

# Kisabeth Historical Review

From Germany to America — Our Past and Present

## A Brief History of the Minnesota Kisperts

By Gene Kispert

Our clan of Kisperts originated in the Wunsiedel area of the Fichtel Mountains in northeast Bavaria. Anna Barbara Wunderlich was born in Bergnersreuth, Oberfranken on January 16, 1813. She married John Wolfgang Kispert. This union produced 3 children; Anna Barbara, born May 26, 1835, John Paulas, born January 29, 1837, and John Martin, born January 13, 1839. According to oral family history, Wolfgang fell into a local river while cutting ice. As a result he caught pneumonia and died. His widow Anna Barbara later married Johan Nicholas Bauernfiend (born July 5, 1821) in Bavaria. In 1848 or 1849 the family left Bavaria and sailed to America. Many Germans were leaving their country because of religious persecution, a hatred of military conscription or the non-unified Germany. It is not known



our point of entry but I believe they landed on the east coast and made their way to Jefferson, Wisconsin, either by the Great Lakes or more likely overland. The Milwaukee area of Wisconsin had a very large German population. With over 50% of the population being German born or of German descent, Wisconsin was sometimes called the German State. Jefferson was a small German town with 6 breweries. At that time, there were

several other Kispert families in Jefferson. They settled in the Green Bay area. It was located at the edge of the Michigan Territory, which became part of the state of Wisconsin in 1848. It was good farming country, but with many trees and hills. It probably looked somewhat like their Bavarian homeland. No Kisperts live in Jefferson at this time (2003).

Minnesota became a territory in 1849 and a state in

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Greetings

Hello to all family members and friends. This is the first newsletter of 2003. We hope to have one more newsletter before our 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Family Reunion on August 2, 2003. Please send us any news that you wish to have us include in

our summer issue. Any family or pertinent news is always welcome. Also remember our web site at: [www.kisabeth.com](http://www.kisabeth.com) We will keep you informed at this web site of any family news between newsletters and also any important updates. Don't forget to

leave a message at our guest page. We really like to get news, comments and other family information at our guest page. The more entries the better job we can do. So please utilize this tool. Thanks.

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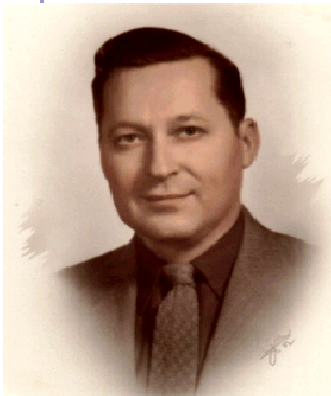
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## New Embassy Suites Hotel, Rogers, Arkansas



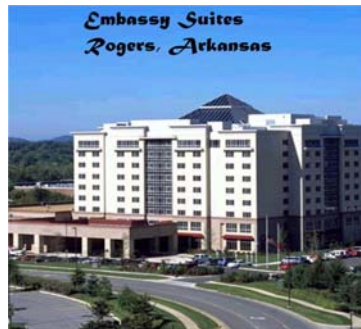
The Village Voice  
Lutheran Heritage  
Resident  
Spotlight

Foster Bryan Kisabeth was born on May 29, 1909 in Hicksville, Ohio. He is a high school graduate from Fostoria, Ohio. He then went on to pursue his career as a Traffic Manager for a steel company. Foster had met his wife Bertha while at a traveling medicine show and had been introduced by a friend of hers. Foster and Bertha were married on July 22, 1933 and shared 68 wonderful years of marriage. They had raised five wonderful and loving children: Kenneth, Gordon, Michael, Gerald, Barbara. Currently he has fourteen grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. One of the most remembered events in his life was that of when he was seventeen years old. There was a dynamite cap that had exploded in his hand blowing off three of his fingers. Other interesting information is that he is an active member of the Knights of Columbus and had been the Financial Secretary for forty years. He enjoys playing Euchre, working crossword puzzles and most of all has been an avid stamp collector for eighty years. Congratulations Foster!!!

Still another new challenge awaits young Robert F. Kisabeth. He's on the move again. Family member Robert Foster Kisabeth, son of Gordon & Michele (Case) Kisabeth has taken a new position for Embassy Suites by heading their brand new Rogers, Arkansas complex.

"Rob" as he is called back in his hometown of Plymouth, Michigan, will be the General Manager of the hotel in this multimillion dollar project. He accepted the position in December 2002. The huge complex is expected to

be completed in May. Rob and wife Steffi have already relocated the family to their new location. The Kisabeth have built a new house in the Rogers area and both of their sons, Jacob and Matthew are already settled into their new schools.



**In the photo above right: Robert Kisabeth pictured with Hospitality Chair Patricia Agnew and Dean of Academic Affairs Tarun Malik. On December 16, 2002, Mr. Robert Kisabeth, former General manager of Embassy Suites in North Charleston, came to the Charleston campus as Distinguished Visiting Lecturer. Kisabeth spoke to the students about his career path and how he reached his present level. Kisabeth stressed the importance of the externship program, and how "hands on" experience can impact a student's decision about the future. He also talked about the John Q. Hammons Hotel Company and its great growth opportunities. Mr. Kisabeth has recently been transferred to Northwest Arkansas as General Manager of the new Embassy Suites there.**

*(Continued from page 1)*  
**A Brief History of the Minnesota Kisperts**

1858. The Indian Wars were ending and many settlers moved west to East Prairie (southeast Minnesota). This area has a very rich "ready made" farmland, which needed very little clearing. The Homestead Act of 1862 provided 160 acres of farmland to bona fide settlers.

The Bauernfiend family left Jefferson, Wisconsin in the early 1860s and settled in the Nerstrand area. Anna Barbara apparently did not make the move as I cannot find any further information

about her. Paulas went to Minnesota, but moved on to California (he has an interesting history which I will write about later). Martin settled in Minnesota and married a girl from the next farm. Caroline Engel was born January 10, 1843 in East Prussia. She was the daughter of Wilhelm & Caroline (Müller) Engel. They were blessed with seven sons and five daughters. Martin bought 60 acres from his father-in-law and eventually had 160 acres of prime farmland. He was known as a good blacksmith, organizer, beekeeper and progressive farmer. Martin

helped organize and was on the Board of Directors of the Nerstrand Elevator and the Nerstrand Creamery. He served on the School Board of County 55 Rural School. Martin Kispert owned a Case Steam engine and threshing machine and would thresh other farms in the area. A prize possession was a 1903 EMF automobile. He said that EMF stood for "Every Monday Fix." Caroline was noted for being a good mother and an excellent cook. Her fried potatoes were said to be excellent. Martin & Caroline Kispert have over 700 direct descendants today and counting!!

## Carnival in Germany

The many different festivals and customs in the various regions of German-speaking areas, display great regional differences, but they all refer to the “tolle Tage” (crazy days), “narrische Zeit” (the foolish time) and the participants are Narren (fools). On the day preceding Ash Wednesday, commonly referred to as Shrove Tuesday (Mardi Gras), there are parades when various “Fools’ Guilds” visit each other to participate in each others parades and to share in the fun and feasting, drinking and merrymaking. Besides the right to symbolically “occupy” the town halls, the masked or disguised “fools” have traditional rights and privileges to dispense their own justice. The feature of Karneval has been especially cul-

tivated in Mainz Cologne and Dusseldorf, where it has been a tradition ever since the occupation of the city by French troops at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It provided a safe outlet for frustrations and protests.

In Germany Mardi Gras (Fasching) is also referred to as the fifth and foolish season (‘die närrische Zeit’). The exact time of celebration and the traditions vary from county to county but it generally takes place in early spring.

My dear friend, Manfred Elgert, from Nieder-Kinzig, Odenwald, Hessen, Germany says that on Monday & Tuesday (March 3 & 4) all over Germany there are processions. Not just in the large cities but also in Erbach, Michelstadt, Breuberg

and other towns in our area. Remember, these small places are the ancestral villages of the Kisseberth / Kissenberth families. In the small village of Nieder-Kinzig on Saturday February 22 in the sports hall a session eith very amusing recitals lasted until early Sunday morning. The season began at 11.11.11.11 (November 11 at 11:11 a.m.) and will end on Ash Wednesday.

In Bavaria where dear friend Dieter Göschl lives the tradition on Faschings-Dienstag (Carneval-Tuesday) continues. On this date for more than 25 years Dieter has met with his Texas Instrument colleagues in the small Weißbier brewer called Weisbraü Huber. They eat white sausages, Bretzl and drink Weis-

bier. The wives usually join the men and Dieter disguises as a cowboy with a real Stetson hat he bought while on assignment in Dallas, Texas.



**Faschings-Dienstag**  
Carnival Tuesday



In Bavaria where dear friend Dieter Göschl lives the tradition on Faschings-Dienstag (Carneval-Tuesday) continues.

## Family Data Book

We are currently working on our Family Data Book. Completion is targeted for our reunion date of August 2nd 2003. This Data Book will be the companion to our recently published “Küschwert to Kisabeth History Book. We are asking everybody to submit any family data and family pictures to us. We want to include all current births, marriages and deaths in our book. We hope to have ordering information in our summer 2003 newsletter.

If you have not ordered the history book “Küschwert to Kisabeth” yet we still have book left to send. The cost is \$35.00 which also includes a CDROM for you computer. This CD has a copy of the book in viewable format and also contains pictures and some data. Use address included in this newsletter to order. The CDROM is also available separately for \$15.00 including postage





## Kissenberth Family of Lochau, Austria

### Web page

*Don't forget to visit our web page and leave us messages in our guest book.*  
[www.kisabeth.com](http://www.kisabeth.com)

*On [kisabeth.com](http://kisabeth.com) we have copies of past newsletters as well as some stories of our past. The index of the book *Küschwert to Kisabeth* is listed as well as reunion information. P.S. Reunion is August 2, in Bascom Ohio.*

I have been corresponding with two of our younger cousins from Austria. Martina Kissenberth came across our Kisabeth web site ([www.kisabeth.com](http://www.kisabeth.com)) late last year (2002). She liked the web site and appreciated all the work we have put into our family research. Her older sister Carolin has since joined in the email exchanges. It is always nice to meet other family members and I look forward to a long and lasting correspondence with our Austrian cousins.



Carolin Kissenberth

Martina and Carolin Kissenberth live in the beautiful Alpine region of Austria called Vorarlberg. Their town is Lochau. This location is very close to the famous Lake Bodensee (a five minute walk from the Kissenberth home). The family consists of father Hans Georg & Heidemarie (Mangeng) Kissenberth, Carolin, Martina and Mathias.

Hans Georg (born 23 June 1954) works for the Austrian Government while Heidemarie (born 9 January 1960) divides her time between working and running the household. Carolin was born on February 27, 1984 and is currently in her last year (8<sup>th</sup>) at the Bundesgymnasium in Bregenz. In Austria the Bundesgymnasium is like our high school here in the U.S. After eight years of attending school you take the "Matura," the final exam. Martina (born 22

February 1986) is in her 7<sup>th</sup> year while young Mathias (born 23 September 1987) is currently attending a private school and is in his 5<sup>th</sup> year.

Hans Georg Kissenberth enjoys tennis and table tennis while Heidi likes to attend theater, musicals and operas. Carolin will graduate in May and hopes to attend college in Innsbruck studying economic sciences. Typically as a young adult, she loves to go out weekends and is a big fan of the rock group Matchbox Twenty. Martina is very busy with school activities and after graduation she hopes to attend a school in Innsbruck studying to become a midwife. Mathias Kissenberth loves to play all sports especially soccer, tennis and table tennis.



Hans Georg Kissenberth

Hans Georg is the oldest son of my dear pen pal friend Manfred Kissenberth of Bludenz, Austria. Manfred and I shared many letters before his sudden death in September 1998. Manfred is the cousin of Erwin Kissenberth of Rockledge, Florida and nephew of our famed WW1 ace Otto Kissenberth.



## Mary Margaret (Barto) Kisseberth (1913-2002)

On December 27, 2002 we lost a very special person and family member, Mary Margaret (Barto) Kisseberth. She was a regular at our family reunions and very sweet dear lady. We shall all miss her. My father, Foster B. Kiseberth was especially fond of Mary Margaret. At our first annual reunion (1991) Foster gave her a specially made Kiseberth-Kisseberth Reunion hat that she so badly wanted. Mary lost her dear husband Roscoe the January prior to our 1<sup>st</sup> reunion. "Roscoe would have loved the reunions," Mary said. Our prayers go out to the family. The following below is Mary Margaret's short biography from the *Tiffin Advertiser-Tribune*:

Mary Margaret Kisseberth, 89, of Elmwood Nursing Home, Green Springs, and previously of McCutchenville, died at 7:25 p.m. Friday, Dec. 27, 2002, in Mercy Hospital of Tiffin. She was born May 6, 1913, in Tiffin to William C. and



Mary Margaret  
1940s



Mary Margaret  
1990s

Margaret (McClory) Barto, and both are deceased. She married Roscoe Paul Kisseberth June 30, 1931, in McCutchenville; and he died January 19, 1991. Survivors include: a son, Paul Barto Kisseberth of Stamford, Conn; four grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; and a sister, Linabelle Barto Beach of Fairfax, Va. Also preceding her in death were two brothers, Clifton E. Barto and William Oral Barto; and two sisters, Zua VenNest and Edrie Barto. She was a homemaker and a

member of Tiffin Congregation Jehovah Witness Kingdom Hall. There will be a memorial service at a later date at the Jehovah Witness Kingdom Hall with Richard Barth conducting the service. There will be no burial. Visitation will be prior to the memorial service once the service time is set. Memorials may be made to the Kingdom Hall or to a charity of the donor's choice. The Turner-Engle Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements.

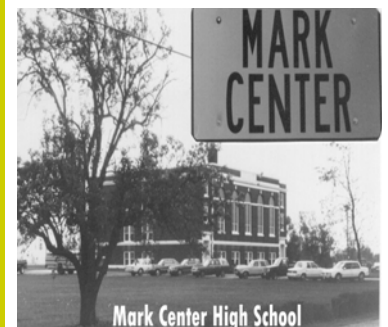


Dr. Calvin Cotrell

## 60 Year Class Reunion at Mark Center High School

Dr. Calvin Cotrell will be returning to the Hicksville, Ohio area this month. "Cal" & his lovely wife June are presently residing in Haines City, Florida. Dr. Cotrell was a 1943 graduate of Mark Center High School. The small school is located in Mark Center, just a few miles from the larger town of Hicksville. Cal is the son of the late Iden & Hazel (Kisabeth) Cotrell. After finishing high school, he earned his B. S. degree from Ohio State University, his master's degree at the University of Missouri and his doctorate at Ohio State. Congratulations to our dear cousin Dr. Calvin Cotrell.

**Daniel C. Kisabeth** has been accepted to the Doctor of Chiropractic (D.C.) Program at National University of Health Sciences in Lombard, Illinois. Dan will begin his studies May 5, 2003 for the D.C. Summer Trimester. Dan is the son of Gerald L. & Pamela A. Kisabeth of Canton, Michigan. Dan is also the grandson of Foster B. & Bertha Kisabeth, longtime residents of Plymouth, Michigan. Dan has a Bachelors of Arts degree from Michigan State University with a major in business finance.





# Nieder-Kinzig, Germany

I hope most of our family members are familiar with this small village located in the Odenwald area of Hessen, Germany. The significance of this little town is very important in our Kisseberth-Kisabeth family history. It is the last residence of our specific Kisseberth clan prior to immigrating to America in the 1830s and 1840s. This area is located about fifty miles south of the large metropolitan city of Frankfurt.

Nieder-Kinzig was first called Nieder-Kinzich in 1408 and Nyder-Kintzig in 1454. This small farming village is located 4 kilometers from the larger city of Bad König. In 1972 Nieder-Kinzig along with a few nearby villages became a part of the administration of Bad König. Nieder in German means lower while Kinzig is named after the small creek of the same name. The Kinzig creek runs through the village. Nearby is the village of Ober Kinzig (Upper Kinzig) while in between the two is Mittel-Kinzig or Middle Kinzig.

In 1933 the population of Nieder-Kinzig was 298. In 2000 there were 771 residents so N.K. remains a small picturesque farming village today.

I have been corresponding with the former Ortsvorsteher (Head of the Village) Manfred Elgert. He was also a member of the five man Ortsbeirat (Advisory Board). Mr. Elgert has been a valuable asset in our family history research. I cannot thank him enough. Both my brother Gordon and I hope to visit with Mr. Elgert next time we travel to Deutschland.



The Kisseberth family is first mentioned as being residents of N.K. in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Our ancestor Leonhard Kisseberth, the famed judicial magistrate at Castle Breuberg had a grandson also named Leonhard Kisseberth ( Kießberth). He is mentioned in 1718 as the Schultheiß (village mayor) of Nieder-Kinzig..

friend & village historian



former Ortsvorsteher  
Manfred Elgert

The Kisseberths remained in the village until Georg Kisseberth emigrated to Seneca County Ohio in 1832. Ten years later (1842) the remaining Kisseberths followed. One son, Nikolaus (1812-1876) remained in the area. He married Maria Elisabetha Rexroth and later settled in Maria's hometown of Michelstadt.

On page 267 in the village history book "Heimatbuch Nieder-Kinzig," it lists the Georg Friedrich Kisseberth Familie as being the first recorded family from N.K. to immigrate to America.

In conclusion, if you ever visit the Frankfurt a. Main area and are in search of a little family nostalgia, rent a car (or use the train) and view the very scenic area of our ancestors and the quaint little village of Nieder-Kinzig. Be sure to stop by the local restaurant there called the Gasthaus "Bäcker-

Adam." An overnight stay will cost about \$23 including breakfast and about \$33 with half pension (dinner). Also don't be afraid to visit my dear friend Manfred Elgert at Darmstädter 88 (telephone: 1880 local & 060631880 from the U.S.). Manfred is willing to help you in all sectors there.



View of Nieder-Kinzig from the southwest. In the back right is the neighboring village of Etzen-Gesäß & at the border left is Mümling-Grumbach.





# May Day



n Germany the first of May is a national holiday, similar to Labor Day in the USA. It is the International Worker's Day.- Tag der Arbeit, when workers gather for rallies and speeches. But it is more than that. To this day there are a variety of May festivals. May was a joyous time in the ancient calendar. The fairies, the rulers of May, would help the earth to dress her once more in green. In farming areas, spring, summer and the beginning of autumn were filled with a lot of work. this would only interrupted by the midsummer celebrations 'Johannis Tag'. " Mayregen brings Segen" ( Rain in May brings blessings). Many customs are connected to this the first of May. Maiglöckchen (May bells) are in bloom. Maikäfer ( May beetle) from chocolate are bought in the stores. Houses are decorated with green sprigs and flowers. May is the month most sung about. The May pole is put up and



there are dances around it. There are May pole or a May queen contest. In some areas the whole town will gather around the Maypole. The May pole and the dance around is a symbol of spring's reawakening. May is also known as "Wonnemond" the month of lovers. In May the most weddings took place. Over time the Maibaum (may tree) lost it original meaning, of celebration a wedding. Young unmarried men from a town would organize a dance, to get unmarried maidens of the town, into the spirit of May. Then if a wedding took place, a tree decorated with colorful streamers and ribbons would be places in front of the bride's house. The May pole would be officially erected in the middle of the market or in front of city hall. The traditional May pole dance starts with long ribbons attached high on the pole. Each dancer holds the end of a ribbon. The circle of dancers begins far away from the pole, so the ribbons will be straight and tight. There should be an even numbers of dancers, facing alternatively clockwise and counter clockwise. All dancer move in the direction they are facing, passing right shoulder with the next, and so on around the to braid the ribbons over and under around the pole. Those passing on the inside will have to duck, those passing on the outside raise their ribbons to slide over. In Bavarian towns, it has been custom to cut a tall and straight tree, place it in the middle

of the town and decorate it with wreath of spring flowers and ribbons.

One of the traditions is to attempt to steal the May pole from a neighboring town, then the pole is held for ransom for a couple kegs of beer. There is also a Maibaumkraxeln(May pole climbing). Maiwein (May Wine) is a German drink, it is flavored with fresh Waldmeister (sweet woodruff). Waldmeister is an herb, a small plant with white flowers.

## Maybowle (May punch)

- 12 sprigs of sweet woodruff
- 1 1/4 cups powdered sugar
- 1 bottle of dry white wine
- (1 cup of brandy).

native costume - Kisseberth emigration



1842

Cover the mixture for 30 min.& remove the sweet woodruff. Stir contents of bowl thoroughly and pour over ice in a punch bowl.

Add:

- 3 bottles of white wine
- 1 quart carbonated water or champagne
- thinly sliced oranges and some pineapples

Native Dress of the Odenwald Area





You are only a  
stranger but once.

From Germany to America  
—Our Past and Present

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## Reunion

**13th Annual  
Family Reunion**  
Küschwert  
Kisabeth Kisseberth  
Kisaberth Kissenberth  
Küspert Kispert  
And family and friends.  
**August 2nd,  
2003**

**Where:**

Meadowbrook Park of Hopewell Township  
5430 West Tiffin Street - P.O. Box 309  
Bascom Ohio, 44809  
Beech Shelter

**When:**

August 2nd, 2003

**Time:** 10am till dusk

**Who:**

Anybody interested in the friendship or history of the  
Kisabeths and various spellings of the name.