

# Voorheis Family



The Voorheis name came to this area through Emory Voorheis in 1890. At this time there were five hotels in Frankenmuth with the earliest established in 1856 only 11 years after the settlement was founded. The first hotel was called The Exchange Hotel.

It has the distinction of having fifteen different owners. The business is known as Zehnder's of Frankenmuth and is owned and operated by the Edwin Zehnder family.

The Exchange Hotel was built by Henry Reichle. His wife, as was the custom, was the cook. Reichle operated the business for 20 years and then it was sold to Benjamin Felgner, who owned it for the next eight years. Theodore Fischer was the proprietor followed by Richard Robbel. In 1892, The Exchange Hotel was bought by Henry Goetz who operated it until 1899, when he built a new hotel.

Emory Voorheis lived in the Goetz Hotel when he arrived in Frankenmuth. Many single men were boarders at the hotels at that time. But Frankenmuth really received its reputation for fine food and lodging from the salesmen or "agents" that stopped as they made their rounds from Saginaw, Flint and Detroit, Michigan.

The hotels served breakfast, dinner and supper, but only at mealtime hours. In between, lunches were often available free with beer. The good food, as well as the reasonable prices was a big attraction. Theodore Fischer, owner of the Union House, offered lodging and breakfast with shelter and feed for a horse – all for 75 cents. The other hotels in Frankenmuth of that era were the Commerical House established in 1882 and Stahl's Eagle Hotel built in 1880.

Voorheis' arrival in Frankenmuth was not typical of the other early settlers.

His ancestors came from Holland, not Germany, and settled in Lapeer, east of Flint. Emory was born there July 14, 1870. The family name started out as VanVoorhees. Hees was a village in Holland and Emory's ancestors lived in an area before you reached the village of Hees. Hence, the "Voor" which means "before". The "Van" was eventually dropped and the spelling changed to Voorheis.

Later Emory's parents, John E. and Mary (Jennings), came to Frankentrost, another German settlement northwest of Frankenmuth. Emory made the move to Frankenmuth when he was 20 years old. He worked at the Hubinger Lumber Company, the major business in Frankenmuth at that time. Eight years later, on November 12, 1898, he married Emilie Hubinger, the daughter of John Hubinger who was one of the company's founders. The Hubingers were the most prominent family in Frankenmuth.

The couple had nine children: Linda Emma, Walter Markus, Helen Ruth, Norman Rueben Otto, Mable Martha, Marie Anita and Frederick Carl. A son, Arthur Bernard, drowned when he was 11 and a daughter, Bernice, died when she was two months old.

There were 12 grandchildren. They were: Fred Gugel, Lois Gugel Wayer, Walter Voorheis, Marilyn Voorheis Braeutigam, Mildred Block, Don Voorheis, Jerry Voorheis, Eddie Jr. Karolinski, Rhea Kay Karolinski, Nancy Simon, David Voorheis, Nadine Voorheis and 46 descendants in all.

Emory later worked at the Buick Plant in Flint as a tool-maker. Then he worked for Otto Schupp. On September 27, 1927 he died in a horse and buggy accident while hauling coal for Schupp. He was 57 years old.



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