

Descendants of Benedicht (Knoerr) Knerr

Switzerland to America

1557 to 2008



*St. Paul's Lutheran Church ~ Maumee, Ohio
Where the Knerr family attended church.*

by

Darla Knerr Yancey Kizer

Table of Contents

Preface	i
Foreward	ii
Dedication	iii
Copyright	iv
Introduction	v
Maps	vi
Historical Stories	x
Genealogy Registry	3
Family Photos	128
Outline Descendant Tree	139
Notes for Benedicht (Knoerr) Knerr	170
Notes for Christina (Knoerr) Knerr	171
Index	172

PREFACE

For those who are acquainted with other family record books, this one will need a little explanation. The computer software program used to compile this record is the *World Family Tree Maker, Version # 16*. It arranges the families much the same way that other record keeping systems do.

The families are numbered from 1 to 240 at the beginning of each paragraph. The number assigned to the family member is followed by the person's name. In (parenthesis) following the person's name is the name of the immediate ancestor (s), or parent and his or her generation number.

Where there is no number assigned it is because the individual has no immediate descendants. This can be due to being a child in their parent's home yet; single and not married yet, or married but having no descendants born to them yet.

There are Sixteen generation's listed beginning with Benedicht Knoerr born in 1557 and the youngest child listed is Logan Riley Canet born on September 24, 2007, and the son of Paul and Crystal (Yancey) Canet. He is in the sixteenth (16) generation.

Included with some of the notes are listed information regarding burial place, occupation, training, education, political, medical, marriage, multiple births, adoption, residence, church membership, and ordination for minister. Where there was background information regarding that individual that individual that was included, also.

An Index is provided giving the page or pages where the individual person's name is listed. Somewhere on that listed page or pages you will find the person you are searching for.

File Statistics:	Total number of Individuals listed	1,757
	Total number of marriages listed.....	683
	Total number of surnames listed.....	556
	Average Life Span	60 yrs. 10 mos.

FOREWARD

George Jacob and Catherine Knoerr

Our Immigrant forebears.

They arrived in this country seeking religious freedom and a better life for their eight children.

They landed in New York after a six week journey across the Atlantic Ocean on a sailing ship.

They battled Native American Indians as they began to carve out a place to live and make a life for their families.

This newly claimed area of ome was called the "Black Swamp".

A Reclaimed land carved out of the swampy land in the North West corner of the state of Ohio.

They were mostly young, and sturdy, men and women, all accustomed to hard work.

They battled

cold weather in the winter and hot weather in the summers.

They were self-sufficient. They raised most of their own vegetables and meat, or took wild meat off of the land,

preserving it to last from one growing season to the next.

Families stuck together. They supported one another. They learned from each other, in good times and bad.

Many times life in those days, was shorter than in our 21st. Century.

Disease and death were constant companions.

The death of newborns, babies and young children devastated them, but they continued on

supported by their Faith in God.

Young men and women also succumbed to the hard rigors of life. Wars were common....Civil and Indian.

Religious freedom was important to them and they were all thankful for the benefits it afforded them.

They felt blessed to own their own land and be able to offer their children a good life in this new, exciting and developing country they now called Home.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

This book is dedicated to
James, Harold and Donald Knerr
awesome brothers who helped to mold me
to be the sister, and woman, I am today.

Copyright 2008 Darla Knerr Kizer
4911 Old Oakleaf Drive
Sarasota, FL. 34233

All rights reserved

INTRODUCTION

Most of you enjoyed the gift of growing up in the midst of families that you knew and loved. Families that loved you back. But, for my three brothers and I, that was not a luxury afforded to us. Growing up more than a thousand miles from our grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins we knew only a bare minimum of the family whose surname we carried. There were a few times, during the 1930's and 1940's, when uncle's and aunt's brought our paternal grandparents to Florida from Ohio to spend the winter with us. Photos of some of those times document the events. These photos are precious memories to all of us.

Too young to remember much detail of that period in our lives was the reason that Harold shared with me, that he grew up thinking he "...was an orphan". He thought that he had no other family than his immediate siblings. His friends, at school, spoke often of experiences with their cousins and other relatives. They talked of their times together on holidays, birthday's and vacations. Harold said he felt empty inside. He could not share in those feelings. He yearned to experience good times spent with his cousins. But, he knew his cousins by name only.

Mother's family was originally from Illinois. At the age of 8 her parents sold their Tile and Brick business in Illinois and moved to a 120 acre grain farm located in Mark Center, Defiance County, Ohio. This is where she and her brother, James Hollis Cole, grew up. So, in addition, we could not relate to our cousins on that side of the family. I wrote to cousins in Illinois for many, many years as we grew up, but it was not until the 1970's that I met them in person. In 1990, as a part of this research, my second husband, Raymond Beachy, and I visited the area in Illinois where Mother was born. There in the Buckeye Prairie Cemetery I located many of my ancestors. It was there that I found the graves of our maternal great grandparents. Our maternal great grandfather had pastored the Buckeye Prairie Methodist-Episcopal Church. During that visit I met the one cousin, Cornelia (Klinefelter) Colonius, whom I had corresponded with for many years. Her sister, Doris was also present on that occasion. We continue to keep in contact via mail.

It was this void in our lives that led us to begin this search. I wanted to learn more about our family members on both sides. The project, that began small, has now encompassed almost 1,800 names in this book alone. It has allowed me to meet, and learn to know, cousins I knew before, in name only. I have also researched and documented both sides of my mother's family in Illinois, in addition to the Knerr/Cumiskey families living in Toledo.

The search led us back to the time of the Reformation period in Europe where our ancestors originated. As a child, I remember my father telling me, that his paternal family came from the Alsace-Lorraine area of France/Germany. (See map in this book.) He said his grandparents spoke the German language. But, Dad made little effort to teach us more than just a few words of the language. Or, maybe it was, that as children, we made no effort to learn the mother language of his family. As children we picked up words we heard Dad say, and at times we used them. Words like "Danke Shane" for "thank you" and "Gesundheit" for "bless you" when we sneezed. But, we never attempted to speak the language. If we had lived close to our grandparents and other family members who spoke the language we might have learned to speak some of it.

It was not until this project was well underway that I began to learn more about my paternal grandmother, Catherine Theresa (Cumiskey) Knerr. Dad never talked much about grandma's parents. I'm not sure why. It was during this research when I learned my Grandma's family was Catholic and had immigrated from Ireland in 1860. Grandpa's family was from France/Germany and were Lutheran. I also learned that Diabetes Mellitus was present in many of grandma's siblings and was inherited by some of her children. Our father was not one who inherited this genetic disease, but sadly his younger brother, Uncle Marion did inherit the genes for it.

During one winter in 1936-37, while my grandparents were spending the winter months with us in Florida, Mother began to ask questions of her Mother-in-law. Mom was searching to learn who the family members were and how they related to each other. Mother said that in the afternoons, after the lunch dishes were done, they would take their chairs into the back yard. There under a shade tree they would relax and drink Iced Tea. Remember, those were days before air conditioning was available and Florida was a warm climate even in the winter time.

It was during these times Mother recorded on paper, the names of the different persons who made up the Henry Knerr family. I still have those original papers. They are now yellowed and quite fragile. I don't handle them very often for that reason. Today, they are preserved by being encased in acid free plastic covers. Those recorded sheets helped me, and others, to begin to understand and compile this genealogy. It was while studying those papers that I first learned that my maternal Knerr grandparents immigrated from Ireland, coming first to New York City, each alone and single.

Owen Cumiskey and Mary Dawson met and were married there. Their first child, Mary Ann, was also born there. Shortly after her birth the family moved to Connecticut where the next five children were born. Grandma was the last child and was born on 06 May 1873. In 1876, the family moved to Toledo, Ohio. Grandma said she was three years of age when her parents moved. We have not been able to document the reason for their move, but the property they located on must have been an inheritance from Mary's family, the Dawson's. One researcher has located other Dawson families living in the Toledo area prior to 1876. We think that Mary must have been a relative of those early Dawson families. The area Owen and Mary owned was in the Washington Township of Lucas County. It lies between Douglas and Secor Roads, just north of Rt. 849 (see map). This belief that the property must have been inherited by Mary, is based on the societal norms of those days. Women were not permitted by law to own property in their own name, but this property was deeded in her name, so it had to have been an inherited piece of property. This is where our Grandma grew up.

Grandpa Henry George and his brother, Frederick Charles Knerr, both played the Violin (in those days called a fiddle). They played for barn dances (not necessarily played in a barn) during the late 1880's. Grandma was a good dancer and she said it was at these dances where they met. There were times when they had the opportunity to dance together during an evening. This led to their romance and to their marriage on 08 June 1890.

Her older sister, Mary Ann Cumiskey, met and married Grandpa's brother, Fred on 08 April 1890. Mary Ann died on 14 November 1894, of Septi-carmia (Pericarditis). This is an infection of the membranes around the heart, and her death left Fred with two small daughters. She had been ill, and cared for by a Physician for ten weeks prior to her death. After her death Fred took the two girls, named Mary Lou (called "Mae") and Theresa E., out to Maumee to live with his parents on their farm. Both girls remained there, growing up on the farm, and were cared for much of the

time by his two younger sisters, Emma and Louise Knerr. These two sisters never married, although family lore has it that one had been engaged to be married, but the engagement was broken. Emma and Louise took care of, not only their two nieces, but after the death of their mother, they continued to live on the farm and took care of their father, Jacob until his death in 1926. They inherited the farm upon his death, continuing to live there until both of their deaths in February and April of 1965. They are buried on the Knerr family cemetery plot in the Wakeman Cemetery located in the town of Waterville, Ohio.

Family lore also has it that due to Emma and Louise's dislike for their sister-in-law, Catherine, they refused to permit her to be buried beside of Grandpa Henry on the family plot. So, another family plot was purchased nearby for her burial site. Uncle Marion and Uncle Leroy Knerr purchased the plot together. Each had 6 lots of the 12 lot plot. Grandma was living with Uncle Marion and Aunt Fern at the time of her death. She is buried on one of Uncle Marion's lots with her name on the headstone. A grand daughter, Audrey Taylor and her husband James are also buried on that plot, but with no marker on the headstone for them. Also buried on the same plot is a great grand daughter, Kathy Lynn Taylor, who died at the age of 6 years from Leukemia. Her name is inscribed on the headstone beside of Grandma's. Audrey and James had a son, Micheal Taylor who died suddenly of a heart attack on January 1, 2000. He is buried in a grave near the Sexton's building with no headstone marking his place. I presume the family did not know that there were lots still available beside of his parents on the family plot when he died. If desired, the family could have his body relocated to the family plot, but contact has been unsuccessful in reaching them in the past couple of years.

Documentation for this book has been enhanced by many of the family members from both the maternal and paternal sides of the family. I am indebted to three persons who have given unselfishly and generously, to this project, in both time, memories and pictures. One is our first cousin, Norma Fretz Moon. Without her this story would not be complete. Living in Toledo, and growing up in the bosom of the family, she has helped me to piece the family picture together. She has spent countless hours serving as my guide as we traveled around the city and county in search of answers and information. She was dedicated in helping to find the many persons and places necessary to tell the story. She never tired of my asking questions. If she didn't have an answer we worked together to find the answer. For weeks one summer she shared her home with me, made phone calls to set up appointments with family members, and then guided me to where they lived, so we could find a person that was able to give us answers to our questions.

There were some very humorous times when we laughed until our sides hurt. Like watching Norma read a map for me as I drove from place to place. Another time was when we took water and a toothbrush and cleaned the little green lycans off of the headstones of family members in the Wakeman cemetery at Waterville. Another time, was, when we spent several hours at Toledo Memorial Cemetery cleaning, and clipping the bushes, around the headstones of Aunt Jean Merz and her family, so I could take a photo of their stones. Those photos provide documentation for me of the names and dates. There were serious and sad times when we would locate a family members final resting place in a cemetery. Like our research to find the burial sites of Great Uncle Fred Knerr and his family. But there were so many happy times as we once again became close cousins, like sisters. Almost 65 years had passed since we had seen each other, but it was almost like yesterday. She looked the same as I remembered her. I'm not sure I did. Although there are cousins that she tells me that I look like. She compares me to Dode Knerr Dulinski in looks.

Another person, without whom the story would not be complete, was just as dedicated to helping us in the research of the Cumiskey family. He is James Gilsford, Jr. In the course of my early research at the Lucas County Library I learned the name of his Mother, Virginia (Hoskins) Gilsford. Further research revealed her to be the daughter of Theresa E. Knerr, the girl whose mother died when she was a two year old child, and who grew up, along with her four year old sister, Mae, on the farm of her grandparents, Henry and Catherine (Cumiskey) Knerr, in Maumee. It was at the Library that we located her address in West Toledo.

Virginia was home the day Norma and I found where she lived. In speaking with her, standing on her porch that day, I learned that she was a cousin. I, also learned, that she knew very little about her Mother's family, and she was anxious to learn more about them. That day she told me that she was an only child and during the days of her childhood her father would take her out to the Knerr farm, located on Heatherdowns Boulevard in Maumee, where her Mother had grown up. There she would play in the old barn and try to forget how lonely she was. Further contact with her helped to fill in more family information.

With very limited and sketchy information on her ancestors she was searching to learn more. We were able to help her fill in many of the blanks in her search. Through the assistance of a local researcher, William Bell, we have been able to locate and document, the Cumiskey grandparents farm lying between Douglas Road and Secor Road and south of Laskey Road. It now is a quiet residential area of NW Toledo. Two streets in the area, Elsie and Bales, are named for family members. (See copy of the map. The green street is Elsie. The magenta street is Bales and goes through both the properties owned by Mary Cumiskey and the adjacent one owned later by her son, Thomas Cumiskey).

Jim has shared much information about his grandmother Theresa E. (Knerr) Hoskins. As a young boy he spent much time with his grandmother and made many visits to the farm in Maumee where she grew up. He learned to know her Aunts, Emma and Louise Knerr, who helped raise his grandmother, Theresa. During a trip he made to Florida, we met at my home and I shared with him the old yellowed papers on which Mother had recorded family data back in 1936-37. This helped him in his search to learn more about his Grandmother's family. Today we maintain contact and continue to work on this genealogy together. It is a very rewarding relationship that we share. His Mother continues to live in West Toledo and we maintain contact. She remains in good health in her 80's as we go to print.

The third person who contributed heavily to this genealogy is Susan Zacharias of Swanton, Ohio. My brother, Jim, first came in contact with her through the Internet in about 1996-97. She was researching her Zacharias family and in comparing notes they realized that they shared the same family roots. As she completed her family information and printed it out she provided Jim with a copy of her research. In the summer of 1997, I met Susan at the Library in Swanton and she helped me to get started in the research of our family. Unfamiliar with the area, she provided me with directions to several cemeteries where family members were buried in White House and Waterville. I will be forever grateful to her for all of her help. She put in much time and effort in the search for her family and this proved valuable to me as I began my search for our roots.

Susan is the great grand daughter of Sarah Anne (Knerr) Fisher, the oldest sister of my grandfather, Henry George Knerr. She provided a copy of a studio picture of Henry and Fred Knerr with their violin's, taken in about 1887-88. This priceless old photo had been given to her by her Aunt Helen prior to Helen's death during the 1990's. Helen lived to be almost 100 years of

age, and personally knew the two Knerr brothers. Another family, the Bernard and Mary Utz of Waterville, also have an original copy of this photo. They, also, provided me with photos of the Noah and Sarah Anne Fisher children.

Two others who helped with the research of the Cumiskey family are cousins. I first responded to an inquiry on the Message Boards of Ancestry.com, for information regarding a Toledo policeman by the name of Lawrence A. Cumiskey. I replied that I was researching a family by that name, but the contact person did not think we were researching the same family. I did not think that it was a coincidence to have another "Cumiskey" family living in Toledo, so I persued it. Contiuing to search we exchanged more information and finally Leah Marie Brown realized we were distantly related. At a still later date, again through Ancestry.com Message Boards, I became acquainted with her cousin, Lisa Reed. Lisa and I have kept in contact and she has provided lots of information on her grandfather, Laurence A. Cumiskey, and his family. He was a 27 year veteran of the Toledo Police Department. This led us back to Owen and Mary (Dawson) Cumiskey, as her ancestors.

There remains more research to be done as we continue to work at connecting more of the members of this large family. Will we ever complete it? Probably not in my lifetime. But, this work now may provide the incentive for someone in the future to add to it. The Internet continues to provide more and more connections to family members. Perhaps some time in the future we will be able to connect the Cumiskey and Dawson families in Ireland to us. There are census reports now available for Ireland on the Internet through Ancestry.com. However at this time we lack the names of Owen Cumiskey and Mary Dawson's parents. If that were available we might be successful in going back to family members in Ireland, but at this writing we lack that connection. We know they sailed from County Cork, Ireland. We know there are many with those names in a couple of counties in Ireland, but lacking the given names it is not possible to establish a connection to them.

It is my hope and prayer that this book, will provide the readers with documentation and photos of this family. That you will enjoy reading of it as much as I have enjoyed researching. It is my hope that one day, information will become available, permitting a future researcher to document the Cumiskey line back to our ancestors living in Ireland. This book has been a very rewarding project for me. It is one that I hope will help you who read it, to know better know the families listed in this book. That you will learn, and appreciate, the dangers and peril that our ancestors underwent to establish a new home in a new land. To begin anew.

We, who are alive today, are indebted to their pioneer spirits. They searched for a better place to live, with more opportunities. They searched for a place where they could live peacefully. A place where they could own property in their own name. This was no longer possible in the area where they lived in Europe. Land was scarce and only owned by the Aristocracy. Where they could worship according to the dictates of their hearts, and where they could offer their children a better life. Today those goals have not changed. It is what each of us desire for those we love.

~ Darla Knerr Yancey Kizer

