



**THE TWO-STORY HOUSE** on the Humes farmstead was built by Bill and Emma (Reling) Humes in 1922. They bought the farm in 1920. It is now the home of Gisela (Merkel) Humes Fisher, who came to America from Germany as the bride of Donald Humes.

## Family celebrates at 1920 homestead

By MARYLOU OLSON

Memories of family get-togethers, holiday dinners, the aroma of turkey and pies baking, and having fun with cousins, returned to grandchildren of the late Bill and Emma (Reling) Humes when they gathered at the family homestead south of Traer on Saturday, Aug. 8, during a weekend reunion.

The place, now owned by Gisela (Merkel) Humes Fisher, has been in the family since 1920.

Bill Humes was born Nov. 30, 1868 at Philadelphia, Pa., and his parents were John Humes and Rebecca (Elliot) Humes, both immigrants from the County of Donegal in Ireland.

His wife, the former Emma Reling, who was born Oct. 8, 1872, came to America with her parents, William and Christine (Hadermann) Reling, and a brother, Fredrick, from Cochstedt, Germany in 1874, and they homesteaded near Tipton.

In 1878, when Bill was 10, the family moved to Mitchell County, where he became a successful farmer and acquired his own farm in the Blue Hill area before his marriage.

He and his brother, Jim, became the owners of one of the first threshing machines, powered by horses. He also raised registered Jersey cows on their farm and operated the Farmers Union Elevator in Cawker City.

After Bill and Emma were married on April 6, 1899, at the home of her parents northeast of Cawker City, they lived on farms at Blue Hill and Cawker City. The second farm has since been inundated with Waconda Lake. The couple purchased the farm at Traer in 1920, where they reared four children, Frederick, Elsie, Ernest and Esther.

After Bill Humes' death on Oct. 25, 1942, his son, Fred Humes and his wife, the former Mabel Wolfram, bought the farm and reared two children, Donald and Audrey, there.

Elsie Humes married Walter Wurm, a nearby neighbor and farmer, and their children include: Wilma (May), Lester, Eugene and Neta (Jeffus).

Ernest married Ruth Miller and their children were Ernest, LeRoy, Doris, Dorothy, Darlene, the twins, Sharon and Charlotte, and Darrol.

Esther, the youngest child, was married to Avalon Thomas and they had a son, Eldon.

After Fred Humes died, his son, Donald and his German bride, Gisela, moved to the home place.

"Coming to America was a real change for me as I embraced a new culture," Gisela Humes-Fisher wrote in her book, "It is Well." The book tells her story of growing up in the lean years of post World War II in Germany, marrying an American soldier and moving to the western plains of Kansas.



**GISELA HUMES FISHER** (right) became a U.S. citizen on July 11, 1968, at the courthouse in Oberlin. The judge was



William B. Ryan of Norton and the certificate was signed by Clerk of the District Court Alice Vernon.

She and her husband had three children, Evelyn, who was born in Germany; Karen and Michael. After her husband died of cancer in 1988, she has continued to live on the farm and has since purchased it from the Humes family. She married Cleo Fisher in 1990, and he died in 1993.

Wilma May, a granddaughter of Bill and Emma Humes said, "I still laugh when I think of how my grandparents would ship two turkeys to relatives back east in the fall. They would have one for Thanksgiving, then feed the other one in the basement of their house until Christmas."

The reunion at the farm provided reminiscing, food and fun for all ages.

Other weekend activities included a wiener roast on Friday night at the home of Brad and Shanna Long and Miranda; and a brunch on Sunday morning at The Gateway, which included the family tradition, "Christmas in August." However, this year the Christmas tree was decorated with sunflowers. A raffle for a family quilt, made by the children of Mrs. Fisher and quilted by her, was won by her grandson, Kenneth Johnson, of Medford, Mass.

Those who enjoyed the reunion, by families, included: Wilma May: Elwood and Jeannie May, Jerry and Connie Olson, Justin and Wendy Scott, Garrett and Gage, Oberlin; Kelly Olson, Junction City; Stean Olson, Hays.

Eugene and Bette Wurm, Hern-

don; Judy Jordan, Daniel and Sean, Brad and Shanna Long and Miranda, Oberlin; Patricia Buffum, Trista Buffum and Aaron, Russel Buffum and Brittany Heien, Rebecca Nichols and Paul Osterhoudt, Omaha.

Lester and Kay Wurm, Overland Park; Mark and Amy Wurm, Laura, Katie, Mary Ann and Wesley, McPherson.

Gisela Humes-Fisher, Oberlin: Michael and Evelyn Johnson, Rexford; Andrew Johnson, Daniel Johnson, Emily and Elisabeth, Colby; Kenneth Johnson, Medford, Mass.; John and Karen Wolf, Abi and Benjamin, Kinsley; Michael Humes, Christopher and Cassandra, Enterprise; Dennis Brown, Oberlin.

Robert and Audrey Law, Garden City; Chris and Michelle Law and Jacob, Garden City; Jared Law, Manhattan; Doug and Kelly Law and Jacob, Justin Parker, Salida, Colo.; Jeff and Liz Headrick, Emily and Sarah, Kismet.

Neta and Allen Jeffus, Topeka; Russell and Janell Pol-lom, Jessica, Sam and Wyatt, Spring Hill.

Eldon and Evelyn Thomas, Dalhart Texas.

Dorothy Reling, Cawker City; Doris Jean Mays, Loveland, Colo.; Lorraine Humes, Orleans Neb.; Darlene Walton, Fremont, Neb.; Galen and Marcia Thurlow, Ty and Tory, Michelle Thurlow, and Michael May, Newport Neb.



**THE BILL AND EMMA HUMES FAMILY**, shown on the farm in 1924 at the couple's 25th wedding anniversary, included: front row, (from left) Emma, Esther (Thomas) and William Humes, and (back row) Fred, Elsie (Wurm) and Ernest.