

# The Braeutigam News

A Newsletter for the Descendants of John Wolfgang and Christine Kensing Braeutigam  
Published By David William Braeutigam-4th Generation Texan

Issue #1

December 1989

## David and Tawnya Vacation in Disneyworld

David and Tawnya vacationed in Disneyworld this past November. They stayed in Orlando, Florida while visiting Mickey, Minnie, Goofy, and Roger Rabbit at Epcot Center, MGM Studios and the Magic Kingdom. They also drove to the east coast of Florida to visit the beach and tour the Kennedy Space Center.

## Dave's on-going Research into the Braeutigam History

Dave Braeutigam is still finding all kinds of information on the Braeutigams. Through research at the Dallas Public Library, numerous books on Texas History and of the German settlements in Texas, plus letter and phone calls to the Texas Archives in Austin, Dave has uncovered all kinds of interesting facts.

For example, Dave has obtained copies of the Agricultural Census of Gillespie County for the years 1860, 1870 and 1880. These Census Forms list the farms of John Wolfgang Braeutigam and of many others in the Gillespie County area during that time. They include the number of pigs, horses, cows, number of acres of land, types of crops grown on his land and even the value of all of this!

## How Can I Help with the Family History?

I am sure lots of ya'll out there have information that should be recorded about the Braeutigams, Kensing, Eckhardts, Golds, Luckenbachs, etc. but don't know what to do with it. This information must be recorded and preserved for the generations in the future to enjoy.

We also need to gather pictures of all the generations of families, make copies and *label* all the information needed to complete the

'picture'. With these pictures and an update of the family history we could have a very nice family history that could be published.

## Why did our Ancestors come to Texas anyway?

Ever wonder why our ancestors decided to come to the United States? Back in the fall of 1845, Valentin Johann and his wife Maria Elisabeth along with their children, John Wolfgang and his sister Elise (Mrs August Schoenewolf), with her children: August, Sofia, and Christiana, came to Texas aboard the ship *Johann Dethardt*. They arrived at Galveston on January 12, 1846 after sailing from Bremen, Germany approximately two months earlier. (I have a copy of a document signing Valentin and John Wolfgang into the port of Galveston on that date that I obtained from the Texas Archives in Austin!)

This family, along with many other Germans, came to Texas for political and religious freedom because of a group of Germans called *Verein zum Schutze deutscher Einwanderer in Texas* or the "Society for the Protection of German Immigrants." This group obtained land in Texas for the settlers to live on and would eventually own out right (something they could not do in Germany). All the families signed a contract with the Society (I am currently trying to obtain a copy of Valentin's contract--hopefully in the Archives!) and paid \$240 for 320 acres of land and passage from Germany to Texas! After living on the land for three years, cultivating at least fifteen acres of land, building a house, and submit to the colonization plans of the Society and of the laws of the land, then the land would be transferred over to the immigrant.

## Was John Wolfgang Braeutigam in the Civil War?

This is a question that I wondered for quite a while. John Wolfgang was the proper age to be in the Civil War (36 years old), but during the Civil War Gillespie County was a pro-Union County. Gillespie County had voted to stay with the Union and not join the Confederacy. This is because most of the citizens of Gillespie County had recently come from Germany and had pledged their allegiance to the United States. They did not have the same feelings for the South like many of the other counties of Texas. Thus I felt that it was doubtful John Wolfgang joined the Confederacy. But many Germans were persecuted and even hung for their strong pro-Union feelings. Many Germans left Texas and fled to the North through Mexico to prevent persecution. (How many out there know about the True der Union Monument in Comfort, Texas?)

So I went to the Confederate Museum in Hillsboro, Texas to do some research. I found that on April 14, 1864 John Wolfgang Braeutigam joined the Texas State Troops. John Wolfgang was a Private for Company C of the 3rd Frontier District under Captain Jacob Dearing. John Wolfgang served for a total of 8 days at \$2 a day.

The Texas State Troops was a frontier force that helped protect the settlers out west from Indian attacks. The State allowed some men to join this unit instead of joining the Confederate Army.

### **Official Dedication of Ft. Martin Scott**

On December 9, 1989 there will be the official grand opening of the Ft. Martin Scott Historical Site. Ft. Martin Scott was the first of the Frontier Forts built by the United States to protect the first Pioneers of the west. A Historical Marker was put up in 1936 at this site.

Ft. Martin Scott was founded on December 5, 1848 (it was still being built as late as 1850) on the old San Antonio Road (present day Highway 290) a couple of miles east of Fredericksburg. It was used until 1853 when it was abandoned by the U. S. Government. Mr. John Twohig, a wealthy San Antonio

businessman, owned this property until March 5, 1870 when he sold the 640 acres and all the buildings to John Wolfgang Braeutigam for \$1600 in gold coin.

On this site John Wolfgang built a saloon, a small store, and did some farming. He also built a dance hall that became known as "Braeutigam's Garten." The Braeutigams used the old officers quarters as there home.

The first Gillespie County Fair was held here in 1881. John Wolfgang's property proved large enough for such an event--dancing, horse racing and a place to show the livestock. The Gillespie County Fair is still known as the oldest County Fair in Texas.

In September of 1884 John Wolfgang was murdered at his saloon by four men who wanted to rob him. Soon after this, the saloon was torn down and the wood was used for a barn. It stayed in the Braeutigam Family until 1959 when it was sold to the city of Fredericksburg.

### **Little Known Braeutigam Facts**

Did you know that Gillespie County was almost called Pierdenalis County? Back in December of 1847 the people of Fredericksburg decided that San Antonio was too far to conduct official business with the state so they petitioned the State Legislature to form a new county out of Bexar County. They asked for it to be named Pierdenalis County (Fredericksburg was part of Bexar county until Gillespie County was formed in 1848). The State agreed, but the name of the county was named after Captain Robert A. Gillespie, who died at the battle of Monterey during the Mexican-American War. Of the 150 signers of the original petition filed with the state of Texas, John Wolfgang Braeutigam is one of the signers!

### **I Need Info about Your Family!**

Please send me information on what's happening in your family (eg. a new baby, a vacation, graduation, etc) so the rest of the clan can hear about it. Just send it to the address below and I'll try to get it out as soon as the next newsletter is printed.