

interview

with Frank (Frank) (1) Thaheld of the woman R.L. on Feb 1, 1994

Family name was originally spelled Tahedl - Fred changed it when he came to US - easier to pronounce

(1) born in Niederswilen, 5 km away from Matthausen (harbor town on the Danube)

(2) Father was a farmer - named Johann - his ancestors came from Bohemia

mother Anne ^(or Anna) - her ancestors ^{from} Helsinki, Finland first settled in Sylvania, then Germany & then Austria

she had 16 children but several died at birth or when they were little

children

(1) Albert Friedrich (Fred) - 5 years older than Frank

(2) Franz Walter (Frank)

Children in order of age

(1) Teresa - oldest

(2) Johann (Hans) born 1900

(3) Anne (or Anna)

(4) Fred - born 1903

(5) Josef

(6) Frank - born 1906

(7) Michael (Michel) - lived in Salzburg

(8) Louis

family farm had cows, horses, hay, beets

¹⁻² Mondbeumen (poppy flowers) used to make Mondstrudel (to make it ^{per Frank} heat up the

mond - it plums up. The opium goes away as soon as it is heated up. It gets mushy, mixed with sugar & put in cake)

R.L. in photo

1. Michael

2. Hans

3. Josef

4. Fred

5. Franz

6. Anne

7. mother

8. Louis

9. Dad

10. Teresa

(no more children born after photo taken)

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R. L. in photo

- | | |
|------------|-----------|
| 1. Michael | 7 mother |
| 2. Hans | 8 Louis |
| 3. Josef | 9 Dad |
| 4. Fred | 10 Teresa |
| 5. Franz | |
| 6. Anne | |

(no more children
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Frank remembers one other brother who died at about 12 years of age. He couldn't remember his name though

The children had to walk about a mile to school. They all walked to school. ~~They were covered with rags & shags~~ They were forced to learn to ski when 3-4 years of age

Fred was a very good student but he didn't like singing or exercising. He ^{became} interested in flying as a young kid. He liked to bring aeronautics books to school until the teacher told him not to

when Fred 6-7 years old he built a model of a plane. He told his mom he wanted to fly. Fred was "born for aviation" said Frank

To earn money to buy the mechanical parts he needed to make his "thing" Fred worked in a bowling alley (Kegel) in the village inn (Hasthaus) setting up the pins. He also worked on Sat + Sun for a neighbor to make money

Fred built gliders in his ~~his~~ father's barn. Dad gave him ^{space} room to do it. The wood he used he got from the nearby pine & linden trees. Linden wood is very light like balsa wood. Frank helped him put the canvas on

When Fred was 16 ^(1919?) he flew the glider off the roof of the barn. Frank was at school when this happened. Parents were also gone had they been there they would never have allowed it. Dad ~~was~~ worried Fred would kill himself, but Fred wanted to fly. "He was 'born to fly'" said Frank. Parents ~~against~~ thought Fred "crazy"

Fred first flew in a glider during WWI with a Mr. Waneck of Augsburg, Bavaria. He held

* Frank has photo of where Fred was born in Austria

③ He also flew paper planes and was a famous pilot

the world record in glider flying & Fred went to Bavaria to meet him. Fred came home afterwards & built his own glider

neither farmer didn't like Fred ^{they were superstitious &} said he was associated with the devil. They got mad because Fred's glider was landing in their corn fields

(he would have been 12?)

In 1915 during WWI, Fred worked on his glider. He became interested in gliders because he had a friend who was a glider flyer & Fred flew with him several times

He would get his glider up in the air with the help of 15-20 boys who pull on a rope behind the glider catapult wall ^(hooked to the glider) which would keep the glider from going backwards. Boys would pull on the rope as far as they could, let go & the glider was catapulted into the air. Fred was alone in the glider

Later he built a 2-seater glider. This glider got into the air by being attached to another plane.

Frank said he once flew with Fred in his glider because "we built it together" ^{in 19}

Fred didn't have a flying license

^(Fred) when he was 15 years old he built a ^(1918?) horsepower engine. He put it on a bicycle. "Ran really good" per Frank but people thought "was crazy"

* Fred didn't want to be a farmer when father told him to go out at 4:30 a.m. to cut the grass (meant hay?) Fred would say he was sick because he didn't want to do it.

According to Frank it's more difficult to fly a glider than a powered plane because you have to understand wind conditions.

(4)

Fred was "tight with money" He didn't like to spend money on food or "things like that."

Right after the war Fred got his flying license. At the town of Treiskirchen, which had a small airport he met ~~to~~ a man, a "von" who Fred called "the wisel" (weasel), because he was faster than anyone else. ~~This man helped him~~ At this airport were planes that the Allies were making the Austrians destroy. ~~They were~~ biplanes & triplanes. The "von" man helped Fred and his friend, who had accompanied him there, take one apart (dismantle it), transport it to another location ^{rebuild it} & repaint it.

Now Fred had his own plane. This was the 1st one he flew with an engine but "he wasn't afraid."

The plane they took apart & rebuilt was a triplane called a "Tumpler Taube" which had been built in Austria. Frank said in Austria Fred would sometimes get ideas at 3-4 in the morning & get up & sketch them.

Father was "disgusted" because 3 of his boys Fred, Frank & Josef were becoming mechanics instead of farmers (Josef, Frank also became pilots) Frank said he became interested in aviation because of Fred.

The farm eventually went to Hans. When he got ill. His sons didn't want to be farmers either so the farm was sold. One of Hans' sons ~~Frank~~ became a lawyer in Linz. ^(also named Hans)

Fred went to Vienna because he didn't want to work on the farm. ~~He~~ While there he worked for his uncle who owned a *Rösterei ~~where~~ (he roasted coffee beans and supplied them to restaurants in Vienna. Two years later Frank also went there & worked for the uncle because he also didn't want to work on the farm.

During this time Fred also worked in the old Roman city of Enz ~~by~~. He had friends there ~~who~~ who were also interested in flying (He had friends too in Matthauser who were interested in flying)

In Enz Fred worked for the Impac Corp. He designed for the company gas engines (for motorcycles, etc). They were 5 + 7 horsepower engines)

Because people in Austria not interested in his invention ~~capable to lose their money~~, Fred decided to come to U.S. ~~from there~~ ~~but~~ ~~emigrated~~ to

~~Argentina~~ he believed the Americans were more willing to invest. ~~He would not get a visa to come to the U.S. though~~ There were rich people here who could finance some of his inventions or the U.S. govt could help him.

He wasn't able to get a visa to come to U.S. though so he sailed to Argentina where he spent a year. He lived in Cordoba & worked on planes ~~there~~ as a mechanic. He worked on biplanes & triplanes.

after the year he stowed away on a ship coming sailing for Galveston, Texas

after arrival in Galveston he hitchhiked to ^{So} California. People gave him a few dollars along the way.

He met Mildred in Brea - when he came to Brea he didn't speak English. A guy who spoke German told him that across the street there was a girl who spoke German because her parents were German. She was from PA

* Concerning the Humming Bird, Fred wrote Frank ~~Schmitt~~ ~~that~~ ("in S. America" ^{Frank Schmitt's journal Columbia 1931!}) saying he was building a small plane & when it was done he hoped it would work

Mildred also liked to fly

Once Fred left Europe he only returned once to his homeland but by then his parents had already died.

According to Frank, Fred was a quiet man who always had plenty of books around him. He was also always making drawings.

Fred bought his ranch in Menden for an investment. He had a machine shop there & he made model planes. In later years Fred made solar motors (made solar plane too), tools and other inventions. He also designed & made parts for helicopters.

He had about 10 patents. He sold them cheaply in the US, including one for small diesel engines that he sold to farmers.

Fred died in March '81 - Mended the same year (in Sept) & buried in Genoa Cem. Genoa, NV. According to Frank's wife, Mended was sorry that she didn't put an airplane on Fred's gravestone, but she died too soon to have it done.

~~He was buried in Genoa~~ Fred's photo supposedly above in diesel engine in the Smithsonian

In 1931 Frank left Austria because he said Hitler was already making threats & trouble. He emigrated to Colombia where he worked as an air mechanic for 8 months & then became a pilot. He flew for 3 years. He was a fighter pilot ~~in~~. He flew against Peru & was supposed to Bomb Lima but at the last moment the President of Colombia called off the strike.

"He was crazy" said Frank

Frank came to the US in 1956 ^{after living in Colombia & Venezuela}. His daughter had come first but she was homelike so Fred brought Frank & wife to US. They lived in Fullerton in a rented house on Chapman Ave.

He got a job at Hyatt Foods in Fullerton the day after he arrived here from S. America. He developed machines for them.

Influenced by Fred,

Fred's other brother Josef became a pilot ~~also~~ was also & was the chief mechanic for an air company in Colombia.