

# The Bukovina Society of the Americas NEWSLETTER

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Membership Dues:  
Lifetime \$150.00  
Annual \$15.00

## A BLESSED CHRISTMAS TO ALL

### PEOPLE AND EVENTS

- Welcome to our newest life member # 200, Mike Richter of Niederbipp, Switzerland. Because life membership dues income pays for basic operations of the Society, we can continue to provide annual membership for only \$15.00 per year, unchanged in our 20 year history. This is an unheard of bargain for services such as the Newsletter, private content on our website and periodic free programs. Life memberships ensure that the story of Bukovina will be preserved. So thank you to all of our life members for your support of the Bukovina Society! As we welcome Mike, we look forward to welcoming more "lifers"!
- The Bukovina Society building is physically located in Ellis, Kansas, a town of about 2000 inhabitants. Our headquarters and museum space is generously supported in part by the City of Ellis and by the Ellis Arts and Historical Society, owners of the historic First Congregational Church building. We have no paid staff, but a handful of loyal volunteers in Ellis make sure that the bills are paid, the newsletters are mailed, the museum is maintained, and the store is supplied and orders shipped. Scattered across the globe and connected to the Society by the internet, volunteers provide untold amounts of service to people with a Bukovina interest, including graciously sharing their own genealogical research, submitting articles for the newsletter, and maintaining the Bukovina Society website, making our shared Bukovina history and culture accessible to people worldwide. The Bukovina Society is in a small rural town in Kansas, more importantly, it is in 20 other countries...it is

wherever YOU are. You are, we all are, the Bukovina Society.

- In the September 2011 issue of the Newsletter, two articles reported on the Augustine family reunion in Canada. Juanita Augustine of Ellis, Kansas has made numerous trips to Canada and has served as host to Canadian visitors. She sent the names to us of others who attended the reunion. From Hays, Kansas, Daryl and Sandy Augustine, Jeff and Judy Augustine, and Duane and Mary Lang. From Denison, Texas, Gene Augustine. From Bixby, Oklahoma, Connie (Mrs. Art) Augustine. From Wichita, Kansas, Viola McFeeters. From Ellis, Norma Lang, Viola Burns, Annette and Mark Elles, Gilbert and Janet Augustine and Juanita Augustine.

### NEWS FROM ABROAD: DER SÜDOSTDEUTSCHE

By: Irmgard Hein Ellingson

Der Südostdeutsche, or SOD, is the newspaper published by our sister organization, the Bukowina-Institut in Augsburg, Germany. It is edited by our colleague Luzian Geier. The Bukovina Society of the Americas is pleased to share some highlights with our English-speaking readers.

July-August 2011

The death of Dr. Otto von Habsburg, son of the last Austro-

Hungarian emperor, was reported in the previous issue of the Bukovina Society newsletter. His biography and the text of a letter of condolence sent to the House of Habsburg by the Landsmannschaft der Buchenlanddeutschen e.V. were featured in the July-August 2011 issue of the SOD.

In "Eine Wallfahrt nach Kaczika," or "A Pilgrimage to Kaczika," Sebastian Blazy of Nienhagen (Niedersachsen/Germany) recalled some of the stories that his grandmother, Rosa Poellmann Baumgartner of Fürstenthal, had told him about the annual pilgrimage to Kaczika [Kaczyka, Cacica], on August 15, the Feast of the Assumption of Mary. Thousands of pilgrims continue to come from abroad for this event every year. Blazy traveled there in 2010 and in this article, he describes the Roman Catholic church, now elevated to the status of a basilica, the grotto behind the church, the main altar in the sanctuary, and its famous Black Madonna. A plaque commemorates the visit of Pope John Paul II, who was among the pilgrims in 2007.

"Zwei Schwestern auf Spurensuche in der Bukowina," or "Two Sisters Trace Roots in Bukovina," relates an April 2011 trip made by Gabi Schwartz and her sister Maria made to northern Bukovina, now in the Chernivtsy oblast in Ukraine. They visited Komaresti (Comarestie), where their father Josef Manasterski was born in 1930. Outside the school that he had attended, they encountered the school director and her husband, who introduced them to two of Josef's former classmates. These men accompanied them as they toured the school, the Orthodox Church, and cemetery, and then escorted them to the former home of their grandfather Marian Manasteriski. This is located on the village's highest ground and from it, they could view the fields and meadows and wooded lands that had belonged to him. They also visited the site of the Ziegelei, or brickworks, built by him. Gabi and Maria went from Komaresti to the villages of Jadowa (Zadowa) and Petrouz, where they had a wonderful chance encounter with a relative of their paternal grandmother, Anna nee Brodowski.

The article "Kurzbesuch in Baintz – eine kleine Chronik" describes the houses, church, and cemetery in Baintz (Baint, formerly Baintii or Baince), located about a kilometer from the Ukrainian border. It is just northeast of Fratautz or northwest of St. Onufry in the Suceava district of Romania.

A recent visit to Augsburg by the Romanian Foreign Minister, various other reports, and a list of birthday greetings complete the issue.

## September 2011

Josef Baumgartner of Wolfsburg (Niedersachsen/Germany) was born in Fürstenthal, Bukovina, just before the outbreak of World War I. His recent 100th birthday was the occasion for preparing his biography, which was then published for SOD readers. Herr Baumgartner is the uncle of Sebastian Blazy, the author of "Eine Wallfahrt nach Kaczika" (see above).

The 17th annual Armbrüster-Treffen, or Armbruster Reunion, was held in Framersdorf, the family's ancestral village in the Pfalz, in September 2011. Participants in this event, held in alternate years, include those still living there as well as others from Frankfurt am Main and members of the families who immigrated to Bukovina. More about the Treffen as well as genealogical material and photos is online at <http://www.armbruester-familienverband.de/>.

Marias Lebensgeschichte is an autobiography by Maria (nee Loy) O'Brien of Pearl River, New York. She begins, "On 9 September 1940, I first saw the light of the world in Paltinossa, Bukovina (today in Romania) as the third of four children of Adam and Cäcilie Loy. Fate would have it that I was the last member of my large family to be born in Bukovina. In November of that same year, the entire German population of Bukovina was resettled in the German Reich. This event ended 140 years of building and development by the Loy family, whose ancestors Adam and Eva Loy had moved to Bukovina from Gollnitz in the Zips (Spis in modern Slovakia) in the early 1800s. I never returned to the village of my birth and probably never will."

## October 2011

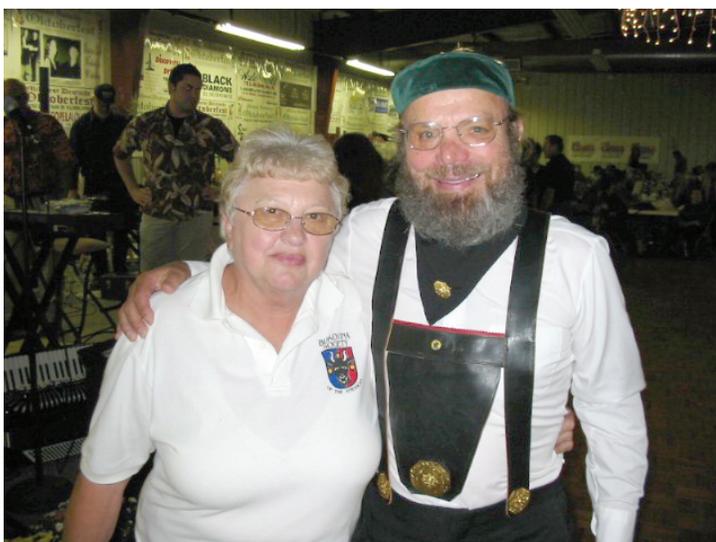
The second of two study/research trips hosted in 2011 by the Bukowina-Institut took place in September. This issue of SOD featured the first installment of a travel report titled, *Eine wunderschöne Studien- und Erlebnisreise, zu den Wurzeln und auf Spurensuche in beiden Gebieten der Bukowina*, written by Luzian Geier of the Bukowina-Institut. Twenty Canadians and Americans, including an Argentinean living in the US, joined eleven Germans for the two-week trip to parts of Bukovina now located in the Suceava judetul (county) of Romania and the Chernivtsy oblast (district) of Ukraine. With them as interpreter/translator was a Swiss woman with American citizenship and Bukovina roots. Included in this installment are visits to the churches and cemeteries in Jakobeny, Gura Humora Eisenau, Arbore, Solka, Illischestie, Cacica, Glitt, Marginea, and Radautz, as well as to the Voronetz and Moldavitza monasteries,

General Consul Juri Jarmilko and Consul Petro Peretiatko, both of the General Consulate of Ukraine in Munich, vis-

ited the Bukowina-Institut in Augsburg in September 2011 and are pictured with Otto Friedrich Hallabrin, the Institut's business manager. This was the General Consul's first visit to the Institut and the first by a General Consulate representative in more than a dozen years.

Bukovina's cemeteries are the subject of the illustrated article *Friedhofs in Buchenland; Beginn einer Bestandaufnahme* by Nicole Rieskamp. A translated excerpt: "Generally speaking, no cemetery maps are available. Therefore I began by walking up and down the cemetery rows in search of German inscriptions and names. This was a very difficult, tedious task because the city/town cemeteries are packed so full of graves that apart from a main walkway, there are no paths or rows to walk. In addition, most of the village cemeteries are not mowed so that I waded through hip-high grass. In places, old rose and lilac bushes have grown together to the extent that it is not possible to walk there ... I left the cemeteries, pleased with what I had found but disturbed by neglect and evident destruction." The article continues with brief reports about conditions in the Suceava (Suczawa), Itzkany (Catholic-Orthodox), Dornesti, Sereth, St. Onufry, Alt-Fratatz, Radautz, Dorna Watra (Catholic), Jakobeny, Ludwigsdorf [Kirlibaba], Frassin, Stulpikany, and Gura Humora cemeteries.

Please feel free to contact me with questions about any of these issues /or articles.



Society President Marcy McClellan at the Oktoberfest with special guest Gary Wiltscheck.

## BOHEMIAN GERMAN CONNECTION

By: O. M. Windholz

For some 10 years, I have enjoyed frequent contact with members of the Bohemian German Heritage Society of New Ulm, MN. The impetus was our common heritage in Bohemia, part the Austrian Empire.

Many founders of Pojana Mikuli, my maternal ancestral village in Bukovina, were emigrants from Bohemia. In the late 1800s, Bohemian emigrants settled in New Ulm just as Bohemian Germans from Bukovina arrived in Ellis, Kansas. Several of my Bohemian cousins in Ellis, are here as the result of a few of the New Ulm residents relocating.

The Pfeifer name is a second personal connection that I have with the Bohemian Germans in New Ulm. For example, the Pfeiffers there were immigrants from Ulm, Germany. Since Magdalena Pfeifer Windholz was my Volga German great-grandmother, I may have a few cousins in New Ulm.



Gary Wiltscheck and his wife Ann with Leo and Viola Dorzweiler at Oktoberfest 2011.

The Bohemian German Heritage Society and the Bukovina Society have exchanged speakers, research, and music at conventions and symposiums. George Glotzbach visited our community last year to learn about our Ellis County German heritage and promised to continue to share our story in New Ulm. This led to Gary Wiltscheck, an officer of the BGHS, attending Oktoberfest 2011 in Hays.

The latest and a most significant connection involves several news articles on the dedication and blessing of a historical marker in honor of the Rev. Valentine Sommereisen

at the Church of St. Joseph in New Ulm on May 25, 2011. Rev. Sommereisen was the first resident priest to minister to the Volga German settlements. He was born in Rouffach, Alsace, and came to Minnesota, where he was ordained in 1856. Rev. Sommereisen ministered to a large area in Minnesota, and was involved in Indian and military ministry. In 1871, he departed for the Dakota Territories, and as the marker states, "On one occasion in 1873, he provided services as chaplain to General George Armstrong Custer on his Yellowstone Expedition."

Rev. Sommereisen was the first resident priest to minister to the Volga German settlements in Ellis County, Kansas. The marker in New Ulm notes his 1876 appointment to Hays, Kansas, and his interment in St. Joseph's Cemetery there. He is buried in the Haffamier family plot. Michael Haffamier was a friend and administrator of Rev. Sommereisen's estate. Curiously his name appears as Sommereison on the grave marker. Gary Wiltscheck visited the gravesite before Oktoberfest for photos to take back to their Society and for their newsletter, the Heimatbrief.

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## THE 2011 MT. ANGEL TREFFEN: BUKOVINA SOCIETY BOARD MEMBER AT DANUBE SWABIAN GATHERING

By: Irmgard Hein Ellingson

The Donauschwaben are the Germans who settled in and around the Pannonian (Danubian) Plain after the Austrian Habsburgs defeated the Ottoman Turks. Beginning in the mid- to late 1600s, the Habsburgs recruited German-speakers from the German principalities, France, Switzerland, and other parts of their empire to settle the newly acquired lands. Because groups of them traveled down the Danube (Donau in German) from Ulm in Swabia (Schwaben) to Vienna, they became known as the Donauschwaben. They settled in the central Hungarian highlands, "Swabian Turkey," Sathmar, the Banat, and Batscka. After World War I, these areas were ceded to Hungary, Romania, and Yugoslavia.

Today Danube Swabian clubs are found in Chicago, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Akron, Toledo, Detroit, Los Angeles, Milwaukee, Philadelphia, St. Louis, Trenton and other American cities and Kitchener, Toronto, Windsor and other Canadian cities. The clubs serve as cultural and social centers for the Donauschwaben in North America.

The online Banat Mailing List, organized in 1995, con-

tinues to serve as a forum for those interested in Danube Swabian history, customs, and genealogy. In 2000, some of the list's West Coast participants decided to meet in person. They selected Mt. Angel, Oregon, with its Oktoberfest and Donauschwaben Heritage Festival, as the perfect venue and by the end of the event, the annual tradition of the Mt. Angel Treffen, or meeting, had been launched.

Mt. Angel, located 18 miles northeast of Salem, was founded by German settlers in the late 1800s. The Bavarian-style storefronts and beautiful Benedictine Abbey provide an ideal Old World air for the annual Oktoberfest, Oregon's largest folk festival, which always begins on the second Thursday after Labor Day. From the Abbey, built on a bluff high above the town by Swiss Benedictine monks in 1883, one can see Mt. St. Helens, Mt. Hood and Mt. Adams, as well as the Willamette Valley. The monastery's beautiful library stores a priceless collection of illuminated manuscripts and features a display of rare, hand-printed books.

Presenters and topics at the 2011 Mt. Angel Treffen included

- Ray Borschowa: "Land Survey of Georgshausen"
- Rosina T. Schmidt: "Emigration to Southeast Europe as of 1720"
- Karen Dalton Preston "Writing the St. Hubert Family Book - Lessons Learned"
- Irmgard Hein Ellingson: "Austria-Hungary: The Habsburg Heart of Europe"
- Henry A. Fischer: "A Funny Thing Happened to Me While I Was Researching the Danube Swabians"
- Dr. John M. Michels: "Partisans and Communist Repression and Crimes in Slavonia, Syrmia & Baranya" - Book Review
- Eduard Grünwald: "A Boy From Werschetz Comes to America"
- David Preston: "Genealogy Research in the 21st Century"

Film presentations included a preview of "Millions Cried, No One Listened" and of "Danube Swabians - A Film" by Marko Cvejic. A goulash-cooking class was hosted by Leah Augustin Ott, who is Bukovina German as well as Danube Swabian. At next year's event, she plans to host a cabbage rolling bee (translation: Galusky!) on Friday for the Saturday lunch.

The next Mt. Angel Treffen will take place during Oktoberfest on September 13-16, 2012. To read about the Treffen, go to <http://www.danube-swabians.org/treffen/>. To learn more about Mt. Angel and its Oktoberfest, go to <http://www.mtangel.org/> and <http://www.oktoberfest.org/>.

# STRAJA: A COMMUNITY AND EARLIER LARGE ESTATE

## A CHRONICLE OF A LESSER-KNOWN BUKOVINA LOCALITY

By: Luzian Geier

If looking for "Straja" in earlier reference works of the 19th and early 20th centuries, one also finds it written as Strazia, or in Ruthenian, Straza, which in Old Slavic means Wach [German] = alert, or Warte [German] = watch tower) These were the various names of a community in the densely wooded upper territory of the former district of Radautz, which also included a privately administered estate in the vicinity inhabited almost exclusively by German Catholics numbering 68 in around 1900. It was a rather large estate for this region, with a surface area at that time of 47.95 square kilometers. In the community itself there lived only a few Germans, most of them immigrant craftsmen. But for a time Falkau, where a larger number of Germans resided, was also administratively linked with Straja.

The village community of Straja itself lies on the left bank of the Suceava River, so that the area was often overwhelmed by massive floods, the last time in 2008, which brought great devastation. The village bordered mostly on the community of Ober-Wikow (Vicovul de Sus). In the 19th century until the end of World War I the community was only half as large as the estate of Straja (26.42 square kilometers). On the other hand the forest community's population of 2896 in 1895 showed a noticeable absolute majority of Orthodox Romanians who had been there from earlier times or had recently migrated from Transylvania plus Jews and Germans, who constituted only a small number. In a Bukovina address book for 1908 (Vienna) the number of inhabitants is given as 3634 plus 46 on the estate. Here a forestry and domain administration had its seat; there was a post office, a railroad, a telegraph station and a savings and loan bank. Trade in the community lay almost exclusively in Jewish hands (a butcher, three grocers, three retail dealers, seven saloon keepers, wholesalers, two innkeepers, etc.) The Germans were the craftsmen (blacksmiths Ferdinand Mirwald, Friedrich Zachmann, Schuster, Andreas Geisler, Franz Geisler, Anton Korbel, etc.) Until the First World War the community was under the civil and military jurisdiction of Radautz. The first reference to a one-room school dates from 1860, which remained operational until 1869. In 1955 there followed the opening of the first Kindergarten.

Important economically was the railroad line (today Suceava-Nisipitu), which lies on the right side of the river,

originally only a short connection to Dornesti (Hadikfalva)-Frassin, and the district's main road which ran from Ober-Wikow to Schipot. This made possible the founding of a well-known sawmill. For a time a cementing furnace was also operated with success. Nonetheless, it closed by the end of the 19th century, as did the mill for the processing of sounding boards a short time later. The most important lines of business were in forestry and animal husbandry, in particular the raising of sheep. Land usage was as follows: 400 hectares for farming, 995 hectares for hay fields, 386 hectares with right of pasturage and pasturage, 13 hectares for gardens, and 5367 hectares of forests. For 1905 the animal count was as follows: 1823 horned cattle, 1665 sheep, 687 pigs, 178 horses and 160 bee swarms.

During the interwar period were added the sawmill "Bukovina," a quarry operated by the Religious Foundation, a consumers' cooperative and two mills. According to the census of 1930 the community had 4662/4653?? inhabitants including 4338 Romanians, 137 Germans, 134 Jews, 29 Russians and 15 Poles, [= 4653] 145 were Catholics, 145 Protestants (AB) 13???? At this time the community was in the "Judet" of Radautz. As frontier territory the community sustained heavy losses through hostilities during both world wars, since the military front passed through it.

The community which had existed since the Middle Ages, which had for a long time belonged to the monastery of Punta and an Orthodox Romanian parish church, had until the outbreak of World War I only a four-class grammar school and an Orthodox Romanian parish church dedicated to the ascension of the Virgin Mary whose feast day is celebrated on August 15. Here the large community in the district of Suceava includes 5300 inhabitants and its perimeter encompasses 45 square kilometers. In the north Straja borders on Ukraine. Today the asphalt street 209 Radautz-Brodina passes through the community. Rail connection has been disrupted since the flood.

From this community there hailed the distinguished Bukovina historian Dimitrie Onciul, commemorated by a bust and after whom today's school is named.

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# BUKOVINA TOURISM 1931-1941

By: O. M. Windholz

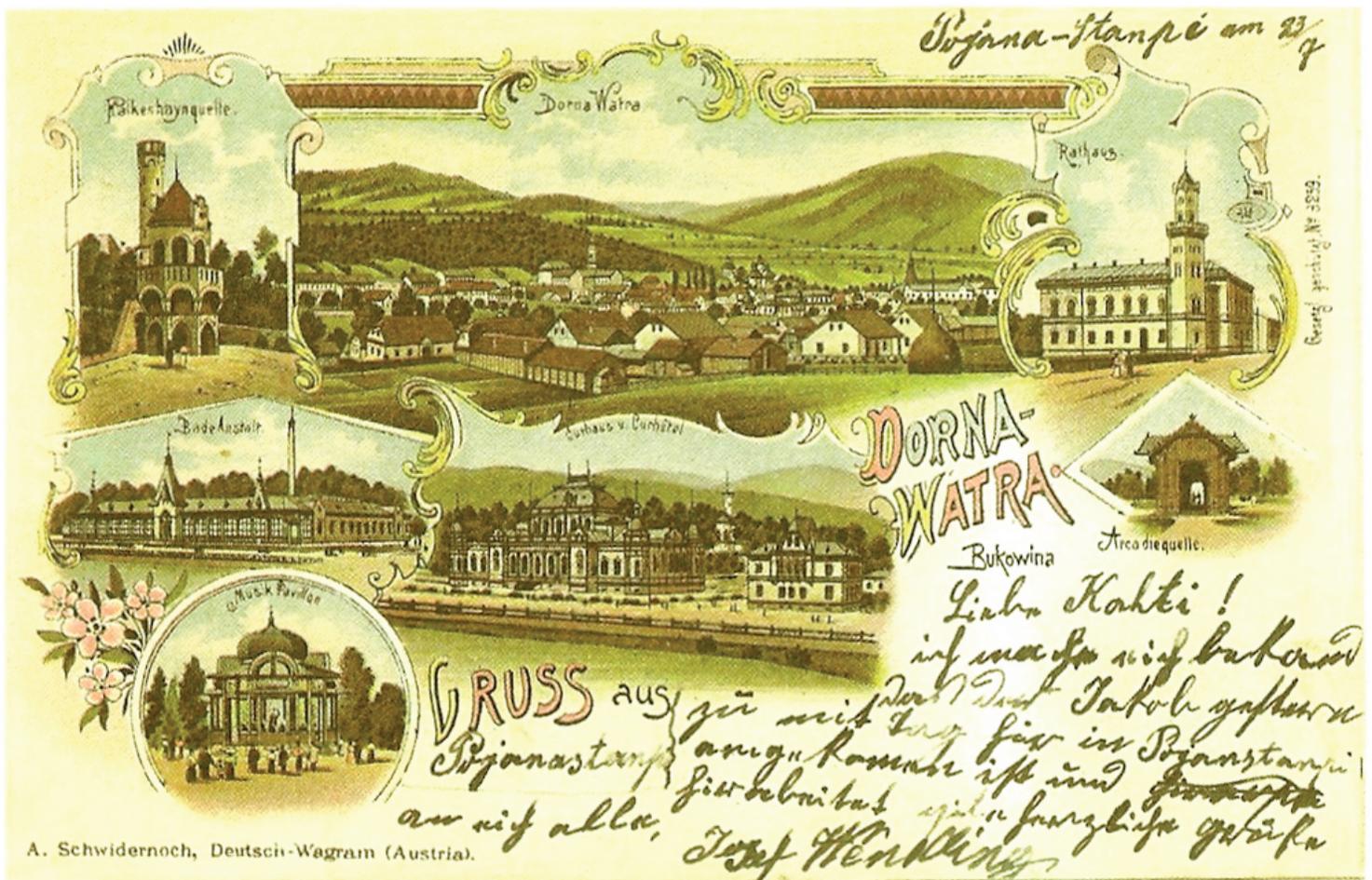
The Bukovina Society receives Bukovina-related publications from time to time due to our affiliations with other organizations and our internet presence.

Ovidiu Corduneanu of Campulung in Suceava (county), Romania, has recently sent a wonderful book to us, published in 2010 in Bucharest, Romania. The first two hundred pages or so, which are printed in the Romanian language, include minutes of the local Touring Club of Romania, an association for touring and nature protection based in Campulung (Kimpolung) during the interwar years between 1931 and 1941. A 60-page appendix with full-color photos, documents, stamps, and postal cards follows. Most of the images have German-language captions, with descriptions and the names of villages and cities printed in German.

One post card in this collection caught my attention with the surname "Wendling," which is familiar among the Bukovina Germans of Ellis County, Kansas. The card contained seven inset photos of Dorna Watra, Bukovina, with a greeting. There was also a personal message handwritten in German by a man named Josef Wendling.

I made copies of a scan of the card and gave them to Trey Wentling, a young man who is the grounds superintendent at the Smoky Hill Country Club in Hays. Trey immediately said he knew of a Josef Wendling in their family history. He could read part of the personal message and said he was going to consult his high school German text for further translation.

The Bukovina Society wishes to acknowledge and thank Ovidiu Corduneanu for this book, which is a prized addition to our archives.



Pictured is a scan from the book of the post card sent by Josef Wendling

## OUR TRIP TO GERMANY

By: Juanita Augustine

My Granddaughter Clarissa Rupp, and I took a 10 day trip to Germany, May 16 – 26, 2011. It included visiting relatives and friends and also some sightseeing.

We arrived in Frankfurt where Michael Augustin met us at the airport. We were guests of Michael and Bärbel for four days. We did sightseeing in Leonberg and Stuttgart of the Po Tower (largest in Germany), a museum, Mercedes tower and the markets. We visited cemetery where Michael's mother and brother are buried. In Augsburg we toured the City Hall, which was destroyed during World War II and later completely rebuilt and decorated according to the original. Our next tour was of the Fuggeri, founded in 1521 as a settlement for needy citizens where rooms still rent for only 0.88 Euros. Our final stop was at St. Ulric Church.

In Salzweg we were houseguests of Michael and Regina Schissel. There we were greeted by relatives Ludwig and Traudl Grill, Alois and; Ressi Schott, Franz and Elizabeth

Augustin, Monika Seidl, and Michael Schissel Jr. who joined us for a buffet luncheon.

Michael Augustin and Michael Schissel drove us to Passau where we did more sightseeing including the Mariahilf church, walked the 300 steps of the "Stations of the Cross" and lit a votive candle for my deceased husband Frank. We then drove along the Danube River to where three rivers meet, the Danube, Inn and Ilz, and saw the different colors of each river. We then attended a reunion with 30-35 other family. It was so good to see many familiar faces and to reminisce of the past 10 years Frank and I made our first trip to see them.

On Sunday morning Regina, Clarissa and I attended Mass at St Stephens Cathedral. It is so beautiful I can't begin to describe it. After Mass we went to the 100th anniversary of the local brewery. Block after block there were crafts, flowers and food from all areas of Europe. Most interesting was the dress of men, women and children of their native land. Later that afternoon we were guests at Ludwig and Traudl Grill for a barbeque with other relatives. Nicole Eller and Fred Wildfeuer, who have visited us in Ellis, joined us.

*Photo of one of the Augustin family gatherings in Germany.*



After shopping and seeing the cemetery where Regina and Michael, Augustin's grandparents are buried, we went to Alois and Ressi Schott's home for lunch. Nearing the end of our visit, family and friends gathered to say goodbye. On our final morning we said goodbye to Michael. Bärbel and their daughter Eva drove us to the airport in Frankfurt. It was a very enjoyable and memorable trip to be long remembered by Clarissa and me, thanks again to our German family.

*Enjoy The Color?  
Available if you get  
this email as a PDF!*