

Frankentrost History



The history of this community in Michigan dates back to Wilhelm Loehe of Neuendettelsau Bavaria, Germany. Loehe was the university-educated pastor of the church at Neuendettelsau Franconia (northern Bavaria). He publicized the need for funds to supply Lutheran workers to America and formed an organization to prepare workers and to continuously gather funds. He sent a small group of people together with their pastor to form a congregation at the place where they would settle. Over a seven-year period, several hundred colonists were delegated to establish a number of Bavarian settlements in Michigan, known as the Franconian colonies. Although Loehe himself never came to America, he is considered to be the founder of the Franconian colonies in the Saginaw Valley: Frankenmuth in 1845; Frankentrost in 1847; Frankenlust in 1848 and Frankenhilf (now Richville) in 1850.

In 1847, the second Bavarian colony, Frankentrost, was founded by 22 families and was located seven miles northwest of Frankenmuth.

Those colonists included:

(Arriving June 10, 1847) Pastor Johann Phillip Graebner; Adam Schnell with his wife and 5 children; Michael Bluemlein with his wife and child, Frederick Billmeier with his wife and child; Michael Widemann and wife; George Hetzner and wife; Henry Rank and wife; Adam Kipfmueller with his wife and 5 children; Leonard Buchinger and wife; Christina Heinlein and children; Mrs. Strieb; Andrew Moll with his wife and 11 children; Jacob Herbst with his wife and 3 children; John Simon Abraham with his wife and 3 children; and G. Maeder.

(Arriving June 24, 1847) J. Peter Schlenk and bride; Adam Wissmueller and 2 children; George Wissmueller and wife; Michael Huber with his wife and 2 children; Christian Frisch and wife; Conrad Munker with his wife and daughter; Ludwig Reinbold with his wife and 3 children; J.G. Edelmann with his wife and 3 children; and Widow Jaeckel.

These colonists did not scatter their houses on farms as was done in Frankenmuth, but built them in a straight row as was done in Germany. A main street ran from east to west and the cabins were built about two rods from this road on the north and the south side.

By the 1860's, this road led to Frankenmuth. By 1870, a plank road was built which led to Saginaw. Today it is the paved Holland Road. The close arrangement of dwellings, made it necessary for the individual farms to be a mile long. The church and parsonage of Immanuel congregation were in the center of the colony.

The nearest home was six miles away. The foot path to Frankenmuth was readily overgrown with underbrush. Purchases had to be made in Saginaw or Flint, and frequently it was all but impossible to get through to these towns. Nevertheless, the Frankentrost colonists amid all tribulation did not lose faith and courage. They told their pastor, "*Pastor, sometimes we have bread and not potatoes, and sometimes we have potatoes and not bread; but we always do have God's Word by which we are refreshed and strengthened*".

As of 2005, the congregation numbers 729 baptized members with a school enrollment in the 70's.



Researched & Compiled by Bavarian Inn Lodge
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