



# The Bukovina Society of the Americas NEWSLETTER

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Membership Dues:  
Lifetime \$150.00  
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## PEOPLE AND EVENTS

- Welcome to our newest life member # 192, Zita Watzlawik, Bell Garden, CA.
- Webmaster Werner Zoglauer has created a life member certificate in full color available by email to those interested. If printed on quality photo paper, this makes a wonderful item to frame and proudly display. Requests can be sent to [Zoglauer@bukovinasociety.org](mailto:Zoglauer@bukovinasociety.org).
- Luzian Geier of the *Bukowina-Institut* in Augsburg emailed a notice to us of the following new information on Google Maps for Romania. The text appeared in *Die Allgemeine Deutsche Zeitung fuer Rumaenien* on Saturday, 24 April 2010. It refers to the interactive map at this link: <http://www.worldcountries.info/Maps/GoogleMap-Romania.php>
- Father Ralph L. Aschenbrenner, 74, Wichita, died in retirement Tuesday, April 27, 2010 after serving in the Salina Diocese. He was born Oct. 1, 1935, in Colby, Kansas to Philip and Rose (Schuster) Aschenbrenner.

the Bukovina Society with this gift, which the Society will utilize for future newsletter stories and publications about our Bukovina heritage.

August Julius Nibio was born on July 13, 1886 in Radautz, Bukovina to Ferdinand Nibio (originally from Esseg, Slavonia) and his wife Maria, nee Koehler. He graduated from the K.K. Gymnasium (high-school equivalent) in Radautz on July 11, 1904. He then studied History at the University of Czernowitz. There, his 5-hour College-Program "History of Austria until the Migration" achieved excellent results. From 1908 – 1926, he taught at a Secondary Education School for girls.

In 1924, A.J. Nibio married Maria Hanek in Lemberg, Galizien (today, Lviv, Ukraine), about 138 miles north of Czernowitz. Maria was the daughter of Stanislaus Hanek of Suzawa, Bukovina and Maria, nee Hübner from Sereth, Bukovina.

As evidence of his scientific activity, Professor Nibio authored many works and articles, mainly about the history of Bukovina. One of his articles was published in the German Language in 2006 at Bukovina Society's website, <http://www.bukovinasociety.org/Schwaebische-Kolonisten-in-der-Bukowina1787-1937-Das-evangelische-Privatschulwesen-d.html>

In 1940, Professor A.J. Nibio and his wife moved to the Resettlement Camp #53 in Bautzen, Saxony, Germany as part of the "Umsiedlung – Heim in Reich" (Resettlement back to Germany). Not exactly with the joyful support of his wife Maria, Professor Nibio brought along many historical books. Their daughter, Geraldine Nibio was born in July 1941 in Bautzen. By 1943, the family had been resettled to Auspitz,

## BUKOVINA SOCIETY SELECTED TO RECEIVE HISTORICAL LIBRARY

By Werner Zoglauer

The Bukovina Society is very honored by a donation of eight books and publications once owned and/or authored by Professor August Nibio, formerly of Radautz, Bukovina. As described below, these were the few publications of Professor Nibio's Bukovina History library, which survived the long ordeal of World War II. We greatly appreciate the effort made by Professor Nubio's daughter Geraldine and her husband, Walter Kailbach, of Austria to select and entrust

Mähren (now Hustopece, Czech Republic), where their son, Manfred was born in 1943.

After World War II ended in 1945, Germans were forcibly removed from the new Czechoslovakia. In the process, all of Professor Nibio's books were stolen, except for very few which remained in Professor Nibio's possession and which Walter and Geraldine (Nibio) Kailbach have now donated to the Bukovina Society. After their expulsion from the Czechoslovakia in 1945, the Nibio family settled in Austria, first living in temporary barracks in Waidhofen (at the Thaya river) until 1949, when the family was able to move into a "real" home. From 1947 until he retired, Professor Nubio taught at Bundesrealgymnasium Waidhofen.

In 1958, Professor Nibio moved to Vienna, where he dedicated himself to music history studies until his death in 1968.

In the meantime, daughter Geraldine Nibio met and married Walter Kailbach in Vienna in 1964.

Based on the information he learned at our website, Mr. Kailbach contacted the Bukovina Society to make the arrangements for this donation. Herr und Frau Kailbach, nochmals, vielen Dank!

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## BUKOVINA SOCIETY BOARD MEMBER ADDRESSES PALATINES TO AMERICA CONFERENCE

By Irmgard Ellingson

Bukovina Society board member Irmgard Hein Ellingson of Decorah, Iowa, presented two lectures at the Spring Conference of the Pennsylvania Chapter of Palatines to America in Harrisburg PA on Sat. April 17, 2010. Her two lectures were titled *Shatter Belt: The Eastern Habsburg Empire and the Western Russian Empire and Der Grosse Schwabenzug: The "Swabians" in Central and Eastern Europe* were very well received. Irmgard reports that the audience was fascinated by her PowerPoint maps and images, especially those depicting Bukovina and the painted monasteries.

The Pennsylvania Chapter of the Palatines to America, <http://www.pa-palam.org/>, is a regional German-American genealogical organization. It is one of the seven chapters of the Palatines to America, <http://www.palam.org>.

The first Germans to come to America as permanent immigrants settled in Pennsylvania at Germantown, now a part of Philadelphia. Later, a small group of Anabaptists (Mennonites) settled near the contemporary town of Strasburg in what has become known as the Pennsylvania Dutch country. At about the same time, a larger number

of Germans settled along the Hudson River north of New York City. In Pennsylvania, the early Germans were joined by many fellow countrymen of all religious persuasions. The port of Philadelphia became the major gateway for Germans to enter the American colonies. A large fraction of those entering at Philadelphia remained in Pennsylvania.

German immigration to Galicia and Bukovina in the 1780s included Pfälzers, or Palatines. Some of these were the Armbruster (Armbrister, Armbruster), Hehn, Hodel, Hubich, Kerth, Knieling, Mang, Manz, Massier, Rumpel, Sauer, Wendling, and Werb families. Other significant German Protestant immigration to Galicia and Bukovina came from Wuerttemberg in modern southwest Germany and from the Zips district in what is now north central Slovakia.

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## PARKE ADDRESSES CGSI CONFERENCE

By Steve Parke

After spending so many years working on the Bukovina, Bohemian-German side of the family, I've spent a lot of time this past year researching another family ethnic line, the Czechs. My paternal grandmother, Rose Kvasnicka, was the daughter of immigrants John and Anna Kopic-Kvasnicka who first settled in Wilbur, Nebraska. The family moved to Trego County, Kansas, in 1909 and lived on the southern edge of the historic Voda Road Czech settlement. They also lived near the O'Toole ranches on Hackberry Creek, whose nephew from Ireland, Peter Parke, took a liking to Rose. Eventually Rose and Peter married and the rest of the story is still folding.

With long-standing geographic and family tree interest in the Czechs, I've been a member of the Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International for almost as long as the Bukovina Society of the Americas. In 2008 my article "The Voda Road People", was published in a CGSI publication, the result of about 3 years of research on the Trego County, Kansas, Czechs. This in turn led to presenting on "The Czechs of Kansas" at a CGSI symposium in Lincoln, NE, on May 1, 2010.

The Czechs of Kansas are a very colorful and diverse group. There were at least 20 such settlements in Kansas, many of them small and somewhat unknown by many, except the local people. The earliest settlement, Marak near Everest in Brown County, started in 1857 during Kansas Territorial days with settlers from near Mt. Radhost in Moravia. Almost all of the Czech settlements were in the northern half of the state. The central corridor of Kansas was the most populous with about 75% of the Czech population in the 1900 Federal Census. There were at best only about 9,000 people from the Czech lands in Kansas in 1900, not

very many compared to the various Germanic settlers who are the largest group of immigrants in Kansas. The Irish and Scandinavian settlers were also more numerous than Czechs in Kansas.

The readers of this publication might be most interested in Czech matters related to Germans who settled in Kansas. After doing a survey of the many Czech settlements in Kansas, I found some interesting stories related to Kansas communities that were of mixed German and Czech settlers with both Germanic and Slavic cultures. From this perspective the settlements of Hanover and Olmitz in Kansas stand out most prominently in terms of sheer numbers and cultural interactions. The Czechs and Germans of Hanover, where the Germans were eventually in larger numbers blended very early through German clerical leadership, mixed marriages, and a common religion, Catholicism. Faint remnants of early differences are evidenced by attempts to establish a Czech Catholic Church and a C.S.P.S. Lodge near Hanover. Olmitz, also shows significant blending but matters were complicated by the nearby "Blood Creek Irish" and some yet to be discerned early issues related to culture and/or religion. Parish history reports that these matters were resolved with the arrival of Fr. Huna in 1900 but still existent but small Slavic cemeteries point to a deeper story waiting to be found.

We could also look at relations between the Ellis County Bukovina Germans and local Czech settlements on three sides of the Ellis settlement. About 10 miles south of Ellis was a small group of Czech settlers from Chicago who arrived as the Kutina extended family grouping. To the west about 25 miles was a group of Bohemians and Moravians who lived along the contemporary Voda Road. And to the north between Zurich and Plainville, was another small group. Settlers in these areas first started arriving in 1878 and their numbers grew significantly around 1885. By 1900 these groups numbered 60, 165 and 112, respectively, including immigrants and children. For comparison purposes, in 1900 the Ellis area Bukovina Bohemian Germans numbered about 92, the Bukovina Swabian Germans numbered about 215 and the Bukovina Polish Catholics about 30.

I've not found much of any information about how these groups interacted in the Ellis, Trego and Rooks County area. Most of us are still too busy sorting out our own groups, let alone looking at group interactions. But most notably all of these extended Ellis area Czech groups had Freethinker orientations with 3 such fraternal lodges formed in the area circa 1900. This would have significantly limited early marriage numbers between the Czechs and German Catholics as the early Freethinkers had anti-Catholic or anti-clerical attitudes. This holds true at least in Trego County marriage records as there are no marriages between Czechs and Bukovina German Catholics from 1886 to 1941. Yet there were several marriages between Bukovina Lutheran Ger-

mans and Trego Bohemians in the early 1900's, indicating less philosophical, religious differences.

Getting back to the program in Lincoln, about 150 attended various aspects of the two day event. I did not meet anyone from Kansas at the event but did meet a number of people with roots in various Kansas Czech communities. Continuing research contacts were made. Personally the most interesting presentation was that of Dr. Bruce Garver of the University of Nebraska at Lincoln concerning the European historical basis for the Czech American Freethinker movement which so profoundly impacted so many Czech settlements in the early years. Meanwhile a photo taking tour of the UNL Campus revealed many beautiful trees, a good reminder of Arbor Day, started in Nebraska and celebrated this weekend as well. Lincoln as the prairie capital is a beautiful city as well.

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## NEWSPAPER OBITUARIES DONATED

By O. M. Windholz

A 60-year love of labor came to an end last when Oneita Jean "Jeanne" (Rathbun) Bollig donated her collection of obituaries to the Bukovina Society in Ellis. Sometime in the 1950s, Jeanne and her sister, Eileen Goetz, began clipping obituaries from the Ellis Review on their ancestral line. Growing up in Ellis meant the sisters knew virtually everyone for several generations. Their main interest was the Swabian Lutherans, some one half of the Bukovina German emigration from Austria to Ellis beginning in 1886.

Jeanne took their early clippings and began adding to them by collecting all the obituaries from the Ellis Review. She made four by six file cards on which she pasted each obituary and typed a heading with last name, first name and dated newspaper source. In some cases she made copies at a reduced size to fit the cards. She continued the hobby from her home in Wichita, so obituaries from the Wichita Eagle and Hays Daily News found a way into the collection. Jeanne and her husband LeRoy attended the Bukovinafest celebrations in Ellis and she brought along the file drawers to share with other Society members. Numerous obituaries are about the original pioneers to Ellis and contain information not generally known in this day and age. Interesting facts like surviving relatives in the old country and notes on their journey and hardships are revealing.

When asked how many cards were assembled, she replied, "I really don't know how many obits are in the collection." Subsequently a count numbered nearly 2,000 obituaries. This writer could kind of tell the collecting had come to an end when the final batch of clippings were stuffed in a WalMart bag and passed along with the meticulously filled file cabinets.

Jeanne also recorded oral history of her family and Swabian friends along with other documents which resulted in three ring binders with very interesting information. This collection is a major resource for researchers of Ellis natives, information not available without extensive research of old newspapers. The board of directors of the Society will place this collection in the archives for use by anyone interested.

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## SECOND BUKOVINA NOVEL

By Janet M. Gagnon

*Dust Clouds and Mud Puddles; Hardships and Triumphs of an Immigrant Family* is an historical fiction book for 8 -12 year old children. The book spans four generations of an Austro-Hungarian immigrant family. After arriving in America, the family settled on a farm in Kansas. The story chronicles their difficulties as they strive to start a new life in a strange country, their trials during the difficult years of the Dust Bowl and their eventual successes. It stresses their German heritage and follows the family from the early 1900's until the Second World War.

This family immigrated to America in the author's previous book, *Mud Poppers and Leaf Whistles, Journey of a Young Austrian Immigrant*. The first book tells about their difficult and harrowing trip to America.

The author, Janet M. Gagnon is a member of the Bukovina Society and grew up on a farm near Ellis. Her ancestors, including her father, were among the immigrants who made the treacherous journey to America from the Bukovina Province. The Province is now part of Ukraine and Romania. The author researched her ancestry for more than twenty years and traveled to Romania and Ukraine with the Bukovina Society in 1996. During her research, she realized the dearth of age-appropriate information and decided to write her books focusing on children.

These books reflect the experiences of many immigrants and offer an historic insight into a bygone era. Each book includes numerous illustrations and may be ordered through the Bukovina Society in either paperback (\$14.99) or a hardcover edition (\$24.99 + S/H).

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## A FARMER'S LIFE IN MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY BUKOVINA

By Johann Hubich

Translated by Irmgard Hein Ellingson

Note: Johann Hubich of Tereblestie described mid-nineteenth century life in Bukovina, which was then administratively linked with Galicia, in his memoirs. These have

been translated from Wilhelm Messner's *Deutsch-Tereblestie* book by Irmgard Hein Ellingson. For more on this topic, see Irmgard's article "Galicia: A Multi-Ethnic Overview and Settlement History with Special Reference to Bukovina," published in the *FEFHHS Journal*, Volume X [Salt Lake City: Federation of East European Family History Societies, 22-40]. It is posted online at <http://www.feeffhs.org/journal/10/galicia.pdf>.

“. . . But [my grandfather] Ludwig Huwig] did not live there [in Satulmare, Bukovina] very long. One winter he walked to Radautz in a big blizzard and in the evening, on his way home, sat down to rest at the cross before you get to Satulmare, and there he froze to death.

Then his son Sebastian supposedly sold the estate rights for 40 florins and moved to Tereblestie. When exactly that was, I do not know. I just know that I have had in my hands a document stating that he was magistrate in Tereblestie in 1810 and that he had supposedly received the ground and house at Tereblestie #137, which is still in the family's possession, from Sedorovitsch, the *Guts und Domänenpächter* [leaseholder of the estate and crown].

This land had originally been measured by the government for the Tereblestie colony but the colonists had not taken possession at that time. Sedorovitsch utilized the opportunity and placed my grandfather in possession. In return, Grandfather had to perform *Robot*, or compulsory labor, for Sedorovitsch for a specified time although he filed a report stating that the land was not subject to lord-subject conditions but rather belonged to the colony. The report went to the privy councilor, and the colony asked him to review the matter of the properties received from the state but unfortunately they could barely hang on to their fields. This parcel had been allotted as colony or community land. Seven colonists received their land parcels all in a row. The eighth colonist got his land from this, had objected and claimed exemption from *Robot*, paying an annual tax of 13 florins . . .

“. . . I attended what is now the Romanian school but at that time was called the *Normalschule*. Four times every day I passed the estate building with the *Propenation* offices on one side and the imperial *Cameralamt*, the imperial area of office of the *Mandatar*, or the authorized government minister, on the other. The crown's leaseholder was the greatest authority or power in the village. No Romanian passed the building without removing his cap, not even if it looked like the building was empty. If anyone saw the leaseholder or the *Mandatar*, one had to kiss his hand and if not, then one could be seized and at the very least, receive twenty-five strikes with a rod, stick or cane. The bench upon which this punishment would be executed always stood at the leaseholder's door. If someone complained when four to six *decurats*, or services to the lord, were reckoned as a punishment, the leaseholder would simply say, "*Der Himmel ist*

hoch, der Kaiser ist weit, und die Herren habe ich in der Tasche” (heaven is high, the emperor far away, and the gentlemen in my pocket). Then the person would be jailed by the *Mandat* for another eight to fourteen days, starving if he did not negotiate with the police to obtain forbidden bread.

“This is the way that it was with the *Zehnt*, the share or tithe system: one-tenth of everything that the farmer produced in his fields and gardens was the property of the estate owner or imperial leaseholder, whose agent on horseback came out to question everything. No one dared move any of his harvested crops until the leaseholder’s agent, or *Auszehner* as he was called, rode out on his horse to personally survey the field, measured the pile of grain, and selected what he wanted, whereupon the farmer had to deliver the specified grain to a designated receiver in the farm yard of the leaseholder. If the person designated to receive it was not there, then the poor farmer had to wait for him before unloading anything, no matter what the weather was. If it happened to rain, then the wet grain would not be received. Then the farmer either had to dry it there in a room or take it home and dry it there, then bring it back again. Only then could he think about his own grain waiting piled in the field. I remember that in summer, I used to watch as the procession of farmers waited with hats in hand to plead with the *Auszehner* and kowtow to him. Everyone simply wanted to be done with it because of the weather. It resembled a funeral procession led by the mounted and obviously bored *Auszehner*, who idly flicked his leather horsewhip upon those who followed in his wake.

“The obligations of the subject who worked for an estate lord were indeed regulated by an imperial patent but it did not help. First, no education was available. No farmer could read or write with any fluency aside from the German colonists who did not have to perform *Robot* or pay the *Zehnt*, but rather paid an annual tax of 13 florins to the area office. They allowed their children to be taught to read and write by teachers whom they supported out of their own means. Granted, this was inadequate instruction because the children only went to school in the winter; in the summer they had to herd cattle and do other light work. If the father was poor or if the child was an orphan, then the child had no opportunity to attend school. The child was simply confirmed by the pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran faith at the age of fourteen years. For this it sufficed if the child knew the Ten Commandments, the Lord’s Prayer, and the Apostles Creed...

“The conditions of servitude continued until 1848. Then a law was passed so that the farmer had to buy his land from the authorities in order to be freed from the *Robot* and the *Zehnten*. A land release tax was instituted to compensate the crown’s leaseholders for their losses . . .”

## RAIMUND FRIEDRICH KAINDL AND THE KAINDL-GESELLSCHAFT

By Irmgard Hein Ellingson

Raimund Friedrich Kaindl was born 31 August 1866 in Czernowitz, the capital of the Austrian crown land of Bukovina. He died 14 March 1930 in Graz, a city located in the *Steiermark*, or the Steyer district, of Austria.

Kaindl, a noted historian and ethnographer, an advocate of the Great or Pan-German historical viewpoint, was a professor at the Franz-Josef University in Czernowitz (now Chernivtsi University in Ukraine) from 1901 to 1915, and at the Graz University from 1915 to 1930.

One of his published works was *Das Ansiedlungswesen in der Bukowina seit der Besitzergreifung durch Österreich*, or *The Settlement Patterns in Bukovina since the Time of the Austrian Occupation*, (Innsbruck: 1902). Dr. Sophie Welisch and I have each referenced and translated sections of it for the Bukovina Society of the Americas. Other works are *Die Deutschen in der Bukowina* (Berlin: Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland, 1919); *Die Geschichte der Deutschen in den Karpathenländern*, Zweiter Band (Gotha, 1907-1911) with *Geschichte der Deutschen in Galizien bis 1772*, *Die Geschichte der Deutschen in Ungarn und Siebenbürgen bis 1763*, *in der Walachei und Moldau bis 1774*, and *Die Geschichte der Deutschen in Galizien, Ungarn, der Bukowina und Rumänien seit etwa 1770 bis zur Gegenwart*; and many more that address the diverse Romanian, Ruthenian (Ukrainian), Polish, Jewish, Magyar (Hungarian), Slovakian, Lippovener, Armenian, Hutsul, and other people who lived in Bukovina.

The *Raimund-Friedrich-Kaindl-Gesellschaft*, e.V. was founded in 1974 in honor of R. F. Kaindl and was established to research the history and culture of Bukovina and genealogical studies. It functioned in association with the *Landsmannschaft der Buchenlanddeutschen (Bukowina) e.V.* in Munich and later the *Bukowina-Institut* at Augsburg University, both in Germany. Its annual publication, *Kaindl-Archiv*, featured these studies as well as village monographs, family genealogies, and biographical works. Its last president, Irma Bornemann, managed the organization from her home in Stuttgart, Germany. She served as a member of the international board of the Bukovina Society of the Americas from its founding.

The following has been excerpted and translated from the website of the *Bukowina-Institut* and its *Kaindl-Archiv* page: “Bukovina, called *Bukowina* or *Buchenland* in German, was located on the eastern curve of the Carpathian Mountains. It was and still is a land “between the Orient and the Occident.” Partnership and tolerance characterize the lives of its people gathered there – Ukrainian (Ruthenian), Romanian, Jew, German, Pole, Magyar (Hungarian), Slovak,

Armenian, Lippovan (Russian “Old Rite Believer”), Hutsul - who live between the Dniestr and the Bistritz Rivers. In Czernowitz, its provincial capital, the most southeastern German-speaking university in Europe, opened its doors and began its work in 1875. It produced Raimund Friedrich Kaindl, the historian of the so-called Carpathian Germans and pioneer of the scientific ethnography. It is his name that this organization bears.

“Bukovina, called ‘the Switzerland of the East,’ was destroyed in the 20th century by nationalism and communism. In cooperation with the *Kaindl-Archiv*, the *Bukowina-Institut* in Augsburg intends to highlight the European character of Bukovina and thereby contribute to the experiences of various central European peoples and groups seeking to produce the science, research, culture, and literature for democratic life in “Vision Europa” (see [www.vision-europa.org](http://www.vision-europa.org) for more).

“Beginning with *Heft* [volume] 9/1, *neue Folge*, *Jahrgänge* [years] 1992-1995, the price for an individual issue is 3 E (Euros). Beginning in 1996, an individual issue is priced at 5.10 E.

“Recently the following issues have been reprinted and are again available:

Heft 1/1977, 36 pages, 3,60 E  
Heft 3/1979, 40 pages, 5,10 E  
Heft 4/1984, 74 pages, 6,00 E  
Heft 5/1986, 74 pages, 7,50 E  
Heft 6/1987, 50 pages, 5,10 E  
Heft 7/1989, 84 pages, 9,90 E  
Heft 8/1990/91, 173 pages, 12,60 E

“Supplemental genealogical publications about the Geimer, Beill, Mayer, Strobel, Hubich, Renner and Nunweiler families can also be ordered. A complete price list may be obtained from the address printed below.”

Kaindl-Archiv  
Bukowina-Institut an der Universität Augsburg  
Alter Postweg 97a  
86159 Augsburg  
Deutschland / Germany  
E-mail [info@bukowina-institut.de](mailto:info@bukowina-institut.de)  
Website: <http://www.bukowina-institut.de/index/html>

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## ORAL HISTORY OF THE BOHEMIAN GERMANS

By O. M. Windholz

The recent death of Frank J. Erbert, now buried among the Catholic Bohemian Germans from Bukovina, brought to mind the importance of family and ethnic oral history in our

lives. All who knew him, especially his family, recognized he was a walking history book. Even in his last few years, the stories still came forth and not a word changed if you heard them before.

In researching and writing about this immigrant community from Bukovina, I have noted that our forebears in the Ellis area did not have much of a written record of their history. It was several years beyond the centennial of the arrival of the first settlers at the Ellis railroad depot when I realized this missing link about this amazing group of people. This sent me to scan the microfilm files of a hundred years worth of weekly Elis newspapers to learn more about my own heritage.

My maternal Great Grandfather Josef Erbert and his family soon joined the first Bohemian German families led to Ellis by his eldest son Franz Erbert. Though lacking in published accounts, I recall much oral history of the Erberts and their fellow community members. In contrast, I grew up reading the numerous published accounts of my paternal Volga German Windholz family. Much of this was guided by the well-educated, German speaking Capuchin friars who ministered to them.

It is interesting to see obituaries, census records and naturalization papers confirm oral history. In the Ellis newspapers and extensive interviews of elder Bohemian Germans in the early 1990s, one name always came to the front. The community leader Franz Erbert was always referred to as the authority that passed on their history. Young men in the extended Erbert family gathered around Franz spending hours absorbing oral history when there were opportunities to be doing something more exciting outdoors. The Ellis paper must have been impressed with Franz, as he was often reported on and quoted. This, at a time when the same paper was concerned about the influx of “Russians” into Ellis County. The editor seemed to consider the local Austrians to be a cut above the “Russian” Volga Germans.

Our late Frank J. Erbert followed his grandfather Franz as a primary family storyteller and my dated, but singular book on the Erbert family drew heavily from interviews with him. Another grandson Frank Schneller also absorbed much oral history from Franz. The influence of Franz’s history lessons were not limited to just the men, as numerous ladies of Erbert ancestry contributed to the Erbert story. My mother Pauline, the youngest girl in her family always used Franz as the base of her stories to us as children. Today another of the Erbert descendants, Joe, carries volumes of family oral history in his memory, extending the tradition of Frank J. Erbert.