



The Bukovina Society of the Americas NEWSLETTER

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Publisher: O.M. Windholz
windholz@bukovinasociety.org
Co-editor: Irmgard Ellingson
Irmgard@bukovinasociety.org
Co-editor: Rebecca Hageman
rhageman@bukovinasociety.org

Webmaster: Werner Zoglauer
zoglauer@bukovinasociety.org
Asst. Webmaster: Rebecca Hageman
Member Data Base: Rebecca Hageman

Web Site: www.bukovinasociety.org



Membership Dues:
Lifetime \$150.00
Annual \$15.00

BUKOVINA BRIEFS

- Welcome to our newest life members, # 189, Kathleen and Carlo Garofali, Girraween, Australia, #190 Frank Geissler, Leisnig, Germany and #191 Klaus Irion, Bury, UK
- Lisa Baker's cousin Werner Armbrüster from Bavaria wrote to her from Germany about the *Armbrüster Familienverband* (Armbrüster Family Association) in Framersheim, near Worms. The organization was founded in 1963 and meets every two years. A 50th anniversary celebration is planned for 2013. A related article appears in this *Newsletter*. Their website is: www.armbruesterfamilienverband.de with future plans to have the family tree available.

HOW MANY ARE WE?

by Rebecca Hageman (Wichita, KS)

When the Bukovina Society of the Americas launched their first meeting in July of 1989, the membership could be listed on a single sheet of paper. For the next few years, the membership climbed slowly, adding a few at a time, mostly stimulated by interest in the annual Bukovinafests, keeping the "old world" culture alive, and by word of mouth from friends and family members. Genealogy-minded folks began to share their research, and more prospective members began to appear in Ellis to discover their family's heritage and past.

In the late 1990s, the society's initial Internet presence

was on the AOL home page of one of our members. In 2002, a large, structured website was built, with our own domain name, www.bukovinasociety.org. Numerous volunteers worked hard to translate and or create hundreds of pages of Bukovina related historical and cultural pages. Bukovina descendants from around the world took notice. Since May of 2002, our home page shows over 113,800 "hits!"

The addition of a Genealogy Database, available to members at our website, significantly increased traffic and interest in our website.

A few years ago, the membership was transferred from a few typed pages to electronic format. While it was impossible to determine the year of each entry, we know for certain that in 1989, we had at least 18 recorded memberships. From 1989 to 2001, we averaged fewer than 10 new members annually. 2003 brought 22. In 2004, we gained 82 members. Our largest increase was seen in 2007 with 132 additions to the Society!

Today, the membership rolls show 521 active members. In January 2010 alone, we have 17 new memberships, including one Life Member!

Most of the memberships come from the United States as would be expected. Canada comes in second, with 103, and Germany with 71. In all, 18 foreign countries have been represented, adding Australia, Austria, the Bahamas, Brazil, Denmark, France, Israel, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and Venezuela to the list.

Currently, there are 191 life memberships on record. Other than the US, our life memberships come from Canada (11), Germany (6), and one each from the United Kingdom, Australia, Austria, and Spain.

From the number of countries of our members, it is evident that Bukovina descendents have spread all over the world. The BSA website is where they meet to learn about the history and culture about our ancestors and to re-connect family ties. Thanks to the members who have generously made their genealogy research available to us, and to volunteers who graciously donate their time and talents in Ellis, Kansas, and around the country and the globe, the Bukovina Society is thriving. How many are we? We are many!

Armbrüster Family Association established in Framersheim, West Germany, in 1963

by Irmgard Hein Ellingson (Decorah, IA)

The *Familienverband Armbrüster*, or the Armbrüster Family Association, was organized in West Germany in 1963.

Recently Lisa Baker, a longtime Bukovina Society member, forwarded a copy of the organization's *Mitteilung Nr. 44 2008* to the editor of the Bukovina Society newsletter. The *Familienverband* was kind enough to allow us to publish translated excerpts about their organization and newsletter. This article incorporates some of that material as well as supplemental information that I have provided.

Inside the *Mitteilungen* cover, the names and addresses of various leaders are listed beneath the heading *Impresum*. These include Brigitte Armbrüster, the *1. Vorsitzende* or chairperson; Petra Armbrüster, the *Stellvertrende Vorsitzende* or vice chairperson; Jürgen Armbrüster, the *Geschäftsführung (Gesamtvorstand, Stellvertretend)* or business manager; and Kai Armbrüster, the *Kassenverwaltung* or financial administrator.

The issue begins on page 2 with *Aus der Forschung*, or "From the Research." A translated excerpt: *Pastor Johannes Armbrüster, tax payer, a note in the Grünberg City Acts (continued from Heft 42/2006): "My dear father Johannes ... had attained Bürgerrecht, or the rights of a citizen, in Grünberg through marriage and the acquisition of a house and land." This is reported by Pastor Jeremias Armbrüster in 1622, still during the lifetime of his father. I found an accompanying document for this statement in the course of research in Grünberg in the summer of 2006. There in the city tax lists I found an entry from the time around 1585. Our ancestor had to probably pay taxes on his land in order to establish his garden in the Untergasse, or "Lower Street." This entry*

leads to an interesting, but complicated, special research area: monetary amounts ... Grünberg is located in Hesse-Darmstadt: <http://www.gruenberg.de/>. Within several generations, descendants lived in Framersheim, Kreis Alzey, in the Rhineland Palatinate (see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Framersheim> and <http://www.framersheim.de.alzeyland.de/fa/index.php>). It was from Framersheim that the descendant Anton Armbrüster and his wife Anna Katharina Weiss immigrated to Galicia in 1783. Within a few weeks, their married son Johann Daniel Armbrüster with his first wife Anna Maria Ort and their married daughter Anna Margaretha Armbrüster with her husband Adam Wendling followed them. All were settled in Illischestie, Bukovina, in 1788.

Page 2 of the 2008 *Mitteilung* continues with *Aus dem Verband - Der Jubiläums-Familientag am 3. und 4. September 1988 in Framersheim*. This is a look back at the organization's 9th *Familientag*, or family day, held in Framersheim on Sept. 3 and 4, 1988. Of particular significance to Bukovina Society readers is this excerpt.

"... The 1988 *Heft*, or Journal, contains *Armbrüster in Übersee*, or "Armbrüsters Abroad," an interesting contribution to a continuing theme in our newsletters.

"Ulrich Armbrüster reported about a surprise visit made to him in Framersheim by Robert and Cathryne Kerth and their friends from Beaman in the USA [translator's note: no state was given in the article].

"The Kerths were among the early emigrants from the *Pfalz*, or the Rhineland Palatinate, to Bukovina. We find, for example, Anna Barbara Kerth from Waldgrehweiler by Rockenhausen [translator's note: Waldgrehweiler is now incorporated within the *Donnersbergkreis*

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donnersbergkreis>]. She came to Illischestie, Bukovina, in the year 1788 as an *Erzinslerin*, or settler endowed with inheritance rights. We recognize Luise Kerth as the wife of Adam Armbrüster (born 1828) and Therese Kerth as the wife of Heinrich Armbrüster (born 1830), both of whom were pastors in Illischestie [translator's note: Adam and Heinrich were the sons of Johann Daniel Armbrüster and his second wife Catharina Zachmann. I have not found any documentation that identifies either as a pastor. In the book *Illischestie, A Rural Parish in Bukovina: Primary Source Material for Family History*, longtime Illischestie schoolmaster and researcher Johann Christian Dressler identifies Adam as the owner of the inn at Illischestie House #291.].

"The Kerth family had male lines as well. Various Kerth families remained in Bukovina, were resettled to Germany in 1940, and four young men who bore the family name died in battle in World War II. Others immigrated to the United States in about 1900. Their

descendants included the visitor Robert Kerth, who came to the ancestral village in 1988. For years I conducted a stimulating correspondence with his brother Roy [Aust Kerth], an enthusiastic family researcher. He could not attend the *Familientag* 1988 because he was already very ill.

“Prompted by Uli’s report, Christian Armbrüster of Berlin took up contact with Bob Kerth and described a lively visit to him in Las Vegas in the 1992 *Heft*.

“The reports regarding contacts with relatives in various countries, above all in the USA and Canada, have stretched out across the years. They began in 1969 when Pastor Ludwig Hartmann from Canada met with our *Vorstand*, or board of directors, in Worms, and then our treasurer Rudolf visited him in Canada that same year, and continue to the report of the chairperson who reported about her visit to the Canadian relatives at the *Familientag* 2007.

“So we can look back across 40 years during which time our members have again and again reported their contacts with relatives outside of Germany, and thereby have expanded our historical and contemporary perspectives of our entire family.

“Perhaps others will find an opportunity to share their encounters, experiences, and perceptions with all of us.”

Reise in die Bukowina, a report of a trip to Bukovina by Brigitte Armbrüster, whose parents and older siblings had been born there, appears on pages 4-7. In her introduction, she notes that she and her father made the trip in 1972 and then in 1988, she went with her mother, her aunt (mother’s sister), and her niece (her sister’s daughter).

Elsewhere is a report about *Leben und arbeiten in Ungarn*, life and work in Hungary. Armbrüsters were, and are, found literally all over Europe, the USA, and Canada.

If you are interested in an annual membership, please send your name and postal address with street or post office, city, state, zip- or postal code, and country with 5 Euros. Additional donations are welcome. The bank connection:

Armbrüster-Familienverband

Konto-Nr. 2730103

Bankleitzahl 55091200

Volksbank Alzey – Zweigstelle Gau-Odernheim

BUKOVINA REVISITED

by Michael Augustin (Leonberg, Germany)

“I never would have thought you would be returning to Bukovina so soon,” my friend Roland noted as we were

at breakfast in our small boarding house in Gurahumora (Gura Humorului). “Nor did I,” I replied. How did this happen? In search of my roots I undertook my first trip to Bukovina with three friends in October 2008 during which we enjoyed many pleasant and interesting experiences. In early September of this year I was overcome – perhaps influenced by the approaching autumn weather – by a spontaneous yearning and additionally by an indescribable desire again to see this beautiful land with its people and tourist attractions. But can one repeat a trip with such a plethora of emotions a second time without of necessity experiencing disappointment? I called Roland, our last year’s guide, and learned that he was already planning to return to his house in Suczawa (Suceava) but was also prepared again to undertake a tour with us. The details were quickly settled: I still had sufficient vacation time, there were reasonable flights (c. 300 euros per person) from Frankfurt via Bucharest to Suczawa, and our rooms at the boarding house of the Corelaru family were available. Now there remained only the question of who would be participating. In that my wife, Baerbel, spontaneously expressed her desire to accompany me pleased me greatly, and my Uncle Franz Augustin from Duisburg, who was born in Ober-Horodnik (Horodnic de Sus) in December 1938 but had never returned to Romania, had been constantly pressing me to undertake a trip with him to his homeland. He accepted my suggestion without hesitation despite the fact that his wife could not accompany him during the time under consideration. Thus the question of the fellow travelers was resolved.

The first phase of the trip proceeded without incident with the exception of a scheduled five-hour layover in Bucharest so that we arrived in Suczawa at 10:30 p.m. and reached our boarding house close to midnight. Nonetheless, our hostess, Vioruca, had prepared a sumptuous meal for us. The next morning we strolled through Gurahumora and concluded that nothing much had changed since our last visit including the presence of a large construction site at the bridge over the Humor Stream. We paid a short visit to the German Forum, where we were hospitably received and shown the building’s facilities (guest room, library, meeting rooms, etc.). Afternoons were spent in Stulpikany (Stulpicani), Negrileasa and even in the former German settlement of Schwarzthal (Vadul Negrilesei), accessible only via a road in very poor condition. Aside from the landscape and the villages themselves, we were interested in the churches and cemeteries where we photographed the still existing German graves.

The following Saturday we wished to visit relatives. At this point I must mention that my paternal grandmother (Viktoria, nee Branza) had had a brother Mihai, whose

descendants today live in Solka (Solca). My Aunt Traudl in Germany still maintains contact with her first cousin Constantin (Costica) and his family and had already signaled our visit. Unfortunately Costica was in the hospital that day so that we only got to know his wife Veronica and his son Viorel as well as his wife and some neighbors. The family runs a grocery store and a small café on the main street of Solka. We were very graciously received and agreed that we would return after Costica's discharge from the hospital the following week. The remainder of the day was spent touring the cemeteries and churches in Arbora (Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox monastery churches) as well as the church and the salt mines in Kaczyka (Cacica). At the cemetery of this famous pilgrimage site we had a special stroke of luck: here we sought and found the tombstone of the salt miner Franz Augustyn (31.01.1827 – 16.04.1883) for whom I have still not identified parents despite my extensive databank.

Sunday morning we visited Fürstenthal, this time on a sunny day. Mr. Zaremba, the owner of the lumberyard, recalled our visit of one year ago and took the time not only proudly to show us his installation but also the cemetery, the old school, and the old German houses. Sadly we learned that his mother, Josefa nee Gaschler, had died in February and was laid to rest under the cemetery's large fir tree. We were invited to have lunch at the Suczewitza (Suceavița) monastery after which we had a tour by a German-speaking guide. The day ended with a visit to Ober-Horodnik, the birthplace of my Uncle Franz, where we also spent some time at the cemetery. There we found no German graves but did see an old wooden church, which gave a very good indication of how the first houses of worship might have looked before they were constructed of stone.

Although the weather was pleasant the following Monday, we spent the better part of the day in the Suczawa Archive. In the late afternoon we toured the city, the famous church of the George monastery (1514-22) and afterwards the stately ruins of the fortification of the 15th century Moldavian princes.

For Tuesday morning we had planned a visit to the weekly farmers' market in Gurahumora, which was more frequented this year than last and provided numerous sights and scenes worth photographing. We then went to the cemetery and later to a type of amusement park



Weekly farmers market in Gurahumora

at the border of the city where extensive construction including that of a ski lift and swimming pool is taking place. As the day drew to a close our host, Vasile Corelaru had organized a special treat for us through his social connections: a drive of about one hour in a very nice open coach drawn through the forest in rapid gait by genuine Lipizzan horses along a narrow-gauge railroad track dating from the Austrian era.

In the meantime we learned that Costica had been discharged from the hospital. We paid him and his wife a visit and accompanied him to the cemetery in Solka (Solca), where, among others, he showed us the grave of his parents. Naturally the visit lasted longer than we had planned, but we still had time in the afternoon for a visit to Rădăuțz (Radauti) and reached the city before sunset and after the rain clouds had dissipated.

On Thursday we paid an unannounced visit to the Moldowitza (Moldovița) monastery where we had the opportunity to see not only the monastery itself as well as its adjacent stables, farm equipment, cattle, etc. When the abbess learned that guests of Mr. Corelaru were here on a visit, she did not let the opportunity escape her of greeting us with wine and cake. We then proceeded to a mountainside pasture (Romanian: *stina*). In contrast to the pasture we saw on our last visit, this one lay off to the side in the forest and had remained in a pristine state. And here we were served a native liqueur called *zuika* and lamb cooked in a vessel over an open fire in a seasoned sauce with cheese and *mamaliga* (corn meal mush), which we consumed without the slightest consideration of how one could digest this highly caloric meal.



Michael Augustin cooking lamb in the open fire pot

Two things are here of worthy mention: one was a brood of young sheep dogs, which especially impressed my wife, and the other was fact that the owner of the *stina*, who used a 1.5 meter-long trumpet-like wind instrument to communicate with shepherds across the wide distances, could play it like a virtuoso. After we had begun to recover from our "fatiguing" meal, we undertook yet another extended walk to the village of Bori (Boureni), which from our boarding house lies about one hour by foot between Kloștër Humora (Manastirea Humorului) and Gurahumora.

Friday was our last day in Bukovina. The weather was

markedly cooler and autumnal. We used the morning for shopping and my wife went to the beauty parlor. In the afternoon we toured the two monasteries in the vicinity, namely those in Voroneț (Voroneț) and Kloster Humora. The day drew to a close with a long walk to a valley off the beaten path behind the community of Kloster Humora.

Of our return trip it remains to be said that we had to be ready for departure very early on Saturday, that all went as scheduled, that we arrived in Frankfurt shortly before noon, and that at 3:00 p.m. we were again at home in Leonberg.

This trip, which not only went according to plan but was especially enjoyable and interesting, was on a par in hospitality and congeniality with that of one year ago. However, the reader will no doubt discern that for the perfect execution and the unending complexity of our experiences we owe a debt of gratitude to our tour guide, Roland Loy. Without Roland's organizational talent, linguistic abilities, and familiarity with the area, as well as his connections especially to the Corelaru family and their further contacts and hospitality, this trip would not have been so rewarding and successful.

AN INTERNET PLATFORM FOR THE ASSOCIATION OF BUKOVINA GERMANS

by Emilian Fedorowysch and Alfred Wanza



Alfred Wanza (l) and Emilian Fedorowysch (r) in the boardinghouse of the Sava family in Pojoritta (south Bukovina)

During our trip through the homeland of our parents we - Alfred Wanza from Lower Saxony and Emilian Fedorowysch from North Rhine-Westphalia - contemplated ways in which to keep viable Bukovina's fascinating past and unique cultural characteristics as they pertain to its German population. Aware that the generation which had lived through these experiences is steadily decreasing, we feel it necessary to preserve this gripping and exceptional history in order to bring it closer to all whom it may interest. Fully cognizant that a vast amount of literature about Bukovina has already been published and is also widely accessible via the Internet, we wish to present a compact overview of Bukovina's history in a German language

forum for the friends of Bukovina in order also to awaken the interest of the younger generation. Happily the *Landmannschaft der Buchenlanddeutschen* (Association of Bukovina Germans) headquartered in Augsburg concurs with this concept. Thus we are now able to present the results of our earlier work on our web site: www.bukowinafreunde.de. Since Bukovina Germans are scattered throughout the world, it would advance the cause of this platform if they and those interested in the area would consolidate their efforts. Genealogy is one very important approach to Bukovinian studies readily lending itself to collaboration. Bukovinian genealogists can be found in Germany, the United States, Canada, Brazil and in other countries as well. Our new Internet site offers an opportunity for furthering this endeavor.

University facilities such as those of the Bukowina-Institut at the Augsburg University as well as the Bukovina research centers at the university of Czernowitz (north Bukovina) and the Academia Romana Institutul "Bukovina", Radauti (south Bukovina) are continuously involved with research on Bukovina's past happenings. In the Habsburg era almost a dozen ethnic groups of several religious persuasions lived peaceably and productively together in respectable economic circumstances with a functional administrative and school system, budding cultural associations and a lot of different trade unions, a widely diversified and engaged press, a provincial diet which replicated the national parliament in Vienna: in brief, a Europe in miniature in a territory of 10,442 square kilometers. Such an advanced political and social structure actually existed!

The history, the total cultural spectrum, the scenic beauty, and the renowned Bukovinian hospitality and fellowship should facilitate a mutual examination of the realities of this land. The political opening of the East makes possible the sharing of knowledge and contributes to a deeper understanding, contacts, toleration, and wholesome togetherness of its people.

Gladly would we welcome the strengthening our contacts with our compatriots and their family members in Bukovina through the use of the modern media. Perhaps we shall find support through articles such as this. It would be excellent if in this way a bond for upholding the Bukovina spirit could be established.

We are in fact the initiators of this concept although it is also clear to us that for the successful development of our work some support is necessary. We reach out to all interested parties who identify with these objectives and invite them to join us in a mutual effort. There are many areas

to explore; e.g., the Internet, the Electronic Data Interchange, culture, history, genealogy, student exchange, sponsorship and financial support to name but a few. We would be pleased to have you collaborate with us. Please let us know how we can work together. You may contact us at our e-mail address buchenland@bukowinafreunde.de as indicated on our web site.

We appreciate the opportunity the Bukovina Society of the Americas has given us to present this article in an edition of their *Newsletter* and wish to take this opportunity to congratulate the Society on the twentieth anniversary of its founding.

DESTINATIONS IN THE NEW WORLD

by: Martha McClelland (Hays, KS)

In the summer of 2009, Karen Hoeft of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada contacted the Bukovina Society of the Americas inquiring of her Schoenthaler ancestors. She has been researching her family roots and seeking other members of the Schoenthaler family. I saw this as an opportunity to share the history of my Great Grandfather Adam Schoenthaler. Karen also mentioned that she planned to travel through Kansas in the fall and we made arrangements to meet on September 28, 2009 at the Society headquarters in Ellis.

Both of us recalled our family histories and stories that were handed down over time. We found that her Great Grandmother, Maria (Schoenthaler) Ast and my Great Grandfather, Adam Schoenthaler were brother and sister. Her Great Grandparents, Christian and Maria (Schoenthaler) Ast left Hamburg, Germany on May 23, 1890. Their ship, the *Northenden*, arrived at Port of Grimsby. They came with 6 children, John, Frank, Franziska, Jacob, Katharina, and Maria. They settled in Edenwold, Saskatchewan where they farmed. Other children born after settlement were Christian, Fritz, Caroline, Fridrich, Ludwig, Adam and Louise. The influenza that swept through Saskatchewan in their early years took a grave toll on the family.

The Lutheran Churches that served the people of the Edenwold area were St. John's, St. Peter's and Immanuel's Evangelical Lutheran Church. A group of board members from the Bukovina Society traveled to Saskatchewan in May of 1991 to make presentations to the Bukovina colonies around Regina, from which the Society has numerous members. One of their last stops was at St. John's Lutheran Church. Like St. John's north of Ellis, this church was a short distance from town and was strikingly similar.

The Kansans and their Canadian cousins sang German songs and shared stories of their common heritage.

Three years after Christian & Maria (Schoenthaler) Ast's successful settlement in the New World, it lured Adam and Maria (Hoffman) Schoenthaler to immigrate, although they decided to go to Ellis. The six children on the trip were Adam "Ed", Louise, Johanna "Jennie", Joseph, Wendell and Fredrich. They traveled by railroad to Bremen, Germany where they boarded the ship *SS Gera* on June 8, 1893. They sailed through the English Channel and across the Atlantic Ocean, arriving in Baltimore, Maryland on June 21, 1893. The trip was over 4000 miles and took 13 days. Passports & fare for the family cost approximately \$1,000. Once again they boarded a train to travel across the US only to be delayed at St. Joseph, Missouri by the birth of a seventh child, daughter Caroline, on June 24, 1893. Time was not wasted because they arrived in Ellis, on June 27, 1893. Three more boys, Ernest, John, & Richard were born in the USA.

Adam was a man who meant business, purchasing his first quarter section of property on July 31, 1893, northwest of Ellis. At the time of purchase, there were only a few buildings and a dug-out home on it. Adam and the older sons proceeded to quarry limestone and build a home. It was a two story structure, mostly still standing today. Other out-buildings were added, all at the hands of Adam and his family. Adam knew this was his promised land and that he intended to spend the rest of his life here so he applied for citizenship on October 28, 1893. He and his family were naturalized on September 25, 1901. Three children were born after settlement, John, Ernest and Richard.

Adam was a firm believer of the Lutheran faith and helped organize the St. John's Lutheran Church, founded on August 8, 1897. The charter members were, William Homburg, Adam Schoenthaler, John Huber, Wendell Zachman, Michael Keller, Caroline Konig, Phillip Zervas, Jacob Schoenthaler, William Wendling, Gustav Switzer, G. Joswakowsky, George Huber, Jacob Ast, Ernest Hamburg and John Kerth.

Through the years I was aware a sister of Adam had immigrated to Canada but never dreamed that I would ever meet one of the descendants in person. It is very exciting to me to discover the similar beliefs and traditions that were carried to their new homes in Canada and the US. It certainly bears out that traditions follow families wherever they locate.