

# FORT BEND COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

## *ORAL HISTORY COMMITTEE*



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### Abstract: **Joseph Daniel “J. D.” Meyer**

Mr. Meyer was raised in a German-Catholic family that moved from Schulenberg to Sartartia Plantation. Germans were hired because they had strong work ethics. His father, Otto worked for Houston Milk, Ice & Ice Cream Company in the dairy processing plant on the plantation. The Sartartia Dairy opened in 1932 and closed in 1948 due to the widening of Hwy 90.

JD describes the dairy operation as the most modern in the Houston area with the reputation of producing the highest quality of milk and cottage cheese. His father was known as the best cottage cheese maker for the company. After the dairy closed, JD's family was the only family that remained living on the plantation until the mid 1950s.

13 Pages

∥ *Scroll down for Key Words from the Interview.* ∥

## Interview Summary

### People (in alphabetical order)

D. C. "Buck" Buchanan – former manager of Dairy  
 Benjamin Clayton – owner of Sartartia  
 Antonia Pohl Gebauer – maternal grandmother  
 Joseph Gebauer – maternal grandfather  
 Herbert Helmcamp – manager of Dairy  
 Jesus – managed blacksmith shop  
 Carlton Lorfing – best friend  
 Freddy Martin – best friend  
 Herbert Meyer – brother  
 Hertha Gebauer Meyer – mother  
 JoAnna Meyer – daughter  
 John Meyer – son  
 Joseph Meyer – paternal grandfather  
 Marjorie Meyer – sister  
 Mary Kleosel Meyer – paternal grandmother  
 Melinda Sommers Meyer – spouse  
 Otto Ferdinand Meyer – father  
 Gus Ulrich – encouraged Germans to relocate to Sugar Land  
 Mr. White – football coach, SLHS principal, FBISD superintendent

### Places / Businesses

Alief, Texas  
 Central Prison, Sugar Land

Fort Bend ISD  
 Missouri City, Texas  
 Phoenix Dairy  
 Ruffino Barber Shop  
 Rosenberg, Texas  
 Sartartia Plantation  
 Sugar Land Heritage Foundation

### Events

JD was born in 1939 on the Sartartia Plantation where his dad, Otto, worked in the dairy processing plant. His dad was known as making the best cottage cheese in the company. His parents were German-Catholic from Schulenberg.

JD and his siblings continued to reside on the plantation six years after the dairy closed – until the mid-1950s. His dad also drove a FBISD school bus and was the second in command of all maintenance for the school district.

JD describes the workings of the Sartartia Plantation Dairy, the location of the barns, dwellings and other buildings on the plantation.

JD and his wife, Melinda, met at Sugar Land High School. They raised two children, JoAnna and John. Now retired, they enjoy time with family including six grandchildren.