

Weiss Family



he Johann Adam Weiss Sr. family has played a significant role in the development of the Frankenmuth Bavarian Inn Lodge. The complex is built on the Weiss Centennial Farm that was passed down to four generations before it was purchased

by the William Zehnder Jr. family.

Johann Adam Sr. was an early Frankenmuth settler. He arrived here in 1850 when the community was only five years old. He came for the purpose of purchasing a tract of land for his family and another for his brother's family.

By the time Johann Adam Sr. made the voyage across the Atlantic, the earlier immigrants sent letters with advice about the passage. They said sea sicknesses could be overcome by eating dried fruit, prunes, apples and pears. White wine was recommended instead of red. Each passenger was responsible for his own food, bedding, washing and cooking utensils. Meals were simple. Meat that kept the best was ham and sausage. It was advised that dark bread be kept in an old whiskey barrel to prevent mildew. Morning and supper soup was made by breaking biscuits into small pieces, filling a dish halfway with them, then adding pepper and pouring hot water over it.

Johann Adam Sr. traveled to America when he was 36 years old. He was born July 19, 1814 at Kurzendorf Bayern, Germany. He married Maria Magdalena nee Schaefer who came from Ellingen Bayern, Germany, near Gunzenhausen. They had a daughter Anna Sybilla, born in Dietenheim, the year Johann Adam Sr. left Germany. Maria and the baby remained behind.

Johann Adam Sr. found work at a local lumber mill owned by George Hubinger. Later George sold him the cleared tract of land along the Cass River (property location of the Bavarian Inn Lodge).

The parcel included what is now Heritage Park to the north and property owned by Edwin Zehnder family to the south.

The new land owner sent for his wife and daughter in 1852. Along with them came his sister, Anna Barbara Weiss, and her four children: Maria Margaretha (18), Adam Jr. (14), George Kaspar (11), and Maria Barbara (7). Her husband died during the voyage and was buried at sea.

Records indicate that Johann Adam Sr. took his nephew "under his wing". In 1860 he sold them property off the land he owned.

Johann Adam Sr. and Maria had three more children once they came to Frankenmuth: Barbara Weiss in 1858; Anna Marie Weiss in 1861; and Margaretha Weiss in 1865.

Their oldest daughter, Anna Poellet, had 11 children; Barbara never married; Anna Marie Sohn had seven children; and Margaretha Haas had three children.

In his later years, Johann Adam Sr. gave property to his son-in-law, John Haas, with the provision that Haas had to provide home and care to his unmarried daughter Barbara for life, which Haas did.

The Weiss homestead property was eventually handed down to Johann Adam's two nephews, John Adam Weiss Jr. and George Kaspar Weiss. Then the son of John Adam Weiss, John Michael Weiss, owned it. Michael sold his property to Bernhard Weiss. When Bernhard and his wife died, their three children, Robert, Ralph and Lorine owned it. They sold it to the Zehnders.

Johann Adam Sr. died August 8, 1889 at the age of 75. His wife died two years earlier.



Researched & Compiled by Bavarian Inn Lodge
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