

## “The Sound of Music”: Fact or Fiction

### Real Story of the von Trapp Family

#### The History of the von Trapp Family

Georg died in 1947 and was buried in the family cemetery on the property. Those who had applied for citizenship achieved it in 1948. The Trapp Family Lodge (which is still operating today) opened to guests in 1950. While fame and success continued for the Trapp Family Singers, they

decided to stop touring in 1955. The group consisted mostly of non-family members because many of the von Trapps wanted to pursue other endeavors, and only Maria's iron will had kept the group together for so long.

In 1956, Maria, Johannes, Rosmarie, and daughter Maria went to New Guinea to do missionary work. Later, Maria ran the Trapp Family Lodge for many years. Of the children, Rupert was a medical doctor; Agathe was kindergarten teacher in Maryland; Maria was a missionary in New Guinea for 30 years; Werner was a farmer; Hedwig taught music; Johanna married and eventually returned to live in Austria; Martina married and died in childbirth; Rosmarie and Eleonore both settled in Vermont; and Johannes managed the Trapp Family Lodge. Maria died in 1987 and was buried alongside Georg and Martina.

When the Captain died on May 30, 1947, the children started to rebel. They were tired of living on the road, and they wanted to start families and settle down. All of the children eventually broke away, and the von Trapps stopped touring in 1956. The family corporation bought an old farm house in Stowe, Vermont, with everyone helping to build the home and take care of the farm. They soon found out that this was not enough to support the whole family, so while they were away on tours they rented their home to skiers. This was the beginning of the von Trapp hotel business.

In the early 1940s the family settled in Stowe, Vermont, where they bought a farm. They ran a music camp on the property when they were not on tour. In 1944, Maria and her stepdaughters Johanna, Martina, Maria, Hedwig, and Agathe applied for U.S. citizenship by filing declarations of intention at the U.S. District Court in Burlington,

Vermont. Georg apparently never filed to become a citizen; Rupert and Werner were naturalized while serving in the U.S. armed forces during World War II; Rosmarie and Eleonore derived citizenship from their mother; and Johannes was born in the United States and was a citizen in his own right.

In the early 1940s, the von Trapp family toured the United States as the Trapp Family Singers before eventually settling in Stowe, Vermont on an enchanted farm with sweeping mountain vistas reminiscent of their beloved Austria. In the summer of 1950, they began welcoming guests to a rustic, 27-room family home/lodge. After a devastating fire in 1980, the original structure was replaced by the new Trapp Family Lodge, a striking, 96-room alpine lodge situated on 2,500 acres offering magnificent indoor and outdoor resort amenities. The entire property is owned and operated by the von Trapp family.