

News Items

- ☞ Please mark this date on your calendars: **Saturday, October 1st.**
That's the date of the annual LUCKE FAMILY PICNIC!

- ☞ Dottie will be in the NY/NJ area in late September and will be at the Picnic. We're looking forward to a renewal of the softball rivalry between the Magees and the Guckers!

- ☞ Did you notice a lot of fireworks on July 4th? The reason, of course, was the celebration of Rita's 79th birthday. Imagine the noise next year!!

The Thirteen

Our plan is to incorporate stories in the Newsletter about Caspar and Mary Lucke and each of their children - *The Thirteen*. In this issue we lead off with stories about Caspar & Mary Elizabeth and Child #1, Mary. Some parts may be truly "legends" since we don't have firsthand information, so if any of you have more reliable information, or if you have other stories about Grandpa & Grandma Lucke or the Mullers, please send them to us and we'll print them next time. For the next issue we would like to continue in chronological order, with writeups on #2 Frank, #3 Leo and #4 Beatrice. Therefore, we request that Agnes Wilson, Gertrude Keeley, Leo Lucke and Patricia Galligan write about their Parents and Grandparents; we also need help regarding Beatrice, since we've lost touch with the Langs. We've attached a list of *The Thirteen*, so you can check where your "branch" fits in and be prepared to write YOUR stories!

Caspar Lucke and Mary Elizabeth Scheckel

We believe that Caspar Lucke was born in the 1850's, in Germany - perhaps Prussia or Bavaria. Around 1870, Caspar emigrated to the US, leaving his Family behind, and came to New York. The true pronunciation of the Family name was "looh-keh" (there was an umlaut - two dots - over the "u") but it was "Americanized" to sound like "lucky."

Mary Elizabeth Scheckel was born in New York (probably Manhattan) around 1860. As a teenager, she and her Girlfriends volunteered to serve refreshments for German immigrants at their Church's socials. It was there that Caspar and Mary met, and fell in love. This love produced 13 children. Two of these children (#6 Lucy and #12 Caspar Ambrose) died young; the other 11 married and, with the exception of #9 Joe, had children of their own. [For the remainder of this article, we will refer to Caspar and Mary Elizabeth as Grandpa & Grandma.]

Grandpa Lucke was very industrious. In addition to working for a newspaper, he built houses in Brooklyn including the Family home at 21 Suydam Place. Some of his children, when they married, lived in houses that he had built. Lena Horne also lived in one of his houses. The Luckes were devout Catholics and attended St Benedict's Church where most of the children were baptized.

Grandpa was also very practical. **"Legend"** has it that one day #1 Mary got exasperated with Grandpa because the ceilings needed painting. Grandpa merely said "Don't look up!" This was an early example of what has later been described as "Lucke humor" *[that is, quite corny!!!!]*

Sometime after the birth of Child #13, Caspar John (Jack), Grandpa Lucke came home one afternoon and sat on the porch of the house at Suydam Place. One of the children found him there, having peacefully died in his chair. This was about 1908.

Grandma was a warm, gentle and easy-going person; in German terms she would be called "gemutlich!" She had a Brother, Charles Scheckel and an unmarried Sister, Frances Scheckel, whom everybody called Auntie, who lived with the Lucke Family. Between them, the two Sisters took care of the household chores, with Auntie being the cook and Grandma the seamstress (making most of the children's clothes), and both of them doing the weekly washing every Monday. Although Auntie was famous for her recipes, Grandma was also famous for her annual meal of Hasenpfeffer (rabbit) - which she refused to eat herself! Some of Auntie's recipes that were handed down were potato pancakes, apple (or peach) cake with brown sugar and a delicacy she called "kisses." Yummy!

Some time after Grandpa's death, Grandma, along with the unmarried children, moved to Flatbush, to 779 East 32nd Street between Glenwood Road and Avenue H. Later, she moved to 553 East 34th Street between Clarendon and Avenue D. Some of us remember the latter house, with the big piano, #11 Anna's huge painting of The Girl at the Well and that ferocious dog, Buddy. Everybody loved to go to Grandma's house, in good times and in bad - she made you feel warm and loved! Rita remembers Anna going to Grandma's and getting her reassurance when she was having her first baby.

Grandma died on July 1, 1942 and is buried in Most Holy Trinity Cemetery in Flatbush. Auntie then went to live with Anna for a few years until she became sick; she died around 1945, and was buried wearing her Secular Franciscan habit.

"Legends : "

☺ Every Christmas at Suydam Place, Santa Claus would come stomping into the front parlor to dispense gifts - or lumps of coal! It was years before the Lucke youngsters caught on that it was Auntie! Another story concerns #7 Charles (always called Carlie) who loved to tease Auntie. Of course, she pretended to be stern with him, but he got around her by tickling her feet, which broke her - and everybody else - into stitches.

☺ Rita remembers that, on her way to get the IRT subway to work, she would often see Grandma (by then in her late 70's) briskly walking to St Jermon's Church for morning Mass.

Child #1: Mary Catherine

Mary was born on March 29, 1880. As the eldest, and with a new baby coming just about every two years, Mary became "Big Sister" and "Mother's helper" to her Brothers and Sisters - a tremendous learning experience for becoming a housewife and Mother later on!

Mary was sent to a private Catholic Boarding School in Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania, where she met her lifelong friend, Mathilda Moller. Although Mary loved the school, she had to return home after her first year to take care of the brood. Her Sisters later followed her there, while the boys went to a private school for young men.

Mary met John Jacob Muller at Vespers in St. Benedict's. John did clerical work for a wholesale drygoods firm but at home he was very creative. His avocations included gardening, carpentry and tinkering with electronic items like radios; he won a prize for inventing a push-button radio. Mary & John were married on July 14, 1909. Their first three homes were on Park Place, Brooklyn, each time one of Grandpa's houses. This is where their children (Mary Dorothy and Rita) were born and raised, going to St. Matthew's Parochial School. Some time later, they moved to Flatbush, first to 594 East 43rd Street. Mary Dot was married to Dan Crossan from that house, in Little Flower Church. The Mullers also lived on East 31st Street and at 3508 Farragut Road. In 1954 they bought a house on Holly Avenue in Mineola, NY. John died in that house on May 2nd 1958. Mary died peacefully in her sleep on December 27th, 1961. Rita sold the Mineola house in 1963 and moved to the Lynbrook/East Rockaway area where she has lived ever since. Mary Dot died January 22nd, 1965.

"Legends : "

☺ Mary, having "grown up" early, was on the serious side, but she did have her share of the Lucke Humor - although she was usually unaware of just how funny she could be. For instance, one time when Mary and Rita were watching the Kate Smith Show on TV. Rita remarked: "Kate has lost some weight; she used to be as big as a horse." Mary immediately quipped "Well she's still no pony!"

☺ Mary had great devotion to the saints, St. Anthony in particular. She claimed that St. Anthony helped you find lost items by "telling you where to look." But she insisted that you had to give him a reward. Once, when the power failed and there were no lights, Mary wanted Rita to stay home from work. Rita prayed to St. Anthony to put the lights back on, and promised \$1 if he would...or \$2 if he did before she left for work. As her hand was on the doorknob to leave, on came the lights, so she had to fork out the \$2.

☺ After John's death, Mary & Rita decided to get a pet and wound up with parakeets. The first was Tony (guess whom he was named after?) followed by Jackie, who actually did talk! Rita couldn't ever deny her Brooklyn roots, because Jackie used to look at birds in the backyard and say "Look at the boodies choip, choip, choip!"

The Thirteen

- #1 MARY CATHERINE LUCKE (29-Mar-1880)
m. John Jacob Muller (20-Feb-1878)
- #2 FRANK P LUCKE (18-Oct-1881)
m. Mary Cramer
- #3 LEO LUCKE (//1884)
m. Mary Karl
- #4 BEATRICE LUCKE (//1886)
m. Fred Lang
- #5 ELSIE LUCKE (24-Jul-1888)
m. Joseph Bond
- #6 LUCY LUCKE (//1890)
- #7 CHARLES B LUCKE (//1892)
m. Mae Broncheska
m. Helen
- #8 WILLIAM J LUCKE (//1894)
m. Loretta Dougherty
- #9 JOSEPH ANTHONY LUCKE (//1894)
m. Beatrice Bier
- #10 MARGARET LUCKE (31-Oct-1897)
m. Edwin Magee
- #11 ANNA GERTRUDE LUCKE (12-Dec-1900)
m. Lloyd Howell Campbell (27-May-1901)
- #12 CASPAR AMBROSE LUCKE (1902)
- #13 CASPAR JOHN LUCKE (27-Dec-1905)
m. Anne V Reilly

Child #1: Mary Catherine

MARY CATHERINE LUCKE (29-Mar-1880)
m. John Jacob Muller (20-Feb-1878)
└── MARY DOROTHY MULLER (28-Jan-1911)
 m. Daniel Crossan
└── RITA MARTHA MULLER (4-Jul-1915)