

Deuring Family



he family farming tradition that was started by Johann Balthas Deuring in the early years of Frankenmuth continues today with his third and fourth generation descendants. His grandson and great-grandson raise cash crops on some of the original acres he farmed in the mid 1800's.

Johann Balthas was born in Wurtenberg Bavaria, Germany. Nothing is known about his childhood or early adult years. Records show he married Maria Margaretha Reif on April 10, 1864 in Frankenmuth. Maria was born in Bavaria on March 14, 1835 and came to America in 1848. She first married Frederick Bernthal; but he died in 1862.

Farming in Frankenmuth in the mid 1800's was a challenge. The settlers suddenly became lumberman because the land had to be cleared before it could be farmed. The back-breaking job took months, even years to complete. Some farmers planted their fields even though many tree stumps remained. The earliest crops were potatoes and corn. Then wheat and other grains were planted.

Although Frankenmuth started out as a rural community, the growth of businesses along the Cass River changed the focus somewhat. A flour and saw mill were important additions. Both allowed Frankenmuth to be less dependent on Bridgeport and Saginaw for building materials, food and other supplies.

Travel in Frankenmuth was made easier with the construction of roads. The settlers formed crews and crisscrossed the township with a network of dirt and some plank roads. The advantages of the Cass River which meandered through town were also appreciated. Logs and supplies were floated down the river with ease.

Johann Balthas established the family homestead on a 30-acre parcel on Tuscola Road west of town along the Cass River. A plat map in the 1870's shows he also owned 30 acres in the same area south of the river and another 80 acres even farther south. A 51-acre parcel he owned north of the homestead on Beyer Road is the center of the Deuring family's current farming operations. The acreage is owned by Johann Balthas' grandson Richard and his family. Richard farms 150 acres with his son Gene, Johann Balthas' great-grandson. They raise soybeans, navy beans and hay.

The original Deuring settler had six children in all. Three daughters came first followed by three boys. Sophia Katharine was born in 1866 and married Johann Bierlein in 1887. Dorothea Karoline was born in 1868 and eventually married Johann Konrad Weiss in 1889. The last daughter Maria Margareth was born in 1870 and married Johann Georg M. Rupprecht in 1893.

The couple's first son was named Johannes Balthas Deuring. He was born in 1872. His children are: Walter, Edwin, Martha and Richard. Richard married Leona Haubenstricker and they had three children: Gene, Diane Rogner and Dawn Hoffman. Their grandchildren are Rachel and Amanda Deuring and twin boys Tim and Andrew Rogner.

The other children of Johann Balthas were Johann Jakob born in 1875 and Johann Adam Born in 1877.

Later records also show a Johann Wilhelm Deuring in Frankenmuth. He married Maria Katharina Hofmann who was born in Frankenmuth in 1862. Their children were: Bernhard Leonhard, Bertha Sophia, Georg Ernst, Karoline Dorothea Elizabeth and Erna Maria.

