers who came single or childless, Johann Michael and Anna arrived in Frankenmuth with six grown children. Marie Barbara was 22 when they made the voyage; Marie Margaretha was 19; Anna Maria was 17; Johann Leonard was 15; Johann Michael was 12; and Johann George was 10.

The oldest daughters got married shortly after the family arrived. Maria married George Baierlein and they had four children: Michael John (died young), Margaret Naegele, Marie Wenige and John Michael.

Marie Margaretha married Johann Leonard Bernthal in 1847. He was one of the colony's original 15 settlers who came to Frankenmuth two years earlier. They had six children: George Leonard, Margaretha Kern, George Michael, Maria Kunigunde Woelzlein, John Konrad and Johann George.

Three of the other four children also eventually got married and raised families. The youngest son Johann George never married. Anna Maria married George M. Bickel. Their three children were: Jacob, Leonard and Marie.

Jacob's daughter Emilie married William Zehnder Sr., grandfather of Bavarian Inn Lodge Owner and President, Judy Zehnder Keller.

Johann Leonard had the largest family with 10 children. He married Anna Margaret nee Stroehlein. Their oldest sons, John Michael and John Leonard, operated the Veitengruber Lumber Mill on the north side of Genesee Street. The mill manufactured cheese boxes and sawed and planed lumber. Their other children were: Anna Barbara Roth, Anna Maria Bernthal, Johanna Otto, John William, John Carl, Maria Roth, Margaretha Dinse and Heinrich.

Johann Michael married Anna Barbara nee Stern and they also had a large family of nine children. Their children were: Leonard, John Michael, George Adam, Martin, Sophie Keinath, Katharine Kaesemeyer, Mary Olsen, Margaret Olender and Anna Rega.

The Veitengrubers came from Graefensteinberg near Gunzenhausen, Germany. They settled on a farm on West Genesee in Frankenmuth. The acreage extended from the present Churchgrove Road to Main Street. The Frankenmuth City Hall, Universal Houdaille Plant and Frankenmuth Fire Station occupy the land as of the year 2005.

Like most of the earliest settlers, Johann Michael was a farmer. He died at the age of 59 on January 14, 1858. He only lived in Frankenmuth for 12 years.

The Veitengruber family tree recently began an eighth generation of Johann Michael's great-great-great-great-great-grandchildren. Most of the descendants do not have the family name, however Veitengrubers from the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh generations still live in Frankenmuth.



Researched & Compiled by Bavarian Inn Lodge
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