

FORT BEND COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

ORAL HISTORY COMMITTEE



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Abstract: **Charles D. Stutzenbaker**

Mr. Stutzenbaker, born in the Fairchild-Needville area in 1934, is a descendant of some of the first Czechs to move to Texas in the mid-1800s from Moravia, which is in the current Czech Republic. The original family name was spelled Sturtzenbecker but later went through several spelling variations.

Charles shares numerous stories of his ancestors prior to and after arriving in Texas including one who met General George Armstrong Custer who was stationed in Texas before the infamous 1876 battle.

Growing up in Fort Bend County, enjoying hunting, fishing and camping, Charles provides details of his youth including photos of family and friends. He was involved in the scouting program and earned the rank of Eagle Scout and continued through the Explorer Scout program. After service in the Army, he saved enough money to attend and graduate from Texas A&M University with a degree in Wildlife Science. This degree and his love of the outdoors led to an almost 40 year career as a Biologist with the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department without leaving his beloved home in Port Arthur.

Prior to retirement in 1995, in addition to numerous scientific reports and popular magazine magazines, Stutzenbaker published three major books. The first was the definitive work on the mottled duck and is entitled "The Mottled Duck, Its Life History, Ecology and management" The second was a school textbook entitled "Wildlife Management". The third book was a plant identification and management book entitled "Aquatic and Wetland plants of the Western Gulf Coast".

The mottled duck book provides a complete assessment of that particular migratory bird species. The textbook is enjoying wide distribution across the nation and the plant book is widely used by plant enthusiasts, land manager, land regulators and the teaching profession.

28 Pages

⇓ *Scroll down for Key Words from the Interview* ⇓

Interview Summary

People, *in alphabetical order:*

Uncle Adolph
 Dr Balkey – physician
 Barbara Roane Bleil – classmate
 Bert Bleil – friend
 Ben Dedek - cousin
 General George Armstrong Custer
 Mary Drgac – paternal grandmother
 Albert George - rancher
 John Hus Presbyterian Church
 Joe Lagow – land manager
 Milton Kroesche – classmate
 Roland Kroesche - friend
 David Lobpries – Naturalist Advisor
 John Moore – rancher
 Jiri Psencik – great great grandfather
 Anna Jurkova Psencik – great great grandmother
 Anna Psencik – great grandmother
 John Psencik – great uncle
 Jan Pultar – maternal grandfather
 Kristina Pultar – mother
 Marie Ruzicka – maternal grandmother
 R K Sawyer - Author
 Andy Sipocz – Instructor
 Marissa Sipocz – Instructor
 R E Bob Smith - landowner
 Major Paul Stach
 Stern Family - farmers
 Becky Stutzenbaker - wife
 Alfred Stutzenbaker - brother

Alfred Wilhelm Stutzenbaker – father
 Charles F Sturtzenbecker – paternal grandfather
 Fritz Sturtzenbecker – great grandfather
 Emil Tejml – best friend
 Rev J R Vilt – Pastor
 Dave Wintermann - landowner
 Sylvester Zdunkewicz - friend
 Victor Zdunkewicz – friend

Places / Businesses, *in alphabetical order:*

Austin
 Baltimore-Maryland
 Big Boggy National Wildlife Refuge
 Brazos Bend State Park
 Brazos River
 Brenham
 Canada
 Coral Sea
 Corpus Christi
 Dallas
 Duval Sulfur Company in Orchard
 Eagle Lake
 Fairchilds
 Fort Bend County Historical Society
 Fort Bend Herald Newspaper
 Galveston
 Germany
 Cuba Kansas

Kendleton
 Korea
 Lacassine National Wildlife Refuge
 Long Point
 Louisiana
 Matagorda
 Moravia – Czech Republic
 Murphree Wildlife Area
 Needville
 Pearl Harbor
 Port Arthur
 Robert E Lee Elementary
 Rosenberg
 Russia
 Texas Parks & Wildlife Department
 Places / Businesses
 Virginia
 Wesley in Washington County
 Wharton Junior College

Events

In 1857, Charles' great great grandparents, Jiri and Anna Jurkova Psencik left Vizovice, Moravia and arrived in Texas aboard the ship Frides.

In 1861, Charles great grandfather, Fritz Sturtzenbecker, a single, 18 year old German boy arrived alone in Galveston

On my mother's side of the family, the Pultar and Ruzicka families along with others, left Moravia around 1875 because of poor living circumstances and moved a short distance

eastward into Russia. Moving back to Moravia, they finally immigrated to the US.

Charles parents, Alfred Stutzenbaker and Kristina Pultar married in 1926 in Needville.

Charles grew up in Rosenberg where he loved to hunt, fish and camp. He was involved in athletics, the Scouting program earning the rank of Eagle Scout. He explained his experiences growing up and during World War II.

After a few years in the Army, he attended and graduated from Texas A&M University in Wildlife Science.

Charles spent almost 40 years with the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department as a Biologist. He was responsible for researching and establishing wildlife habitat management on public and private lands. His work involved managing wetlands, for livestock grazing, and wildlife use for all species of birds but especially waterfowl along with other wildlife species including frogs, fish, alligators and even red wolves.

Due to his extensive research and photography work, he authored several books.

Charles retired in 1995. He and his wife, Becky continue to reside in Port Arthur, Texas.

Charles ends this Interview with an Epilogue taken from a third grade writing assignment titled, What is a Biologist ?