



The Bukovina Society of the Americas NEWSLETTER

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

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Membership Dues:
Lifetime \$150.00
Genealogy \$25.00
Annual \$15.00

SOCIETY NEWS & EVENTS

- We welcome new lifetime member Debra Sheperd, Saskatchewan, Canada who joined over 200 other lifers in their support of the Society.
- David Schuster and wife Jan with her mother Donna Jean Dreiling, visited the Society headquarters to learn more of the Schuster/Weber ancestry. David's father was Michael, son of Frank F. and Barbara (Weber) Schuster, married in the United States from the village of Fürstenthal, Bukovina.
- Virginia and Mark Belland, former residents of Colorado, now living in Florida, toured the Bukovina Society museum and the Chrysler boyhood home in Ellis recently. Mark has an interest in the Bukovina German migrations to the U.S. He served in the military in Germany and thereafter was employed at the Chrysler Corporation. Virginia recounted her ancestral connections to the early Walt Disney related families that settled in Ellis.
- Judi (Halbleib) Kingry of Ontario, Canada, paid a visit to her sister, Joan Rupp of Ellis (who passed away since). Joan and her daughters Susan Payne, Josie Hemmings and Lisa Hall live in Colorado. They also visited with another sister, Rosann Felder of WaKeeney, then to the Bukovina Society museum for family research. While viewing the photo gallery, they were delighted to see Joan's daughter's great-great grandparents, early settlers to Ellis. They were Joseph and Theresa (Bena) Tauscher.

DEATH OF KURT REIN

By: Oren Windholz

Prof. Dr. Kurt Rein died at the age of 86 in Baldham near Munich on August 23, 2018. Dr. Rein was a founding member and long-standing board member of the *Bukovina Institut* in Augsburg. He visited numerous locations of the Bukovina German emigration to the United States and Canada, numerous times to the Bukovina Society headquarters. His research led to the publication of *German Emigration from Bukovina to the Americas*, along with Dr. William Keel of the University of Kansas. His other published works include a collection of Bukovinian dialect examples. The memorial service and burial took place on September 10, 2018 in the *Aussegnungshalle of the cemetery Vaterstetten, Johann-Sebastian-Bach-Straße 1, 85591 Vaterstetten*. The Bukovina Society and the Bukovina Germans all over the world have lost a brilliant man and good friend.

I first met Dr. Rein when a delegation from the newly formed Bukovina Society were honored guests at the 40th meeting of Bukovina Germans in Augsburg. Co-founders of the Society, Paul Polansky, Irmgard Ellingson and Oren Windholz, along with my wife Pat established long lasting ties to many of our distant cousins from Bukovina. Each time Kurt came to Ellis County I was his host and we became good friends, a memory I will long cherish.



EMIGRATION FROM THE BUKOVINIAN VILLAGE EISENAU TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND TO CANADA

By: Renate Gschwendtner

Preprint from the forthcoming history book about Eisenau. Besides this general chapter, the book contains a list of over one hundred emigrants, along with data on their fate and the names of the ships they used for travelling to the New World.

When two waves of emigration occurred in Bukovina between 1880 and the First World War, many Eisenauers, too, decided to take the step into the New World. The reasons for this may have been primarily economic. Jobs were scarce after the decline of the ironworks and mines operated by the aristocratic family Manz von Mariensee, but the number of inhabitants of Eisenau was increasing.

At that time, Bukovina was one of the “poorhouses” of the Danube Monarchy. Seventy to eighty percent of the population worked in agriculture; there was a high level of illiteracy and weak infrastructure. Most of the families were rich in children, and for the younger sons there was often little to inherit. Emigration promised people prosperity and better possibilities of land acquisition. Some were planning to work in the United States just for a while, and then use the money they had acquired to start a family at home in Bukovina and acquire property there. Family men wanted to send money home or to bring the family later. Young, adventurous boys saw emigration as a way to escape military service. Some of them dreamed of making a fortune overseas.

Government and authorities of Bukovina tried to counteract the constant emigration, as an article in the “Bukowinaer Rundschau” (May 1st, 1900) shows: *The emigration crisis is still growing, rather than decreasing, and it is to be feared that until the county council of the provincial government have found the means to remedy the misery by armchair decision, the population in the countryside will be reduced by half or even more. Yesterday, about 50 families from the Kotzman district arrived here on their way to Canada. Since it was suspected that the thieves who plundered the cash register of the Kotzmaner Bezirksstraßencomite (street committee of the Kotzman district) could be among them, they were stopped by the police, but they were all able to identify the provenance of their money. It had to cut a patriot deep in the soul when he saw how people – men, women, girls and boys of all ages – pull money from the country out into the distance. Asked for the reason of their emigration they answered, that they could not longer endure starvation. That is the ruin of our country. How long will that last?* In 1904, the “Bukowinaer Bote” reported that the enforcement of the American immigration laws was currently very strict. Any immigrant arriving in New York harbor whose destination was not New York itself would be held back on Ellis Island if he did not have a ticket for the continuation of his journey and at least ten dollars in cash. If he couldn’t

get the money afterwards from relatives and did not have the guarantee of a missionary society, he would be deported. Exceptions were possible only if he could prove that he was traveling to relatives who were already living in the United States.

In 1910, the emigration problems had not changed, as the following article from the “Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung” shows: *Emigration from Bukovina to America: Recently, the Ministry of the Interiors increasingly warned the population against emigration to the States of America. The reason for this is the sharp increase in emigration from Austria. In particular, the flow from Galicia and Bukovina is quite large, as these countries are known as poor in industry. The poorer classes of the population are forced to seek their bread wherever they can find it. It is true that professional emigration agents in Bukovina are up to mischief and befool the people with all sorts of promises. That alone is not the only reason for the emigration movement. In Bukovina one can observe that the dollar is the most dangerous emigration agent. If a farmer in a village receives a dozen dollars from his son or another relative, then this event is about to make its way through the village, and in the near future several families will be leaving for the land of treasures. If you want to reduce emigration – as strange as it sounds – you have to prevent that too many dollars flow into the villages. The warnings usually point to the triste circumstances, the inadequate living conditions, the low wages and so on. But when the man in the street sees the rolling dollars, he has difficulty to convince himself of the adverse conditions on the other side of the ocean. And he will grasp for the hiking pole to try his luck as well. The emigrants of Bukovina do not leave their old sod forever. Lots of them return when they have acquired a small fortune in America. Whether this newspaper article really served deterring those who were willing to emigrate is doubtful in the light of the last sentences.*

Shipping companies and American land settlement societies anticipated profit opportunities and sent agents to Bukovina, who were recruiting customers willing to migrate. In the “Illustrated Guidebook to Bukovina” (Illustrierter Führer durch die Bukowina), which was published in Chernivtsi in 1907, the United Austrian Shipping Company Austro Americana (Vereinigte österreichische Schiffahrts-Aktien-Gesellschaft Austro Americana) advertised that travelers to New York and other areas of America, Argentina, Africa and Australia would be transported at cheapest fares on the newest, most comfortable and fastest ships. Direct purchase of tickets to America etc. was possible at all train stations and at the General Agency for Galicia and Bukovina (Generalagentur für Galizien und die Bukowina).

In 1912 the same shipping company advertised in the “Bukowinaer Post” and in the “Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung” (two Bukovinian newspapers) for regular and direct traffic from Trieste to New York and from Trieste to Argentina via Rio de Janeiro.

The travel agency Kolumbus in Chernivtsi also placed an advertisement in the travel guidebook from 1907 and offered

sale of ship tickets to the United States of North and South America [sic!], Canada, Africa and England, as well as direct rail tickets to all American states, as well as to Canada, transportation by first-class steamers via Hamburg, Bremen, Rotterdam, Antwerp, Havre and Trieste. Expedition of cargo to overseas places.

The Czernivtsi travel agency Globus also considered an advertisement profitable and offered the following: *Rail and ship tickets to all places in the world. Agency of the Sleeping Car Company of the Austrian Lloyd Trieste (Schlafwagengesellschaft des Oesterreichischen Lloyd Triest), the Red Star Line Anwerp, the Norddeutsche Lloyd Bremen, the Holland America Line Rotterdam and the American Express Co., tickets for circular tours, traveler checks etc.*

In a brochure of the K. K. Österreichische Staatsbahnen (railway company of the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy) from 1912/13, the shipping company Austro Americana promoted crossings from Trieste to New York, New Orleans, Rio de Janeiro, Santos and Buenos Aires. In the same pamphlet one could also find out about the cheapest train connections to the ports. But emigration to America was not only advertised through newspaper ads. The shipping companies operated a network of agencies and sent their emigration agents to the most remote and tiniest villages of Bukovina, Slovakia and Galicia. For each recruited emigrant, the agent received bonus money. The Hamburg-Amerikanische Packetfahrt-Actien-Gesellschaft (HAPAG) and the Norddeutsche Lloyd (NDL) generated revenue on a large scale in the business of emigration. A crossing from Hamburg to New York cost a little more than 60 gulden. That was about 100 German marks.

To make good profits, they needed a large number of passengers traveling in the tween decks, who were crammed into overcrowded ships under the most primitive conditions. Receiving terminal for immigrants to the United States of America was from 1855 Castle Garden, also called Castle Clinton and located at the headland of Manhattan Island. When this first official immigration center was overburdened in 1890, it was decided to build a larger immigration center on Ellis Island, an island off New York that went into operation in 1892.

Most of the Eisenau emigrants, after having survived the strains of passage and immigration control, went to Chicago. Smaller groups settled in New York, Minnesota and the Canadian province of Alberta. Married men after a while arranged for their wife and children to join them, but some also returned to their old homeland. Single young men mostly married women from their own cultural circle. Some Eisenau men even found women from Eisenau in America who had also emigrated.

The great migration from Eisenau to America began around 1900 and continued until the 1920s, only interrupted by the First World War. In some families particularly many

members emigrated. The fact that there were already some of their relatives “over there” seemed to encourage the others to leave. An example of the emigration of a whole family is the Slowenskys, where all the children gradually went to the United States, eventually even followed by the old parents, who presumably did not want to remain alone in Eisenau.

In Chicago, several men from Eisenau were employed at the Chicago Burlington Quincy Railroad Company. They worked as a blacksmith, a car inspector, but mostly as a car repairer. One of the immigrant Eisenauers had a job as a steamfitter at Pullman, another worked as a baker in New York, at least four as a tailor in Illinois, one became a farm worker in North Dakota, one a machinist in Philadelphia, and one was a cabinet maker in Chicago. The author could not determine which occupation every immigrant pursued in the new homeland. The emigrant women from Eisenau were often already married and followed their husbands, others married in the United States, and some worked as maids there. Next to the great attraction of Chicago, there was a smaller one, namely the village of Cass Lake in Minnesota. The settlement was founded in 1898. So the immigrants came to a young village. Maybe it was the many local sawmills that attracted them. The men of Eisenau had been employed as a woodworker and sawmill worker and had to find similar jobs in the New World.

In 1900 Cass Lake had only 546 inhabitants. Later, during the time when the Eisenauers arrived there, the population increased rapidly. In 1910 there were already 2011 inhabitants. One of the Eisenauers was Franz Gottlieb Löffler, born in 1874. He worked as a lumberyard laborer and died in 1920 in Bemidji, MN. He was buried in Cass Lake. One wonders whether the migration brought him what he had hoped for. Wife and children had joined him, but was the family better off? Maybe wages were higher, maybe there was enough work at all. In the Bukovina there was no shortage of sawmill workers.

On the Internet, you can see a series of photos of Cass Lake's early years. Many houses are larger than those in Eisenau, the place looks urban, there was a hotel, a generously built high school. On a photo from 1910 you can see power lines and street lighting. Eisenau was electrified only in the late 1930s. However only for lights. Sockets were out of the question. Despite all these advantages, the immigrants would have had a hard time. That's why not everyone stayed. Franz Xaver Geitz, born in 1887 in Eisenau, wanted to go to Cass Lake after his immigration. He did not stay there, but moved on to Ohio. At some point he must have returned to his old homeland, because when he died in 1923, his wife in 1934, both were in Vama, probably in Eisenau, which belonged to the municipality of Vama.

Another small gathering point for Eisenauers was the village of Sion in Alberta, Canada. The nearest major city is Onoway, which is about 60 kilometers (37 miles) northwest

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of Edmonton. In Sion settled members of the families Geitz, Keil and Ripski.

Not everyone made their fortune in America. Some may have been persuaded by their homesickness to return to Bukovina. Emil Giacomelli from Eisenau was one of the returnees. He had emigrated in 1913, married a woman from Bukovina in Chicago, Marie Tanzel from Pozoritta/Pojorâta (Suceava), had worked as a car repairer for the Chicago Burlington Quincy Railroad Company, and then returned to Eisenau around 1920/1921.

After the Second World War, there was another wave of emigration of Eisenauers to Canada and the United States. They had lost their homes in the Bukovina, they had to flee from Silesia but post-war Germany had not yet become a new home. The land of the supposedly unlimited possibilities lured them.

SOCIETY MEETING

Local members of the Bukovina Society board and spouses met at the Ellis Country Club for a social, business meeting and celebration of the revised website headed by volunteer member, Doug Reckmann, who traveled from Oregon to Ellis for the occasion and also for the wedding of a cousin. New and present Society members can now access the genealogy section of the user friendly site. The board and guests enjoyed German food featuring cabbage wrapped Galuskies/

Haluskis (known as pigs in a blanket) along with dumplings, potatoes and creamed peas. Our hostess Phyliss LaShell, daughter of board member Norma Lang, satisfied the sweet tooth of all with her home-made cherry kuchen.



Front row from left: Eileen Goetz, Norma Lang, Martha McClelland, Gilbert Augustine and Guy Windholz
Back row from left: Shirley Kuppertz, Oren Windholz, Darrell Seibel and Joe Erbert (Emritus)



Doug Reckmann and his assistant website volunteer Guy Windholz are pictured at the Society Social