

Yoba Family



The Yoba family name was brought to Frankenmuth in 1917 by Julius, his sister Helen, and a brother Mike, all orphans at the Lutheran Children's Home in Bay City. They were brought to St. Lorenz Lutheran Church on a Sunday morning and introduced to the congregation members with hopes of finding a home for them.

Helen was taken in by the Conrad Loesel family and Julius was taken in by the Jacob Woelzlein family. Mike, who was crippled from a siege of polio, could not be placed and was taken to Monroe, Michigan and placed with a family there.

The children's parents, Julius and Elizabeth nee Szankowski, came to Monroe from Debreczen, Hungary in 1910 with their two daughters, Betty and Helen. Mike and Julius were born in the Monroe area. Julius and Elizabeth hoped to make a better life for themselves and their four children. They worked doing seasonal farm work, thinning and hoeing sugar beets, etc.

Within six to seven years both parents died leaving the four children as orphans. An uncle in Alger, Michigan tried to care for the three youngest children but the Department of Social Services felt he didn't have the means to support them so they were taken to the Children's Home in Bay City. Betty, the oldest daughter, was old enough to go with a friend to Chicago to find work there.

Julius, born in 1911, could only speak Hungarian when he was taken in by the Woelzlein family. Going to school at St. Lorenz, Julius learned "high" German but always had trouble with the Bayerisch dialect that the rest of his schoolmates were speaking.

He was confirmed at St. Lorenz in 1925. Julius married Hildegard Zehnder on July 26, 1942.

Julius farmed for many years on Dehmel Road, south of Frankenmuth. After the children had grown up and none of them had an inclination to farm, Julius and Hildegard retired from farming.

In 1969, a home for the elderly, the Lutheran Home, was opened in Frankenmuth. Julius and Hildegard both worked there, Julius as maintenance supervisor, and Hildegard as admissions director.

Julius and Hildegard had five children: Judy Bonner was an administrator at Genesys Home health organization in Flint, Michigan; Jerry was vice-president of Great Lakes Gauge in Bridgeport, Michigan; Tom was a graphics and sign designer in Houston, Texas; Marilyn Rodammer was co-owner with her husband of the Listening Room in Saginaw, Michigan; and Sue Gilbert was a paralegal specialist for the Social Security Disability Program.

Julius and Hildegard had ten grandchildren and two great-grandchildren as of the year 2005.

Julius managed to get in touch with his sister and brother after 36 years of separation from Betty, and 50 years from his brother Mike.

Julius faithfully served his church as an elder and the community on the school remodeling building committees. He also served on the Board of Education for the Frankenmuth Public Schools and helped organize the Frankenmuth Conservation Club.



Researched & Compiled by Bavarian Inn Lodge
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