

Schmitzer Family



The Schmitzer name arrived in Frankenmuth in 1852. The clan was led by George Schmitzer, a master tailor. He was born October 20, 1815. His father Johann was also a tailor and taught him the trade. His mother was Eva Margaretha Woerlein. The original plans called for both parents, Johann and Eva, to accompany their son and family to America. But Johann died shortly before their departure. Eva left Germany, but died on the "Brig Hector" during the voyage.

George Schmitzer and his wife Anna Barbara Winkler (b. May 15, 1814), with their six children, Johann Michael (14), Anna Margaretha (12), Johann Georg (10), Johann Konrad (7), Johann (6) and Eva Margaretha (4), arrived in New York on June 26, 1852. They then found a growing community of farmers and businessmen in Frankenmuth, Michigan, a settlement of several hundred residents. George died January 9, 1896 and Anna died April 2, 1864.

The German immigrants in Frankenmuth, who were only in America for a short time when the Civil War began, took their military responsibilities seriously. All of George's sons served in the Civil War. One son, Johann Konrad, went to Texas after the war and was never heard from again. It is said that he was lost during the hurricane in Galveston on September 8, 1900. The storm killed an estimated 6000 people and was the third worst weather event in U.S. history. George's youngest son Johann was wounded. The most noteworthy soldier was the oldest son Johann Michael. When the first call for troops came in the fall of 1861, he and his brother Johann George joined the 3rd Michigan Cavalry. He served almost three years before he was captured by Southern forces while on scout duty. Johann Michael was tried and convicted of being a spy and sentenced to be shot. The day before his sentence was to be carried out, through a mistake of the confederate soldiers, he was exchanged with other Northern prisoners and spared.

When his duty was up he was honorably discharged in 1864 but re-enlisted and served until January 1866 when he was again honorably discharged, this time at San Antonio, Texas.

Johann Michael returned to Frankenmuth after the Civil War and married Anna Barbara List (b. September 25, 1849) on August 18, 1867. They lived on a farm on Dehmel Road and had 13 children: Conrad Johann moved to Texas and married Minnie Ford; Johann Ernst married Margaret Dunninger; William died shortly after birth; William A. married Gertrude Shreve; Christian Michael A. married Anna B.K. Loesel; George Valentin married Anna K. Loesel; Ludwig George A. married Johanna Stellwag; Marie (Mary) Margaretha married John Scharrer and after his death, Herman Lange; Ernst George married Augusta Trinklein; Carl George F. married Bertha Koepfendorfer; Adam Martin married Clara Zissler; Martin married Alma Pickelmann and Albert Johann H. married Thekla Hauck. Johann Michael died October 8, 1915. Anna Barbara died July 23, 1921.

Conrad Johann worked for two railroad companies and later was in charge of a blacksmith shop. Johann Ernst was a farmer, a blacksmith, and owned many businesses in Flint. Christian (Chris-Mike) built the Schmitzer Hotel in 1907 in Birch Run. Ernst, a blacksmith in Frankenmuth and his brother Ludwig (Louis), bought the Hotel in 1912. Christian (Chris-Mike) moved to Chesaning and built the Chesaning Hotel and his brother Adam became a partner in the hotel business. George Valentin and Carl George were farmers. Martin was a blacksmith in Birch Run most of his life and Albert served in World War I.

Alois (March 22, 1906-June 1, 1990), the oldest son of Ernst and Augusta, married Gretchen Rupprecht (February 17, 1910-October 24, 2005) on April 26, 1930 and they had four sons and three daughters.



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