

The Pagel Family Times

Volume 11

September 2006

THE PAGEL CEMETERY AT WILLOW SPRINGS



Friedrich Wilhelm Pagel's grave marker in the Pagel Cemetery

The Pagel Cemetery lies on property sold by F. E. Harwell and his wife to Gottfried Pagel on January 27, 1852. Gottfried, his wife, Friedrike Dickow Pagel, and eight children had emigrated from the village of Kortenhagen in 1850. The children, who ranged in age from sixteen to six months, were Friedrich Wilhelm, Carl, August, Wilhelmine, Fredericka, Friedrich, Emilie, and Ernst. A ninth Pagel child, Julius, was born in April of that year, but the mother passed away some time shortly after his birth.

In April 1855 Gottfried Pagel married a widow, Johanna Zorn Fritsche, who had recently immigrated with her 14 year-old daughter. The oldest Pagel son, Friedrich Wilhelm (commonly known as Wilhelm) married his stepsister, Magdalena in 1858. About that same time Gottfried Pagel bought a larger tract of land in Lavaca County and moved there with most of his family. Wilhelm and Magdalena stayed behind in Fayette County, living on his father's 192 acres on Cummins Creek, which they later bought.

2006 PAGEL FAMILY REUNION

Dedication of Historic Texas Cemetery Medallion & Plaque
10:30 a.m. on Saturday, October 21st
at The Pagel Cemetery at Willow Springs
If possible, please bring folding chairs.



Catered BBQ Lunch and the Traditional Family Reunion
12:00 Noon at the Shelby American Legion Hall
Hosted by descendants of Friedrich Wilhelm Pagel
Homemade desserts will be welcomed!
Please return the enclosed r.s.v.p. form by October 10th.

In case of rain, the dedication will be held at the Am. Legion Hall.



The Pagel Cemetery is on Darden Loop off FM 159 just west of Willow Springs.
The American Legion Hall is located at the intersection of FM 1457 and Krebs Road, which is 3.7 miles north of FM 159.

For more information, contact Rox Ann Johnson at 512-250-8424 or e-mail roxannjohnson@sbcglobal.net.

In 1866 Wilhelm Pagel bought additional acreage about a mile northeast of this property, nearer the springs of Willow Branch which give Willow Springs its name. On this new tract he dug a cellar and built a house for his growing family with thick rock walls smoothed over with plaster. He both farmed and operated a general merchandise store on this property. The local community became known as Rock House, named after Pagel's home, when he became its first post-

master on October 12, 1871.

Gottfried Pagel died in August 1873 and Johanna (known as Anna) returned to live with her daughter's family. Unfortunately, 39 year-old Wilhelm Pagel died only two months later on October 21, 1873. His is the oldest known grave in the Pagel Cemetery. Because Wilhelm was buried away from his home in a grave located on the land bought by his father in 1852, we think that this is also the resting

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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:

Lillian Schmidt Ahlgrim
Wiley Newton Anderson, Jr.
David C. Beckner
James Douglas Craven
Glenn Richert Fahrenthold
Edward Geoffrey Kemp
John Patrick Konderla
Jamie Roxanne Ladewig
Sonia Slaby Maeckel
Alexander Friedrich Menking
LeMont Menking
Charles Anthony Pagel
Donald Henry Pagel
Paula Schaefer Pagel
Virginia Ann Maeker Pantel
Olga Schroeder Roeber
Anne Glover Garbade Schwab
Charles Franklin (Ray) Willemin
Julia Rae Dornburg Wimberly

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place of his mother, Friedrike Pagel, who had passed away twenty years earlier.

Upon Wilhelm's death, Magdalena Pagel relinquished the post office. Ernst Witte and later Emil Surmann became the Rock House postmasters. The Post Office was moved three miles east into Austin County where they lived and where that small community is still known as Rockhouse. (In 1881 Charles T. Zapp became a postmaster at Willow Springs and the community was known for a time as Zapp or Zapp Post Office until that post office was discontinued. Throughout these name changes, the local school was called the Willow Springs School.)

Magdalena Pagel died on July 13, 1886 and is the second known burial in the Pagel Cemetery. Three months later

This issue of *The Pagel Family Times* was edited by Rox Ann Albrecht Johnson, secretary/historian of the Pagel Family Reunion, who takes full responsibility for its content. Comments and questions may be directed to her at 11105 Scotland Well Drive, Austin, TX 78750, (512) 250-8424, roxnnjohnson@sbcglobal.net. Please notify us of family births, deaths, and marriages.

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little Ella Altmann died from a black widow spider's bite and, although she wasn't related to the Pagels, she was their neighbor and was buried near them. The cemetery filled with neighbors like the Hennigers, Garlins, Kruses, and Linckes and more Pagel relatives, including Anna Zorn Fritsche Pagel, who died in 1904 at age ninety-three. When the Pagels' son-in-law and daughter, Ernst and Emma Albrecht, sold the property surrounding the cemetery in 1911, the deed did not convey "one acre of land now being accepted by the Pagel family as a graveyard."

The northern border of the cemetery was the road connecting Willow Springs to Fayetteville. When a new highway slightly farther north was cut through to Fayetteville in 1924, the road alongside the Pagel Cemetery was connected to it forming a loop and became less traveled.

An early photo shows a wooden fence surrounding the cemetery; however, in 1963 Theo Heinsohn sent letters to descendants of those buried in the cemetery, asking for funds to erect a more permanent chain link fence. That fence was completed by May 17, 1964 when a Decoration Day ceremony was held. Today Theo's son, Ted, serves as volunteer caretaker of the cemetery.

The cemetery now holds seventy-eight known graves, including members of six generations of the Pagel family. The most recent grave is that of Jesse Heinsohn, a Pagel descendant who died in 1996. At least six of those buried in the cemetery were German immigrants and

the rest, with very few exceptions, were descendants of German immigrants who settled at Willow Springs and made their living in agriculture. As a reminder of how hard life could be, at least twenty-nine of the graves (over one-third) are infants and small children.

Fifty-seven of the graves are identified with tombstones. Many of the older grave markers bear German inscriptions, reflecting the importance of that language in every day life in the Willow Springs community at the time. As recently as 1990, several of the graves were marked only with shells. Unfortunately, in all but one case, the shells have now disappeared. Similarly, a fragment of sandstone that still marked a grave fifteen years ago has now disappeared. We suspect many other sandstone and wooden markers in the Pagel Cemetery have eroded away over the years, leaving no trace of lives well spent.

Many thanks go to Maynette Heinsohn for her help in compiling this history of the Pagel Cemetery.

www.pagelfamily.org

Our cousin, Clay Maeckel, has generously provided space on his server to the Pagel Family Reunion for our web site. The site includes many old photos, the family history, a family tree, old Pagel homes, cemeteries, and reunion information and photos.

Check it out and see what's new!