



The Bukovina Society of the Americas NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 81, Ellis, KS 67637-0081 USA

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Lifetime \$150.00
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SOCIETY NEWS & EVENTS

- The Society received a sad report that our good friend and supporter, Ayrton Celestino Goncales, Curitiba, Brazil suffered gunshot wounds to his head in a robbery. Slowly the surgeries and treatments are helping him recover and we wish for his return to good health, now that he has returned home. Professor Celestino attended two Bukovinafests in Ellis County, presented at a Bukovina program in Regina, Canada with the Society and has traveled Europe in researching his Bukovina roots. He has authored publications on Bukovinians in Brazil and was a founder of their Bukovina organization.
- We received three generous donations, which helped defray our registration-free Bukovinafest. The Society is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization recognized by the IRS for deductible contributions. Thanks for your support and we welcome other gifts.
- The New Ulm, MN Oktoberfest has moved from # 5 to # 2 in a top 10 review by *USA Today*, according to a copy of the announcement from George Glotzbach of the New Ulm based Bohemian German Heritage Society.
- Bukovinafest 2017 report and a group photo were published in *Der Südostdeutsche*, Augsburg, thanks to Luzian Geier.

Johann Augustin, who together with his wife Anna Maria Bauer and his sons Mathias, Josef and Laurenz emigrated from this small village in the Bohemian Forest to Bukovina in 1803. (See newsletter vol. 27, March 2017)

Since this was the first meeting of its type for the family, it remained an open question as to how many would participate. It was planned that the meeting would take place if at least 20 people would attend. Happily, after the February announcement it soon became apparent that the number of participants wouldn't present a problem. A total of 50 people of all ages came to the meeting. We filled all 16 rooms of the Kollerhof Hotel and all 5 rooms in the neighboring Karalovsky Hovzod lodge. The guests came from many areas all over Germany: Kiel, Bremen, Berlin, Oberhausen, Halle, Ludwigshafen, Stuttgart, Straubing and Passau.

Three groups arrived a day early and some stayed a day longer. On Saturday afternoon, while enjoying the sunshine on the hotel patio, they awaited the arrival of the remaining guests who trickled in. Hearty greetings were exchanged among those who knew each other and introductions were made among those who were meeting for the first time.

The first event was dinner where we arranged to have a whole wild boar grilled. The Kollerhof owns its own hunting grounds and so game dishes are a specialty of the house. Mr. Kellermeier, the owner of the hotel and also a passionate huntsman, explained the long process that the game has to go through after being shot before it ends up on the plates of the guests. We owe a great deal of gratitude to Mr. Kellermeier and Mrs. Boschotova, hotel manager, as well as to their entire team. Their perfect service and the beautiful location, as well as the overall ambiance of this hotel contributed significantly to the success of our meeting. Later that evening formal introductions of the five branches of the family who were present and a cozy get together was held.

AUGUSTIN FAMILY REUNION IN THE BOHEMIAN FOREST

By: Michael Augustin

The first German Augustin family reunion in the Bohemian Forest took place September 30 to October 3, 2017 at the Kollerhof Hotel in Hammern (today Hamry, Czech Republic). As the conference was held in the German language, invited were the German-speaking descendants of

The next morning the program was officially opened by Michael Augustin, who had organized the meeting, and who now reported on the status of genealogical research, explaining how the individual branches of the family are linked. In addition he presented the excursions and the program scheduled for the following days. Next Erwin Wierer, the German homeland caretaker of Hammern, who together with his wife Fanny had arrived from Bad Kötzing in Bavaria, Germany greeted the guests in the wonderfully restored church across the street. There, Mr. Wierer reported in detail about the long journey which he and his co-workers had taken to bring the church and the cemetery to the good condition in which one can admire them today. A walk across the former cemetery brought the morning session to a close.

In the afternoon the majority of the group went for a hike to the 'Vorderen Schmausenhütte', a former glassworks in the woods near Seewiesen (today Javorna, Czech Republic). In the birth record of his son Laurenz we can read, that Johann Augustin had lived there as an 'Inwohner' (roomer) in 1801. According to various sources the glassworks had quit their operations definitively around 1800, which makes the emigration of Johann and his family to Bukovina in 1803 understandable. Even if there is nothing to see there from the former glassworks anymore, one can find relicts of the glass production in the soil in certain spots. The members of our group, regardless of the wet weather, also started looking and found some remarkable pieces.

Three more presentations were held after supper: Nico Augustin from Kiel talked about heraldry and the Augustin coat of arms, which he has designed for his family. Peter Gruniewicz from Stuttgart gave a lecture on the Bukovina German settlement Büsnau near Stuttgart and Franz Hanus from Ludwigshafen reported about the fate of his family and his own childhood and youth in Romania after WW II. It was a great pleasure to see, how intently old and young listened to these presentations till the wee hours and what lively conversations developed even after that.

The highlight on Monday was a hike to the 'Ganglhof'. The relics of the mountain farm are located in the woods of St. Katharina west of the German village of Rittsteig and only about 1/3 of a mile away from the border between Germany and the Czech Republic. Research indicates that as early as 1713, but presumably since the 1670's it was the residence of our forefather Georg Augustin. The Ganglhof was the place of residence of our extended family until in 1887 a Franz Augustin and his sons emigrated from there to Brazil. After that the farm changed owners multiple times. Like all the other farms near the border it was destroyed by the Czechs after the expulsion of the Germans in 1946. Today one can find there only ruins and remnants of foundations and lots of household goods which were left behind at the expulsion.

Before and after this hike various smaller groups had individual activities which shall be mentioned here only in a summarized form: Visit to the pilgrimage church of Neukirchen beim heiligen Blut, Germany, duty-free-shopping at the border, visit to the church and cemetery in Neuern (today Nyrsko, Czech Republic) and to Eisenstrass (today Hojsova Straz, Czech Republic), hike to the waterfall at the Osser mountain, visit to the church in Deschenitz (today Dešenice, Czech Republic) where Johann Augustin was baptized as well as to the drinking water dam of Neuern, which was built in 1969 and which covers today about one third of those parts of Hammern, which were situated in the valley along the banks of the river Uhlava.

After supper Michael Augustin gave two more presentations about our 'early' ancestors in the Bohemian Forest back to Georg Augustin (1648 – 1718) and about Bukovina, the homeland of our 'later' ancestors. When saying goodbye on Tuesday morning absolutely nothing was left anymore of the initial distance between the individual branches of the family. Everybody said good-bye very cordially to each other and agreed that the careful preparation was well worth it and that we can look back to a very successful family reunion full of joy and gratitude.



Augustin Reunion Attendees

GERMAN JOURNALIST VISIT

A freelance journalist from Lubeck, Germany spent 25 years in an industrial job and then became an author for the sheer pleasure of writing. The worldwide travels of Marion Hahnfeldt have resulted in many magazine articles and other publications. Her latest travel project is to visit 12 states in the US in 12 weeks, with plans to follow as many people of German ancestry as she can. So many exciting experiences led to the addition of more states. Dr. Bill Keel of the University of Kansas is hosting her in Lawrence and referred her to Ellis County because of the concentration of German descendants.

Hahnfeldt arrived in Ellis County with the first stop at the Bukovina Society Museum. She was welcomed by Society members Martha McClelland, Vice President, Oren Windholz, President and Guy Windholz, Curator. For two days in Ellis County she interviewed local residents with both Bukovina German and Volga German ancestry. Some of the material will eventually appear in her project publications.

Prior to arrival in the US, she did an Internet and Face Book search out of curiosity on her uncommon surname. Inquiries on Facebook went unanswered as she expected. Then, to her surprise, a man from Wisconsin responded and she asked to meet him for coffee. It turned out the American Hahnfeldt is a 4th cousin with a common ancestor and he had done extensive genealogy work on the family.

After renting an auto in New York and making the tour back, Hahnfeldt will return to her home with many recordings and photos of her journey and for her website blog.



Journalist Marion Hahnfeldt and Ellis County Commissioner Martha McClelland

SPIRIT OF ARGENTINA

Zita Watzlawik, a presenter at the Bukovinafest 2013 has ancestral ties to Augustendorf in the former Bukovina. The family of Johann and Petrona Watzlawik emigrated to Buenos Aires, Argentina during a period from 1912 to 1930, with separations due to the First World War. She toured Bukovina in 2011, which was part of her photo presentation. While in Ellis for an extended stay during the fest, she was hosted by Marcy McClelland and Pat Windholz. Zita still spends time with family in Argentina and lives in Los Angeles.

Zita's daughter, Zita Gonzalez, is a professional dancer who did an after dinner impromptu tango with a lucky guy at the fest. Zita wrote proudly that her daughter and granddaughter, Giovanna Dan, both are touring with the *Tango Buenos Aires: Spirit of Argentina* throughout the States. Giovanna graduated from UCLA in 2016 in the Department of Art and Culture. After two months of rehearsals in Buenos Aires they are performing in 46 shows in 25 states.

Tango Buenos Aires has become one of Argentina's great cultural exports, known throughout the Americas, Europe and the Far East as the most authentic and uncompromising representative of the Tango.

Tango Buenos Aires was created by the renowned composer and tango director Osvaldo Requena for the Jasmines Festival at the famous Buenos Aires cabaret Michelangelo. The company met with tremendous success and was immediately added to the season of the General San Martin Municipal Theatre.

With one of the presentations scheduled for September 29, 2017 at the Lied Center on the campus of the University of Kansas, Greg and Lorrie Windholz, their daughters and Brian Windholz attended and met Zita's two dancers after the show.



Meeting at the Lied Center were: Zita Gonzalez, Lorrie, Lacey and Natalie Windholz, Giovanna Dan, Brian and Greg Windholz.

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E-MAIL FROM MICHAEL BAYER

We stayed two nights in the city of Suceava, and spent a couple days touring the country, including stopping at one of the famous painted monasteries (Voronet, Dragonmira, Humor, Sucevita, and Moldovitsa), and admiring the massive sunflower and corn fields across the rolling hills. Two things stuck out at me: the vivid colors and modern designs of all the homes, and the stuck-in-time energy, complete with traffic jams of horse-drawn wagons, sheep and horses in the roads, etc. It was wonderful. People we met in Bucharest were jealous that we were going to Bucovina as it seems Romanians find it to be a very special region of their country; indeed as soon as we entered official Bucovina territory, and as soon as we exited, the environment totally changed, most notably in the architecture and the creative, colorful designs of the homes. I don't have a ton of detail on my ancestors. They were from the Romanian

side, were ethnic Germans (surname Bayer), and my great grandmother's family was from Germany/German Empire (we don't know which town) and she missed it terribly. I don't know how long my great-grandfather's family had been established in Bucovina (from Germany also), but they had been there at least a few generations. They were blacksmiths. My great grandparents had three boys (John, Otto, Emil) and one girl, and gave birth to a fourth boy upon arriving in the US (this was my grandfather Walter Bayer). It appears they had moved back to Germany for a year or so (perhaps because my great grandmother had missed it so) before my great grandfather sailed from Bremerhaven to Ellis Island, then sent for the family the following year. They lived in NYC, then New Jersey, and then settled in Thompson, CT, where all the boys ended up getting into the car business. Anyway, just thought I'd give you some background and share a few pictures. I'm glad to have found your organization.