



The Bukovina Society of the Americas NEWSLETTER

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

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Web Site: www.bukovinasociety.org



Membership Dues:
Lifetime \$150.00
Annual \$25.00

SOCIETY NEWS & EVENTS

- Welcome new life members 266 Rachel & Chris Lee
- Museum renovation will be multi phased, and will begin with roof repairs being first. It will not be something visible from the street, but essential. Also, an initial priority will be the restoring of the original church exterior doors.
- Museum volunteer Guy Windholz gave a Bukovina presentation November on the anniversary event recognizing the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Ellis County Historical Society. The day's events were held in the historic "Stone Church". The programs covered the variety of the history in the county and included a reenactment of a Wild West gunfight.
- Two billboards on Kansas I-70 near Ellis feature the three museums including the Bukovina Society. Tourism funds from Ellis have also placed us in the new travel brochures that are placed in travel locations across the State. This increased inquiries for visits to our museum from the travel stations including out of State travelers.
- St. John's Lutheran Church, established by a colony from Bukovina celebrated the 100th anniversary of the building of their church north of Ellis, KS.



BUKOVINAFEST 2022 SEPTEMBER 15-17

(Times, locations and names of presenters will be added as confirmed, No registration fee, but we encourage email notices to us for planning purposes.)

Thursday, September 15, 2022

1:00 p.m. BSA headquarters, Ellis, KS

Photo display and sharing by attendees, Becky Hageman

Google a tour of your ancestral village, Tim Flax

Genealogy workshop, Doug Reckmann (This will be part presentation and part dealing with requests in advance from attendees)

Early bird social and dinner Ellis Country Club

Friday, September 16, 2022

9:00 a.m. Coffee and conversation at the renovated museum, Ellis

Continuation of Thursday events if requested

The saga of a refugee in the 1940s, Fritz Kramer

1:00 p.m. The Venue at Thirsty's, 2704 Vine St. Hays, KS

Fürstenthal, one of the prime villages, Becky Hageman

Czernowitz to Sydney

Annual business meeting of the Bukovina Society

Social and dinner

Saturday, September 17, 2022 at The Venue

Coffee and opening remarks

Reports from Bukovina organizations in Germany

Video of Bukovina trips

TBA

TBA

Social and dinner



Chapel memorial in his home village

JOSEF WEBER

FROM FÜRSTENTHAL TO CHICAGO, FROM ALTAR BOY TO ARCHBISHOP

By: Rebecca Hageman

Are you familiar with the name Josef Weber? No? Perhaps you have heard of Fürstenthal, Bukovina, his birthplace. Perhaps not. It was never famous. It was a small, isolated woodland village in the Carpathian Mountains, founded in 1802 for the purpose of glassmaking. Most inhabitants worked in that cottage industry in one form or another, many cutting down beech trees to fire the glass furnaces. Most residents also had small plots to grow food. Fürstenthal is now called Voievodeasa, Romania. So how does a Fürstenthaler become well known, and reach the title of Archbishop in the Catholic Church?

Prior to the existence of Fürstenthal, everyone was from somewhere else; this Weber family can be traced back to Stubenbach, in the Prachin district of the Böhmerwald, or Bohemian Forest. On a map, this appears to be fewer than 5 kilometers from Bavaria. A German dialect would have been the common language spoken. Michael Weber (our Josef Weber's grandfather) was a lumberer. He and wife Katharina moved the family to Karlsberg, Bukovina in 1803, where a glass hut had been established about 5 years earlier. Franz Weber, Josef's father, was born in Karlsberg in 1806. He married Christine Dorndorfer in 1831. By 1835, the growing family had had joined a number of Karlsberg laborers in Fürstenthal, where Michael acquired farmland.

Franz and Christine were the proud parents of as many as 10 children. Large families were common in Fürstenthal. Their seventh child, Josef, was born the 12th of June, 1846. He was

baptized the same day in Fürstenthal's small wooden chapel. His godparents were Josef Baumgartner and his wife Barbara. This ordinary child, born into an ordinary family, was destined for an extraordinary future.

At the time of his birth, Fürstenthal had around 650 people. In May of 1857, Fürstenthal was visited by the Archbishop of Lemberg. Our young Sepperl, Sefferl, or Peppi, as boys baptized Josef were called, had become an altar boy. As such, at 11 years old, he was witness to the solemn Pontifical Mass and administration of confirmation, as well as the festive reception. We can well imagine that at this time, he made the determination to someday become a bishop.

How could a youngster aspiring to become a bishop reach this lofty goal? His parents certainly didn't have the funds to send him away to school. Fürstenthal didn't even have its own priest. The local chaplain no doubt initiated the first step of a written application to the small pontifical boys' seminary in Lemberg (now Lviv, Ukraine). A number of tuition free scholarships had been created for talented youths of simple farming families. It is believed that Josef was accepted and left home at 11 years old to attend. He was on his way! When he was 13, three scholarships to youngsters from Bukovina pursuing a clerical position were established through the Bukovina Catholic Religious Foundation. Lemberg, also known as "Little Poland," wasn't easy to reach - railways hadn't been built yet in the region, so the mail coach was the only transportation available to young Josef.

He must have impressed the rector, prefect, and professors with his aptitude and ambition. From the seminary in Lemberg, where lessons may well have been in Polish and Latin, Josef Weber was sent to the Papal Polish College, under the direction of the Congregation of the Resurrectionists, in Rome to study from 1869 to 1873, earning a doctorate in theology. At this time, he no doubt added Italian to his languages. June 7, 1873 marked his ordination as a priest in Rome. It isn't known when he celebrated his first mass in his hometown of Fürstenthal.

Within the first four years of becoming a priest, he held a number of responsible positions. Back at Lemberg, Dr. Josef Weber served as chaplain in the parish of St. Martin, then as cathedral vicar, and as in the same year, second prefect in the clerical seminary. A year later, we find him teaching theology at the University of Lemberg, where he was spiritual director of the boys' seminary, and father confessor to women's convents. By 1877 he was spiritual director of the clerical seminary, becoming vice rector soon after.

Between 1884 and 1889, Vice Rector Dr. Josef Weber was appointed adviser in the archbishop's consistory, then became chancellor, nominated canon, and finally papal house prelate, and rector of the seminary. During that time, we can assume that he returned to Fürstenthal for the consecration of his hometown church where he had seen a bishop for the first time.

When the current Archbishop of Lemberg died, and as resulting vacancies were filled, Dr. Josef Weber was appointed Bishop of Lemberg. He was the only priest of the Bukovina clergy to be elevated to the rank of bishop. The solemn consecration took place in the cathedral of Lemberg on December 29, 1895. That same month, he was appointed Titular Archbishop of Temnus, a defunct bishopric in the former Archdiocese of Ephesus in today's Turkey.

Upon the death of the next archbishop, Dr. Weber was passed over for a Polish archbishop, there being some anti-German sentiments in the Lemberg region, and indignation at his establishment of schools where German nuns and monks taught classes in German. He was also facing slanderous attacks from the anti-clerical Socialists. Weber was made vicar-general for the new archbishop, and again, made a titular archbishop, this time for Darnis, in North Africa.

Our Archbishop Weber never forgot his humble roots in Bukovina, particularly his hometown of Fürstenthal. He had a large house built in Fürstenthal, known as the "Weber House," as a home base when he visited the neighboring village churches as bishop, with a room set aside to receive family and friends, furnished with a large round table and four club chairs. This was conveyed to his brother Franz. He also purchased land near the cemetery and donated it to the church. During this time, there were several trips back to Bukovina and the homeland he knew so well, consecrating churches, baptizing children, and confirming hundreds of persons.

In 1906, Archbishop Weber left the Archdiocese of Lemberg, resigned all offices, and entered a monastery in the Congregation of the Resurrectionists of Our Lord Jesus Christ in Rome, a vow which he had made when he was a student in the Polish College in Rome. As a novitiate in the monastery, he served as conference director and devotional leader for the Resurrectionists in Rome and in Mentorella, in the Polish College in Rome and Albano, and for the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth in Albano. As busy as he was, he authored works in Latin, which appeared in Rome in 1909.

In 1908, it was decided to send Dr. Weber to America as a missionary. At this point in the records of the Roman Catholic archepiscopal archives in Lemberg, our Archbishop's story ends. Now we continue his story from America. In 1909, Dr. Weber arrived in Berlin, Ontario, Canada, to become the director of novices for Canada and the United States. He conducted affairs in German and Polish. Although his use of the English language was limited upon his arrival, he soon authored two books in English. At this time, he served as preacher and as master of devotions in religious houses of his order as well as those of nuns' orders. As bishop, he administered confirmations, consecrations, and dedications over a wide geographic area.

In 1915, he became superior of the religious house and the Church of St. Stanislaus Kostka, the oldest Polish church in Chicago, feeling a special responsibility for the Polish

Catholics in the United States. Such was his affinity with the Polish Catholics that he was named "Honorary President of the Polish Clergy in America" in 1913, and was elected as "Honorary Member of the Polish National Committee for the Independence of Poland" in 1915.

In the order's archives in Rome, Archbishop Weber's surviving letters include thirteen in Latin, thirteen in Polish, three in English, two in German, and two in Italian.

Archbishop Josef Weber died March 24, 1918, at age 71, in Chicago. He was laid to rest in St. Adalbert Catholic Cemetery, also known as the Old Bohemian Cemetery, or the Old Polish Cemetery, in the Resurrectionists' Mausoleum, in Niles, Illinois. There his name is listed on a brass plaque as "Archbishop Joseph Weber, CR" (Congregation of the Resurrection). It is fitting that he should be at rest there - his deep family roots stretch back to Bohemia, and the Polish Catholics considered him to be on of their own.

He was not forgotten after he said farewell to the small village



Funeral card in the Polish language.

in the Carpathians. A requiem mass was held for him each month at the little church in Fürstenthal until the transfer of the Bukovina Germans in 1940.

The only Bukovina clergy elevated to the rank of bishop, Josef Weber was the only archbishop of the Congregation of the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ during the first 100 years of its existence. He is not forgotten in the Chicago area, either. A school of the Congregation in Chicago was named Weber High School for the archbishop, closing in 1999. There continues to be an Archbishop Weber Club, an Archbishop Weber Council founded by the Knights of Columbus, and a Daughters of Isabella Archbishop Weber Circle. An Archbishop Weber Scholarship continues to be awarded at DePaul College Prep school in Chicago. Not bad for a little kid from Fürstenthal.

Special thanks to The Congregation of the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ (C.R.). This is an international Institute of Consecrated Life of men within the Roman Catholic Church, founded in 1836 by three men, Bogdan Jański, Peter Semenenko and Hieronim Kajsiewicz on the heels of the Polish Great Emigration.

ORDER 7161

Submitted by Luzian Geier and Doug Reckmann

On 16 December 1944 Stalin signed Order 7161ss, the secret command to “mobilise and detain all Germans capable of working, including men aged 17 to 45 years and women 18 to 30 years” from Romania, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia. Their subsequent deportation to forced labour camps was intended to help reconstruct the Soviet Union and was a form of reparations for the destruction caused by the Second World War. A total of 112,480 men and women were deported. The majority of them – 69,332 individuals – were Germans from Romania. This book tells their story.

The Project

“Why don’t you come by and tap on my kitchen window. If I like the look of your face, I might let you in.” This was the somewhat cheeky response Ada Teutsch gave when I called her out of the blue in hopes of paying her a visit in her home in Brălov (Romania) in January 2012. A few hours later, I gently tapped on the window of her ground-floor flat; a frail, small-statured lady appeared behind the glass, looked me over until she cracked a slightly mischievous smile and disappeared again. A couple of minutes later, the front door creaked open.

Ada and I spent the next three afternoons together in her kitchen where she shared her life story with me: her carefree teenage years, a happy family life that came to a brutal halt in January 1945 when, along with other ethnic Germans, she was herded into cattle wagons and carried off to the Soviet Union. Many of her fellow deportees did not survive the first

few months at the camp; many died from the harsh labour conditions in freezing temperatures and insufficient nutrition.

Even in old age, the mere sight of snow triggered flashbacks to the winter of 1945, paralysing Ada with anxiety inside her home.

While Ada shared her story, I listened, recorded her voice and photographed her in an attempt to capture not only her emotional experience as she revisited the past, but also a testimony to our meeting in images and words.

Ada was the first one in a series of 40 former deportees that I would meet over the following three years.

It was through sheer serendipity that, just one year before meeting Ada, I had come across the topic of the deportation. I had travelled to Romania in 2010 to explore the German-speaking communities in Transylvania, whose ancestors had been settlers originating from Luxembourg, my home country.

And it was during this reconnaissance trip that I first learned about the deportation of the German minority. I was surprised that I had never heard of their fate before and even more so that many, mostly younger, Romanians were equally oblivious to this chapter of their country’s past.

The deportation had already been researched academically and explored in literary and cinematic works, yet no comprehensive photographic work existed on this subject at the time. Meeting and photographing the survivors was a ‘last chance’ endeavour – many of the deportees have since passed away – that enabled me to document first-hand the memory of a generation as well as capture the emotions evoked by the processes of remembering and sharing of memories through portraiture.

What I had initially perceived as a series of sincere but informal talks, primarily to conjure up those memories and emotions of past experiences, quickly morphed into a practice of gathering oral history, an exercise that, over time, revealed the cultural memory of the deportees, their identity and self-perception as members of an ethnic minority as well as certain deeply held beliefs within their community. And to the extent that there were discrepancies between historical fact and deportees’ memories, I discovered “how ordinary people caught up in historical events make sense of their experiences.” (A. Portelli)

This was one of the themes I tried to explore while I was documenting in photographs my encounters with the survivors.

The Book

ORDER 7161 retells the story of the deportation through a combination of witness portraits, archival and contextual images and opens a window into the survivors’ memory of their forced internment via an important selection of recorded testimonies.

In 2019, the sample book was nominated for both the Luma Rencontres Dummy (Sample) Book Award (Arles) and the Unseen Dummy (Sample) Award (Amsterdam)

FLORIDA LAND BOOM HITS ELLIS

By: O. M. Windholz

ORDER 7161

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A recent new book review, Bubble in the Sun, by Christopher Knowlton led me to some internet searching and to reading a book on the Florida Land Boom of the 1920s because I recalled some social notes in the Ellis Review-Headlight during my search for material in the book, The Erberts. It seems although the land bubble built up and burst in the 20s, some local entrepreneurs were ahead of the pack, checking it out before the crash.

The land boom shaped Florida's future by creating entire new cities out of the Everglades. The bust was the same as other, and more recent, bubbles in America; speculators, easy credit and rapidly appreciating property values. Home lots were being bought and sold as many as ten times in one day. Hired hands



The Life Member plaques which contain 266 entries have grown in the last 30 years. These are displayed at the entrance to the museum and represent a tremendous show of support for the Society. If anyone would like to be added to this honor roll, please visit our website.

were placed around the developments to refer the curious to agents who gave them a kick-back for any sales. Rather than list prices on lots, sometimes auctions were conducted. Land was also sold through the mail due to heavy advertising by developers and promotions by Florida governmental units who also loosened regulations to assist the new economy. In 1924 enough building lumber arrived to encircle the equator with an eight-foot boardwalk. Housing was not the only boom; vacationers, luxury hotels, golf courses, gambling and booze led the way.

Rudolf Erbert and John Tauscher of Ellis and J.F. Hazen of Ransom were led by R.C.Hall to Florida to scout the opportunity. The Review-Headlight promised to "have something more to say about their trip in the future." The following week the editor got John to "stand still long enough to find out what they thought of Florida." John said it was a regular "Paradise, with fruit, berries and gardens ready to pick." Land agents made great claims, but John believed the potential was even greater. "There were lots of buyers and none went away without being satisfied and fully invested. He bought quite a piece of land and would have done more if money matters were not quite so close."

Rudolf Erbert advised friends and relatives "to buy all the land that they can see a way clear to pay for." Josef Ebert's daughter Mary (later Sister Mary, CSA) recalled she and the children

came home from school to learn the joyful news they were moving to Florida. John Tauscher announced his intention to move there. Unfortunately, he took his losses with others after the bust, all attempting to dispose of their investment in time. The inevitable had occurred; land prices reached such a peak, new customers were not available to buy from the old customers wanting to sell. The land bust crippled the tourist market, and hurricanes in 1926 and 1928 destroyed many developments. The Great Depression finished it all off until the next land surge.