

Pretzer Family



he daughter of Ervin and Mildred Pretzer, Kathy Pretzer, came from Hemlock, Michigan. Her early education was taken at the Wright School in Midland County and continued at Zion Lutheran School and Hemlock High School. After earning a Bachelor of Arts degree from Central Michigan University in 1965, she accepted an offer to teach in Frankenmuth's List Elementary School.

Kathleen Pretzer came to Frankenmuth in August of 1965. The school district at that time was experiencing a growth spurt due to the baby boom and the development of subdivisions within the town. Two third grade teachers were now required. In the years following Kathy continued to teach third graders most years, but also taught fourth and sixth graders. In the early 70's, she taught reading and English to sixth graders in a room known as "the dungeon" at the Main Street Middle School. After two years, Kathy returned to the enlarged List Elementary School to again teach third and fourth graders. She retired from teaching in 2003.

The Pretzer family enlarged in 1989 after a friend, Lori Bailey, informed Kathy that it was possible for singles to adopt foreign infants. Following a year of filling out forms and waiting impatiently, Kathy and her sister Sandy traveled to Paraguay in South America in May of 1989 to complete the adoption of the almost year old Sarah Elizabeth Pretzer. Sarah became the latest twig on the family tree that, like the family of Irene Pretzer Bronner, also traces its roots to Heinrich Pretzer of Pomerania. His descendant Carl August Pretzer and his wife Auguste Gensch Pretzer emigrated from Altdamm, Germany in 1884. Upon their arrival in America, Carl August and Auguste also first went to Macomb County, Michigan. Their fourth child William Carl August was born there within six weeks of their arrival.

William was the grandfather of Kathleen Pretzer. In 1886 the family moved to Richland Township, Saginaw County, Michigan where one of their closest neighbors was Ferdinand Pretzer, the grandfather of Irene Pretzer Bronner. Carl August died in 1929 and Auguste in 1928. Their children were: Otto, Fritz (Fred), Ernst, William, Carl (Charlie), George, John, Agnes, and Olga.

William Carl August, the grandfather of Kathleen Pretzer, married Elsa (Elsie) Dankwardt on December 24, 1905. They owned and operated a farm in Richland Township for many years. It was located just east of the farm of Irene Pretzer Bronner's father William Pretzer. This was a situation which could have caused some confusion. Apparently, neighbors sometimes solved this by referring to William Carl August as "East Billy Pretzer" as a photograph was labeled. He also had another nickname "Cement Bill" because he built cement bridges for a living. William died in 1942 and Elsie in 1981. William and Elsie had nine children: Oscar, Walter, Margaret, Arnold, Flora, Ervin (father of Kathleen), Caroline, Clarence, and Gladys.

Ervin William Pretzer was born February 7, 1916. He married Mildred Beyersdorf May 31, 1941. During WWII, he served in the U.S. Navy. After returning home he continued his employment at the Dow Chemical Company in Midland. Ervin and Mildred continued to live in Richland Township until 2005.

Their children are as follows: Kathleen Pretzer was born April 12, 1943 in Saginaw County. Sandra Pretzer was born January 31, 1948. She married Robert DeLong on September 6, 1969. Robert is a civil engineer for Wayne County and Sandra is a church secretary at Trinity Lutheran Church in Wyandotte, Michigan. They have two children, Derek and Nathan.



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