

The John and Elizabeth Genczo Family



50th Wedding Anniversary - 1956

Standing from left to right: Steve (6), Elsie (8), Ann (3), Mary (1), Mike (5), Elma (7), Betty (4)
Seated: Dorothy (10), John, Sr., Elizabeth, David (9). Another child John, Jr. was killed in a train accident in 1928 at the age of 16. The number following the name is the order of birth.

John Genczo was born on May 28, 1886 and his wife Elizabeth Hossu on April 18, 1887, both in Czechoslovakia. The couple wed on May 9, 1906 in that same country and their first child Mary was born there in 1907. Mr. Genczo immigrated to the United States, while his wife and daughter remained in Czechoslovakia. He spent some time working in the coal mines of Pennsylvania, then moving on to Illinois. The 1910 Census Records for Olive Township on April 23 rd show John was a boarder with Zirk Antone and family, and worked as a loader in a coal mine. Apparently Elizabeth and daughter Mary immigrated to the United States later in 1910. The couple's second child, John Jr. was born in Illinois on August 4, 1911. Mr. Genczo became a naturalized citizen on May 28, 1917 by order of the Circuit Court of Madison County, Illinois and his naturalization papers show that he and "Lizzie" (as shown on the papers) had 5 children. The 1920 census lists the family as living on New Douglas Road with 6 children and Mr. Genczo listed as a miner in a coalmine. The 1930 census lists 7 children at home and Mr. Genczo as a farmer in general farming. By this time, their 2 oldest daughters had probably moved away from home and their oldest son had died. John & Lizzie were well known and respected members of the community and worked hard, as did most couples of the time, to raise and provide for their family. Elizabeth died in 1957 at the age of 70. In later years, John lived with several of his children for extended periods of time before his death in 1970 at the age of 84. The current number of descendants for this couple is around 65, with many of them still in the area. Three of their ten children are still living, with two of them in Olive Township.



Elizabeth died November 8, 1957
and John died June 6, 1970.

They are buried in Sacred Heart
Cemetery.

The Mitias Gorenz Family



John and Frances Gorenz

At the turn of the twentieth century, Mitias Gorenz journeyed to the United States with his family. This included his wife, Cecila (Stoper), daughters Mary and Frances and two sons John and Joe. They came to this country due to the unrest in Europe. Mitias and his family settled in Livingston. He was the owner of a saloon. He operated the business until he was shot and killed while walking home one evening in April 1913.

John Gorenz who was born in Ubrania, Austria on September 25, 1896 became the head of the household. He met Frances Pervinsek who was born in Franca, Brazil, South America, on November 16, 1899. They were married November 22, 1919. The Gorenz family grew to include a daughter Marie Frances born November 20, 1920 and a son, John Henry, born on February 9, 1927.

John took his family to Golden, Colorado where he was the proprietor of a grocery store. He later returned to Livingston where he began a beer distributing business. John was the town's tax collector for many years. He was a long-time member of the SNPJ Lodge.

Frances worked at the City Bakery in Staunton but after her marriage became a full-time homemaker. They remained in Livingston until their deaths. Frances died July 4, 1957 and John on October 2, 1965.

Marie met John Lesicko, also a resident of Livingston and they were married on June 8, 1940. (See Lesicko history).

John Henry Gorenz attended the Livingston Schools until his senior year when he enlisted in the United States Navy and served his country during World War II. Upon his return, he went to work for the Wabash Railroad as a telegraph operator. On October 4, 1952 he married Irene Louise Pirok at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Livingston. In 1955 John went to work at Shell Oil Refinery in Wood River. He worked there until his retirement. John and Irene lived on a farm near Alhambra until his death on January 26, 1994. John and Irene had three children: John David, Marie Frances Pothast and Louise Ann Knecht. They were blessed with eight grandchildren: Craig and Linda Pothast; Angela and Christopher Gorenz, and Nicholas, Wilda, Andrew and Elizabeth Knecht. There is also one great-grandchild, Ethan Pothast.

The Gorenz family made their home in Livingston and Mitias Gorenz was part of its history.

The Joseph Lesicko Family

Joseph Paul Lesicko was born in Prague, Czechoslovakia on August 5, 1889. He came to the United States in hopes of finding a better life. Joseph came to Livingston in 1906 and began working in the coal-mine. Also coming to the United States was Josephine Knize who was born in Budapest, Hungary on March 19, 1895.

Joe and Josephine were married on September 30, 1911 in St. Louis, Missouri. They continued to make their home in Livingston. Josephine spent her days maintaining a home and raising their family. This was not small task as the family consisted of seven children: John Jullian, Joseph, Steve, Edward, Frank, Anna Marie Stoecklin and George.



Standing from left to right: Anna Marie Stoecklin, Joseph, Jr., Steve, John, and George
Seated: Edward, Josephine, Joseph, Sr. and Frank

Joseph was a blacksmith and worked at the area coalmine. He also operated a small blacksmith shop in a building behind his home. Joseph passed away on August 7, 1968 and Josephine died on May 19, 1974.

Joseph's son, John, learned his father's trade and worked alongside his father for many years at the #2 mine in Williamson. At the age of twenty-five John lost an eye while working on a descending cage at the coalmine. John married Marie Frances Gorenz on June 8, 1940 at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Livingston. Marie attended the St. Louis School of Cosmetology and for many years operated a beauty shop from her home.

Into this union were born five children: Ronald John, Gloria Marie Knezik Blechle, Bernadette Marian Banovz, Kathleen Jo Niggli and Marie Louise

Bartony. John and Marie owned and operated the Track Inn Tavern until it was destroyed by fire in the 1960s. John became constable of Livingston. For many years, he was the village's water commissioner. He was active in the Slovak Lodge. John maintained the Sacred Heart Catholic Church and Cemetery property for many years also. John and Marie made Livingston their home for over fifty years. John died on September 27, 1992. Marie passed away on June 17, 2000.

John and Marie's children have all married and have children and grandchildren. Ronald has three children Tina Ripperda Gardner, William and Patrick. He has seven grandchildren Kendall, Aaron, Jessica, Joseph, Desiree, Andrew and Jacob.

Gloria has six children: Kevin, Jeffrey, Gregory, Rebecca, Kristine Schopp and Jarrid. These children were born from her marriage to Rudolph Knezik who also was raised in Livingston. Gloria has ten grandchildren: Laura, Jaclyn, Gregory, Joshua, Amanda, Carson, Madison, Megan, Connor and Cole.

Bernadette has three children: Francene Ingle Pejakovic, Michael and Jason. Her grandchildren are Bradley, Dustin and Austin Ingle.

Kathleen has three daughters: Nicole Orebaugh, Amanda and Alyson.

Marie has a daughter Ashley.

The Lesicko families have made Livingston their home for ninety-nine years. Today some of the families have moved to different areas, but their roots can be traced back to the small coalmining town that is celebrating its 100th birthday. It all started with my grandpa when he came to the "Land of Opportunity."



Standing from left to right: Marie Lesicko Bartony, Kathleen Lesicko Niggli, Ronald Lesicko, Bernadette Banovz, Gloria Lesicko Knezik Blechle.
Seated: Marie Gorenz Lesicko and John Lesicko

The Mathas and Jennie Best Jones Family



Jennie Best was born September 26, 1901 in Omphgent Township which is located west of Olive Township. She attended the local schools, graduating from high school in 1921 as the only member of the first graduating class. She taught school in Livingston from 1921 – 1923.

She married Mathas Brant Jones of Old Ripley on April 21, 1923. To this union was born a son, Udell Mathas on April 1, 1924. Unfortunately, he contracted double pneumonia and died the next year on his first birthday.

Other children born to this family were Russell in 1926, Shirley Jean in 1930, and Alice Joann in 1933.

Russell was drafted into the Army in 1945 and returned in 1946. He married Norma Scrivner and to them was born a daughter named Linda Kay. They were later divorced. He later married Jeane M. Cory, and they had three children – Debra Kay, Larry and Kimberly Sue. They are all married and have offspring.

Shirley Jean Jones married Rudy Makler and to them was born two children – Vicky Lynn and Rory Craig. Vicky and her husband John Renner have a son and a daughter. Rory and his wife Patti have two daughters and a son.

Alice Joann Jones married James W. Early after graduating from high school. They have two daughters – Sherry married, had one son and later divorced. Lisa is single.



The Stanley Karnosky, Sr. Family

Stanley Karnosky, Sr., a native of Lithuania (then a possession of Russia), came to the United States about 1895. He worked in the coal mines in Pennsylvania and then continued across the country to Wyoming and Colorado where he worked in the gold and copper mines. He received his citizenship papers in the State of Washington, May 2, 1902. He worked in the Northwest several more years before returning to Lithuania. He had a sister in Vilnius, Lithuania. He remained in Lithuania for several years before returning to America, bringing with him the future Mrs. Karnosky, Anna Yucius.

They arrived the day before Thanksgiving, 1909, and remained on the ship for Thanksgiving as Ellis Island was closed. They traveled to Elk's Island the following day, proceeded to Buffalo, New York, then on to Cleveland, Ohio where Anna had a sister and brother. They were married January 1, 1910 in Cleveland. After their marriage, they left Cleveland and came to Livingston seeking work in the newly opened mine.

In 1913, Stanley was active in the building of the new Catholic Church. It opened in 1914. Mr. and Mrs. Karnosky became charter member of this church. Their daughter Helen was baptized in Staunton's St. Michael's Church. Their son Anton was the third child to be baptized in Livingston's new church.

They were the parents of nine children – a daughter and son died in infancy. They raised four sons and three daughters. Helen passed away in 1992 and Valentine in 2004. The third daughter, Lillian, became a member of the Dominican Sisters in Springfield.

All four sons served in the military during World War II. Ben retired from the army as a colonel and now lives in Georgia with his wife Winn. Stanley, Jr. served in the Navy, retired from Olin Corporation in East Alton and lives in Livingston with his wife the former Mary Torry. Anton was inducted into the Navy and was stationed at Great Lakes Naval Base. He retired from St. Francis Hospital in Litchfield and lives in Livingston with his wife the former Roberta Bird. Tom served in the Army, retired from General Motors Corporation and lives in Michigan with his wife the former Betty Ottino. There are eight grandchildren, thirteen great-grandchildren and three great, great-grandchildren.

During his lifetime, Stanley, Sr. worked in the coal mine. He was interested in many projects around the home. He built a carpet loom for Mrs. Karnosky. She made carpets for her family and friends for many years. Mr. Karnosky was a kind and thoughtful man. He passed away in 1951. Mrs. Karnosky passed away in 1992 at the age of one hundred-two years old.



Standing from left: Ben Karnosky, Ken Karnosky, Mary (Stanley) Karnosky, Elmer Heisterberg, Helen Karnosky Heisterberg, Anton Karnosky, Roberta (Anton) Karnosky, Tom Karnosky, Sr. Mary Stanley, Denis Karnosky, Stanley Karnosky, Jr. (kneeling)
Seated (adults): Mary (Denis) Karnosky, Rose (Ken) Karnosky, Betty (Tom) Karnosky, Anna Karnosky, Valentine Karnosky.
Seated (children): Eric Karnosky, David Karnosky, Jim Karnosky, Jody Karnosky, Kim Karnosky Muin, Debbie Karnosky, Angie Karnosky (seated in front of Kim). Jeff Karnosky.

The Anton Karnosky Family

Anton Karnosky was born in Livingston, 1914, the son of Stanley, Sr. and Anna Karnosky. He has lived in Livingston his entire life. Presently he is the oldest resident born in Livingston. He attended Sacred Heart Catholic School, graduating in 1927 and from Livingston High School in 1931.

Anton and his wife Roberta have been married for sixty-eight years. Three children were born to this marriage. Ken lives in Staunton and is retired from Olin Corporation in East Alton as a production foreman. He has two children Debbie and Jeff. Karen is a registered nurse and lives in Arizona with her husband Frank Harding. They have one son Joshua. Kim is a secretary for the Bethalto School District and lives in Bethalto with her husband Terry Muin. They have a son Joseph and a daughter Sarah.

In his early years, he delivered newspapers, did many chores in the neighborhood and community; worked at Co-op Store during high school days after school and during summer vacations; picked up grocery orders and delivered them to customers; filled shelves,



Pictured back from left: Ken Karnosky, Kim (Karnosky) Muin.
Seated: Karen (Karnosky) Harding, Roberta Karnosky, Anton Karnosky

maintained the furnace and did general clean-up.. After graduating he worked full-time clerking, printing the sale bills, and accounting.. He spent thirty-seven years with Co-op Store.

In 1965, he accepted a position at the St. Francis Hospital in Litchfield, Illinois, as purchasing agent/material manager. During this period he was involved in the building of the new hospital which opened in 1971. He retired in 1984. During this same period, his wife Roberta was also employed at the hospital. She was a seamstress and later a secretary in the maintenance department.

Anton was active in city politics. He served the city as mayor, treasurer, and trustee. During his tenure in office, he was involved in construction, finance, and operation of the water and sewer system and the Livingston Sanitary District

Anton's career as a volunteer fireman started very early in a kid's life. When the fire bell sounded, off he went to the fire station, then to the scene of the fire--real excitement! During the winter months when he was fourteen years old, he made fires upstairs in the city hall for firemen's meetings just to be around firemen, who he felt were special people. Once on a rare occasion, the fire bell rang at 6:00 a.m. on a Sunday while he was at work at the Co-op Store. He ran to the station. The Fire Chief George Lusiana, for lack of firemen, directed Anton to drive the Model "T" fire truck to the scene while he prepared the hose and pump to be ready at the scene for his firemen when they arrived—what a thrill for a fourteen year old kid! Presently he is a sixty-three year member of the Livingston Volunteer Fire Department. Besides fire fighting, answering medical calls and many other types of "calls for help"

requested by the people, he served as the department's secretary/treasurer and as treasurer for thirty-seven years – assisting at all department activities, homecomings, chicken fries, bingo, annual dance, etc.

He and his family have been members of the Sacred Heart Church since 1914 when the parish was established. He ushered since he was thirteen years old. He also participated as a choir boy while a student of the Catholic School. He printed the first Sacred Heart Bulletin in 1950 and continued weekly for the next forty years. He was involved in all parish activities, materially and spiritually throughout the years of his membership in the Sacred Heart Parish. He is a member of the parish council and Sacred Heart Cemetery Association.

Anton was a member of the Lion's Club and served as committee chairman; assistant Scoutmaster of the Boy Scouts in the early 1950s, and assistant manager and coach of the Livingston Little League baseball team that played night ball in the league at Staunton that consisted of teams in the surrounding towns. He served on the school board for eighteen years and was involved in the organizing of the Livingston Consolidated School District #4.



Joseph Kucinick Family

Joe and Kay Kucinick are one of the oldest couples in Livingston. Joe who is 87 and Kay who is 89 have been married 66 years. Joe's parents, Joe and Mary (Raukar) Kucinick, came to Livingston in 1914. They had three sons – Michael, George and Joe, Jr. Michael had a son, Larry and a daughter, Mary Ann (Kucinick) Parril.

Joe, Sr. worked in the coalmine; Joe, Jr. worked as a clerk in the mine office. Joe, Jr. was postmaster from September 1959 until he retired June 1983. He served as postmaster of Livingston for twenty-four years, the longest tenured postmaster of the community. Kay served as a clerk at the post office. They both retired the same day. Joe and Kay have three daughters – Patricia Rosenthal, Katherine Burns and Michele Muin. A son Thomas is deceased.

The Malench Family

Henry A. Malench was born in Cavareno, Italy in 1898 son of Leopold and Dora Malench. Mary Rizzie was born in Cloz, Italy in 1902, daughter of Stephano and Anna Rizzie. Henry immigrated to Livingston with his parents in 1909. Mary immigrated to Livingston with her widowed mother in 1905. Anna Rizzie subsequently married Vitorio Sattovia. Father and step-father worked in the Livingston coal mine. Mary attended Livingston Grade School. Henry went to Livingston Grade School and High School, following that attended Business School in St. Louis. They married in Livingston in 1923.

Henry worked as a telegrapher for the New York Central Railroad, as a cashier at the Bank of Livingston, and in the office of the Livingston coal mine. From 1938 to 1950, he worked in the Probate Clerk's Office in Edwardsville. From 1950 to retirement in 1970, he was cashier at the First National Bank in Staunton. Mary was a stay-at-home mother. The couple had two sons – Henry L. and Robert L. With much sacrifice, they sent both sons through St. Louis University and St. Louis University School of Medicine. Both doctors practiced medicine in Edwardsville for thirty-five years and continue to live in Edwardsville in their retirement.

Both Henry and Mary died at age eighty-six after being lifelong residents of Livingston.

The Minkanic Family

Theodore, son of Michael and Maria (Harbacs) Minkanic, was born on July 19, 1878 in the village of Izbugya, Austria-Hungary. In 1896 at the age of eighteen, Theodore arrived in the United States and settled in Mt. Olive, Illinois. He had been sponsored by his sister Anna and her husband George Tomso.

Anna, daughter of John and Maria (Fedor) Jacko, was born on June 8, 1884 in the village of Muravny, Austria-Hungary. She arrived in the United States on August 22, 1901 at the age of seventeen and settled in Mt. Olive, Illinois. She was sponsored by her aunt Elizabeth (Fedor) Koval and her uncle Michael Fedor both of Mt. Olive.

Theodore Minkanic and Anna Jacko were united in marriage on May 4, 1902 in Mt. Olive, Illinois. They became the parents of ten children – Mary born 1903; Anna, 1905; John, 1907; Rose, 1909; Helen, 1911; Andrew, 1913; Michael, 1916; Theodore, 1918 died in infancy; Adeline, 1920; and Violet, 1923. There are twenty-two grandchildren and numerous great-grandchildren.

Mom and Dad lived simply and provided fond memories to all of their genuine generosity of a loving, hospitable family.



Standing from left to right: Andy, Mike, John, Anna Jacko Minkanic, Theodore Minkanic.
Seated: Ann, Rose, Mary, Helen, Adeline, and Violet

The Alphonso Moggio Family

In 1920 Alphonso Moggio moved from Staunton to Livingston with his family consisting of his wife Lucille, their sons Louis and Raymond and their daughter Sofia. Another son, Robert joined the family in 1932.

Mr. Moggio began a coal and ice business that he conducted out of his home. He always had only one truck, which was always in use making deliveries in Livingston and Williamson.

He purchased the ice from the Martin Lee Ice Co. located in Staunton. The ice was sold in units of 25, 50, 75, and 100 lbs. Customers put a sign in the window with the four numbers on it indicating the amount wanted. Ice tongs were used to carry the small chunks while the 100 lb piece was carried on the shoulder. Surplus ice was stored in a specially made icebox kept in a shed on the premises. People would come to the house to purchase ice especially on weekends for picnics and to make ice cream.

Hauling coal from both the Livingston and Williamson coalmines was a strenuous job shoveling the coal from the truck into the sheds where the coal was stored. Mr. Moggio was engaged in the business until February 1937 when he suddenly passed away. His sons, Louis and Raymond, carried on the business until the outbreak of World War II when both eventually went into the service.

Of the Alphonso Moggio family, Robert resides in The Villages, Florida and Sophia in Naperville, Illinois



Standing (back) Lucille Moggio,
Standing (front): Louis Moggio, Raymond Moggio.
Seated: Alphonso Moggio, Sophia Moggio



Pictured above is Robert Moggio
(youngest child of Alphonso and
Lucille).

The Henry and Lena Meyer Family

Henry Meyer emigrated from Germany and settled in Trenton, Illinois. For a short time when plans were being made to sink the New Staunton Coal Company Mine in Livingston, Henry and his wife Lena (nee Hoeh) came to Livingston where Henry engineered the sinking of the mine.

Four children were born to Henry and Lena – Dora, Helen, Frieda and Clarence. Dora moved to Arizona and Frieda moved to Ohio, she had two daughters Grace and Peggy Jane. Clarence and Helen remained in Livingston. Clarence had three children – Richard, Patty and Charles.

Henry built the second house in Livingston located on the northwest corner of the intersection of Main and South Second Streets. The original homestead was occupied by Helen Meyer Safko until the early 1990s when Mrs. Safko passed away. The residence, while no longer in the Meyer family, is still in good repair and occupied as a residence.

Henry was the first city clerk in 1905 when Livingston was incorporated.

Clarence “Peggy” Meyer had a paper route, was Olive Township Road Commissioner, and also held the office of village clerk.

The William Nixon Family

William “Bill” Nixon was born in Thayer, Illinois in 1902 to Robert and Della (Ammons) Nixon. In 1903, Robert and his brother-in-law John Westwood came to Olive Township, where Williamson is today, to take charge of the sinking of the Mt. Olive and Staunton Coal Company Mine #2.

Bill was active in football and track at Staunton and Livingston High Schools. He left high school at the age of seventeen to pursue a career as an electrician at #2 coal mine. He continued to play independent football with a local team. In 1923 he married Nora Best of Livingston. Bill was an avid quail hunter being in the field by dawn and coming home when it was dark.

Nora, the daughter of George and Mary Best, was born in 1903 on the farm where #2 mine was sunk. Bill’s father Robert boarded with the Best family during the sinking of the mine. Nora moved to Livingston with her parents in 1904.

Nora and her twin sister Cora were in the second graduating class at Livingston High School along with Anna Arkabauer, Dora Dixon, and Lucille Reeves. Nora worked at the

home of Dr. and Mrs. R.C. Berry during her school years and until she married Bill. She was an avid knitter – knitting for the Red Cross during WW II and later knitting baby and children’s sweaters and her specialty Christmas stockings.



Pictured (standing): Maridel (Nixon) Fowler and her husband Arvel Fowler
Seated: William Nixon and Nora Nixon.

Nora and Bill had one daughter Maridel. They were wonderful parents hosting parties for Maridel's classmates and attending high school basketball games. They lived in Livingston from 1937 until 1946 when they moved to the first farm west of the #2 mine. In 1948 they purchased the Williamson farm and built a home and Bill started farming in addition to working in the mine. Many people remember sledding on Nixon's hill.

Maridel attended Livingston school kindergarten through twelfth grade and graduated in 1952. In 1954 she came back from college to teach in Livingston and Williamson and later Staunton. In 1968 she married Arvel Fowler of Bethalto, where she continued teaching until 1989. They are both retired, live in Bethalto and spend their time volunteering at the Bethalto Museum which they started for the village.

PREVEDEL FAMILY

Frank Prevedel arrived from Austria to this area on November 24, 1909. He married Virginia Prevedel on February 8, 1913. Frank bought ground from John Carson on March 24, 1915. His piece of ground was 200' x 200'. It is located in the north part of Livingston. They built a home on the northern section of this acreage. Frank and Virginia had five children—3 sons and 2 daughters. Frank worked in the Livingston mine and also had 5 cows that he milked and supplied some residents in town. Along with several miners (United Mine Workers), Frank started the Co-operative Store to help get the miners away from the Company Stores. The United Mine Workers sold the store to the Augustine family in the 1940's. March 7, 1937, Frank was blinded by an explosive charge at the mine.

On September 8, 1956, Frank sold part of this property (85' x 200') to his son-in-law and daughter (Charles and Olinda Best). They built a house on this ground. Charles and Olinda had 3 children—2 sons and 1 daughter.

Frank died May 7, 1964 and Virginia died November 21, 1989. The homestead was left to Hilda Prevedel, their eldest daughter. After 90 years this property is still in the Prevedel family. Hilda sold the family house to Michael and Terri Best—a grandson of Frank and Virginia. Lynne Best—a granddaughter of Frank and Virginia, now owns Charles and Olinda's home.

