

# FISCHER CEMETERY

## I. CONTEXT

The Fischer Cemetery is located in northern Comal County at 12300 FM 32 between San Marcos and Blanco, about one-fourth mile east of FM 484. See Attachment 1 - Aerial View of Fischer Cemetery and Community.<sup>1</sup> The cemetery has served the Fischer community since 1889 and burials still take place at the present time.

The Fischer community was started by Hermann Fischer and his wife Anna Lindemann, who married in 1855. They settled on 160 acres in the fertile valley that he received in 1854.<sup>2</sup> Their log cabin was the first structure in the valley.

A short time after Hermann settled in Texas, his brother, Otto, joined him and filed claim on land next to Hermann's.<sup>3</sup> Otto married Adolfine Schlameus in 1871. Hermann and Anna had four children: Otto, Emma, Hermann Jr., and Wilhelm (Willie). Otto and Adolfine also had four children: Alfred, Otto Jr., Waldemar (W. G.) and Rudolph (R. O.). Both Hermann and Otto were very active in the cattle business.

After the neighborhood grew, Hermann decided to build a store in 1858 and in time **Fischer's Store** became the center of the community and surrounding area. Initially, the Fishers operated a mercantile store in one end of a log cabin while their living quarters were in the other end of the structure. Other families also settled in the predominately German region - Schlameus, Spangenberg, Linnartz, Luehlfing, Sachtleben, Pantermuehl, Kaderli, Haas, Schubert, Wersterfer, Krause and Wiechman. Of course, almost everyone traveling between San Marcos and Blanco would be trading at Fischer's Store. This store became the biggest mercantile establishment in Texas employing sixteen clerks, handling farm machinery, threshers, and other farm machinery, and a large stock of household goods as well as groceries.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Google Earth, 2012, Image CAPCOG

<sup>2</sup> Comal County Clerk's Office, Volume D, p 234.

<sup>3</sup> Comal County Clerk's Office, Volume D, p 234. Both names on patent.

<sup>4</sup> Margaret Dietert, *The History of Fischer, Texas*, partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Education degree at Southwest Texas State College, 1954.

When the community received a post office with the name of **Fischer's Store** in 1876, the community name soon had statewide recognition. In 1894, the name was changed to **Fischer Store**<sup>5</sup> and in 1950 the name was changed to simply **Fischer**.<sup>6</sup> Hermann Fischer, Sr. served as the first postmaster for 17 years and after that, different Fischer relatives<sup>7</sup> served as postmaster for 100 years.

Many other essential services were added as the community grew- cotton gin, dance hall, bowling alley, school, blacksmith shop, rodeo grounds, grist mill and cemetery. At one time the community had a polo team.<sup>8</sup> The added services changed the valley to a self-contained social/economic community. At the present time, the dance hall, bowling alley and cemetery are still a viable part of the community.

## **II. OVERVIEW**

### **A. Acquisition and Description of Cemetery Site**

In 1886, Otto Fischer gave 30 acres of land to the Fischer Store community for the education of their children.<sup>9</sup> It was on the highest elevation of these 30 acres that the community cemetery informally got started. Since it was located on the school land, it initially was called the **Fischer's School Graveyard at Fischer's Store**.<sup>10</sup> In later years the title was changed to simply **Fischer Cemetery**.

At the end of the 1956-57 school year, all "one-room" schools in Comal County were closed when the Comal County Rural High School was formed on 12 November 1956.<sup>11</sup> Out of this arrangement came the current Comal Independent School District (CISD) in 1968. Under the consolidation of all Common School Districts, the 30 acres of land given by Otto Fischer to the community became the property of CISD. It was not until March, 1976, that CISD transferred 3.851 acres of the original 30 acres to the

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<sup>5</sup> Charles Deaton, *Texas Postal History Handbook*, 1980, p 96.

<sup>6</sup> Oscar Haas, *History of New Braunfels and Comal County, Texas 1844-1946*, The Steck Company, Austin, Texas, 1968, p 134.

<sup>7</sup> Herman Fischer, Jr., Willie Fischer, Eddie Fischer and then Eddie's wife, Gertrude Fischer, served as postmasters after Hermann Sr.

<sup>8</sup> As reported by Terry Fischer.

<sup>9</sup> Comal County Clerk's Office, Volume S, pages 611-612.

<sup>10</sup> Taken from the register for Fischers School Graveyard at Fischers Store, 1889, located at the Sophienburg Archives in New Braunfels.

<sup>11</sup> Alton Rahe, *History of Sattler and Mountain Valley School, Comal County, Texas*, Walsworth Publishing Company, 1999, p 44.

## **Fischer Cemetery Association.** <sup>12</sup>

The Fischer Cemetery Association was not formally organized until 1976. Records of transactions and officers have been kept since then. In the earlier years of the cemetery, the community members informally took care of the necessities as the need arose.

See Attachment 2 for a detailed description of the layout of the Fischer Cemetery. It appears that there are 1170 burial plots laid out in the cemetery while at least 430 souls are buried there.<sup>13</sup>

The association completed the Historic Texas Cemetery (HTC) designation on the Fischer Cemetery in 2009.

Many improvements were made to the cemetery over the years: perimeter cyclone fencing, cemetery sign, kiosk with a directory of the cemetery, and covered shelter to conduct memorial services. See Attachment 3 - Fischer Cemetery Sign on FM 32. Attachments 4 and 5 show some of the burial sites.

## **B. Selected Burials in the Cemetery**

### **1. The First Burials**

The Fischer School Graveyard records show that Monroe Smith's infant son was the first person buried in the cemetery in 1890.<sup>14</sup> Persons by the name Ulbricht and Trener were buried in 1891 and 1892 respectively.<sup>15</sup>

### **2. Fischer Family**

It was in the fall of 1849 when Hermann, from Barmen, Germany, sailed to Texas with a group of German settlers of the German Immigrant Company under the direction of Prince Karl of Solms-Braunfels. Anna Lindemann Fischer, wife of Hermann Fischer, was born in Konezeavitz, West Prussia and came to this country in 1846. Otto Fischer was born in Barmen, Germany and came to Texas a few years after his brother Hermann. Initially he taught school. In 1871, he married Adolfine Schlameus who had come on the same boat as Otto, but was only four years old at that time.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Comal County Clerk's Office, Volume 237, p 211.

<sup>13</sup> The number 430 is approximate since burials are still taking place in the cemetery.

<sup>14</sup> Monroe Smith was the first caretaker of the cemetery.

<sup>15</sup> Fischers School Graveyard at Fischers Store, 1889.

<sup>16</sup> Dietert, page 6.

John Otto Fischer, born April 19, 1856, was the oldest child of Hermann and Anna Fischer. He was a farmer and rancher all his life in the Fischer community. He and Flora Schlameus had 12 children.

Willie Fischer, born October 10, 1868, was another son of Hermann Fischer. He was trustee of the local school, treasurer of the Fischer Agriculture Society, and a charter member of the Sons of Hermann in Fischer. He married Elfrida Pantermuehl and they had 13 children. Willie died January 17, 1958.<sup>17</sup>

These very brief highlights of the early Fischer families perhaps helps to explain the 35 burials of four generations in the Fischer Cemetery.

#### **4. Schlameus Family**

Julius Schlameus was born September 1, 1848 near Berlin, Germany. He came to Texas with his parents, Adolph and Marie (Schultz) Schlameus, at the age of four years. He received his education in New Braunfels, Texas. In 1873, he married Emma Fischer, daughter of Hermann and Anna Fischer. They had nine children.

Adolph Schlameus emigrated from Neumark, Prussia in 1851. He married Maria Schultz in 1846. He was a teacher in New Braunfels for nine years, then taught at Cibolo for three years, and finally lived at Fischer for the rest of his life. The couple had eleven children of which eight survived to adulthood. Their son Fritz A. Schlameus, born in Cranes Mill, Texas, married Susie (Dickens) Schlameus, daughter of James Dickens and Nancy McNair, natives of Alabama. There were three daughters and five sons.

Adolph and Marie Schlameus are buried in the Fischer Cemetery, as well as 31 of the descendants of their family who settled in the Fischer area.

#### **5. Pantermuehl Family**

Christian Pantermuehl, born 1836, came to Texas in 1853, and became a farmer in the area. He married Maria Baetge November 23, 1867, and they had nine children. Christian served in Podewils's Company F, of the 36th Regiment, Texas Cavalry. He was one of seven Pantermuehl brothers to survive the Civil War.<sup>18</sup> Marie (Baetge) Pantermuehl was born August 27, 1848, in Moscow, Russia, where her father (Carl

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<sup>17</sup> Obituaries, *New Braunfels Herald*, January 23, 1958

<sup>18</sup> Wilfred H. Schlather, *War Between the States, Participants from Comal County, Texas*, Accurate Litho and Printing, San Antonio, Texas, 2009, page 126.

Baetge) was employed by the Russian Government. The family came to Texas in 1852.

Christian and Marie Pantermuehl are buried in the Fischer Cemetery as well as many of their descendants who resided in the general area of Fischer.

### **6. Linnartz Family**

Fritz (Friederich) Linnartz came to Texas with his parents, Peter and Louise Linnartz, in 1846, when he was six years old. They came from Dusseldorf on the Rhine to New Braunfels, Texas. In 1873 he married Thusnelda Ervendberg, daughter of Reverend L. C. Ervendberg, born July 20, 1854, at the Ervendberg Orphanage.<sup>19</sup> He bought 100 acres of land from his father and devoted himself to agriculture and stock raising. He died February 4, 1903.<sup>20</sup> They had four sons and one daughter. Their son, Walter Linnartz, entered the service of his country in 1917 receiving preliminary training at Camp Travis. He was transferred to the 36th Division, Co. E., 144th Infantry. In France, he was moved to Co. A. 23 Infantry 2 Div. He was killed in action during the Meuse-Argonne offensive November 2, 1918.<sup>21</sup>

The Linnartz family was another prominent family in the area of Fischer and many members of the family are buried in the Fischer Cemetery.

### **7. Interfamily Relationships**

As for many other close-knit pioneer communities, the burials in the cemetery reflect the interrelationships among the families in the community. For example, the burials for the Sachtleben family show marriages into the Wersterfer, Schubert and Pape families. Similar examples are visible at other family graves.

### **8. Graves Moved from Other Cemeteries**

In 1961, 21 graves were moved to the Fischer Cemetery before they would be inundated with the waters of Canyon Lake. Throughout the years four graves were moved from the Pantermuehl Ranch and single graves from Dripping Springs, Pleasant Valley, Schlameus Ranch and Suche Ranch.

## **III. SIGNIFICANCE**

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<sup>19</sup> The orphanage was located near New Braunfels. The 1850 Comal County census shows 19 orphans at this place.

<sup>20</sup> "German Obituaries" *New Braunfels Zeitung*, translated by Oscar Haas, located in the Sophienburg Archives in New Braunfels, Texas, page 97.

<sup>21</sup> Obituaries, *New Braunfels Herald*, September 23, 1921.

This cemetery has been in existence for 123 years. It is unique in the fact that for several families, multiple generations of descendents are buried here, a rare occurrence in today's mobile society. This offers the descendents an opportunity to visit and reflect upon most of their ancestors in one cemetery. The cemetery serves to educate the young people, whether from this community or not, about the family names and the interrelationships among the families. A careful study of the birth and death dates of the buried serve as a moving history of the community.

Information compiled by Terry Fischer and Alton Rahe 2012

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**Attachments:**

- 1 - Aerial View of Fischer Cemetery and Community.
- 2 - Layout and Description of Fischer Cemetery
- 3 - Fischer Cemetery Sign on FM 32
- 4 - Burial Sites in Cemetery -1
- 5 - Burial Sites in Cemetery -2