



The Bukovina Society of the Americas NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 81, Ellis, KS 67637 USA

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Membership Dues:
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SOCIETY NEWS & EVENTS

- Members of the Bukovina Society met for the annual business meeting on October 10, 2014 at the *Oktoberfest* in Hays, Kansas. Elected to new terms on the board were: Marcy McClelland, Steve Parke and Art Honas.
- Our deepest sympathies are extended to Larry Menestrina, long time Bukovina Society member as well as a former member of our International Board, at the death of his wife Nataliya in Wichita, Kansas, on Oct. 30, 2014. The funeral service was held at St. Jude Catholic Church in Wichita on Sat. Nov. 8. The Nataliya Menestrina Memorial Fund has been at the Cessna Employees Credit Union, 4 Cessna Blvd,

Wichita, KS 67215, to aid the family with funeral expenses and other challenges.

- Father Myron Flax, O.F.M. Cap., was recently recognized for 50 years of service in the Order of Capuchin Franciscans. He was born September 30, 1928 in Ransom, Ness County, Kansas to Godfrey and Catherine (Weber) Flax. Ransom was home to a Bohemian German Catholic colony that settled there when land became more scarce and expensive in Ellis and Trego Counties. Fr. Myron served for 38 years in the Capuchin missions in Papua, New Guinea in outlying areas of the South Pacific island nation. He was the first Westerner to enter the Gambe area and formed new parishes there, later becoming administrator of the Mendi Diocese Cathedral. He continued ministry upon his return to the United States and has now retired to the friary of the Basilica of St. Francis in Victoria, Kansas.
- Luzian Geier of the *Bukowina Institut* in Augsburg wrote that his uncle, Paul Michalski, died in Lima, New York, on August 22, 2014. He was born in New York and returned with his parents to Ostra and Stulpikani, Bukovina. He was part of the 1941 *Umsiedlung* (resettlement) to Graz, Austria, and was regarded as a protector of his people during the *Umsiedlung* and World War II. He returned to the United States in 1957. The Bukovina Society extends its sincere sympathies to the family and friends of Paul Michalski.
- Members of the Frank and Leona Neuburger family made a June-July 2014 trip to the Ellis, Kansas, area to visit the family's homestead. The group consisted of

Wayne and Mary Neuburger, his brother and sister-in-law Ken and Mary Neuburger, their mother Leona (the widow of Frank Neuburger), their aunt Ida and uncle Julius, and cousins Norma, Dorothy, and Kenneth. The family had lived in the Ellis area until 1953, when they moved to Salem, Oregon. The 2014 trip made it possible for Leona, born on a farm outside of Hays on June 30, 1915, to return to her birthplace on her 99th birthday. Wayne and Ken were also able to visit with Ellis area acquaintances including Bukovina Society board members Art Honas and Joe Erbert. The Bukovina Society wishes to acknowledge the Neuburgers' visit to Ellis and to extend belated birthday greetings to Leona!

THE LAST EMPEROR WORLD WAR I: A CENTURY AGO

It is now a century since the 1914 outbreak of World War I. Then Bukovina was still part of the Habsburg [Austrian] Empire and Francis Joseph had reigned as Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary for 66 years. The old emperor died in 1916 and was succeeded by Charles I, who reigned from 1916 until 1918, when he "renounced participation" in state affairs but did not abdicate. He spent the remaining years of his life attempting to restore the monarchy until his death in 1922. Charles was the last ruler of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the last Emperor of Austria, the last King of Hungary, an the last monarch of the House of Habsburg - Lorraine.



Charles and Zita on their wedding day,
October 21, 1911

"I am an officer with all my body and soul," he told his wife upon the outbreak of World War I, "but I do not see how anyone who sees his dearest relations leaving for the front can love war." - quoted by James and Joanna Bogle in *A Heart for Europe: The Lives of Emperor Charles and Empress Zita of Austria-Hungary*, Gracewing Publishing, page 54.

THE ORIGINS OF THE BUKOVINA GERMANS

Irmgard Hein Ellingson

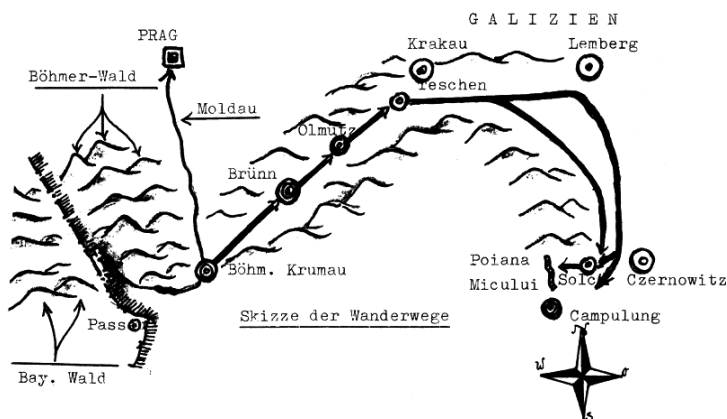
Are you researching your Bukovina ancestors? Well, you are lucky! So much of the region's history - and that includes settlement history as well as family histories - has long been known and published, thereby facilitating our ongoing genealogical and other studies.

Bukovina is located on the outer eastern curve of the Carpathian Mountains. This rural area of 10,422 square kilometers was annexed by the Habsburg [Austrian] Empire in 1785. It quickly became multinational as Poles, Ukrainians, Romanians, Jews, Germans, Serbs, Croats, Slovaks, Hungarians, Armenians and others came there in response to the Habsburg religious toleration policy and their colonization programs. Within about ten years, the region's population had more than doubled and within a century, it had multiplied ten times. The region's 1880 census data reported that twelve percent of the total population was Jewish with the remainder being Ukrainian (42%), Romanian (33%), German (19%), and Polish (3%), with smaller numbers of Hungarians, Slovaks, and others. These percentages remained fairly consistent up until World War I.

As for the Germans, they came to Bukovina from various places in Europe (note: "Germany" was not formed until 1871). The following general regions of origin have long been known and researched:

- the Zips (Spiš) district, from which German miners were recruited to work in the Bukovina mines,
- the Pfalz (the Palatinate) and Baden-Württemberg, from which German farmers emigrated to Galicia and then Bukovina
- western Bohemia, from which German lumberjacks were recruited for the Bukovina glassmaking cottage industry.

The hand-drawn map below, which appears on our Society's website, shows the walking path from the Bohemian Forest to Bukovina. It was originally published in "Buchenhain: Die Heimat unserer Deutschböhmen" by Josef Neuburger and appears in Dr. Valentin Reitmajer's German Bohemian Cook Book, translated by Dr. Sophie A. Welisch.



Do you have a question about the origin of your own German ancestors who settled in Bukovina? Feel free to email me about it at irmgardellingson@yahoo.com.

THE POST-WORLD WAR II LEGACY

Irmgard Hein Ellingson

The *Bund der Vertriebenen* (BdV), or the Federation of Expellees, is a non-profit organization formed in 1957 to represent the interests of ethnic Germans who either fled their central and eastern European homes during World War II, or were forcibly expelled after it. Before that date, the *Bund der Heimatvertriebenen* (League of Expellees and Deprived of Rights, 1950) represented the interests of German expellees, also called "displaced persons."

The BdV is the single representative federation for the approximately 15 million Germans who after fleeing, being expelled, evacuated or emigrating, found refuge in the Federal Republic of Germany. They are organized in

21 regional associations, called *Landsmannschaften*, according to the areas of origin of its members,
16 state organizations (*Landesverbände*) according to their current residence, and
5 associate member organizations.

The Bukovina Society of the Americas is a sister of the *Landsmannschaften der Buchenlanddeutschen (Bukowina) e.V.* Since 1989, the *Bukowina-Institut* at Augsburg University has served as a historical and cultural center for Bukovina studies (see de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bukowina-Institut_an_der_Universität_Augsburg).

The following document, endorsed by all of the *Landsmannschaften*, outlines the shared position of the expellees, including those from Bukovina, to positive,

constructive participation in the post-World War II world. Note in particular the first point, with its specific renunciation of revenge and retaliation. The Bukovina Society affirms these principles in our ongoing partnership with the *Landsmannschaft* and its research arm, the *Bukowina-Institut*.

CHARTER OF THE GERMAN EXPELLEES

Conscious of their responsibility before God and men, conscious of their affiliation to the Western Christian community, conscious of their German origin, and realizing the common task of all nations of Europe, the elected representatives of millions of expellees, after careful deliberation and after having searched their conscience, have resolved to make public a solemn declaration to the German people and to the entire world, defining both the duties and the rights which the German expellees consider their basic law and an indispensable precondition for the establishment of a free and united Europe.

1. We, the expellees, renounce all thought of revenge and retaliation. Our resolution is solemn and sacred in memory of the infinite suffering brought upon mankind, particularly during the past decade.
2. We shall support with all our strength every endeavor directed towards the establishment of a united Europe in which the nations may live in freedom from fear and coercion.
3. We shall contribute, by hard and untiring work, to the reconstruction of Germany and Europe.

We have lost our homeland. The homeless are strangers on the face of the earth. God himself placed men in their native land. To separate man forcibly from his native land means to kill him in his mind.

We have suffered and experienced this fate. We therefore feel called upon to demand that the right to our native land be recognized and realized as one of the basic rights of man, granted to him by God.

However, as long as this right has not been materialized for us, we do not want to stand aside under imposed inactivity, but rather want to strive and work with all members of our nation in new, purified forms of brotherly and considerate cooperation.

For this reason we claim and demand, today as in the past:

1. Equal rights as citizens, not merely before the law but also in everyday life;
2. Just and reasonable distribution of the burdens of the last war among the entire German people and an honest application of this principle;
3. Reasonable integration of all professional groups of expellees into the life of the German people;
4. Incorporation of the German expellees into the reconstruction work for Europe.

The nations of the world should become sensitive of their co-responsibility for the fate of the expellees who have suffered most from the hardships of our times.

The nations should act in accordance with their duties and their conscience as Christians.

The nations must realize that the fate of the German expellees, just as that of all refugees, is a world problem the solution of which calls for the highest moral responsibility and for a commitment to tremendous effort.

We therefore call upon all nations and men of good will to join in the mutual endeavor to find a way out of guilt, misfortune, suffering, poverty and misery which will lead us all to a better future

BUKOVINIANS IN VENEZUELA

Erwin Massier, Josef Talsky and B. C. Grigorowicz, *Bukowina – Heimat von Gestern*, trans. Sophie A. Welisch (Karlsruhe: Arbeitskreis Bukowina Heimatbuch, 1956), pp. 315-316.

“In the summer of 1951 a group of 150 passengers departed for settlement in Venezuela. Organizing this venture were the Bukovina priest Kurt Bensch from Poiana Mikuli and prelate Büttner from the Study Society for Settlement Abroad (*Studiengesellschaft für Siedlung im Ausland*). A trip via plane aroused much attention at that time. Despite the tropical climate and living conditions for Europeans in a area 2000 – 3000 meters above sea level, the “Bukovinos” – as the local population referred to the Bukovina Germans,” have established a model settlement in Turén with extensive farms in a self-contained community recounted here by L. Canelon...

United States of Venezuela
National Agricultural Institute
Caracas, September 11, 1950

INM 3045
Reverend Kurt Bensch
Hotel Ambassador

I have the pleasure of turning to you for your mediation with the ecclesiastical aid organization on behalf of German refugees whose delegate you are and to present the following proposal to you in the name of the National Agricultural Institute in collaboration with the resettlement of agricultural families from Bukovina.

Agricultural settlement of Turén: In this settlement the Institute offers thirty of the designated families an equal number of land parcels and houses among those already existing there and the use of the area after a proposed visit during which they will have seen the houses and parcels they have been offered.

Selection of the applicants: the selection of the applicants will be made by the Venezuelan Immigration Mission in Germany and Austria on the basis of suggestions which have been prepared by their organizations. These must include the name, age, profession, and composition of the family. This in no way disallows the candidates who desire it, to apply directly to the Mission for immigration to the country. This group of thirty families, which has been accepted, will undergo a medical examination, which will take place at the Mission or through submission of the information requested in the accompanying form. The chosen families must keep the required documents received from the German authorities for the trip to Venezuela. The expenses for the medical examination, acquisition of documents, and transportation of the chosen families to the airport from which the trip will take place falls to the organization. The German authorities must offer the Venezuelan Immigration Mission all facilities to ease the carrying out of their task. The German government obligates itself to readmit the settlers and families to their country as well as those whom Directory of the Institute has banned from their parcel.

Conveyance: Conveyance from Germany to Venezuela should primarily proceed by air. To the extent that this is the means of travel by choice, every person has the right to take baggage up to 50 kg. In the event that the sea voyage should be less expensive, this means of transport will be chosen. The user must reimburse the Institute. For this purpose the expenditure will be entered on his credit account.

Enrollment: The immigrants will be enrolled at the

Trompillo reception center, provided accommodations, undergo a medical examination, and given the necessary papers. Transportation to the place where they will be settled will be paid by the Institute.

Mitigation: Without payment of tolls the immigrants have the right to bring their necessities including clothing, furniture for personal use, and tools, which they need for their occupation; moreover, every adult may bring a rifle for purposes of hunting. Nor upon entrance into the territory of the Republic will there be a charge whether as tax or as security.

Transfer of the land parcels and houses: As already stated every Bukovinian family will be sold a land parcel varying in size between 25 and 40 hectares as well as a dwelling which is on the land and equipped with the necessary accommodations. This selling price must be repaid within 25 years. The settler must pay the Institute 3 per cent interest per year on what is owned until fulfillment of the contractual agreement; he can make special payment against his debt, which must be at least 500 bolivars. There is an understanding that the Institute through a declaration of the Directory can reclaim the parcel from a settler and reverse the sale for one of the following reasons:

- 1) because of abandonment of parcel,
- 2) because of lack of discipline or unseemly behavior of the user which makes him an undesirable character in the colony,
- 3) because of obvious neglect or lack of ability of the settler to maintain the structures or implements which have been entrusted to him or belong to the settlement,
- 4) proof that the parcel is not directly being worked,
- 5) not following the work and development plans which are established by the settlement or not following the technical directives of the Institute,
- 6) groundless non-fulfillment of the Institute's financial terms or neglect of the incurred financial obligations; it is understood that failure to make one payment by the settler to satisfy the current agreement will suffice if it does not conflict with the paragraph of article 132 concerning agricultural status,
- 7) because of repeated non-fulfillment of accepted obligations by the settler as a member of associations or other organizations, which had been agreed to or approved by the Institute or by a member of the institutions which enforce the existing agricultural statute.
- 8) The settler must work the assigned parcel himself or with relatives living with him in an ascending or descending line of kinship and with co-lateral relatives through the second degree of blood kinship;

he cannot sell the parcel nor lease it in any legal form; with the exception of cases under a higher jurisdiction, labor by non-approved workers must be adequately authenticated and specifically approved by the Institute. As long as the settler has not terminated his responsibilities, which benefit the Institute under his contract, he cannot encumber his rights to the land in any form. The Institute has wide-reaching methods of control, oversight and direction over of transactions made by the settler.

The final title of ownership, which confirms the settler's rights to his property, will be given to him after the provisional title of ownership in the next year provided that he agrees to the aforesaid obligations. In all points not included in the contracts the decision of Agricultural Society will take precedence in the distribution of the parcels.

Credit:

Nutrition: During the first year and until the first harvest the settlers and their families will receive sufficient provisions, which will be advanced to them; the settler must repay the stipulated amount within a designated period of time.

Agricultural cultivation: For the cultivation of a land parcel the settler will be extended credit for seeds, tools and farm equipments, which must be repaid by the borrower within two-to-three years at 5 percent interest per annum.

Medical attention: During the first year and until the first harvest the settler and his family will receive doctor's care, pharmaceuticals, hospitalization, and surgical intervention free of charge

Education: The children of school age will be instructed in the settlement under the same conditions as the Venezuelans; for adults courses in Spanish will be made available.

Legal status: All settlers in Venezuela enjoy the same civil rights which Venezuelans are granted in the constitution and in other laws of the Republic.

If you are in agreement with these conditions, you may wish to express your consent in writing so that Venezuelan Immigration Mission in Germany can submit the necessary papers to expedite this proposal as soon as possible. I use this opportunity to tell you that that we will separately submit an additional proposal from which the settlement of another group of Bukovinian families will benefit.

God and the Union
Signature: Armando Tamayo, Chairman

Official Stamps
United States of Venezuela
National Agricultural Institute

LETTER OF IGNATZ SCHAFFHAUSER TO HIS SON, KARL WRITTEN ON THE EVE OF WORLD WAR I

Translated and edited with introduction by
Sophie A. Welisch

While perusing the memorabilia of my Bukovinan friends and acquaintances, I had the good fortune of coming across a letter written in 1914 by one Ignatz Schaffhauser from Bori, whose son Karl had immigrated to the United States shortly before World War I. In his letter, written in the Gothic type of the Latin alphabet, the author uses the style and vocabulary characteristic of the rural Bukovina-Germans at that time. A copy of this letter is on file in the archives of the Bukovina Society of the Americas.

Ignatz Schaffhauser (1867 – 1914) was a third generation descendant of the colonists Mathias Schaffhauser and Anna Schwarz who in 1835 left their homeland in the Bohemian Forest and took up roots in what was to become the village of Bori in southern Bukovina. Given a high birth rate, a scarcity of land, and limited economic opportunities by the turn of century, many Bukovinians pursued the route of immigration to the New World. Those not wishing to farm settled in America's cities, including New York, the port of entry at that time. Coming from an agricultural society, both the men and the women lacked skills readily to adapt to urban living. Fortunately many unskilled labor jobs were available at that time; others bit the bullet and learned a new trade.

Among these immigrants we find Ignatz' son, Karl (1894-1933), one of seven children. Four of Karl's siblings, Josefa (1892-1977), Ignatz II (1898-1971), Julianne (1903-1997) and Eduard (1908-?) also embarked on the long voyage across the Atlantic, the first three settling in New York in the early 1920s, and Eduard, the youngest, taking up residence in Cuba. In 1926 Julianne married the Bukovinian, Karl Tanda (1898-1942) in Brooklyn and reimmigrated to Bukovina, only to return to these shores with her two children in the 1950s. Their grandson, Larry Menestrina, an engineer with Cessna Aircraft in Wichita,

Kansas, is a member of the Bukovina Society and formerly served on its board.

Karl was unemployed and penniless when he wrote to his father in early 1914, but he did learn the craft of baker and in time owned and operated his own shop in New York. His brother, Ignatz II also worked as a baker, a trade he learned in the United States.

On June 20, 1914, three months after the letter to his son, Ignatz died in Bori, the village of his birth. His only extant photograph is affixed to his tombstone in Gurahumora. His wife, Maria (nee Brandl) and two other children, Anna (1890-1953) and Mathilda (1905-1955) with their families settled in Germany in 1940.

Ignatz's letter of March 13, 1914 reveals a proud man living in difficult times, comforted by his trust in God, a concern for his family, and an involvement with his neighbors, his community and his church. The text of letter is as follows:

Bori, March 13. 1914

Dear son Karl!

With the greatest pleasure I sit down to write you a few lines. To be sure, when your sister Josefa gave me your letter to read, you can believe me that because I was crying, I could not immediately read it to her. You implored us to give up the grocery store; since the New Year I have already given up the whiskey and rum, since I got a large tax of 1080 crowns for one year. Where can this take us? We will keep the beer and distillery since we already have the insurance and someone always has to be at home. They [the whiskey and rum] would have brought us no income, even if we had kept them because we have to eat, because we have to buy everything, which we use, because three poor harvests followed one after another, which hopefully you still recall. We only have the hay.

Dear son Karl. I have to tell you that my leg is not healed, that I had to suffer great pain. You write that you cannot help me. This I can believe, since all three doctors also cannot help me. The three [doctors] in Gurahumora advise me to go to the hospital since I have already spent so much. But I am fearful of the hospital; perhaps they will amputate my leg. I would rather die with my children at home. Perhaps they will pray an Our Father for me at the cemetery.

Dear son. I wish to tell you that Grandmother is very sick, and you will never see her again. I will also

tell you that they shot Josef Haas, the forester from Woronetz [village on the outskirts of Gurahumora]. We also have a lot of snow here. I wish to tell you that Leon Brandl is also very sick with pulmonary problems. He used to visit me almost every day. Now he can no longer come to me and I cannot go to him. He sends greetings also as does his sister, Theresia Brandl, and you should write to her.

Dear son Karl. I also want to tell you that you write you have no work in America. You can imagine how heavy of heart that made me feel because we incurred great expenses for your trip to America. If you believe that you will get no work, so write me, I'll immediately send you money to return home. Here you would have much work. Only you should be healthy. Ignatz [son of the author and Karl's brother] works with Ferdinand Hellinger. He earns 1 *Gulden* and 20 *Kreuzers*. He would surely pay you more: 1 *Gulden* and 50 *Kreuzers*. In addition, you can earn money with the horses, up to 7 *Florins* per day. So figure out how much you would have earned during this time. Ignatz is too weak to drive the horses and I can't do it. Ignatz earns enough for one suit of clothes for himself but the other children also need things as do Mother and I. If I get well, I do not even have a suit to wear to church. I would be ashamed. And then there are my debts. I cannot make the payments and at best not even the interest.

Dear son. You wrote that you would like to volunteer for the army. But as father I would advise you that you could also have done this in Bukovina. And at least you would be at home. If you are not interested in farming, you can join the local police force or the Finance Security where you would have an even better life. But one point I will allow myself to make: if you have money and don't want to send us any, then you can well imagine what pleasure you are bringing to your parents. If you write a letter to Josefa, we beseech you to tell her to stop seeing Anton Günthner because Mother cannot stand him. Now I conclude my letter with many happy greetings from Father and Mother and from our big Eduard. He is already so big and very healthy.

Best regards to all the people from Bori and from Gurahumora including Wenzel Hilgarth and Seidl and Franz Haas and do not forget the holy season of Lent and also go to confession and to church. Then God will not forget you. Praised be Jesus Christ.

Ignatz Schaffhauser

GERMAN-BOHEMIAN HERITAGE SOCIETY 30TH ANNIVERSARY

The international German-Bohemian Heritage Society headquartered in New Ulm, Minnesota, celebrated its 30th anniversary with a banquet on October 18, 2014. Over 100 members and guests were present, many wearing their homeland clothing (*Tracht*). The day began with a "Culture Corner" where families set up displays of photos, newspapers, and artifacts from the old country, and from the new homeland in the New Ulm area. The formal program began with a welcome and presentation of the new GBHS website (www.germanbohemianheritagesociety.com) by Molly Schweinfurter, President. Louie Lindmeyer read a proclamation from Mayor Robert Beussman declaring October 18th as *German-Bohemian Day* in New Ulm. Robert Paulson, the founder of GBHS, delivered his historical recollections of how it all began in 1984. GBHS' King (*König*) Denis Warta led the assembly in a rousing chorus of the *Böhmerwald Lied*, or Bohemian Forest Song, sung in the old Bohemian dialect. Jerry Gulden proposed a heartwarming toast to German-Bohemians, past, present, and future. Daniel Hoisington, historian and author, presented a preview of a forthcoming documentary video showing accounts of immigration from Europe to America from the memories of descendants of the pioneers who arrived here in the last half of the 19th century. The program was followed by a short business meeting with a year-in-review report and election of officers. The evening was capped by two hours of socializing, dancing, and *schunkeling* (rocking and swaying together) to homeland-style music by Donnie Klossner on his concertina.

Although they did not attend the GBHS 30th anniversary events, Mr. and Mrs. Leo Dorzweiler of Catherine, Kansas, and Mr. and Mrs. Glenn Schmeidler of Hays, Kansas, friends of the Bukovina Society, attended the annual *Oktoberfest* in New Ulm conducted October 3-4 and 10-11. Their host George Glotzbach, occasional visitor to Ellis County and the Bukovina Society, provided a detailed tour of the community.

BUKOVINA SOCIETY
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