



The Bukovina Society of the Americas NEWSLETTER

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Membership Dues:
Lifetime \$150.00
Annual \$25.00

SOCIETY NEWS & EVENTS

- The board of directors of the Society conducted a meeting by email in October, 2020. Minutes of prior meeting were approved. Financial report approved. Election of officers conducted with present officers reelected. Positive input was received on potential meetings by Zoom or other communications media. No further business was conducted.
- Welcome to the new members of the Society, and the following new Life Members: Denise Ziak, Patricia Tomko, and Grzegorz Wasowicz, Katherine Schuster-Luck, Kyle and Debbie Schoenthaler and the upgrade on the website to life members by Simona Gaschler and Gary and Virginia Kerth.
- WEBSITE NEWS FALL - 2020
 - o Added Colorized Pictures of Bukovina People in Brazil
 - o Armbrüster Family Tree added to the Genealogy Database
 - o Updated List of Settlers in Lichtenberg
 - o 175+ Active Users of the Genealogy Database
 - o 1 Lifetime and 1 New BSA Member added in November
 - o 2 Lifetime and 2 New/Renewing BSA Members added in October
 - o 2 Lifetime and 3 New/Renewing BSA Members added in September
- A special welcome to Matilda Radovic, whose mother Anne-Marie Hilgarth wrote the book Anika, based on her childhood. Anne-Marie was born in Gura Humora in the former Bukovina and the book was translated into English by Dr. Sophie Welisch and sold by the Society. Matilda is researching her mother's family under the names of Wendling and Schmidt.
- The dates of the delayed FEEFHS Conference been moved to the following: **August 9-13, 2021**. The same programs and presenters will be there insofar as available.
- George Glotzbach, New Ulm, MN was a tireless supporter of the Bohemian German Heritage Society and his work put him in close contact with BSA. There are family and geographical ties between some members. He visited Ellis

County several times during his travels. He died September 15, 2020 and was buried in New Ulm with full military honors.

- Luzian Geier informed BSA of the death on August 21, 2020 of physician Dr. Gheorghe Nandris, a participant in the re-founding of the Society for Romanian Culture and Literature in Bucovina. He was born in the Chernivtsi region and was a writer of their history.
- Television celebrity Hayley Erbert was featured on DANCING WITH THE STARS, an American dance competition in its 29th season. She was featured between contestant features with Judge Derek Hough one of numerous dancing routines in prior years. Hayley is a Great Great Granddaughter of Bukovina German pioneers Rudolph and Katharina (Neuburger) Erbert. Over 1.5 million viewers have seen the spectacular dance and music on YouTube.

GRANDMA BENA

By: Judi Kingry

Note: The following are the second and final parts of articles published in the last Newsletter

Family Origins – Genealogy

The Angers

Anna Maria Anger was the fourth daughter born 22 Dec 1812 to **Johann Nepomuk Anger** (27) and **Barbara Bauer** (26) daughter of Mathias Bauer and Anna Maria Prinz (18 Jun 1761 - 6 Jan 1830). Johann and Barbara were married 8 October 1807 in Langendorf BOH.

The Anger family originated in Bavaria. **Johann Nepomuk Anger** was born 20 April 1785 in Frauenberg, Bavaria, baptized in Grainet. His parents and grandparents also were born and died in Bavaria. Parents were Paul Anger (b. abt 1748, d. 25 Dec 1833, Frauenberg BAV) and Katherine Zieringer (b. 29 Nov 1745, Hemerau BAV, d. 25 Jun 1800, Frauenberg BAV).

Grandparents – Stephan Anger (b. abt 1705, d. 8 Jan 1762, Hauzenberg BAV) / Magdalena Reiter and Josef Zieringer (b. abt 1716, d. 22 May 1796 Hemerau BAV)/Margaretha Zoglauer (b. 3 Jul 1717, Holzfreyung BAV, d. 22 Aug 1794, Hemerau BAV).

Beginning in July 1843, Johann is shown as a colonus (tenant farmer) in Schwarzthal where he died in May 1870. His wife, **Barbara Bauer** was born in Altlangendorf, Bohemia where she married Johann on 8 Oct 1807. (Barbara was a twin. They were the daughters of **Mathias Bauer** (b. 14 Feb 1755 Pritschen BOH. d. 9 Aug 1807 Langendorf BOH) and **Anna Maria Prinz** (b. 18 Jun 1761 Langendorf BOH d. 6 Jan 1830 Altlangendorf BOH) Barbara and her sister, Theresia were born 27 March 1786 in Altlangendorf, Bohemia. Barbara died at just 29 years, but her sister Theresia Anger lived to age 80.)

Johann and Barbara's first daughter, **Katharina** was born 12 Sep 1806. No records of her death, but she married Michael Prosser in 1819 & had a son Martin in 1827. The second Anger daughter, Elizabeth was born and died Feb 1809. A third daughter Anna Maria, born 9 May 1810 lived about a year. When another daughter, their fourth, was born **22 Dec 1812** in Altlangendorf, she was given the family name of **Anna Maria** – the same as her recently deceased baby sister. Anna Maria was also the first name of her maternal grandmother, her father Martinus's sister and her paternal great, great grandmother. Her paternal great grandmother, had the same two names but in reverse order.

Anna Maria was baptized in Langendorf on the day of her birth. When Anna Maria was not yet three years old, her mother Barbara at just 29 years of age died on 8 May 1815.

Five months after Barbara's death, **Johann** (30), married **Katherina Bauer** on 24 Oct 1815. Katherina (24) was the daughter of Josef Bauer and Anna Maria Prinz (29 Apr 1763, Plattorn BOH). During the next 14 years they had seven children. The first two, **Theresia** and **Mathias** born in 1816 and 1817 died at one and four months of age. The remaining children lived much longer – **Barbara** born in 1818 lived to 33 years; **Theresia** to 87 years; **Josef** to 93 years; **Elisabeth** to 43 years and **Magdalena** to 38 years. Anna Maria's first stepmother, Katherina died 24 Dec 1832 at the age of 41 years and when her seventh and youngest daughter was just three years old. At this time, our Anna Maria was 20 and may well have been put in charge of her young half brothers and sisters.

Two years later, on 21 Oct 1834 **Johann** married **Katharina Kellermann** (44). Although bore no children to Johan, Katharina's daughter joined the family as a step-daughter. Theresia Kellermann Anger, was born 7 Oct 1818 and died at 45 years in 1864. Katharina and Johann were married 13 years before Katharina died 11 Sep 1847.

Now 64 years of age, **Johann** married a fourth time to **Theresia Mayer** (58) on 19 Feb 1849. Their marriage produced no

offspring and lasted 21 years until 17 May 1870 when Johann died in Schwarzthal, BUK. Theresia passed away just eight months later on 21 Jan 1871.

Anna Maria's American Story

Based on recently discovered immigration records, Thomas's widowed mother, Anna Maria came to the States with her youngest son Thomas and his family. The Thomas Böna party traveled aboard the **SS Alaska** arriving New York 15 Dec 1886. In addition to Anna Maria, 74, the family included Thomas, 36, his wife Emilia, 26, and their daughters – Philomena, 8, Rosa, 6, Elisabeth, 4, Julianna, 3, and baby Maria born January 1886.

While there are clerical errors in the Thomas Benna family's immigration record we understand discrepancies in these handwritten manuscripts were common due to language barriers and an overwhelmed recording staff.

Although precise details and dates are lost to history, it was perplexing to explain how the Thomas Benna party arrived New York four months before the Tauschers. What we will never know is the date on which the Tauschers departed Schwarzthal or when they reached Bremen, Germany where their ship Trave departed. We also do not know the mode of transportation for the Thomas Böna party. Either party could have faced scheduling changes, due to shipping schedules, weather etc. The Tauschers left Schwarzthal on foot pulling all their worldly belongings most likely on a large two-wheel cart. If much of the Tauschers' journey from Schwarzthal was made on foot with a large family of young children, it inevitably took many weeks, perhaps months. Furthermore, Josef had served many years in the Austrian military so it is reasonable to think the family may have visited former acquaintances or worked at odd jobs for additional funds during their journey to Bremen, Germany.

Thinking back to Grandma Bena's distress the day the Tauschers left Schwarzthal on their immigration journey, one wonders if part of her distress was the fact she be left behind to live with the family of Thomas and Emilia – a situation that had not worked from the beginning.

Whether by choice or clerical error, the Thomas Böna family surname was changed to Benna when they arrived in the States. Whereas both families landed in New York, the Tauscher family traveled to Kansas while the Thomas Benna party went to Illinois and established their home in that state, possibly in or near Chicago. In 1898, Thomas and Emilia registered the birth of a son named Edmund Benna.

Having settled in Illinois with Thomas and family, how did Anna Maria end up in Kansas?

At some point around 1895, word from Chicago got back to Joseph and Theresa Tauscher while they were living in Ellis. They were told that the son was neglecting his mother, had

abandoned her and that Anna Maria was starving. Grandpa (Josef) Tauscher wanted to send for her immediately but Grandma (Theresa) Tauscher objected, saying it was the son's obligation. Grandpa T said 'send the money anyway' even though they realized it might be a trick by someone to get money. However, Grandpa insisted and borrowed the required money (*presumably from Rudolf Erbert*) to bring Anna Maria to Ellis.

Recalling this traumatic time, Leopoldina Tauscher Herman told her daughters that sometime after Anna Maria came to Kansas, the Tauschers received word-of-mouth news that Thomas Benna was still in Illinois and even living in the same neighborhood, but they decided against sending Anna Maria back because Grandpa Tauscher said it might happen again and they would have to send for her again. Asked – why would they send her back – Dina said because the son was supposed to take care of his mother and his wife understood this when they got married. None of them ever blamed the wife but Mama (*Dina Tauscher Herman*) herself thought the wife engineered the whole thing.

Mrs. Pauline Flax Miller told Mary Herman Riedel that Grandma Bena had been bonded to the Erberts, probably to pay off the money loaned to bring her to Kansas. This explains how Anna Maria's labor bondage tale originated in family stories.

Anna Maria lived a hard life. One day she was sent out on the prairie to pick up cow chips. (*Due to the lack of firewood in Kansas, dried cow chips were burned as fuel.*) She had a big apron in which she'd put the chips, and as it filled up, she'd build a mound. She was so absorbed in her work that she got lost and didn't know how to get back to the Erbert farm. It so happened that she was near the Flax farm. Pauline was a small child at the time. Her Mother gave Grandma Bena some milk, a little lunch and an apple which she put into her apron pocket, probably to eat later. Pauline started teasing Grandma Bena and saying she stole the apple. This hurt Anna Maria deeply. The old woman was so nervous she put the apple back and told the child not to say anything. Mrs. Flax got her son to hitch up a team to a wagon and take Anna Maria back to the Erbert farm. It was not long after that the Flax family heard Grandma Bena died. Pauline just begged and begged to go and see Grandma once more. When they got to the top of "our hill" they saw them carrying her out of Grandma Tauscher's house and to Saint Mary's Church. It is so sad to think of that poor woman out on the prairie by herself.

Grandma Bena died 24 Sep 1903, just three months shy of her 91st birthday. She was buried in the northeast corner of St. Mary's Cemetery.

Notes from Sera Herman Lewis – "Mama told Mary that Grandma Bena was the first person to be buried in the cemetery before the land was officially designated as a cemetery. The church was picking between two pieces of land when Grandma Bena died and the priest arranged to bury her at this

location. Grandma and Grandpa Tauscher made a special visit to the priest to make sure the land would be the cemetery. He said go ahead with arrangements, but they were uneasy until the church finally decided to take this piece where she was already buried and later began holding Catholic funerals there. Years later, Biekers picked out their lot and Grandma Tauscher was in a quandry because she planned to be buried by her mother. In the end, they decided to be near the Biekers so their graves would be remembered, rather than way off in the corner.

"I can't imagine why there was so much confusion over Grandma Bena's grave. Mama pointed it out to me every time we were in the cemetery. She always sprinkled holy water on the family graves and never failed to sprinkle in Grandma Bena's direction, saying 'there's grandma' but never once went near the grave itself, that I remember. Mama was embarrassed because the grave was the only one there and looked so abandoned. Once she got Papa to check it and he said it was alright and the cross grave marker was more solid than some of the newer markers. Grandma Bena's cross was tall, of wood that is well-weathered and had something in the middle holding it together. From a distance it looked like leather but cold so it could have been iron. I've always thought I'd like to see it someday to see what kind of wood would hold up so well. It looked like the wood of a wagon tongue. It always looked straight and tall and was alright the last time I saw it. For many years it was the only grave in the northeast part of the cemetery and had weeds nearly as tall as the cross. Mama was relieved when new graves were put in nearby so it didn't look so alone.

At some point in the late 1970s or early 1980s, Grandma Bena's great, great grandson, Don Kippes arranged to replace the Anna Maria's wooden cross grave marker with a proper tombstone. Unfortunately, 1821 was incorrectly engraved as Anna Maria's birth year.

Leaving Bukovina

Grandma Bena, as Anna Maria was known among her Tauscher-Herman relatives in Kansas died the year before the birth of her eldest Herman great granddaughter, Mary Anna. Regardless, Grandma Bena lives on through family lore that continues to be handed down through generations of her descendants.

The earliest element in the Grandma Bena narrative took place in the mid 1880s as Anna Maria's daughter Theresia Tauscher and family are leaving Schwarzthal – forever. The scenario became a story repeated over and over by her granddaughter, Leopoldina (Dina) Tauscher (Herman), the youngest member of the Tauscher party.

Dina said all the family's belongings were all piled on a two-wheel pull cart with the feather ticks (quilts) on top, lashing it all together. At the final time of departure, Grandma Bena really carried on, throwing her apron over her face and head. The sad farewell scene burned an indelible mental picture in Dina's mind. She was a mere toddler. Not quite 3 years old,

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Dina was perched atop feather quilts with her sister Rosa. Her parents and older siblings were all walking.

Dina frequently recalled her beloved grandmother Anna Maria Böna desperately pleading to go with the family. The Tauschers – her daughter Theresia and husband Josef – along with their nine children were leaving Schwartzthal to emigrate to America. Finances simply did not allow Anna Maria to accompany the traveling family. But Dina said Anna Maria begged and cried to the very last moment until the family were out of her sight, vowing she would one day travel to America. Sitting in the back of the wagon with her sister Rosa, Dina could see her Grandma Bena crying and waving her apron until they were out of sight. Although specific dates and details became muddled over the years. Grandma Bena did manage to get to America. For many years we were told Grandma Bena signed herself for labor to a family who could afford to bring her to the New World. Recent research has revealed this was only a small part of her story.

In the 1800s it was customary for the oldest son to care for the parents until they died. In 1874 when Anna Maria was widowed by her husband Martinus' death, six of their seven children were married, had children and homes of their own. Only her son, 24-year-old Thomas was single and most likely still living in the family home. We assume that he continued to live with his mother and work the family farm.

Three years after his father's death, Thomas, now 27, married 15-year-old Emilia Beer, on 17 Jun 1877. Emilia was born 25 April 1862. Thus, Emilia came to live in the Böna family home and began bearing children. Family tales told of a strained relationship between Thomas's mother Anna Maria and her daughter-in-law Emilia. It is said that prior to her marriage to Thomas, Emilia was well aware that Thomas would be charged with his mother's care but she married him anyway. Apparently the two women's relationship never improved, going from poor to worse over the years especially after the family emigrated to the States. The discord between the two women was never resolved as it appears Anna Maria had been living with the Thomas Benna family someplace in Illinois when news came to the Tauschers in Ellis that Anna Maria was in dire need of rescue.

Ironically, we now believe Anna Maria, aged 74, actually set foot in America on 15 December 1886, four months before her granddaughter Dina. The Tauscher family arrived 16 April 1887 aboard the immigrant ship **Trave** at Castle Gardens, NY.