

THC Staff (JS), 3/18/74; revised 4/10/74, 4/15/74

Official Texas Historical Building Marker  
Comal County (Order #4108)

Location: 197 E. Mill St.,  
New Braunfels

AUGUST DIETZ COTTAGE\*

AUGUST DIETZ CAME TO TEXAS IN  
1849 AS A GERMAN IMMIGRANT, AND  
SETTLED IN NEW BRAUNFELS. ON SEPT.  
1, 1866, HE BOUGHT THIS LOT, SOON  
BUILT THIS COTTAGE, AND SOLD IT ON  
DEC. 2, 1867. AT FIRST A TWO-ROOM  
STRUCTURE, THE BUILDING WAS LATER  
ENLARGED. ITS MORTARED ROCK WALLS  
ARE 20 INCHES THICK. THE BEADED  
CEILING, THE PLAIN BOARD CEILING,  
THE WINDOW GLASS AND CASEMENTS,  
AND FRONT DOOR ARE ALL ORIGINAL.  
HOUSE AND ADDITIONS WERE RESTORED  
IN 1973 BY WILLIAM J. KOLODZIE.\*\*  
RECORDED TEXAS HISTORIC LANDMARK - 1974\*\*\*

4108

FILE COPY - DO NOT REMOVE

\*1/2" lettering  
\*\*3/8" lettering  
\*\*\*1/4" lettering

RECEIVED  
READY FOR  
APR 22 1974

SOUTHWELL ORDER  
TEXAS HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

APPROVED  
Truett Latimer  
*by Bob Waho*  
4-22-74

APPLICATION FORM FOR OFFICIAL TEXAS HISTORICAL MARKER  
TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
STRUCTURAL CHECKLIST

4108

1. The East One Quarter of Lot 118, New Braunfels City Block 2008, was conveyed to Martin Helmuth as an emigrant in compliance with his contract with the German Emigration Company for whom Prince Carl Solms Braunfels purchased the site of New Braunfels from Juan M. Veramendi. Veramendi bought the two leagues of land from the State of Coahuila and Texas, Mexico, in 1831.

When Helmuth acquired the property as a grant on January 9, 1847, it consisted of one-half acre Bavarian.

Peter Imhoff bought the lot from Helmuth for \$50 on January 12, 1848.

Granville H. Sherwood acquired the lot from Imhoff in a trade on December 6, 1852.

Peter Linnartz bought the lot from Sherwood for \$200 on July 12, 1854.

The lot was sold for \$150 on April 13, 1857, to Johann Jacob Gross, deputy and county surveyor for Comal County from 1849 to 1860.

Groos, who was educated and experienced as a surveyor in Germany before emigrating to Texas in 1845, was ousted as county surveyor in 1865 by the military government along with all elected public officials.

He was elected commissioner of the Texas General Land Office in 1873.

Christian Lohl bought the half-acre from Groos for \$150 May 12, 1860, and sold it to Charles Floege for \$150 on October 30, 1862.

Floege sold the half-acre to August Dietz for \$100 on September 1, 1866.

(Dietz divided the property and built the existing structure on the quarter with which this application is concerned. See "2" below.)

*Not the correct spelling. See below. DP 1-30-74*

George Horn bought the south half of the lot, amounting to one-quarter Bavarian measure acre, from Dietz for the sum of "One Thousand Mexican Silver Dollars or their equivalent in legal tender United States National Currency at its market value when paid." December 2, 1867.

Horn sold his half of Lot 118 to Nicolaus Winther for \$950 in gold coin on April 15, 1872.

Jacob Schmitz, noted hotel proprietor of early New Braunfels, bought the south half of Lot 118 from Winther through the latter's attorney, B. Eberhard, who sold it on the courthouse steps to the highest bidder to satisfy a debt of \$500 in gold coin, plus interest. Schmitz bid \$625 and claimed the property. May 6, 1873.

Schmitz, a hotelman who emigrated from Germany, bought the Guadalupe Hotel on Main Plaza in 1858 and in 1873 added the third story to the structure which still stands. The hotel was a stage stop on the Austin-San Antonio run.

The Schmitz fortunes also met with reverses. His widow, Catharina Schmitz, conveyed the south half of Lot 118 to her daughter Paula, widowed wife of Dr. Levin Claessen, in return for Paula's having "advanced out of her private means certain money for the purpose of satisfying certain indebtedness on the hotel property."

The agreement also provided that Paula pay her mother \$25 a month for her "support and maintenance during the remainder of my natural life without (my) having the care and trouble in my old age of managing the property hereinafter set out."

Paula married Franz Roth and moved to Frankfort-am-Main, Germany, and gave bank president Joseph Faust power of attorney to sell the property, Franz Metze buying the half of Lot 118 on February 28, 1885, for \$550.

Metze also acquired the north half of the lot in a separate purchase and sold both of them to Balthaser Preiss for \$1,700 on May 6, 1903.

The original half-acre lot, No. 118, had been divided into quarters by the time Preiss sold the present southeast one-quarter to Albert Rust for \$1,200 on March 3, 1910.

Wilhelm Fischer also paid \$1,200 when he bought the same property from Rust on February 14, 1912.

Paul Henk bought the lot from the Fischer estate for \$1,500 on March 21, 1936. He and his wife Ida conveyed the property to their son-in-law and daughter, Marvin and Cora Heitkamp, in consideration of love and affection. May 27, 1941.

Herman Reiland bought the lot for \$4,200 on February 14, 1946, and sold it to A. E. Goode for \$4,000 May 12, 1947.

Udo Hellman acquired the lot in 1948, Herbert Yates in 1969, and the present owner, William Kolodzie, in 1971.

2. There is no documented proof of when the structure was erected since tax records for that period were destroyed by an earlier administration. However, Oscar Haas, local historian who has done extensive research on Comal County, believes that August Dietz built the house and the one adjoining it on the southwest quarter of Lot 118, both facing Mill St., when he acquired the property in 1867.

3. The site, just one and one-half blocks from the Main Plaza, was in a block of both business establishments and residences. An early hospital was next door, a 19th Century newspaper office and the first Western Union office were farther down the block.

4. August Dietz, believed to be the builder of the structure, was naturalized a U. S. citizen in the Comal County Commissioners Court

on July 30, 1867. The records do not give any other information about him, no record of place or date of birth, no copy of application.

Ship lists show that an August Dietz, age 24, was among German emigrants who came to Texas aboard the Galliot Flora in 1849, and he was bound for Guadalupe County.

5. No record of architect or contractor.

6. As shown in the 1881 Bird's Eye View of New Braunfels, the building was constructed with a high pitched roof extending over a front porch, both of which have been reproduced by the present owner in restoration of the building which he uses for his surveying business.

The original structure consisted of two rooms, one behind the other. Walls are of solid masonry, rock and adobe, about 20 inches thick, with deeply recessed windows, one of which had been partly concealed and was restored to its original lines by the present owner. Much of the window glass is of the period when the structure was built.

A handmade lock of the period has been replaced in the original handmade door at the entrance. Spindles in the porch railing were copied from another early New Braunfels house. Planked ceiling is of one-inch thick, handhewn yellow pine, 10 - 12 inches wide, with center-matched joints. Casements are original. Beaded ceiling is original.

7. Limestone was quarried for rocks in the nearby hill country, and the limestone also was burned in local kilns to provide lime for mortar. The caliche soil, rich in lime, provided a serviceable adobe for mortar, too. All of the numerous small kilns that were scattered about the county have disappeared, replaced by big local industries.

8. There is no record of the uses of the property, but it is presumed it was generally rent property since many of the owners had residences elsewhere in the city. It may have been used for businesses which none

of the available records reveal.

9. Former owners had added frame structures to the back, lowered the roof, and removed the porch, roof and porch now restored to their original lines. The present owner has added at the rear a large drafting room, full bath, coffee lounge, and garage.

10. Current condition of the building is excellent. William Kolodzie, owner of the property and the surveying business occupying the structure, is responsible for the upkeep.

Kolodzie has furnished the interior with numerous early pieces which he has collected and selected carpeting and drapes appropriate to the style and period of the building.

11. Photos attached.

12. No information available.

13. Unknown except that it was a residence for many years before the present owner acquired it.

14. To give added distinction to an example of early New Braunfels architecture and thereby encourage other businessmen and property owners to follow the example of Kolodzie.

Each year, more and more early buildings are lost to neglect, remodeling, and the encroachment of narrow-minded "progress."

The Comal County Historical Survey Committee wants to encourage every effort to reverse this trend of destruction, to preserve the distinctive early architecture, examples of original and fine craftsmanship.

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Bibliography:

HISTORY OF NEW BRAUNFELS AND COMAL COUNTY TEXAS, 1844 - 1946, by Oscar Haas. Deed Record research by Oscar Haas.

A NEW LAND BECKONED, by Chester and Ethel Geue

ABSTRACT OF TITLE to East One Quarter of Lot 118, City Block 2008,  
City of New Braunfels

Comal County Commissioners Court Minutes and Naturalization Index

Oral Interviews:

William Kolodzie, January 10, 1974

Bill Dillen, restoration consultant, January 11, 1974

Compiled by Marjorie Cook  
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197 E



SPRINGE

COOME ST

WILLIAM ST

MARBLE ST

LESTER ST

COOME ST

CHIFFA

YARDELL ST

MAYHEW ST

CASTEL

HILL STREET

SEVIN STREET

STREET







