

**ANYONE can become a member of
Friends of the Saxonia House, Inc.**

Saxonia House Information can be found at:

www.saxoniahouse.com

Or by writing to Paul and Mary Williams

FOSH

2426 N. Lexington Dr.

Janesville, WI 53545

Saxonia House facts

In 1845 Ernst Leberecht Klessig, thirteenth child of Johann and Johanna, at the age of 18, took passage on the *Frederick Jacob* from Bremen to America, disembarking at New Orleans. By 1846, he settled at Fillmore.

Gottlieb Gruhle of Fillmore in an 1855 letter home to Saxony, describing the building of the house.

April of 1848, Christine Liberta Poetzsch, also known simply as Liberta, emigrated to America from Saxony at the age of fifteen. They had six living children

June 15, 1850, she and Ernst Klessig were married by Joseph Rex, Justice of the Peace.

St. Martin's Evagelic Lutherisch Church Society, at the home of Ernst Klessig, in 1861.

Ernst served as post master.

The Klessigs also offered general merchandise and food trade out of the house.

In 1860, Ernst built the Farmington Brewery and caves.

The first meetings and social affairs of the Farmington Turn Verein were held in the Saxonia House, from its organization in 1862 until the Turner Hall was built in 1868.

Ernst died on March 17 of 1864 and Liberta Klessig remarried Ernst Jaehnig July 1865. They had three living children. Ernst died in 1879.

It was once called Spring Brook Farm.

The brewery measured 18 by 30 feet, falling over in 1994. The brewery still was a going concern into 1881. No more records are found after that.

Liberta's son, John Klessig, ran the farm and brewery, and also a cheese factory in Ozaukee County.

In 1911, Mr. John Klessig and his wife moved with John's mother, Liberta, to Kewaskum. Mr. Klessig was very active in local government, serving on the school board there from 1911 until he moved to Milwaukee in 1941 to live with a daughter.

Mrs. Jaehnig passed away in Kewaskum on January 23, 1922 and her funeral was held in the home of her son. She is buried in Fillmore at the St. Martin's Cemetery between her husbands, Ernst Klessig and Ernst Jaehnig.

The farm was sold to Mr. Arthur Crass in 1911. The dance hall addition (or original construction, with house added to it) was gone before this time.

The Crasses put new windows on the south-facing side of the building in the 1930s. It has been rumored that they put in the secondary staircase on the west side of the building, but unsubstantiated. A second kitchen was used east of the front entrance.

In 1947, Wilmer and Veronica Landvatter bought the Saxonia House and farmland. They raised their own family there, five children, and also rented out the eastern portion of the home, three rooms which consisted of a kitchen, living room and tiny bedroom. The second bathroom was added to accommodate the renters.

In the middle 1970's, the Landvatters remodeled the lower portion of the home, removing walls and entirely remodeling the kitchen. They replaced doors, particularly the parlor doors from the living room, enclosed the staircase, changed the windows and added patio doors.

Veronica Landvatter passed away in 1986 after a three-year bout with cancer, Wilmer in 1994.

A developer purchased the property, remodeled it into a duplex and later sold it.

That buyer re-parceled the land and sold the pieces.

The property was purchased by the Friends of the Saxonia House, Inc. on May 29, 1999. 7.8 acres and the buildings were all that was affordable of the remnants of the original property, for \$75,000. All 77 acres would have been \$275,000. It is hoped to eventually purchase 63 acres to the east of wetlands and cropland to use as a nature preserve and crops for beer production.

The building was landmarked by the Washington County Landmarks Commission on May 20, 2000. The permanent plaque recognizes the property as an historic Washington County Landmark.