

The Pagel Family Times

Volume 16

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PAGEL SETTLEMENT

In 1858, less than eight years after his family had immigrated, Gottfried Pagel and most of his family moved again. The family had prospered on their first farm of 192 acres in southeastern Fayette County. However, with his older sons coming of age, he must have been drawn to the prospect of larger tracts of more affordable land in less densely populated Lavaca County.

The new property, 547 acres located six miles southeast of Hallettsville in the Arthur Sherrill League, was bought for \$2200 and Gottfried bought another 110 acres soon thereafter. Other German-speaking immigrants settled around the family and the area became known as Pagel Settlement. The Pagels weren't the first family in the area so why the community was named after them is uncertain. However, since Gottfried brought all but one of his six sons to Lavaca County with him, there would be Pagels living on this land for the next fifty years.

Pagel Settlement in those early days was filled with blended families. Many in the area had a second spouse or step-children. Premature deaths due to typhoid fever, rabies, tuberculosis, farm accidents, pneumonia, and complications from childbirth, caused many of the area's settlers to lose their helpmates and children. Indeed, Gottfried Pagel's first wife had died in Fayette County. His second wife had lost her husband to typhoid while immigrating. When the Pagels came to Lavaca County, she had left her only daughter behind on the Pagel's farm in Fayette County—as the new bride of Gottfried's oldest son.

It's obvious the neighborhood was closely-knit as the families became intertwined through marriage. Several of Gottfried Pagel's children married the children of his neighbors at Pagel Settlement, the Kuehnes, Spieckermanns, and Rothers. His grandchildren would marry children of the Gautel and Einkauf families. The

2011 PAGEL FAMILY REUNION

**The Hallettsville cousins will host
the 2011 Pagel Family Reunion
on Saturday, July 9th at 10:30 a.m.
at the First United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall,
corner of East 4th (Hwy 90A) & S. Dowling Streets,
Hallettsville, Texas (See map on reverse side.)**

Our catered lunch will include dessert and is \$10 per plate for adults, free for children under 12. Please r.s.v.p. to Bob Zumwalt by Tuesday, July 5th. Please return the enclosed form along with your check. If you get in a bind at the last moment, you may phone (361) 798-2786 or e-mail r_zumwalt@sbcglobal.net and pay at the reunion.

We'll have lots of family heritage displays and a scanner on hand if you'd like to share your old photos or memorabilia.

Please consider bringing something interesting for our silent auction.

Bring the children and teens! Besides our usual balloons, the church has a playground and we will set up a video game area.

We look forward to seeing everyone!

baptismal records of the nearby Sublime Evangelical Lutheran Church demonstrate the close relationships between families as neighbors are often listed as godparents.

Within a few years of their arrival in Lavaca County, the Pagels were faced with the brewing Civil War. In many cases the German immigrants were not enthusiastic about the prospect of a civil war, as many had just become naturalized citizens of the United States and were proud of that new status. Very few German immigrants owned slaves and many were opposed to the concept of slavery. Nevertheless, when war broke out between the states, the citizens of Pagel Settlement were now also citizens of the Confederacy.

At least two men from the community, Fritz Neumann and Julius Einkauf, enlisted in the Confederate army. Others such as some of the Pagel brothers, acted as wagoners, keeping trade routes open with Mexico. Home guards were formed for protection in case of an invasion. Local

citizens paid their Confederate, county and state taxes with receipts showing whether Confederate treasury notes or specie was received or whether the tax was paid with

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IN REMEMBRANCE

This issue of *The Pagel Family Times* is dedicated to the memory of those who passed away in the last year:

Dolores Vana Appelt
Beulah Machost Breithaupt
Ruth Ann Wachtendorf Bruning
Kathryn Gould Byrd
Blaxton Harrison DuBose
Roy Walter Kersten
Otto John Maeker
Mary Clark Menking
Pastor Ernest F. F. Nolte
Barbara Stubbs Pagel
Friedrich Carl Schneider
Raymond Allee (Hoot) Turner
Gladys Blaschke Wallace

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produce such as bushels of corn. After the war, the local men signed oaths of allegiance before their U. S. citizenship and voting rights were restored.

Life was hard at Pagel Settlement, but there were distractions. With shooting tournaments being a popular past time, Gottfried Pagel organized the Pagel Settlement Schuetzen Verein (gun club) in 1869. Evidently this group later merged with another, because in December 1884, Julius Pagel was listed as one of the trustees of the Appelt's Hill Schuetzen Verein. (The Appelt's Hill community was less than ten miles to the north and two of the younger Pagel children married into that family.)

Many of the German immigrants were quite musical and formed bands. A dance hall was built on County Road 134 about midway between the Pagel Settlement Cemetery and FM 530. Entire families would come to dances. When the younger children got tired, they were laid down to sleep on pallets in an area away from the dance floor. Mathilda Einkauf became smitten with her future husband at a dance held there around 1899. Henry Pagel played several instruments, but he was playing the bass fiddle that night, a ring on his right hand glistening as it caught the light from the lanterns illuminating the hall. No doubt there were many other romances begun at the old dance hall before it was closed in 1923.

In the early days, traveling ministers would visit and conduct services in local homes. On December 31, 1875, Ernst Pagel, William Kirchner and August Timm signed a deed giving nine acres to "the members of the Lutheran church and their successors forever for the purpose of building a Lutheran church a school house and parsonage and for a grave yard", in ex-

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change for one dollar. Six acres came from the northeast corner of Ernst Pagel's tract, two acres from August Timm and one acre from William Kirchner's property. A schoolhouse was built, but to the best of our knowledge the church and parsonage were never erected. Any church services were probably held in the school. In 1923 the school building was moved from its location on County Road 134 on the east side of the district to a more central location on County Road 126 where Albert Bonorden had donated two acres of land for the school. The Pagel Settlement School was annexed by the Hallettsville I. S. D. in 1950 and closed. The building was sold.

With only fifty-one known burials, the Pagel Settlement Cemetery is the final resting place for at least twenty-one immigrants from Germany and Austria. Gottfried Pagel (1800-1873) and his granddaughter, Caroline Fischer Gautel Wiechring, and her first husband are the only members of the Pagel family known to be buried there.

The first known burial had occurred in 1858, the same year the Pagels arrived. A German immigrant, Wilhelm K. Gautel, had immigrated to the area with his wife in 1854 and was buried on his property. His wife later married Wilhelm Kirchner, who gave the acre that included the grave for the cemetery and school. Likewise, we believe Gottfried Pagel was buried on his property and later that grave was included in the six acres contributed by his son. Today, the only reminder of the old Pagel Settlement community is its graveyard. To visit the cemetery, take FM 530 south from Hallettsville. Turn left on County Road 134, which runs through the middle of the cemetery.

While the markers west of the road were mostly accessible, the markers to the east of it couldn't be seen through the brush before a November 2007 clean-up opened up a lovely view of the Henneke Fish Hatchery ponds. Since then we have tried to join with the other families every November for a cemetery workday. The hard work has already been done, so we're usually through mowing, trimming, and raking around noon. It's a very congenial group. If you would like to join us next time, please contact Rox Ann at (512) 925-4804 or e-mail roxannjohnson@me.com.

Mapping Help Needed

We are working on an application for obtaining a Historic Texas Cemetery designation for the Pagel Settlement Cemetery. It's almost ready, but a map is also required and that's been a problem. Having the cemetery surveyed would be the obvious answer, but that's very expensive. If you think you are up to mapping this very irregularly-shaped cemetery, please contact Rox Ann.

Our cousin, Clay Maeckel, generously provides space on his server for our Pagel Family Reunion web site which includes many old photos, our family history and family tree, old Pagel homes, the three Pagel cemeteries, reunion information and photographs from recent reunions. Check it out to see what's new!

www.pagelfamily.org