

Loesel Family



he Loesel name came to this area through Lorenz Loesel who was born March 4, 1817 in Göckenhof, a tiny hamlet in Franconia, Kingdom of Bavaria Germany. Lorenz was baptized the next day and confirmed in 1830. His father, Johann Georg Loesel, died suddenly when Lorenz was eight years old, and his widowed mother, Maria Kunigunda nee Arnold of Höfstetten, raised him on a farm along with his eight brothers and sisters.

Without the supervision of a father, Lorenz became quite "worldly." At age 22, Lorenz was inspired to change, a result of meeting William Loehe, a Lutheran pastor in Neuendettelsau. Loehe helped him find peace for his troubled soul and he took Lorenz into his home. For the next 2½ years, Lorenz became his "Stallknecht" or servant. When Loehe approached him with the idea of organizing a colony in America, Lorenz was eager to help. Lorenz Loesel was the first person who grasped the idea of a missionary colony in Frankenmuth and volunteered to help make the plan a reality. He wrote, "*I immediately offered my services as leader of the colony and I offered to recruit members for the colony.*" He sailed with the original group of 15 colonists in 1845. For his years of work and loyalty to the community's original purpose, Lorenz earned recognition as the "Founder of Frankenmuth."

Lorenz followed through on his offer and by April 20, 1845, the immigrants completed their religious instructions from Loehe and were ready to sail from Bremerhaven on the ship "Caroline". Among their little group were six men, four young women, one couple with their daughter, and Pastor Craemer. They were en-route to Michigan for a location on the Cass River, fifteen miles from Saginaw, to do mission work among the Chippewa Indians in Saginaw County. Four hours after the "Caroline" left port, another vessel ran it into a sandbar and it was held there some 20 hours until the tide rose and they could continue.

During this strange interlude, Pastor Craemer married four couples, that included Lorenz Loesel and his bride, Margaretha Walther, thought to have been a rather close relative of Dr. C. F. W. Walther. It was a rather rough honeymoon. As the good ship "Caroline" headed westward, it encountered many storms, six of them being of major strength. In addition, one night during a severe storm, the "Caroline" collided with another ship, whose bowsprit broke off and flew into the "Caroline." But God was with them and after a voyage of 50 days they landed safely in New York Harbor with great thanksgiving. It should also be noted that stormy weather was not all that the

little flock suffered. There was much seasickness aboard that violently tossed ship. Smallpox also broke out, causing the death of the little daughter of the Haspels and she had to be buried at sea. Lorenz also suffered from this plague.

Lorenz's autobiography admits he had doubts about the voyage. He worried about traveling so far and feared about the thieves they heard were in New York. "*What would happen if these thieves took all our possessions and money?*" he wrote. "*Would we stay in New York or turn back and return to the homeland?*" Near Albany, New York, their train had a head-on collision. Despite the perils, the colonists arrived in Saginaw July 10, 1845. By August 18, they had completed a community cabin in Frankenmuth.

The next spring, Lorenz built his home about one-quarter mile east of St. Lorenz Church and began farming. Lorenz and his wife purchased 120 acres at \$2.50 an acre. Mrs. Loesel wrote they had to borrow \$50.00 because they spent more money for the land than they intended. To begin life on the farm, the Loesels bought two cows and two calves for \$29.00. They had secured a sow with five pigs and three one-year old shoats, which they planned to butcher in the autumn. With a neighbor, they purchased two six-year old work oxen for \$58.50. From the maple sap in the spring, they made 36 pounds of sugar and eight measures of syrup. In addition to the few fruit trees, the forest had many nut-bearing trees.

By the end of June 1846, the Loesels had spent \$20.00 for flour, \$12.00 for meat, \$8.00 for potatoes and what was necessary for indispensables. Mrs. Loesel also wrote that in the winter they bought a young dog from the Indians for a loaf of bread. The dog soon learned "German" and his obedience was similar to German dogs.

Lorenz and Margaretha had seven children.

The first son born in Frankenmuth was Johann Matthias, who lived only eight days. His was the first funeral held at St. Lorenz Church.

Anna Barbara, born in 1847 married Ernest Keinath and she lived to be 62 years old.

Johanna Margaretha lived only 5 months.

Johann Leonard, born in 1850, married Maria Bickel and he died at the age of 77 years.

Katherina, born in 1852, married Johann Rodammer and she died at the age of 67 years.

The last two children of Lorenz's first wife, Margaretha, were twins born in 1854.



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Twin Johann Konrad lived only 5 years, and twin Kunigunda, who married Christoph Grueber, died at 63 years.

Soon after the birth of the twins, the good mother and wife died on March 8, 1855 at the age of 34 years, leaving 4 young children, the oldest of whom was Anna Barbara, age 8.

On June 27, 1855, Lorenz Loesel married Anna Barbara Rauh, a young lady of 22, who also had come over from Germany. She was a kind and good Christian lady and became a devoted mother to the four children whose mother had passed away. On June 12, 1856, she gave birth to Margaretha Katherina, who later married Johann Georg Grueber. She lived to be 80 years of age.

Andrew was born on February 16th, 1858. He married Maria Galsterer. Maria died at the age of 31 years leaving a little daughter. On August 12, 1892, Andrew married Christina Riess.

Johanna, born 1860, married Leonard Trinklein. She lived to the age of 77 years.

Adam, born in 1861, married Adeline Stahl and he died at the age of 47 years.

Anna Regina, born in 1863, married John P. Bickel and she died at the age of 82 years.

John Matthias, born in 1865, died at 6 months.

Conrad, born in 1867, married Magdalena Frisch. He died at the age of 89 years.

Barbara, born 1870, married Adam F. Bickel. Barbara died at the age of 90 years.

Lorenz Sigmund, born 1872, married Bertha Vates. Lorenz died at the age of 62 years.

The last child, John Wolfgang, was born in 1874 and married Gertrude Ranke. John W. died at the age of 79 years.

As of the year 2006, there are over 5,000 descendants of Lorenz Loesel. Lorenz was a rather strong and robust man. He was a quiet, prudent man, respected member of the Frankenmuth community and of St. Lorenz Lutheran Church, which he helped to establish. He faithfully served St. Lorenz Church as an elder for twenty-nine years. On December 4, 1846, Pastor Craemer and his wife were blessed with a baby boy and named him Johann Lorenz, because Lorenz was chosen as his godfather.

Lorenz Loesel left this world rather suddenly and unexpectedly. Around mid-August 1880 he was helping his son Andrew, who had recently bought the farm on Curtis Road, two miles east of Frankenmuth along the Cass River. They went to the woods and were sawing some timbers when he suffered a heart attack

or a stroke. Lorenz never recovered from this malady. On August 22, 1880, he fell asleep in the faith of his Savior at the age of 63 years.

Christian burial services were held at St. Lorenz Lutheran Church. He was laid to rest in the original St. Lorenz Cemetery across from the new church, which was being built in 1880. He rests less than a stone's throw from the site of the first log cabin and from the location of the second church, near the place where several Indian children were buried. Close by are hung two church bells, which the colonists had brought from Neuendettelsau, Bavaria, and of which Pastor Loehe wrote, "On one of these bells is a picture of the holy martyr, Larentious, in memory of a dear St. Laurentius Church in the homeland, and in memory of the first person who grasped the idea of a missionary colony and decided to carry it out, Lorenz Loesel. The bells remain intact outside the St Lorenz Church Museum.

Descendants of Lorenz Loesel who entered the pastoral ministry include the following:

Mark Auernhamer, Adolph Bickel, Eldor Bickel, Emil Bickel, Elmer Bickel, Fred Bickel, Herman Bickel

Descendants of Lorenz Loesel who entered the teaching ministry include the following:

David Auernhamer, Heidi Auernhamer, Mary Auernhamer, Edgar Bender, Lois Bender, Lorna Bender, Ann Bickel, David Bickel, Ernest Bickel, Eugene Bickel, Howard Bickel, James Bickel, Kenneth Bickel, Kurt Bickel, Lawrence Bickel, Mary Bickel, Ottomar Bickel, Paul Bickel, Paul Bickel, Phillip Bickel, Ralph Bickel, Tim Bickel, Verna Bickel, Victor Bickel, David Buuck, Herman Daenzer, Maxine Fiala, Carl Fischer, Ralph Fischer, Henry Grueber, Lorenz Grueber, Martin Grueber, John Haubenstricker, Edgar Keinath, Lucille Kirchhof, Bonnie Leidel, Sharon Leidel, Alvin Loesel, Andrew Loesel, Berthold Loesel, Eileen Loesel, Eleanor Loesel, Ellie Loesel, Esther Loesel, Herman Loesel, Lois Loesel, Lorenz Loesel, Waldemar Loesel, Alvin Nuechterlein, Rudolph Ranke, Daniel Richert, Oswald Riess, Richard Riess, Walter Riess, Edward Rupprecht, William Rupprecht, Carl Schiefer, Alois Schmitzer III, Herman Schmitzer, Carl Trinklein, Fred Trinklein, John (Hans) Trinklein, Rebecca Trinklein, Virginia Trinklein, Edwin Weber, James Weber, Frederick Wiese Jr.



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