My Heritage

My name is Chris Weitzel, I was born here in Australia but my heritage is from German descendent. This interesting surname is of medieval German origin, and is an occupational name for a dealer in, or seller of wheat, derived from the Middle High German "Weitzen", wheat. Other surnames in this category include: Weitzmann (wheat dealer); Weitzen and Weitzenkorn (metonymic occupational names for dealers in wheat), and Weitzhandler. Job-descriptive surnames originally denoted the actual occupation of the name bearer, and later became hereditary.

The earliest recording was in 1470, when one Jung Hanss Weit zu Killer was noted in medieval records of Germany. The form Weitzel is particularly well recorded in 17th Century Church Registers of Hessen, and in 18th and 19th Century Registers of Bayern. Entries include the birth of Hans Kurt Weitzel on July 7th 1627, at Gross Felda, Oberhessen, Hessen. On September 15th 1863, Adam Weitzel, aged 30 yrs, who embarked from the port of Bremen on the ship "Hansa" bound for New York, was a German immigrant into that city. The birth of Catharina Freiderika Weitzek, daughter of John Henry Weitzel and Catharina Elizabeth Knight, was recorded on October 29th 1863, at 1 Manor Terrace, Kilburn, London.

The first recorded spelling of the family name is shown to be that of Johann Weitzek, which was dated July 27th 1623, witness at a christening at Gross Felda, Oberhessen, Hessen, Germany, during the reign of Ferdinand 11, Habsburg Emperor, 1619 - 1637. Surnames became necessary when governments introduced personal taxation. In England this was known as Poll Tax. Throughout the centuries, surnames in every country have continued to "develop" often leading to astonishing variants of the original.

A Coat of Arms granted to the Weitzel family is recorded heraldically in Rietstap's "Armorial General". The Coat of Arms is a blue shield with three silver arrow tips emerging from a silver ring. On top of the shield is a silver knight’s helmet surrounded by a blue and silver decorative flourish. The Weitzel family Coat of Arms took 23 years to complete and 85 thousand coats of arms are included in this work.