



The Bukovina Society of the Americas NEWSLETTER

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

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Vol. 36, No. 1 July 2026

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Membership Dues:
Lifetime \$150.00
Annual \$25.00

SOCIETY NEWS & EVENTS

When the First Congregational Church in Ellis departed its original building, a corporation was formed to preserve and make further use of the historic structure. The Ellis Arts and Historical Society provided the facilities for Ellis organizations to use. The Nicholson family has been generous trustee stewards of the property and gave space to the Bukovina Society to establish a museum. The City of Ellis, having provided utility and other support for many years, took possession of the building this spring at the request of the EAHS trustees. The City offered a long term continued occupancy of the museum space to the Bukovina Society. This was approved by both parties on 16 April 2026. Other civic uses will also continue. We appreciate the support and cooperation of the Ellis community.

- The Annual BSA Member's meeting will be a Zoom meeting at 1:00pm CS. For those who wish to attend, please contact us via info@bukovinasociety.org.
- Welcome Betty Dietz, Hays KS, Life Member #332
- Welcome Eduard Petrea, Raunheim, Germany, Life Member #333
- Welcome Benjamin Blumenstein, Sudbury ON, Life Member #334
- Welcome Dean Ast, Regina SK, Life Member #335



Bukovina Society Museum in Ellis, Kansas

A NOTE FROM THE BSA PRESIDENT

Dear Members and Friends,

Thank you so much for your patience and understanding regarding the delay of our usual March newsletter. Unexpectedly, I was dealing with a serious health issue due to a severe spider bite that required hospitalization and an extended period of medical treatment and recovery.

I am glad to report that I am finally on the mend and getting back up to speed. I deeply appreciate everyone's kindness, support, and grace during this time. I am glad to be back in touch, looking forward to sharing updates with you in this issue!

Warm regards,

Doug

VIENNESE WOMAN FROM CZERNOWITZ HOLDS AGE RECORD

The oldest Bukovinian woman of all time
lived to be 114 years old

Article sent to Luzian Geier, SÖD (Südostdeutsche)
Trans., by Google, edit., by Sylvia Totzke

It was not unusual in Czernowitz or Bukovina for children to receive two or three given names at baptism, often at the insistence of the priests, so that at least one name would be associated with a saint. However, if there were several given names, one could conclude that the child came from a higher social class.

In the Catholic baptismal registers of the Czernowitz parish, entries from the early 19th century (Volume 3, 1825–1869) list Maria Anna Carolina Josepha Adolphina—a daughter—and Antonius Christianus Franciscus—a son—as the children of Joseph Pompe. This family was a prominent clan of high-ranking civil servants at the time, with roots in Bohemia and Vienna, respectively. Joseph Johann Franz Pompe, born in Prague on May 4, 1787, married Johanna Nepomuk Maria von Sebald—who was also born in Prague—in Vienna on May 15, 1815; both subsequently passed away in Vienna. From this marriage came Dr. Franz Josef Xaver Wenzel Pompe—born in Vienna on August 1, 1818—who later moved to the Bukovina region. In Czernowitz, on August 10, 1851, he married Elisabeth Lange, who was eight years his junior (she died in Czernowitz in 1879). As a jurist in the Bukovina, her husband rose through the ranks to attain the position of Senior Regional Court Councilor (*Oberlandesgerichtsrat*). He died on October 7, 1884, in Radautz; his burial vault no longer exists. In a second marriage, he had wed the widow, Elisabeth Grossmann. This family line produced several descendants, including Elise Louise Christine Pompe (born in Czernowitz in 1853); Wilhelmine Charlotte Pompe (1883–1905, Czernowitz; wife of Dr. Ludwig Engel); and Wilhelm Nikolaus Pompe (1852–1901, Czernowitz), who later served as an Imperial Councilor (*Hofrat*).

As a result of the resettlements from Bukovina and the turmoil and consequences of war, Pompe descendants settled in Germany and Austria. One of them, Luise Philippine Pompe, born on October 13, 1908, in Czernowitz, lived unmarried and childless in Vienna's Leopoldstadt district as a librarian. According to Wikipedia and LongeviQuest, she retired in Vienna in 1970.



The article further states that she lived independently in her old age and joined the ranks of supercentenarians on October 13, 2018, at the age of 110. From October 2021, at 113, she was the oldest person living in Austria, and that she had even reached her 114th year. "This made Pompe the oldest person ever to have lived in Austria. Luise Pompe died on November 11, 2022, at the age of 114 years and 29 days (a total of 41,667 days). On December 2, 2022, she was buried in the Vienna Central Cemetery (Group 67, Row 7, Number 39)." Our reader Frank Weiss brought this long-lived Bukovinian woman to our attention.

This makes Luise Pompe the oldest person ever to have lived in Bukovina, according to available records. We have not yet been able to locate her baptism in the microfilm of the Czernowitz baptismal registers at the Bukovina Institute in Augsburg. We must, however, correct the previous statement that Irmgard Genthe (née Uhrich), who died last September in Czernowitz at the age of 110 years and 146 days, was not the oldest person to have lived in Bukovina.

AI SUMMARY OF THREE BUKOVINA VILLAGES

from "Bukowina: Heimat von Gestern,"
eds. Erwin Massier, Josef Talsky, B.C. Grigorowicz
(Karlsruhe: Selbstverlag "Arbeitskreis Bukowina Heimatbuch,"
1956), pp. 141-149
Google Translation edited by AI and Sylvia Totzke

Neu-Itzkany: A German Community in Bukovina (1788–1940)

The German community of **Neu-Itzkany** existed in southeastern Bukovina until December 1940. Situated on the left bank of the Suceava River, just north of the city of Suceava, the village occupied a strategically important location along the imperial highway between Czernowitz and Bucharest and beside the main railway line. Prior to 1918, Neu-Itzkany functioned as a significant customs and border station marking the entrance into Old Romania.

Neu-Itzkany was founded in 1788 following Austria's annexation of Bukovina and the subsequent expropriation of monastic lands for colonization. The settlement developed alongside the older village of Alt-Itzkany. Its first settlers—German Erbzinser (hereditary leaseholders)—came primarily from the Palatinate and Rhineland regions of western Germany and were not subject to feudal obligations. Despite severe initial hardships, including poor harvests and food shortages, the settlers persisted and gradually established a stable agricultural community.

The population of Neu-Itzkany grew steadily over the 19th century, increasing from a few dozen settlers to nearly 600 inhabitants by 1910. The village population was predominantly German Protestant, with a smaller Catholic minority. As landholdings diminished through inheritance, many residents supplemented farming with livestock breeding, horse trading, sugar-beet cultivation, skilled trades, and salaried employment. Proximity to Suceava and Burdujeni enabled many inhabitants to work as railway employees, factory workers, civil servants, and educators.

Education and religious life were central to community identity. A German-Evangelical school operated continuously from the early 19th century until the resettlement in 1940, supported by a succession of dedicated teachers. Pastoral care was initially provided from neighboring parishes, but by the early 20th century Neu-Itzkany had its own resident pastor.

Although one of the smaller German settlements in Bukovina, Neu-Itzkany distinguished itself through economic stability and modern infrastructure. A water supply system was installed in 1908, and in 1922 the village became the first rural community in Bukovina to introduce electric lighting. Local industry included a large sugar factory, an oil mill, and woodworking enterprises. Cooperative life was well developed, with agricultural, religious, and savings associations playing an important role in communal affairs.

Emigration formed part of the village's history, particularly from the late 19th century onward, with several families relocating to Canada and other regions. In 1940, the German population of Neu-Itzkany was resettled, ending more than 150 years of continuous German settlement. Today, the memory of Neu-Itzkany endures through archival records, society publications, and the descendants of its families dispersed across Europe and North America.



Church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul in Nue-Itzkany

Katharinendorf:

Katharinendorf was founded in 1867 as one of the newer German settlements in the Bukovina, after an earlier Slovak settlement failed due to swampy soil. Following a renewed call by the estate administration of Baron Wassilko in Berhometh, 28 Evangelical Swabian families from Galicia settled there, attracted by grants of 16–18 Joch of land, free timber, and firewood under a hereditary lease.

Arriving with little capital, the settlers initially struggled, supplementing farming with forestry work. Through persistent cultivation, they soon improved the soil, achieved reliable grain harvests, built strong livestock herds, and reached modest prosperity. In 1875 the community established its own school, the Evangelical School Community of Katharinendorf.

AI SUMMARY OF THREE BUKOVINA VILLAGES (cont.)

Although surrounded by Ruthenians, they lived largely apart from other German settlements. Nevertheless, they maintained their own German customs and traditions and also knew how to celebrate a proper festival from time to time.

In this context, a humorous incident involving a baptismal mix-up is legendary. In 1910, the farmer Jakob Kauk had a little daughter baptized, who was to be named Elisabeth. After the baptism, there was a lavish feast that lasted past midnight. All the guests enjoyed much food, wine and schnapps. The teacher who performed the baptism was enjoying the festivities a great deal and decided to make the entry in the baptismal register the following day.

The next morning, the teacher no longer knew what to enter in the baptismal register. The effects of the celebration clouded his memory. He didn't remember whether he baptized a boy or a girl, nor did he remember the child's given name. He was ashamed to ask the child's parents, so he went to the postmaster, who had also been present at the baptism, and asked: "Tell me, Johann, don't you know what we baptized last night? Was it a boy or a girl, and what is it supposed to be called?" "Well, it was a boy," replied the postmaster after some thought. "I believe we baptized him Wenzel."

And so, the little daughter Elisabeth was officially registered as a son named Wenzel. The mistake was not discovered until 24 years later, when, in 1934, the girl Elisabeth went to the curator Konrad Gross, who kept the church records, and asked for the issuance of a baptismal certificate, since her sweetheart no

longer wanted to delay the wedding. However, he found no Elisabeth, but only a Wenzel Kauk who had been entered into the baptismal register in 1910. Gross then applied to the district consistory for a change of name, which was granted fairly quickly.

The community later endured wartime losses and displacement. In January 1945, residents fled before the advancing Russian forces, traveling for weeks by horse and wagon through severe winter conditions before dispersing across southern Germany. Yet even after this forced flight, former villagers from Katharinendorf, guided by Konrad Gross, rebuilt successful farms and enterprises in new settlements such as the Buchländer Settlement near Bächingen an der Brenz, once again demonstrating resilience and industry.

Augustendorf:

Augustendorf, founded in 1838 in the foothills of the Carpathians along the Sereth River, was the Bukovina settlement that most faithfully preserved the character of a German-Bohemian village from the Bohemian Forest. Unlike most German colonies, which followed rigid, military-style layouts, Augustendorf adapted to the natural landscape with narrow, branching lanes, mountain-style farmsteads, and surrounding fir and pine forests, closely resembling villages near the Osser and Arber peaks.

The settlement was established not by the state but by the estate owner, Mrs. Augustine Gojan-Fedorowicz of Banilla, who brought in settlers to clear and reclaim overgrown land. Each family received woodland, pasture, and forest-use rights in exchange for labor obligations. Initially settled by twenty families from the West, the village later grew with migrants from the Hungarian Banat. Early families included the Erls, Hasenkopfs, Kampf, and Mirwalds; the Hebeler family arrived later.

Because the soil was poor, few settlers became true farmers. Most turned to charcoal burning, glasswork at nearby glassworks, or carpentry in the surrounding region. Traditional wooden clogs remained in use, though older male headgear disappeared over time. As in other German settlements, even the poorest homes had flower-filled front gardens and window plants.

The entirely Roman Catholic population of about 700 belonged to the parish of Althütte. In 1905, Trinitarian monks built a new church and monastery, revitalizing religious and cultural life under Father Athanasius Sonntag, who later led the community for decades and founded the German Community Center. A children's convalescent home followed in 1930.

Thanks to its scenic setting, healthy climate, river bathing area, and proximity to Czernowitz, Augustendorf became a popular summer retreat, where German traditions and songs were
4 deeply valued.

