



German-Bohemian Heritage Society Newsletter

the Heimatbrief

P.O. Box 822
New Ulm, Minnesota, 56073-0822

Email: Society & Newsletter - jal@mnmc.net
Research Info - rpaulgb@pioneerplanet.infi.net



Vol. IX No. 3 September 1998 Louis Lindmeyer, Editor

Rosemary Kiefner Dies

Rosemary (Mrs. Rudy) Kiefner passed away April 5, 1998 in Wolfershausen, Germany. Rosemary was the wife of the late Rudy Kiefner and a friend of many in our society. Rosemary leaves behind daughters Martina and Karmen and a granddaughter Karolin.

GBHS Finds a Home

The GBHS recently rented a portion of a building for use as a library for our many books and files and a practice facility for the GBHS Singers. The building is in the lower level of 1200 So. Broadway, New Ulm. The cost of the two rooms will be shared equally by the society and the singing group.

The library is currently being organized and when completed will house our many volumes of books, family files, maps, charts and miscellaneous paperwork. If the proper funds are allocated a copy machine will also be purchased. Tentative plans call for the library to be open specific hours for our members to browse our stock of wonderful books and files. Members will be notified when the library is ready to open.

A thank you goes out to president Paul Kretsch, Angie Portner, members of the singing group and others for their relentless search over the past two years for a new home. Thank you also to Denis Warta, GBHS member and owner of the building, for working out a very reasonable rental agreement.

From The G-B Rootsweb Electronic Mailing List:

German-Moravians

submitted by Karen Hobbs.

Most of the Germans who settled in Moravia settled there after the 30 Years War. There were some already there and if they had sided with the Catholics during the war they were welcome to stay. But the Austrian Emperor invited large numbers of Catholic Germans to come in and take over farms that were abandoned during the war or whose protestant owners had been expelled because they had made war on the emperor. It was his way of establishing a "faithful" population in those areas -- meaning that he was Catholic and wanted other Catholics to hold that land so that there would not be another protestant uprising like the 30 Years War. He also believed that the Germans would be more productive than the Czechs and they would get the country back on its feet sooner while showing the Czechs the best way to work the land.

The Germans may have been more productive but that did not lead the Czechs to adopt their methods. The war had left deep scars on the mostly protestant Czech population and they now found that they were being forced to become Catholics. They might go to the same church as those Catholic Germans but they wanted little else to do with them. The result was two separate cultures that deliberately remained separate in spite of some intermarriage and a common religion in most of the country.

Over time some of the German families may have joined the Moravian Brethren or maybe even the Evangelical church but the majority of them remained Catholic.

That is probably why there are a lot of Catholic Germans among the Moravians who came to America.

Car Rental In Germany & Czech Republic

submitted by Karen Hobbs

I rented a car at Frankfurt in May 1997 and drove to my Heimat villages and then to Prague and back. There are several agencies that will not rent cars for CR but Europacar and Avis would rent them when we were there. They will only rent models that are not favored by car thieves -- small hatchbacks without bells and whistles like air conditioning -- but for 2-3 persons it is more than adequate. If your travel agent tells you that you cannot get a car in Germany and drive to CR, they are wrong. There are 800 numbers in the front (yellow pages) part of Fodor's guides to Germany for multiple-agency car rental services that will help you if your travel agent will not.

If you rent in Germany be sure that they know you plan to drive to CR when you pick up the car. You have to have a special document for the car when you cross the Czech frontier and they will not provide that if you do not request it.



I purchased the extra insurance for my rental car and, as it turned out, it was money well-spent. I was driving around in my ancestral villages where a lot of the roads are very narrow and unpaved. While turning around on one of them I rolled into a tree stump that was at the edge of the road and put a serious dent in the car's undercarriage. There were also a lot of untrimmed shrubs alongside some of these rural roads and it was easy to scratch a car door if you had to get over to one side to let another car pass. If you think that all damage will be covered by your credit card auto insurance provisions, be sure to ask for specifics from your credit card customer service (before you leave the US).

If you are planning to drive in cities like Munich and Regensburg it is very easy to get lost because you often have to turn right onto a ramp in order to make a left turn onto a main road. If your hotel is in the city center, it is a good idea to simply head for the Bahnhof and hire a taxi to drive in front of you to your destination when you find yourself going in circles.

Frankfurt airport hotels are very expensive. However, if you stay in a hotel a little distance from the airport it is much cheaper. We stayed in one that was one of the first just north of the airport -- I think it

was called the Stiegenberg or something like that -- and it was VERY nice, in a forest just to the east of the Autobahn. If you book there at least two weeks in advance you get a cheaper rate that can be much less than the walk-in rate and very little more than budget hotels -- around \$75 for a double room. They also have "regular" rooms and "tower" (more \$\$\$) rooms. They provide a regular shuttle to the airport. We checked into our rooms, then we drove to the airport and turned in our rental car and took the hotel shuttle from the lower concourse back to the hotel. The next day we didn't have to worry about having to return the car before a morning flight.

It is easy to miss the exit to that hotel when coming down the autobahn from the north. If you book there be sure to ask them to FAX you directions to get there from north or from south so that you will know what to do if you miss the exit and have to come in from the other direction.

Incidentally, the luggage carts at Frankfurt airport will negotiate the escalators so you can take them virtually anywhere.

This is a reply to Karen Hobbs submission from Ivan Bok, Prague, CZ.

Maybe a more convenient way is to rent a car here (Czech Republic). You can rent every car you want (incl.air condition etc.) from local companies and it's obviously 50% cheaper then from international rental companies as Hertz, Avis and Europcar (who also operate here).

Unfortunately good Czech companies as Pracar Go has no offices at airports etc. because it's occupied by international rental companies. But if you call them before your arrival they prepare the car to your arrival personally.

There's only one limit: you have to return your car here in Czech Republic. But you can pay by credit card and use all regular services (incl. insurance, 24hr technical assistance etc.) as with other intl. companies.

The Talk of the Town

by Frank Koerner, a GBHS member. Copyright Heritage Quest Magazine. Printed by permission. Erich Eichler, Editor-in-chief of the Heimatbote Newspaper, Nuremberg, had this to say about The Talk of the Town. No contribution (to our magazine) speaks louder and clearer about how strongly rooted we are to the old homeland, the land of our ancestors. The mountains and valleys and the green of the forests and meadows deeply impressed the Californian Frank Koerner. Please read the Talk of the Town - read it many times! And please make the effort to see that your grandchildren also do the same! (I couldn't agree more. Ed.)

I could indeed sense the town had disappeared.... even though it was physically present....right there before my eyes and below me in the valley. I stood on a hillside overlooking Benke, Moravia after an enervating 10,000 mile flight from San Diego to Munich. I had driven the remaining 600 miles from Munich to Benke via rental auto. My mind hummed with intense excitement. For the first time, I was in the homeland of my ancestors. I was in Sudetenland. I was experiencing the reality of the factual non-existence of this formerly predominantly Germanic region. The spirituality of both Sudetenland and Benke had disappeared even though this town and all the other former Sudeten German towns were still present. Their collective spirituality could never be retrieved. The heart and soul of this tiny village was now scattered all over the globe. The essence of its life force....the "stuff" that had made Benke tick for centuries existed sorrowfully in the psyche and memory and graves of its departed Sudeten German inhabitants. Their town was gone. That flash of comprehension was probably the most significant moment in my life. I sensed a very personal, silent majesty about this place in spite of the fact it was no longer "here". I realized this is from where I stem. I was born and raised in the United States. Yet Benke is a part of me. I am not 100% red, white, and blue. A tiny portion of me is of Benke. The notion jolted the innermost reaches of my being.

As I returned in the evening darkness to my hotel room in Sch nberg, Moravia, I reflected on the day's events. Until that earlier moment on the hillside, my life had been a jigsaw puzzle from which a solitary piece had always been missing. The piece had been lost. I knew not where. Today, I had peered down at the tiny, valley village where all my forebears had lived and died. For a fleeting instant my heritage had been revealed to me. I had discovered the missing piece of the puzzle. Truly stated, the feeling was.....overpowering. Tears welled in my eyes. I understood the message. I was now a complete person.

It was November 1992. My rented German auto bore German registration. A number of Munich rental firms had refused to rent me a car after I told them where I was destined. I was informed there were too many instances of car thefts there. I finally found a firm and a car. I headed for the city of Sch nberg (Czech name: Sumperk) where my father, Oskar, had been a policeman. Sch nberg (pop. 60,000) is in northern Moravia about 20 miles south of the present-day, Polish province of Silesia. I arrived after an all day drive and checked into the Grand Hotel, an abode that belied its name. After getting my bearings, I immediately proceeded on to the tiny town of Benke (Benkov), located south of Sch nberg. The town had been my father's hometown. The way to Benke was quite direct. Armed with a solitary, tiny, sepia snapshot, I drove very slowly through the town searching for the house in my picture, No. 22. That house had been inherited by my grandfather, Gustav, and had been my father's childhood home. I did not have an inkling of the house's current condition. I didn't even know if the house was still standing....or improved....or converted to something else. Since the local house numbers had been assigned by order of construction and not by land plot, all I was able to achieve was to come close to No. 22. I found house numbers in the teens, twenties, and low thirties, but not No. 22. Many houses in Benke appeared not to be occupied at all. The unoccupied dwellings gave the distinct impression of having been deserted long ago because of their extremely dilapidated condition. Those homes that did appear to be occupied seemed to be well cared for. I did notice a man and woman working in their vegetable garden adjacent to their home. They were turning over the soil. I thought I detected a furtive glance from the man that indicated he might have noted my presence. I did not observe any directed motion towards me. Both folks continued working. I thought to myself, "There's a Czech guy who is probably thinking to himself.....Hmmm.....Another deportee who has come back with some bad feelings to see the land that we Czechs stole from him or his predecessors!"

Benke is a very tiny village. In 1945 there were only 211 people living in the hamlet of whom 196 had been Sudeten Germans. I quickly drove through the whole village in a matter of minutes. At the other end of town, I ascended the mountain behind the eastern edge of the village. I climbed only midway up the hill. Despite the gathering dusk, I attained a panoramic view of Benke. I snapped a photograph of the town and valley to preserve the moment. As I walked up the steep, dirt trail/road t



hat was situated between dense woods of pine, oak, and birch trees on the left and an open, hillside farm field to the right, I could easily visualize (and sense) Pa at the age of 7 or 8 (or as a young adult) often climbing the same path. I later discovered a similar photo of Benke that he had taken from approximately the same spot!

The tranquil evening air had a brisk, refreshing, autumn feel to it. The view below me was enchanting. I had not expected a scene this beguiling. The smoke emanating from the homes' wood fueled fires settled in a layered haze in the basin of the valley below while its pervasive aroma wafted up to where I was standing. It smelled good. Symbolically, the layers of smoke were forming a stairway from my past.

Ascending the stairway and approaching me were all the ghosts of my heritage. The reality of who I am really hit me here. It was a kind of cram course in heritage awareness....an experience....of finally finding the roots of the Koerner family tree, but simultaneously realizing that the tree, far more than symbolically, had been struck by lightning in 1945. My family tree had been irrevocably and irretrievably damaged. All male ancestors on Pa's side had come from this very town. ALL OF THEM! By Pa's own, sparse, but documented family tree records, EVERY male Koerner in his family had lived here since the early 1700's....except me. Before that time there were assuredly many more generations spanning prior centuries. I conjured up visions of times past. My mind flooded with the images of births, adolescence, hopes, aspirations, disappointments, illnesses, marriages, family reunions, Christmas celebrations, and deaths slowly unfolding here generation after generation. I listened to the sounds of the past in my blood.

The earliest Koerner of whom I have documented knowledge is Andreas Koerner. He was born in Benke in 1749. His father, first name uncertain, was my great-great-great-great grandfather Koerner. These are the years when these historical figures were born: George Washington (1732), Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756), Ludwig van Beethoven (1770), and Abraham Lincoln (1809). I mention these famous folks only to serve as a frame of reference to demonstrate that our little, insignificant branch of the Koerners had been living in this Benke valley a long, long time. It makes my own life's span in the U.S.A. pale by comparison. When the American colonists were fighting British soldiers (and hired Hessian Germans) in New Jersey, my forebears were living right here. When the American Civil War was raging and Abraham Lincoln was President, my grandfather Gustav was a little kid growing up....and playing in these same Benke fields. Perhaps right where I was standing.

I experienced no dejavu, but strangely, I felt very much at home. I sensed a special affinity for this place. I was in the presence of a new friend .



...Benke. I was not seeing it as it is. Rather, I was perceiving it as it had been. If the town could talk, I mused, what would Benke say to me? I imagined it would, of course, speak in German as it had for centuries....not in Czech as it had only since 1945. While trampling over dirt clods on its uneven, recently harvested fields, I mentally embraced Benke below me. I fancied a conversation with the village.

"As a young man," Benke would begin, "your father volunteered for the Imperial Austrian Army and went off to World War I for me and Austria of which I was then a part. His brother, your Uncle Bruno, was killed in action in that war. After the German/Austrian alliance was defeated in the First World War, I became a part of a new country....Czechoslovakia. Until 1919, that nation had never existed. Then Hitler took me over as part of the famous Munich Agreement of 1938 (involving Sudetenland) and I became part of the Third Reich. Naziland ended literally at my town line. My neighboring village, Dlouhomilov, which is situated less than 2 miles west and spoke Czech, remained in Czechoslovakia under the Munich Accord. It mattered little. In the spring of 1939 Hitler absorbed it and the rest of Czechoslovakia as well."

I envisioned Benke as being relieved by this opportunity to discuss its past with an interested, new audience. Its long dormant story was now bounding up from the valley floor on my wood smoke stairway. The tale awed me. This peaceful, benign village had been directly touched by all the cataclysmic political events that defined the 20th century. Benke continued recounting its tale.

"As the hell of World War II drew to its close, my valley was occupied by the Soviets. A Red Army tank division rolled over the hillside on which you are standing on its march to capture Sch nberg. After the Nazis were defeated, I reverted to Czechoslovakia.

The village of Benke

Then, all the Sudeten Germans (3,500,000) were forcibly deported (1945-46) from Sudetenland and the other Sudeten German territories. In one sorrowful day, I was left completely devoid of my native people. Their houses were left vacant. Doors were left ajar and swinging loose on their hinges. I felt betrayed.

My soul had been mercilessly wrenched out and destroyed. In an ephemeral snippet of history spanning a paired sunrise and sunset, 800 years of tradition were obliterated."

Only then, and in a flash, I finally grasped the full significance and the historical meaning of the confusing statement my parents had often uttered when I was a child, "Sudetenland doesn't exist anymore. Now we can't ever go back!"

Benke spoke further. "In the intervening decades I was hidden behind Communism's forbidding Iron Curtain. On January 1, 1993, I will belong to yet another, brand new country....the Czech Republic. You, Franz, have found me today. I am the missing piece in your heritage. Isn't it ironic that the missing peace in my own heritage still has not been found?" The town's voice trailed off and fell silent.

I was acutely aware that the mysterious, cosmic bond I felt toward Benke at that precise moment was an illusion. All actual ties between us had been severed, officially and fatally, by the deportation in 1945. The extent of the trauma endured by the expellees must have been overwhelming. This land had been the home of our forebears for centuries. All were now personae non gratae. I realized I did not belong here either. I was a trespasser in my ancestral homeland. The descriptive term for the social and political injustice perpetrated here upon the Sudeten people by the post-war Czech government has been sanitized. Modernly in Bosnia, it has euphemistically been termed "ethnic cleansing". I wondered what Pa would have thought had he been standing there with me at that very moment....a million figurative miles from our common American background. He probably would have reflected on the futility of the nationalistic bill of goods he, and other young men like him, had been sold as they marched off to war to "defend the Fatherland". He had been wounded. His brother was killed. Many friends had not returned. Standing above his now almost deserted hometown, one might justifiably ask, "For what?"

My new Sudeten German friend, Benke, completely understood the perplexing nature and futility of my question. It answered me with a resignation born out of the trauma of the 1945 mass deportation of its entire German-speaking citizenry. Benke looked up at me and forlornly responded.

"The end results of all those sacrifices are embodied.....or more properly stated disembodied.....in this very valley. For I am now.....not a ghost town.....but rather.....a town of ghosts. The ghosts of your father's homeland and all those sacrifices remain here with me. Fifty years ago, all were bit role actors in the drama being enacted on the Second World War's battlefield stage. We were also victims of its cruel plot. Now, we are obscure anomalies of central Europe's past and forgotten by virtually everyone. By its nature, history instantly and permanently defines itself. Thereafter, it forever "recedes" from us without motion. Our remembrances are not welcome here, yet they cannot leave. Our memories are entrapped by history." I comprehended that coming here was clearly a momentous event in my life. No trip to Tahiti could have meant more to me or have been so significant. On the other hand, I also grasped that it is precisely through the occurrence of those historical events that I am American. Joining the Army and being in World War I had taken my father bodily out of this valley and had made him aware of the rest of the world. I feel that experience enabled him the courage to leave and to try something dramatically different after he disagreeably found himself a Czech citizen, rather than Austrian, after World War I. Had his emigration not occurred (and all other things being equal), I would probably now be resettled in Germany and would be a German citizen as are my European relatives.

It had become too dark to take more photos on this walk up the hillside. No matter, because what I emotionally felt at that moment about my heritage could not be further represented on film anyway. I felt my initial sojourn to Benke had been a success. What I HAD been able to do was to notice some features about Benke of which I now felt compelled to take photographs the next day. My detailed exploration of Benke was to begin tomorrow. I then returned to the Grand Hotel in Sch nberg.

I did not know what secrets were yet to be unveiled about Benke. Might the couple I had seen working in their garden play some role in unraveling the town's mysteries? Perhaps this new found link to my heritage in this remote, obscure central European village would dissipate as quickly as it had materialized. Who could foretell? Of one thing I was absolutely certain. I would never be quite the same again.

Benke, Moravia (circa 1915). Centuries of bucolic tranquility were interrupted by World Wars I and II and the Cold War. Since 1918 the town has been governed by monarchy, Nazism, military administration, socialism, communism and democracy. In that time span, it has been under the dominion of seven different countries....Imperial Austria, The First Czecho-Slovak Republic, Nazi Germany, USSR Occupation Forces/National Front, Communist Czechoslovakia (CSSR), and post-Communist Free Czechoslovakia (CSFR). Benke is now part of the fledgling Czech Republic.

Bei Uns Zuhause Schaumburg

By **Frank Gergard Soural** (qlt@cyberus.ca)

A look into the early settlement period of northern Moravia.

Bruno von Schaumburg [1204-1281] was undoubtedly one of the important and proactive Bishops of Olmuetz of the Middle Ages. Born into nobility, the earls of Schaumburg-Holstein whose family residence was the castle of Schauenburg in the valley of the river Weser, he quickly rose through the ranks of the church hierarchy. In his early thirties he occupied important secular positions in Luebeck, then Magdeburg and Hamburg.

In 1245, at a young age of 41, Pope Innocens IV elevated him to become Bishop of Olmuetz. Bruno soon became the advisor and confidant of King Wenzel, and later during the reign of Premysl Ottokar II became Chancellor of the Bohemian King. His memorial treatise (Denkschrift) presented to Pope Gregory X on December 16th 1272 provides valuable insights into history of that time. After Ottokars death. Rudolf von Habsburg elevated Bruno to become the Governor of northern Moravia.

The sweep of the Mongols through Silesia and Moravia in 1241 left many of the settled areas in the flatlands devastated. Premysl Ottokar II King of Bohemia and Moravia called on German settlers to, as

he expressed it: Elevate the land back to prosperity . Bruno was given the task to help organize and execute it. Under his initiative 12 cities 216 villages and 7 Markets [Marktflecken] were founded.

Bruno pursued his task with gusto, old records show that he not only founded the city of Maerisch Schoenberg in the 1200's but that it was named after him. In the 1920 s an old record was discovered stating that he was known to accompany settlers treks from his homeland of Niedersachsen (Lower Saxony) to the settlement areas in the pristine forests of Moravia.

It was a peaceful movement of our forbears that created the German areas and enclaves in the mountainous Sudeten regions and that opened up a controlled exploitation of the regions natural resources. This was entirely according to the wish of Premysl Ottokar II who wanted Bohemia and Moravia to be drawn into the western cultural sphere.

Bruno von Schaumburg died on the 17th of February in the year 1281 and was laid to rest in the church he built in Kremsier.

Don t Forget the Living A Human Interest Story for Everyone!

Have you ever wondered where your family roots are? Have you ever been interested in communicating with distant family descendants living in those countries and the cost of or the language difference somehow seemed too daunting or prohibitive ?

Well, think again !

With the increasing availability of the PC (Personal Computer) and access to the Internet, solutions to these problems mentioned above are now available.

Thomas Semelbauer (Semmelbauer), a resident of Kalamazoo, Michigan for many years, found more than family history and family contacts in other countries, to include Germany, Czech Republic, Austria, Slovenia and Slovakia and you can too ! There are tons of Genealogical Web-Sites found on the Internet that are ready to help. Translation services, specialized Dutch, German, Czech and many more web locations are there for the asking or should we say, the click of the mouse away.

Tom s family history returns to Bavaria/Vollmau/Furth-im-Wald and England with some of the documented English history back to the year 1154. But this is Tom s story and he would be more than happy to tell you more, *if you have the time*. Just ask !

The real story and personal gratification comes as a byproduct of the search for family roots. It s the contact with the living that makes the search so much fun and enjoyment using the computer and Internet tools available to almost everyone. Just add some imagination and you will be surprised of what you find to include new friends



a



nd family connections.

During Tom s Internet travels he made contact with a number of schools and Universities in Germany. One such school was with the Hauptschule (Junior High School) in Furth-im-Wald, Bavaria, Germany. Here he found a distant relative, Martina and Peter Bauer, teachers at the

Hauptschule Staff Photo: First Row (Left to Right) Elisabeth Sch chtl, Alexandra Grassl, Ingrid Kerscher, Rosemarie Rieger, Martina Bauer, Luise Wutz Second Row (Left to Right) Siegfried Elsner, Heribert M hlbauer, Holger Kruschina (Chaplain of Furth-im-Wald), Herbert Wirrer, Kurt Koch, Horst Roider, Herbert Weiss In the background (Left to Right) Oswald Braun, Hermann Dirscherl, Josef Maier, Hans Ziesler Raimund Bergler - Principle of the Hauptschule, Peter Bauer, Robert Mauerer, Hans Georg Lippel

Hauptschule. As Internet correspondence continued, Tom was writing to many of the German students of the Hauptschule and the children had many questions about the United States, family and Kalamazoo.

Andrej (Andrew) Radi wrote explaining he moved with his father and mother to Furth-im-Wald in 1996 from the Ukraine. His German grandfather was born in Saratov, a town near the river Volga. Andrew s English was excellent. Thomas Baier, Josef Heigl, Ben Hastreiter and J rgen Schnell described where they live, their father, mother, sisters and brothers as well as their interest in various sports.

They wanted to know where Tom had traveled and experienced any unusual adventures. They also wanted to know if he had a swimming pool.

Josef Hofstetter wanted to know how old, his new found pen-pal was, hobbies and if Tom had any animals. Astrid Bergler, daughter of Raimund and Brigitte Bergler, explained that she thought it was great to correspond with a Native American, indicating it was much better than reading lessons in an English book. Melanie, called Melli and the smallest girl in the class of Mr. Bauer, had many questions that ranged from Tom s favorite car to what kind of TV programs we Americans like to watch. Other students, Ciao Micha, Daniela, Silke, Martin Schuh, Manuela, Michaela, Yvonne and Martina had very similar questions.

Tom explained that it was pure pleasure to correspond with the children and he too was a student learning about their likes, dislikes and it even helped him with some of his limited knowledge of German.

The students of the Hauptschule indicated to Peter, a desire to expand their e-mail contacts with other students of their own age in America. Thus, the idea of a structured Student to Student E-mail Program (SSEP) was established.

Today the program is being developed under the direction of Linda Trepanier, Chairperson, Foreign Language Department and Coordinator of the Portage School International Baccalaureate Program and Mrs. Kenneth Archey, German instructor. Through the efforts of Tom's sister-in-law, Helen Semelbauer, a teacher within the Muskegon School System, introduced the (SSEP) possibilities to Mr. Joe Panici, a teacher at the Oakview School in Muskegon, Michigan. Students in Muskegon have just begun their e-mail exchange with the students of the Hauptschule.

Mr. Raimund Bergler, Principle of the Hauptschule, is very excited about the (SSEP) and offers the below information about their school, teachers and students. The Hauptschule has three hundred and sixty pupils, ranging in age from eleven to sixteen years old. There are fourteen classes from the fifth through ninth grade and an average of twenty five pupils per class with a maximum of thirty four. The teaching staff consists of thirty colleagues in full or half time service and an average age of forty two years.

Subjects taught at the school include German, English, mathematics, economics, science, history, religious education, physical education, typing, technical drawing and computer science.

If you would like to see more information about the Hauptschule in Furth-im-Wald, Mr. Bergler and the staff of the school invite you to visit their home page on the Internet at the following address: http://www.landkreis-cham.de/schulen/hs_furth/lehrerbild.htm

Herr Raimund Bergler was kind enough to mail a (1997) Year Book of the Hauptschule, which provided Tom with many family names. As Tom reviewed these names, he finds many children with family names he also found in his own research of his family from this region of Germany. Possibly these children and our children will have the good fortune to continue this human interest story, without the time and language barriers that once separated us from our roots. Just add a little imagination with the (SSEP) and let's see what happens! Just possibly, our world and children's future world will be a more tolerant and compassionate place to live!

Thomas H. Semelbauer
4786 Thistle Mill Court
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49006
616-382-6341
tsemelbaue@aol.com

Newsletter Deadline

The next issue of the Heimatbrief will be published in December. Because of the Holidays the deadline for articles is October 15.

Thank you.

History For Sale

German-Bohemians - The Quiet Immigrants

by La Vern Rippley & Robert Paulson

A must have book for researchers . Over ten years in the making. Fully researched. Nine chapters describing our German-Bohemian ancestors life in the homeland, the journey to America and life in their new-found homes. Customs, traditions, music, heritage and more. Over 150 photographs.

Hard cover, 279 pages. \$25.90

Border People: The B hmische (German-Bohemians) in America

by Ken Meter and Robert Paulson

Highly recommended, fully researched. Includes many counties in Wisconsin. Soft cover, 32 pages, many photographs. \$11.50

Duetsch-B hmische K che

A German-Bohemian Cookbook. Dozens of authentic German and German-Bohemian recipes.

Ring bound, soft cover, 88 pages of recipes. \$9.00

The Whoopee John Wilfahrt Dance Band, His Bohemian-German Roots

by LaVern J. Rippley. \$6.00

German-Bohemian Immigrant Monument Book - A souvenir booklet of the monument dedication by the GBHS. \$5.00

Music

German-Bohemian Heritage Singers, Preserving the Heritage cassette tape. A wonderful array of German and German-Bohemian dialect songs \$9.00

Preserving the Heritage II cassette tape. An encore performance features even more toe tapping and heart warming songs in the German and German-Bohemian flavor. Add it to your collection today. . \$10.00

All prices (U.S. Funds Only Please) include sales tax and postage . If you wish to order any of these items, send a check payable to GBHS and mail it with your request to: GBHS, P.O. Box 822, New Ulm, MN, 56073-0822

A Saint From Bohemia

The German Ancestry of St. John Nepomuk Neumann

By Raimund Paleczek, Dusseldorf & Bonn. English translation by Frank Schmidt, Toronto, Canada

On June 19, 1997, exactly twenty years had elapsed since John Nepomuk Neumann, the fourth Bishop of Philadelphia, who had immigrated to the United States from Bohemia (in the early part of the 19th century. Transl. note) was canonized by Pope Paul VI in Rome.

On that day (June 19, 1977) an unpretentious mass was allowed to be celebrated in Prachatitz in Bohemia (the saint's birthplace) which was attended by a few dozen of the faithful under the watchful eyes of suspicious Communist Party functionaries. Would-be churchgoers from the West were barred from attending the mass because of barriers hastily strung across access roads leading to Prachatitz. Besides, even though it was on a Sunday, the regime ordered an outing for all school children that intentionally took them out of town on the day of the ceremony. Nevertheless, the highest ranking guest to attend was the American ambassador who had journeyed from Prague to take part in the ceremony. Through tried and proven totalitarian methods of disinformation the Communist regime led the local population to believe that because of his German ancestry the recently canonized former Bishop of Philadelphia was a "revanchist saint".

Twenty years later (in 1997) the City of Prachatitz made up for its lack of earlier recognition of its native son by sponsoring official ceremonies to honor the saint, this time with the participation of local and foreign dignitaries.

At the very outset of the festivities in the middle of July, a book in the Czech language about Saint Johann Nepomuk Neumann and his native city of Prachatitz was published by author Vaclav Stary entitled Prachatice a Jan Neumann, Prachatice 1997, 232 pages, 195 kc. The author is a retired Director of the County Archives, where he worked from 1957 to 1995. The title of the book refers to its binary contents. In the first part he outlines the history of Prachatitz from its founding to 1850, according to sources available to him during the decades of his tenure in the archives. Much of his essay runs concurrent with the life of Bishop Neumann. The second part consists of summary of hitherto unpublished biographies of the saint's life, from which the author quotes liberally. Just as the City of Prachatitz sought to make amends twenty years after the canonization of Bishop Neumann by staging an official ceremony, so did Vaclav Stary try to set the record straight by publishing his book. He regards his work primarily as a means of bringing the life of the saint, and Prachatitz his birthplace, closer to a Czech readership. The only biographies about the life of Bishop Neumann hitherto published in the Czech language appeared in 1910 and 1940. These were quite inadequate, therefore, Stary's work is a long overdue dissertation from the Czech side.

The latest significant monograph about Prachatitz was written by a Czech chaplain in 1868, i.e. over 160 years ago, based on sources available to him. In the wake of a national revival at that time he was not too punctilious with the truth. In the first part of his historical hodgepodge the writer describes the ethnic composition of Prachatitz as well as its socio/economic development between the 14th and 19th centuries in a somewhat realistic and objective manner. However, he limits himself to brief portrayals of the life of the community from which the reader learns that in the 14th century records were kept either in Latin or German and that the majority of the counselors had German names. A decided change in the ethnic, and therefore the linguistic make-up of the city took place after the Hussitic Wars. Despite the claims of the former Czech literati, the German part of the population was, according to Stary, "in no way insignificant, nor worthy of neglect". He bases his assertion on the first census taken in the city in the year 1585.

Readers familiar with the German biographies will learn nothing new about the work of the saint that is not already known to them, with the exception of the voluminous letters the saint wrote in his native Bohemia. In this regard it must be emphasized that these facts have hitherto not been available to readers whose only language was Czech. On the contrary there are new findings regarding the bishop's early days and that of his family in Prachatitz. Here the author succeeded in uncovering hagiographies that were published without any pretense of critique.

In regard to the Neumann family, Stary established the following: Master stocking weaver Philipp Neumann, the father of the saint who hailed from Obernburg (Germany) did not come to the region in 1802, but much earlier. The first documented evidence of his presence in the region is dated January, 8, 1800, the day he formally applied for civic citizenship in the village Netolitz. He did not, however, remain there very long. Only two years later, on April 22, 1802 he appeared before the city council of Prachatitz on a similar matter in view of his upcoming marriage to Antonia Strachotitz (B. June 8, 1773 - d. April 26, 1804), the daughter of stone mason Thomas Stachotinsky of house Nr. 5. The council granted him the civic citizenship he sought and the wedding took place on May 10th. It is very likely that Philipp moved to Prachatitz a few months before he got married. However, he became a widower early in the marriage and on June 17, 1805 (not July!) he married Agnes Lebisch (b. Dec. 12, 1777 of house Nr. 129 (today Nr. 142). She was the daughter of Georg Lebisch and his spouse Katharina. Seven children were born to the couple (not eight as has often been stated). They were;

(1) Katharina, born April 8, 1806. She married Matthias Berger on June 12, 1836 and died on June 14, 1889.

(2) Philipp, b. Feb. 1, 1808, d. May 6, 1808 (Fraser).

(3) Veronika, b. Feb. 3, 1809. She married Anton Kroll on June 2, 1829 and died of cholera on June 25, 1850.

(4) Johann Nepomuk, the saint. He was born on March 28, 1811, not on a Thursday as he himself states in his autobiography, but on a Thursday three days before Passion Sunday, two weeks before Good Friday.

(5) Johanna, b. April 6, 1813. From 1839 on she was known as Sister M. Karolina Borromaus.

(6) Aloisia, b. May 13, 1815, d. Aug. 27, 1886.

(7) Wenzel b. Sept. 4, 1817, d. April 10, 1896 as Brother Wenzel CSsR in New Orleans.

It has been established that the bishop's father did not emigrate for his native Obernburg for political reasons even though the city was at that time (1796-1801) a supply base for Napoleonic troops, but because of the custom in that age which required apprentices to become journeymen in order to expand their knowledge of their chosen trade. This pretty well covers statements made about the Neumann family.

This was reason enough for the author to expand his research into the ancestry of the saint and more particularly to throw some light into the darkness of his mother's ancestry. Until today, this was based on contradictory statements and superficial research into unreliable sources, (insofar that this seriously took place) and turned up false or misleading entries in the church records of St. Jakobs in Prachatitz. In the registry of births for instance, the following entry appears in the year 1777 under the name of the mother of the saint; "Lebisch Agnes, sen Lepsch". On the other hand in the baptismal record (tom. 111/305) one finds only "Agnes, parents Georgius Lebisch, Iorarius et cives Pracht et uxoz euis Catharina (A.E. parents, G. L. Sattler, citizen of Prachatitz and his wife C.). Why did the chaplain enter the false name of "Lepschi" after the real name in a register which had been compiled at the end of the past century? This has invariably led to confusion.

The "Lepschie" and "Lepsie" family have appeared in the Prachatitz civic records since 1698. A family member named Gregorius Lepschie married in that city on February 3, 1773 (marriage roll 1/227). The similarity of the Christian names "Gregorius" and "Georgius" have led to some confusion because a fleeting perusal of the records may lead some readers to believe that they are one and the same names. On the other hand the name "Lebisch" appears for the first time in the year 1764 when Agnes' brother "Mathaus" (Mathias) was baptized. Obviously, only one family named "Lebisch" was domiciled in Prachatitz, a name which was not mentioned again for at least one hundred years after the registry was set up. But, where did this Lebisch family come from? And, who was the mother Katharina whose name appears beside that of her daughter Agnes on a cross in Old Prachatitz which was reerected at the grave site of the Neumann family?

The most important reference in the register is the entry of the wedding of Agnes' parents, which admittedly cannot be found under the names of "Lebisch" or "Lepschi". On the 22nd of November one "Joannes Georgius Levitsch (!) married Katharina the daughter of Prachatitz citizen Martin Czyfreund (= Ziefreund). An excerpt from the record states the following (in Latin): " Joannes Georgius Levitsch corarium et civem Austriacum ex oppido Sarleinsbach (=Sarleinsbach) in Austria superioris cum Catharina filia legitima post defunctum Martinum Czyfreund civem Prachatensem". Chaplain Simon Hoder (wedding roll 1/159).

Any remaining doubts about the family name were cleared up when the names of the couple's children were entered on the baptismal roll. In each case the parents were listed as "Georg Lebisch et Catharina uxor". The children's names and birth dates are listed as **Mathaus (Mathias)** born September 19, 1764, **Maria Magdalena**, born July 7, 1767, **Bernard**, b. August 18, 1769 and baptized on August 19, 1769 and died on Oct. 8, 1775. **Elisabetha**, b. Nov. 4, 1775. In the baptismal records her name has been misspelled "Klebish". On Jan. 7, 1807 she married Anton Micko. **Agnes**, b. Dec. 12, 1777, **Joseph**, the youngest was baptized on March 1780. The father's name is listed as posthumous in the death register (II/138) because he had died on Dec. 30, 1779 at age 48, just ten weeks before Joseph's birth. Joseph died on Feb. 20, 1785. Thus, the mother of the bishop was already fatherless at age two.

It is quite clear that according to a marriage entry in the year 1763 that the sainted bishop's grandmother hailed from the Upper Austrian town of Sarleinsbach. Johann Georg, the son of Anton Lebisch (whose spouse's name was Katharina) was born on March 30, 1731 in the nearby town of Platt in the vicinity of Zellerndorf, where his father owned a vineyard. The Lebisch family were long-time farmers in the region. Their presence is verified in the Zellerndorf records dating to 1640, the year record keeping was introduced. Families named Lebisch still live there today.

Katharine Scheicher's father Daniel was a miller in the parish of Offenhausen near Wels, Upper Austria, where Katharina was born on April 16, 1703. She married Anton Lebisch in Sarleinsbach in the year 1725. The great-grandfather of Bishop Neumann died on June 28, 1733 at age 32 in Sarleinsbach. The young widow married Prachatitz citizen Andreas Langer on January 26, 1735, and died in Sarleinsbach on June 5, 1779 at a very advanced age for that time. Through his stepfather Langer, Georg Lebisch established the decisive contact to Prachatitz. He settled there early in the 1760s. In the nuptial register he is listed as Austrian (civem austriacum) because he did not yet possess the Prachatitz civic rights. These he acquired through his marriage to the daughter of a Prachatitz citizen.

The grandmother of the saint Katharina "Zifreind" as noted in baptismal record IV/404 was born on November 23, 1740. She was the third of five children of Martin Czfieind and wife Barbara. All were born in Prachatitz and their family names were alternately recorded either as "Zifreund" or "Zifreind". They are; Joseph, baptized on March 17, 1735, Maria, July 20, 1736, Catharina, s.o. Theresa, Nov. 14, 1743, Anna, July 4, 1748

The author did not write anything more about the fate of the Zifreund family and apparently believes that descendants of the Zifreund family may still be living in Prachatitz. (Not very likely if they classed themselves as German because they would have suffered the fate the 3.5 million other Sudeten Germans who were cruelly expelled from their hereditary Bohemian and Moravian homelands in the aftermath of WWII with the connivance of the Allied Powers).

Again it is obvious that German names were often entered into the record according to Czech phonetics. This is because most of the chaplains were Czechs and entered the unfamiliar German names according to Czech spelling.

According to the death register (IV/II) Martin Zifreind died in Prachatitz on March 26, 1763 at age 62. His birthday and data about his parents could not be determined. At the time of his marriage in 1733 the father had already been deceased. Further research could not be undertaken because the Kalsching records dating from 1668 to 1784 were destroyed in a fire on Feb. 4, 1808. The rectory and 65 houses went up in flames in the great conflagration of this market town. After 1710 the baptismal records, and after 1749 the marriage records, too, were restored on the basis of various documents. However, complete records are only available after 1784. With the aid of surviving land title and tax records it was possible to trace the name Zinpindl, with its variants Zifreindle, Zifrayndl, Ziefreund, etc. to the end of the 16th century. Martin's father Matthias, who was born around 1668 was obviously not a Zifreundt at birth, but was the son of Niklas Winklar. When he died in 1687 Lorenz Zifreundt inherited the neglected farmstead. Before Lorenz died at the beginning of the year he adopted his wife's children. After the adoption Matthias took the name of "Zifreundt" in order to inherit property in the "lower section" of Kalsching which he sold seven years later. The great grandfather of the saint was born on this farmstead.

The Prachatitz great-grandmother of Bishop Neumann, Barbara Zifreundl died on September 5, 1770 at age 63. The author was unable to find her name in the records, either under Solczer, Soltzer, Saltzer or Salzer. Her birth could have taken place in December 1707 (Patrozinium of St. Barbara), because her parents had married in Prachatitz on March 8, 1707. On this day the following entry was made in the nuptial record: Bd. 0/178. "Bartholomaus Soltzer(!) honestus invents ex oppido Wallern cum Clara vidua post def. Mathias Mertringer ex Prachat".

It seems that the great-great grandfather of the saint also acquired the Prachatitz civil rights through marriage. Bartholomaus Salzer was born around 1682 in Wallern. Because he had not yet reached his 30th birthday he was listed as "honestus invents" (young man). Bartholomaus married the widow Clara Mertzinger. The name of the father of the bridegroom is not given, nor could the author find a copy of the marriage certificate.

In regard to ancestors of Agnes, the bishop's grandmother, one may summarily state that one half (Lebisch/Scheicher) and therefore one quarter of the bishop's ancestors hailed from Upper and Lower Austria and the other half (Zifreund/Salzer) came from the nearby Bohemian Forest towns of Kalsching and Wallern. Just how far back Agnes Neumann's great-grandmother Clara Salzer (the widow Mertzinger) goes back in Prachatitz or whether she may have had Czech ancestors is unclear, however, it is a well-known fact that the saint's maternal ancestors came from a German speaking environment.

A short comment in regard to saints belonging to a certain ethnic group! During their lifetime saints should strive to be mediators among men. Therefore Bishop Neumann should be looked upon as the saint of the people of Prachatitz - of the Germans as of the Czechs ~ a saint of the Bohemian Forest, a saint of the Franks as well as the Americans. Therefore, no nation should claim the "He is our saint". Such an attitude would not please the "little bishop" as his Philadelphia parishioners were wont to call him because of his slight (1,57 m = 5ft., 1 1/2 in.) stature.

New facts have come to light concerning ancestors of the bishop's father Philipp Neumann. The reason for the father leaving his native city was either to become a journeyman, or because of the political situation in French occupied Obernburg from 1796 to 1801 and the massive forced recruitment of local men for the French army. The submission for the hypotheses that Philipp Neumann escaped the recruiters stems from a report by Becker, the city clerk of Obernburg who stated that Johannes Philipp Neumann was a witness to the bombardment of Obernburg by French artillery. According to the city clerk's report the local priest Father Gotz, together with some older and younger citizens of Obernburg took refuge in a forest on the far side of the Main River. After two days three young men were sent out as scouts to ascertain the situation in the city. Unfortunately they were tracked down by French chasseurs and one of them was stabbed to death. The three scouts were named in the report, one of them was Johannes Philipp Neumann, the father of the saint.

In his report Becker the city clerk of Obernburg apparently mistook Philipp Neumann for his brother Johann who was three years younger. In the archives of the city there is a collection of petitions pertaining to requests for military discharges and waivers of military service respectively in the period between 1796 and 1813. Petition Nr. 10, dated January 31, 1797 refers to Philipp's 19 year old brother Johann Neumann who requested the city council to grant him freedom from military service on the grounds that his brother was already "abroad" and he, Johann, had heard nothing from him for three years it was very likely that he had been drafted into the (Austrian) Imperial and Royal Military Service. This brother is definitely Philipp Neumann who probably left his native city in 1793, or at the latest in spring of 1794 and according to the last letter the family received from him in 1795/96 had settled in the hereditary lands of the Emperor of Germany and King of Bohemia and Hungary Franz II, probably in Bohemia.

It has been authenticated that the father of the saint the 19 year old journeyman stocking weaver struck out for Bohemia - political events on the west side of the Rhine may have been a prime factor for him to head in an easterly direction. In January 1800 Philipp Neumann's presence on Bohemian soil was recorded. The male ancestors of Philipp Neumann came from the Lower Rhine region or Brabant. After the end of the Thirty Years War in 1648, at the express invitation of the Elector of Mainz Catholic families from war-ravaged areas were resettled in the partly depopulated lands south of Aschaffenburg. Obviously, one of these families were the Neumanns. An entry in the civic record of Kleinwallstadt, a neighboring community of Obernburg states that a daughter named Anna Walburga was born to Hans Heinrich (Johann Heinrich) Neumann and his spouse Anna Maria. In the course of the next 18 years four sons and three daughters were born to the couple. The birth certificate of one of the sons, Johann Franz, born August 20th, 1662 may still be seen in the archives of the City of Mainz. From this certificate it is evident that his father Johann Heinrich Neumann was a butcher in Kleinwallstadt, as was his father Johann Konrad Neumann. This Johann Konrad is the oldest provable Neumann ancestor. He was 4X-great-grandfather of the saintly bishop and was born around 1595.

Saint John Nepomuk Neumann. Born of German parents in the Bohemian forest. Bishop of Philadelphia.

This certificate also states that Maria, the mother of Johann Franz Neumann was the daughter of a Johann Hoffmann. This man and his brothers became purveyors of wine and fodder to the Elector of Mainz and after 1628 acquired such renown that the Imperial Court Council of Emperor Ferdinand II in Vienna granted his request and awarded him a civic coat-of-arms. Johann Hoffmann, also 4X-great-grandfather of Bishop Neumann was named Mayor of the town of Kleinwallstadt on Sept. 10, 1638. He held this office until his death in December of 1670 at age 70. Johann Hoffmann probably hailed from Grossostheim (Hessen) where his marriage on February 5, 1630 was recorded.

With his marriage to twenty year old Anna Maria in 1652 the son of a butcher Johann Heinrich entered into a very advantageous union in his new hometown. With the birth of his son Johann on July 10, 1669 he established the Obernburg branch of the Neumann family. Here, in the year 1695 he married the twenty year old daughter of Obernburg citizen and acquired civil rights of the city and was allowed to establish himself as a cooper.

As a citizen of Obernburg he soon acquired great respect and around 1710 he was named "senator" (counselor) of Obernburg and became Mayor 1731. Johann's son Adam, born Feb. 12, 1699 was the third of nine children. Two younger sisters joined Cistercian Order of Nuns in the convent of Engeltal near Altenstadt, Friedberg County, Hessen. In the year 1742 the older one became prioress of the order. On the 15th of February 1724 he married his second cousin Elisabeth Hoffmann in Kleinwallstadt (Adam's grandmother was the younger sister of the grandfather's bride, the cooper Johann Hoffmann (1630-1683. Of the twelve children of this marriage the sixth, Philipp was born on October 15, 1735 who was the grandfather of the saint. He learned the trade of baker in 1754-1755 and took part in the Seven Years War in the service of the Elector of Mainz. In 1765 he was accepted into the Baker's Guild as master baker. After his return from the war Philipp Neumann married Margarethe Jacob. She was born on Feb. 7, 1738. She was the seventh of the nine children of the sailor (on inland waterways) Mathaus Jacob from Kleinwallstadt and Anna Maria Deckelmann of Obernburg. In the marriage record (Matrik 111/110) the priest apparently mistook the bride for her sister Elisabeth (b. Nov. 2, 1734). But the mother of the nine children is always given as Anna Mararethe or Margarethe.

The father of the saint, Philipp Jr., was the sixth child of Philipp Sr. and Margarethe Neumann; Johann b. Dec. 30, 1763 (who died soon after his birth. Maria Elisabeth b. Jan. 30, 1765, Maria Katharina, b. Sept. 12, 1767, Juliane, b. July 12, 1769 (died four months later). Maria Anna, b. Oct.13,1771. Joh. Philipp, b. Oct.16, 1774. Johann, July 13,1777 and Joh. Wilhelm, b. July 21,1781 (died soon after birth). In three generations the Neumann family expanded greatly in Obernburg. In the years 1755-1825 there were no less than 47 baptisms of children named Neumann. Johann died on Nov. 27, 1844 but some of his descendants emigrated to the United States toward the end of the nineteenth century.

In Volume III of the parish of Obernburg on pages 131/132 there is an obituary regarding the death of Bishop Neumann in 1860.

From statements attributed to Bishop Neumann's sister Johanna Katharina it is evident that contacts between the Prachatz and Oberburg branches of the Neumann families were not too core. Perhaps that is why father Carl's letter to the bishop's brother Wenzel, who had joined the Redemptorist Order in Flatbush, New York was held up by the bishop's uncle Johann and spinster Aunt Anna in Obernburg, before it was sent on via Strasbourg and Paris.

The ancestors of the sainted Bishop Neumann stem mainly from the working class, and were marked by the bourgeoisie of market centers of Obernburg, Wallern, Kalsching, and Prachatz. The Lebisch lineage in Lower Austria had rural roots. With regard to language the saint's ancestors belong primarily to South German dialect groups which in their Main-Frankish, Bavarian, South Bohemian and Lower Austrian form of speak represent the diverse mentalities. Lastly we point again to the older Neumann ancestors who came from the Low German-speaking area. All of them had deep roots in the Catholic religion, in whose spirit the saint grew up and whose moral fiber shaped his life.

This article originally appeared in the periodical Glaube und Heimat (Faith and Homeland in Beilugries Germany under the title "Der Heilige nicht nur aus dem Bomerwald. (Loose translation: The saint not only from the Bohemian Forest).

Coming Events

**September 19, 1998
Board of Directors Meeting**

**October 24, 1998 9 a.m.
Fall General Meeting
Lower Level N.U. Public Library**

**November 14, 1998
Board of Directors Meeting**

Dates of Performances German-Bohemian Heritage Singers

**October 2, 7 p.m.
Oktoberfest, Holiday Inn
New Ulm, MN**

**October 4, 2:30 p.m.
Oktoberfest, Turner Hall
New Ulm, MN**

**October 9, 7 p.m.
Oktoberfest, Holiday Inn
New Ulm, MN**

**October 11, 2:30 p.m.
Oktoberfest, Turner Hall**

New Ulm, MN

The German-Bohemian Village of Hirschau

(Hyrsov, auch Hirsava)

A Short Historical Summary

On August 10, 1921, according to records at the Neumarkt fire department, three houses and 4 barns went up in flames at "Hirschau."

Hirschau is one of several places with the same name about which there are Hirschau anecdotes. But Josef Blau's "Geschichte der deutschen Siedlungen im Chodenwald" tells about our own Hirschau in the Bohemian Forest.

Hirschau was established in 1570. Land Kataster (register) item number 12654 shows the following surnames in the general vicinity of Hirschau at that time:

Helget, Simeth, Hawel, Paumann, Sauer, Kelnhofer, Geyl, David, Brey, Knoth, Pressel, Reitmeier.

The Surnames in the area in 1713 were: P ssl, F nk, Schimek, Paumann, Sauer, Pomann, Simmet, Kolbeck, Stoiber, Lobner, David, Kreysa, Reitmeier, Zipperer, P ssl, Feul, Zoglmann.

Schaller's survey of Bohemia published in 1789 says that Hirschau had 35 house numbers and a chapel dedicated to the "Good Shepherd" and to St. Wendelin.

J. G. Sommer's survey of 1839 found 41 houses with 266 German residents, a parish church at Rothembaum and a chapel in Hirschau dedicated to St. Wendelin. There was also one mill.

The chapel which already stood in the village in 1750 was a six-sided wooded structure. The rich, unmarried feather merchant, Andreas Schmidtpeter, donated the capital for construction of a church in Hirschau in 1830. He also gave enough money to support establishment of a parish in the village.

The church was built in 1840 and dedicated to the Good Shepherd. In 1846 it was made a branch of the Rothembaum parish and in 1856 it was elevated to a parish in its own right.

The silver monstrance and golden chalice belonging to the Hirschau church were made by a goldsmith who was born in Hirschau, Herr Seidl.

In 1847 the Schmidtpeter sisters founded the convent of the "Armen Schulschwestern" (Poor School Sisters) in Hirschau.

Andreas Schmidtpeter was born in 1785 and died on May 24, 1844. His portrait is found in the parish house and in the convent. The iron strongbox that Schmidtpeter always carried with him on his business travels is also in the parish house. There are many stories and adventures associated with Schmidtpeter's life as a feather merchant.

Hs. No 1 House name: Brunner: H sl

Anton Brunner, farmer and innkeeper

Anna, nee Hass, from Fuchsberg Nr. 6

Hs. No 2 House name: Brunner: Farmhouse and Inn

Josef Brunner, farmer, innkeeper

Franziska, nee Maier, from Springenberg No. 4

Hs.No.3 (Hs. name: Linsmaier-formerly Schmidtpeter)

Augustin Rudolf (1897-1954), farmer

Anna, nee Linsmaier from Hirschau 3 (1903-1977)

Hs. No. 4 (House name: Gronl-H sl)

Maier Josef (1871-1944)

Maria, nee Augustin from Pl § No. 3

Hs. No. 5 (House name: Bruigirgl H sl)

Grall Anton (1890-1920), Farmer

Aloisia, nee Pritzl from Hirschau (1893-1978)

Hs. No. 6 (House name: Bruigirgl-Bauernhfrom)

Grall Anton (1909-), Farmer

Maria, nee Kohlbeck from Braunbusch (Brand)

Hs. No. 7 (House name: R tmoja-H sl)

Owner: Josef Seidl

Tenant: Franz Kohlbeck Anna

Hs. No. 8 (House name: R tmoja)

Seidl Josef (1886-1976), farmer

Hs. No. 9 (House name: Wendl)

Seidl Wendelin (1857-1943),

Kr mer, Franziska, nee Bretl from Friedrichsthal

(1869-1946)

Hs. No. 10 (House name: Blossi-H sl)

Baumann Anton, gest. 1943- farmer, innkeeper

Maria, nee Stuibler gest. 1943

Hs. No. 11 (House name: Blossi) Inn and Butcher shop

Baumann Franz (1907-1980)

Maria, nee Gr ssl from Chudiwa (1910-

Hs. No. 12 (House name: Zipperer)

Schreiner Anton, (gest. 1971)

Maria, nee Wittmann (2. wife)

Hs. No. 13 (House name: Grouss Peter)

Baumann Peter und Barbara

Hs. No. 14 (House name: Schn daweba)

Seidl Johann (1909-1972), farmer

Theresia, nee Bretl from Friedrichsthal

Hs. No. 15 (House name: Schn daweba-H sl)

Seidl Johann (1878-1955)

Franziska, nee Kohlbeck from Springenberg, gest. 1968

Hs. No. 16 (House name: Hofmichal)

Wittmann Georg

Children: Franz, Georg, Anna, Anton

Hs. No.17 (Hs. name: fr. V th-Gronl Koarl Leitermann)

Leitermann Josef and Maria

Hs. No. 18 (House name: Gongga-Gf ri)

Grall Josef (1904-1941)

Berta, nee Bohmann (1912-1969) from Schneiderhof

Hs. No. 19 (House name: Lenzn-Wongerl)

Owner: Weber Barbara

Tenant: Seidl Alois (1879-1965) Wedding production

Hs. No. 20 (House name: Birkn)

Owner Singer from Springenberg

Tenant: Kohlbeck Josef and Cilli

Hs. No. 21 (House name: Birkentschla)

Baumann Franz (1876-1948)

Theresia, nee Seidl, from Chudiwa, d. 1972

Hs. No. 22 (House name: Singaschousta)

Singer Josef, Shoemaker and knife maker/sharpener

Anna

Hs. No. 23 (House name: Singaschousta H sl)

Hs. No. 24 (Walzl Franz)

Hiebl Franz

Maria, nee Baumann

Hs. No. 25 (Stejsn-Girgl)

Brai Georg and Maria

Hs. No. 26 (Stejgner)

Brai Alois

Theresia, (in Austria)

Hs. No. 27 (House name: Madousch)

Baumann Anton (1858-1925)

Maria, nee Zipperer from Friedrichsthal No. 2 (d.-1979)

Hs. No. 28 (House name: Madousch-H sl)

Hs. No. 29 (House name: Ledererhansl)

Seidl Franz

Philomena, nee Kohlbeck from Springenberg No. 11

Hs. No. 30 (House name: Ledererhansl-H sl)

Weiss, Alois (war casualty)

Widow Anna married Zisterer, Franz

Hs. No. 31 (House name: Cronl)

Maier Josef (1904-1971)

Theresia, nee Rank from Friedrichsthal 24

Hs. No. 32 (House name: Gemeindegmiede)

1938-purchased by Miller (Herr Urschl) und Schn daweba (Herr Seidl) and torn down.

Hs. No. 33 (House name: Kraust)

Stelzer Josef (1892-1977)

Maria, nee Kordick (Fuchsberg)

Hs. No. 34 (House name: M llner)

Braun Josef

Franziska, nee Linsmaier (Hirschau)

Hs. No. 35 (House name: Urschl)

M hlbauer Georg - metal worker/tool maker

Maria, nee Seidl (Hirschau 14)

Hs. No. 36 (House name: Vogl)

Vogl Anton (half of house) (1904-1981)

Maria, nee Hiebl from Friedrichsthal (1905-1952)

Hs No. 37: (House name: Brandl)

Augustin Franz (half of house) - d. 1973

Maria, nee Traxler (Pl §), d. 1955

Hs. No. 38 (House name: Kloarnichal-H sl)

Owner Gr ssl Josef

Tenant: Hiebl, Wolfgang and Maria

Hs. No. 39 (House name: Kloamichal)

Gr ssl Josef (1904-1982)

Marie, nee Multerer (Pl ss)

Hs. No. 40 (House name: M hlbauer)

Linsmeier Josef

Franziska, nee Rank (Friedrichsthal)

Hs. No. 41 (House name: Brunner H sl)

Tenant: Pfeffer, Leopold and Barbara, nee Hiermann

Hs. Nr. 42 (House name: Traxler)

Schreiner Josef, d. 1975

Maria, nee M hlbauer (Hirschau)

Hs. No. 43 (House name: Friedl)

Haas Josef (1898-1978)

Later: Schreiner Johann and Maria

Hs. No. 44 (House name: Knaben Volksschule)

Hs. No. 45 (Hs name: Kloster der Armen Schulschwestern)

Private girls school

Hs. No. 46 (House name: Parish house)

Hs. No. 47 (House name: Schn derl)

Seidl Franz, Master tailor

Barbara, nee Fische (Donau)

Hs. No. 48 (House name: Birkn Schn da)

Baumann Peter (1886-1948)

Maria, nee Stuibler (Neuern) 2nd wife

Hs. No. 49 (House name: Toutengroba) unoccupied

Hs. No. 50 (House name: Walzl)

Hiebl Josef, Tinsmith

Theresia, nee Kelnhofer (F rthel)

Hs. No. 51 (House name: Schrimpf)

Schrimpf Franz, Teacher (1872-1946)

Maria, nee L ffelmann (Neumark)

Hs. No. 52 (House name: Alte M llner)

Hiebl Anton (1862-1909)

Franziska, nee Zierhut (Pl §)

Hs. No. 53 (House name: B cker)

Bretl Georg

Maria, nee Wesselak (Chudiwa)

Hs. No. 54 (House name: Karl Luis)

Grall Alois

Hedwig, nee Wittmann (d. 1975)

Hs. No. 55 (House name: Schlosser)

Maier Franz, Schlosser, d. 1968 in Regensburg

Hs. No. 56 (House name: Tischler)

Baumann Franz

1. Anna, nee Keml

2. Josefa, nee Achatz

Hs. No. 57 (House name: Planeggen Franz)

Blahnik Franz

Maria, nee Reitmeier (Friedrichsthal)

Hs. No. 58 (House name: Birkn Wogna)

Baumann Karl (1887-1973) Wagner

Maria, nee Reithmeier (Friedrichsthal)

Hs. No. 59 (House name: Planeggen Martin)

Blahnik Martin, Merchant

Anna, nee Maier (Hirschau 17)

Hs. No. 60 (House name: Amerikaner)

Metzger (1. Gatte)-Vogl (2. Gatte) Alois

Theresia, nee Hiebl (Hirschau)

Hs. No. 61 (House name: Schmied) in der Au

Baumann Josef and Katharina

Hs. No. 62 (House name: Zoglmann)

Zogelmann Franz (on upper level)

Hs. No. 63 (House name: Planeggen Franz) Builder

Blahnik Franz

Maria, nee Vogl (Stachesried)

Hs. No. 64 (House name: Hausner)

Hausner, Josef (1870-1935)

Veronika, nee Bretl (Friedrichsthal 16)

The list of residents in the Hirschau Heimatbuch contains additional information about each house including the names of children, the acreage owned, and the last known address (1984) in Germany of each family.

The Parish of Hirschau in More Detail.

Several German villages made up the parish community of Hirschau. The parish belonged to the Vicarate of Deschenitz, Bezirke Taus, and was located in the "Neumarker Sattle" very close to the Bavarian frontier. With only 660 members it was one of the smallest parishes of the Budweis Diocese. The villages included in the parish were Hirschau with 256 Catholics, Friedrichsthal with 210, Springenberg with 117 and Schwarzaau with 77 Catholics. The parish was not always that small. In 1862 there were 360 Catholics in Hirschau, 393 in Friedrichsthal, and 237 in Springenberg and Schwarzaau together -- a total of 990 Catholics.

The historian, Dr. Valentin Schmidt, places the first evidence of settlement in this part of the Bohemian forest as follows: Hirschau and Springenberg before 1597 (the latter was established by Georg von Gutenstein), and Friedrichsthal about 1680 (laid out and named after its founder, Baron Friedrich Lamingen von Albenreuth who lived at Chodenschloss). There was already a "Chaluppe" on the site of Friedrichsthal and for that reason the place as a popular name in dialect which means "at the Chaluppe." Professor Karl Wagnerr, in "Waldheimat" (1926, Nr. 6) says that the place was called Friedrichsdorf in the parish register at Rothenbaum. The poet, Josef Rank (1816-1896) was born in Friedrichsthal.

Schwarzaau is first mentioned as a separate locality in 1873. In that year it was carried in the "Pfarr-Matrik" (parish register) of the new Hirschau parish.

All of the villages which later became a part of Hirschau parish were in the parish of Neugedein ("Kdyne" - there was already a parish church there in 1384) until 1680. After 1680 they were attached to the parish of Rothenbaum where the church was built that same year.

The following short history of the parish and its church is extracted from Johann Trajer's work and from the commemorative books held in the parishes of Rothenbaum and Hirschau.

Residents of the Hirschau community were inspired to build a chapel to God and St. Wendelin in the center of their village when their cattle suffered greatly from a plague in 1740-1741. But this pious project could not be carried out because of the afflictions caused by the wars that raged during those years. [NOTE: This refers to the wars between Maria Theresa and Fredrick the Great of Prussia.] In 1750, after the community had recovered somewhat from the war and the cattle plague, the people decided to build a larger chapel with an altar and the necessary accessories for rites of the Holy Mass. After obtaining official consent from the "Reichsgrafs" Friedrich and Hugo Johann von Stadion-Tannhausen, this mass chapel was built in the form of a hexagon and dedicated to the Good Shepherd and to St. Wendelin. On the second Sunday after Easter (May 4, 1753) it was consecrated.

In 1830 four of the villages belonging to the Rothenbaum parish--Hirschau, Friedrichsthal, Pl ss and Springenberg -- requested permission from the authorities at Kauth to enlarge the chapel at Hirschau village. But instead, on March 18, 1830, the Diocesan Konsitorium gave them permission to build a new church to replace the dilapidated little chapel.

The commemorative book of Rothenbaum notes that in 1837 the church in Hirschau was still only a wooden chapel in need of repair.

Finally the communities were able to begin construction. The residents of Heuhof delivered the wood; the village of Pl ss also contributed material (Pl ss and Heuhof were still attached to the Rothenbaum parish but the residents preferred to come to Hirschau because it was closer. Heuhof had actually been in the Rothenbaum parish - along with Sternhof -- since 1782 and before that was joined to the Parish of the Precious Blood at Neukirch).

Andreas Schmidpeter provided money from his own funds to build a suitable house for the priest -- a sum of 4000 florins. This generous (noble) man provided funds to build the church and then to make it a local affiliate of the Rothenbaum parish and then, in 1845, he also funded a chaplain's position. In 1856 the district religious fund agreed to elevate the church to a parish. (In 1956 the church would have its 100th anniversary.)

The patron namesake of the church is "The Good Shepherd." Inside the church, under the pulpit, is the grave of Andreas Schmidpeter.

The sisters of Andreas Schmidpeter were equally generous and in 1846 they donated 3000 florins for the construction of a convent in Hirschau, dedicated to the Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame. The pastor at the time wrote that minister P. Kaspar Cerny (Czerny) and his chaplain P. Gabriel Schneider were in charge of construction of the convent (1847-1849). The cost of construction was paid by donations from the two Schmidpeter sisters, from their brother, Michael Schmidpeter and his wife, Maria, and from the dowries given by some candidates for the order of School Sisters. In 1854 the motherhouse for the order was transferred to the former Minority Order Monastery in Horazdowitz. That congregation had purchased the convent in Hirschau a year earlier. The present (1984) address of the order of School Sisters is in Auberau in the Bavarian Oberpfalz.

The priests who have served as pastors in Hirschau are:

1. Kaspar Czerny; from November 30, 1836 -- January 6, 1853, as branch priest.
2. Franz Czapko from September 16, 1853 - May 2, 1860, as first parish priest.
3. Johann Schneider from October 3, 1860 - September 15, 1867.
4. Raimund Oberm ller from November 29, 1867, until August 15, 1880, vicar to the Bishop.
5. Wenzel Ketzner from November 23, 1880 - January 1, 1896
6. Albin Hala from April 13, 1896 - January 31, 1911
7. Wenzel Boscheck from June 1, 1911 until April 30, 1936

After that there was a period when there were no pastors assigned to the parish and the pastor of Rothenbaum provided services. During the German occupation (Hitler period), Hirschau parish was joined to the Regensburg Diocese and the parish administrator was Johann Czermak up to the expulsion.

The chaplains during this period were named Smid, Steidl, Tesar, Kacerovsky, Dr. Choc, and Urban.

Over time Hirschau parish has given God's church more than 20 priests and more than 60 sisters of different orders. The first was Josef Rank of Friedrichsthal (born August 3, 1840). He was ordained on July 24, 1864, in the vicinity of Bistriz and died shortly after. He was buried in the Hirschau church on September 30, 1864.

The Vicar Raimund Oberm ller and his nephew Johann Jungbauer who was parish priest in St. Katharina are buried in the church cemetery.

Other priests born in Hirschau parish are: P. Ildephons Wittmann OSB, P. Valentin Kohlbeck, OSB who was an Abbot, P. Ambros Kohlbeck OSB and parish priest, and P. Singer. All three of them worked in America and died there.

Parish priest Linsmeier was from Friedrichsthal and worked in the Diocese of Leitmeritz, and there was also Jesuit father Linsmeier who died in Vienna and a Priest named Eduard Hiebl who was from Schwarzaun and died in Warzenried. At one time there were no less than 15 priests working in various diocese all of whom were born in Hirschau parish. One of them was a Theologian named Matthias Grall who died on the eastern front during World War I.

One wonders if there is any other parish that gave God's church so many priests. For every 100 residents of Hirschau parish, two became priests -- in spite of the difficulties caused by living in a place that was remote, far from the railroad at Neugedein, and also far from German seminaries at Mies, Pilsen, Budweis, Krumau, and Mariaschein. Perhaps the name of our church "The Good Shepherd" has real significance.

But now (1984) the church is "orphaned" and has no one assigned to minister there. Please God that the position will soon be occupied since the number of priests in the Budweis Diocese is once again

increasing.

The following events are recorded in the parish's "commemorative" book: On August 21, 1881 there was a terrible hail and windstorm around 3:00 o'clock in the afternoon; on July 24, 1884 (day of prayer) there was another terrible hailstorm during which the two pastors from Putzeried and Loucim nearly perished at the Friedrichsthal bridge as they made their way home; On August 1, 1911 a powerful wind heavy hail again accompanied a cloudburst; at various times there were also fires which caused more or less damage in the parish community. The church itself was repeatedly rebuilt or renovated.

During World War I there were 27 soldiers from Hirschau parish who were killed or missing. At the end of the war the church and parsonage were once again restored and new bells were hung in the steeple.

The chronicles books of the Rothenbaum parish church tell us about Hirschau parish during an earlier time: In 1817 there was a severe famine. One Strich of corn cost 50 florins paper or 8 silver florins, a strich of wheat cost 50 florins paper or 24 silver florins, a strich of oars cost 20 florins paper or 8 silver florins, and a strich of potato cost 20 florins paper.

[Note: One florin in today's money is about \$13.50. The famine mentioned occurred after six years of decreasing harvests because of persistent cold and wet growing seasons. In 1816 the crop failure was disastrous and there were no reserves of any kind. In addition the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815 had returned hundreds of thousands of soldiers to their local economies at a time when there was no work and no food.]

The poor people had to nourish themselves with meadow grasses mixed with herbs in a pan and boiled into a thin soup. They had very little bread because most of the grain was too moist to make flour. Potatoes were small and rare.

[NOTE: Bohemians mostly fed potatoes to their pigs before 1817. As the famine became more and more severe, government workers visited rural areas to show the people how to prepare such things as potatoes and peas for human consumption. After the famine potatoes became a more important staple food than bread.]

In 1832 a cholera epidemic raged through the parish. It was the first time there had been cholera in Bohemia and after that epidemics of more or less severity occurred regularly. The disease came to Europe from India via English soldiers who first brought it to England.

From the end of the war in 1918 up to the expulsion.

Our generation (I was born August 2, 1914 -- the same day that the first shots of World War I were fired) was fated to eventually be citizens of four different countries. In 1918 we belonged to the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, after the Armistice of 1918 we belonged to the First Republic of Czechoslovakia until 1938, from 1938 until 1945 our State was the German Reich and in 1946 we became citizens of the German Republic.

The Republic of Czechoslovakia, born in October 1918 in Prague, included 140,446 square kilometers and a population of about 15,000,000 that included about 7,000,000 Czechs, 3,500,000 Germans (Sudeten and Carpathian Germans), 2,500,000 Slovaks, 700,000 Ukrainians, more than 700,000 Magyars, 350,000 Jews and 100,000 Poles. Although the same day, October 29, the Sudeten Germans who were members of the Vienna Parliament demanded an independent German Bohemia, there were clashes in all of the German-settled areas between residents and Czech soldiers returning from the wartime fronts. In March 1919 there was bloodshed in some cities of German Bohemia and the German-Bohemian government had to evacuate to Vienna. The following May the Czechs set up their own currency as the only legal money and on June 2, 1919, the boundaries of the new Czech States were set by the peace treaty of St. Germain in Paris. In February, 1920, the new Czech state received its constitution which fixed certain protections the person and language of the various minorities. The Germans were allocated 76 out of 300 seats in the National Assembly and 39 of 150 seats in the Senate...about 1/4 of all seats. In 1926 many members of the political coalition of Czechs and Slovaks which had pretty much followed the Czech party line, began to lean towards the influence of the socialist parties -- which were made up of urban Czechs and various German and Slovak factions. Three German parties, The Farmer's Union, the Tradesman's Party, and The German Christian Socialist Party, had various government representatives -- to include two ministers. After the elections of September, 1929 the Czech and German Social Democrats also had government representation -- replacing the German Christian Socialists. In 1933 the German National Socialist Worker's Party was dissolved and the German National Party also stopped functioning because of the political reversals within the German Reich. At that time Konran Henlein founded the "Sudetendeutsche Heimatfront" which later became the Sudetendeutsch party. In 1935 the party received 3/4 of all the German votes cast and was recognized as the largest party in the country. In December, 1935, G. Masaryk left the office of President and his replacement was E. Benesch. In March, 1938, the Anschluss joined Austria to the German Reich and the question of Sudeten autonomy again rose into the foreground. The Munich agreement (19-30 September, 1938) permitted the inclusion of the Sudeten Germans in the German Reich.

One's home community was his "last resort." According to a "Heimatschein" from the period of the first Czech Republic, when anyone committed a criminal act he was exiled to his home community which then had to take care of his needs as long as he lived. They usually ended up in the community poor house -- called the "Hejthaus." He had to get money to support himself by begging from farmhouse to farmhouse.

The End of the War and the Expulsion.

At the beginning of 1945 there were more Silesian and Slovakian German refugees, Russian war prisoners, and scattered soldiers and hospital patients. Soon even units of the Wehrmacht began passing through our community and it was easy to see that the awful war was nearly over. On May 2 the first American tanks came from Warzenried to Heuhof, moving towards Springenberg. But there were still some German troops in fortified defensive positions on the edge of the Springenberg forest and they opened fire with machine guns. The Americans pulled back a little and from their new position they fired on the "Strassschmiedhaus" (roadside forge, smithy) and on Springenberg (Nofmi und Hosnanwesen). On May 3 the Americans renewed their attack, this time at Pl ss, Hirschau, Chudiwa and Neuern. On May 8 three tanks along with infantry advanced to Triedrichsthal, took control of the village, continued on to the edge of the forest beyond and then turned back towards Hirschau.

On May 10 (after the armistice) the first Czechs came from Steffelhof and Melnut into our villages. A short time later uniformed partisans arrived. All weapons had to be turned in as well as anything valuable -- i.e., musical instruments and the like. Humiliation, mistreatment and suppression fell upon the population. Regulations demanded that yellow arm bands (later on white ones) be worn to identify Germans. All savings deposits were flocked, food ration cards bearing the imprint German had no allocation for meat or milk and all cattle had to be relinquished. Community documents were expropriated to verify compliance with the other regulations. Individual farmsteads were gradually occupied and their owners had to work in their own homes as hired hands and maids.

On October 8, 1945, the victorious leaders in Potsdam agreed to the conditions for expulsion of the Germans from Czechoslovakia. On October 25, 1945, President Benesch decreed the confiscation of all movable and immovable assets of Germans by the state without any compensation. The German population who lived on farms that were not yet occupied continued working, bringing in crops and sowing the fields. The following May, when the NSDAP was at its peak, abuse by the military police increased followed by a new wave of arrests in mid-October, 1945.

The prison in Neugedein was overcrowded and the one in Klattau soon had the same problem. Those who have formerly been members of the "Freikorps" were virtual slaves who were worked to death. Other Germans were forced to work in the Erzgebirg uranium mines. Many fled over the nearby frontier into Bavaria with nothing more than they could carry on their backs, finding refuge with acquaintances across the border.

The Homeland Decays.

Our abandoned homes fell into decay. The Czechs removed anything useful and the new inhabitants did not stay there very long -- not even the Gypsies. Friedrichsthal exists no longer - there are only a couple of houses left. A huge collective farm was built on the "Hauslustfeld." The same thing occurred in Springenberg and only Hirschau fared better. Schwarza was razed to the ground and the road from Neumark to Neuern (closed to all traffic since 1970) is now in the forbidden zone. NOTE: This refers to the "no man's land" of border area created to prevent refugees from crossing into Bavaria.

Epilogue

The former residents of Hirschau parish now live scattered throughout Germany. But there are a few places where they have gathered together. Some of them chose to live directly on the German border in places where they can even see the landscape around their old homeland. There is even a place called "Neu-Schwarza" on the Bavarian side of the stream that marks the border. In the Cham district there is also a fairly large group of folk from Hirschau parish.

A second large group went to the Regensburg-Straubing area and settled mostly in the vicinity of Dingolfing and Landshut.

A third group went to Stuttgart and settled in nearby Wangen, G ppingen and that general vicinity while a fourth group found new homes in the Ober-, Mittel-, and main Frankish district (Franconia), primarily in Kitzingen, Marktbreit, W rzburg, Bamberg, Schl sselfeld, and Neumarkt.

A few families went to lower Franconia and Hesse, to Westphalia, into the Rhineland and to Hamburg and Lower Saxony.

A general map showing the approximate residences of former residents of Hirschau Parish and their descendants will be published if the necessary research can be completed.

The Course of Events in our Homeland.

After the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy collapsed the trials of "Tschechisierung" (making Czech) began in our homeland. The Czech officials took over the Gendarme post in Neumark and soon after all mailmen, roadworkers, and civil service, railroad and post office positions were open only for Czechs. All transactions everywhere had to be bilingual but since there were no Czechs living in Hirschau parish community we were spared the requirement of a Czech school. Children from neighboring Silberberg came to school in Hirschau because the German school there was one of the first to be expropriated.

All official documents were in Czech so each community had to employ a secretary who was fluent in that language in order to keep our German-speaking mayors in office. Any Germans who ended up in the Czech military were usually sent to far Slovakia or into Carpathorussia. There were few career possibilities for the German youth in our community. They were virtually locked out of public service of any kind but they could find work in agriculture and forestry. There were also lots of jobs in restaurant and in the "Dorfh usern" (private homes where group gatherings were held) where things often became quite lively and merry.

Long winter evenings passed with singing, storytelling, lively social games, card games, jigsaw puzzles and other such amusements. Parties given by the various social groups, church parties and theater-going parties were high points.

During the summer there was hiking on the Riesenberg and the Herrnstein mountain at Neugedein, visits to the "B renkapelle" at Fuchsberg and to the scenic forests at Neuern. A few people were able to go to the B rgerschule in Neuern or to study in the convents and boys seminaries in Krumau, Budweis or Mariaschein.

Right after the German Reich took over our homeland (October 8, 1938) in accordance with the Munich agreement, and until the end of the Second World War, there were German troops (Waffen SS) in Neumark, Neuern and even in our villages. A provisional national and language frontier was established beyond Friedrichsthal (Steffelhof) and through the Neudorf forest. The currency shifted from the Czech crown to the German Reichsmark at a very unfavorable exchange rate. (One Czech Krone was valued at 12 Reichspfennig.) The community of Hirschau, which included Hirschau, Friedrichstal, Springenberg, Schwarza, Silberberg and Pl ss, was detached from the Taus Bezirk and became a part of the newly-formed Eisenstein district in the frontier portion of eastern Bavaria - it was no longer attached to a Sudeten district.

Some of our young men volunteered for military service or for border patrol, others joined the newly-formed "Arbeitsdienst" while still others were given conscription examinations and drafted into the Wehrmacht. In March 1939 the Germans occupied the rest of Czechoslovakia and declared the "Protectorate" of Bohemia and Moravia. The Second World War began on September 1, 1939 and many young men were called upon to enlist immediately. Their jobs were taken over at first by workers conscripted in Poland and later also by French prisoners of war. Enthusiasm generated by the initial successes of the German armed forces was gradually eroded by the large and ever-growing number of casualties and lists of those missing at the front. The campaign in Russia, in particular, demanded huge sacrifice. Near the end of the war the bombing raids became more and more frequent, evacuees and refugees flowed into our homeland and had to be housed and fed. Many of them pushed their carts through our villages and into the former Reich.

Memorials, In Memory of . . .

Bradley Martinka

from Mariann Treml, the Martinka family

Rose Tauscheck

from Jo & Carroll Elija, Paul & Janice Kretsch,
Bill and Diane Embacher

Irene Lambrecht

Leo & Carol Beranek

Lydia Meidl

from Eleanor Kretsch, Donna Portner,
Robert Nevitt family

Leander Stadick

from Paul & Janice Kretsch, Eleanor Kretsch

Richard Wilfahrt

from Mariann Treml, Bill & Dianne Embacher,
Gladys Ries, Paul & Janice Kretsch,
Randy & Monica Wenninger, Carroll & Jo Elija,
Mr. & Mrs. Dale Krueger, Florence Arbes,
Kurt & Ella Eisen

Jerry Hoffman

from Patrick & Nicole Eckstein

Marie Bianchi

from Patrick & Nicole Eckstein

Butch Carstensen

from David Zenk

Addresses

German-Bohemian Heritage Society
P.O. Box 822, New Ulm, MN 56073-0822

E-Mail

Society & Newsletter:
lal@mnic.net

Research Information:

rpaulgb@pioneerplanet.infi.net

GBHS Home Page On The World Wide Web:

http://www.rootsweb.com/~gbhs/

GBHS Officers and Board Members

1998 Officers

President

Paul Kretsch
311 Linden Street
New Ulm, Minnesota 56073-1519
Telephone: (507) 354-2763

Vice President

Gerald Gulden

Treasurer

George Portner

Secretary

Charlotte Kastanek-Hoppe

Board Member Emeritus

LaVern J. Rippley

GBHS Board of Directors

Social Activities

Don Brand

Social Activities Chair

Pat Kretsch

Newsletter Editor, Library Chair, Research, Membership

Louis Lindmeyer

Research Chair, Internet Chair, Program Chair, Education, Library

Robert Paulson

Sales Chair, Membership Chair, Treasurer Asst.

Angeline Portner

Publicity Chair

Peggy Tauer

Hospitality Chair, Social Activities

Adeline Wilfahrt

Education Chair

Don Zwach

Mariann Tremel

Queries

Trying to locate Bohemian village of (phonetic spelling) Rabotig or Rhapsic where Frank Zadnicheck (or Zednicheck) was born on January 19, 1840. Frank married Fannie Zatcheka (or Zatechka) Kromple (or Krouple), born March 1826. They later immigrated to Quarry, IA., in 1869. Also unable to locate port of departure, the name of vessel they came on, nor American port of entry. Any information on the village, family names or their immigration to America will be sincerely appreciated.

Contact: Ernesta Roberts
1048 East Riverside Drive #3
Truth or Consequences, NM 87901-2956

On Line Web Links

From *ROOTSWEB REVIEW: Genealogical Data Cooperative Weekly News* www.rootsweb.com

DIGITAL ARCHIVES OF COLORADO. Check the available ship passenger lists (the real things, not indexes), church records and various U.S. census records now available on CDs. These are actual digital images of the original records. View samples online at: <http://www.digarc.com/index.html>

Looking for Genealogy Databases, Usenet Newsgroups, or Surname Lists? See what's available via RootsWeb:

<http://searches.rootsweb.com/#usenet/>

New at Rootsweb:

THE OBITUARY DAILY TIMES <<http://www.rootsweb.com/~obituary>>

<GEN-OBIT-L-request@rootsweb.com> has indexed more than two million obituaries from around the world since it began four years ago, reports Denis Savard, its founder and editor.

GEN-OBIT contributors index obituaries from their local newspapers. These are gathered to make daily indexes of current obituaries. Approximately 2,000 obituaries are now indexed daily.

Contributors to GEN-OBIT are usually family surname genealogists, and can request from each other a complete copy (personally retyped) of a particular obituary.

Naturalization Papers

The easiest way to check on naturalization papers in the US is to email the NARA branch that covers the area (state) that your person lived in . They will check their indexes and then contact you if they find them , or those who match them, then you send them the check and they send you the papers (Yes, there are other ways of doing this, microfilms through FHC and local courts , but this is the quickest and easiest).

For particular details and all NARA email addresses check out my web page Helpful Hints for Successful Searching at:

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~irlwat/instruct.htm>

Ship Passenger Lists

Film numbers for all ports of entry for passenger ships into the US at the Helpful Hints website at <http://www.rootsweb.com/~irlwat/instruct.htm>. They are the numbers you can plug into the computer CD catalog at the FHC to find the film numbers you need, one section for NY arrivals (as that is kind of complicated until you get used to it) and another for all other ports.

You might also want to join TheShipsList for any specific info needed on a ship, or for other questions. Several helpful links to emigration and passenger ship info sites are at the Waterford Ireland page at:

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~irlwat/waterford.htm>

Join RootsWeb

The RootsWeb Review, a weekly e-zine with news about RootsWeb happenings, new mailing lists and Web sites, a continuing tutorial on using RootsWeb's resources, monthly statistics, news from major hosted activities such as USGenWeb, USGenWeb Archives, WorldGenWeb, and Cyndi's List, schedules for IIGS/RootsWeb IRC, and other information of interest to RootsWeb users and the genealogical community.

What is RootsWeb?

RootsWeb Genealogical Data Cooperative (RootsWeb) is the oldest and largest genealogy resource on the Internet. Today it houses more than 2,650 genealogy Websites, including the USGenWeb Archives; ROOTS-L (in its 11th year) and more than 3,600 other mailing lists; and the Roots Surname List (in its 10th year). The June 1998 Roots Surname List contains 420,971 names from about 58,000 submitters.

RootsWeb has two missions: (1) to make large volumes of data available to the online genealogical community at minimal cost; and (2) to provide support services to online genealogical activities such as Usenet newsgroup moderation, mailing list maintenance, and surname list generation.

While all of RootsWeb's databases, mailing lists, and other activities are open to everyone, selected services (such as automatic notification when your surname appears in new material uploaded to RootsWeb) are available only to members and sponsors. Some services that are expensive to provide (such as personal Web space or Web serving of personal GEDCOM files) are available at a nominal cost to sponsors.

The "cooperative" in RootsWeb's name means that we are a community-supported facility and your choice about joining has a direct impact on how fast RootsWeb can bring more resources online for the Internet genealogical community. By becoming a member, sponsor, donor, or patron, your support of RootsWeb helps to provide Web and FTP space to thousands of genealogical activities, mailing lists for thousands of groups of genealogists with shared interests, and search engines to make more than four billion bytes of genealogical data (the equivalent of two million printed pages) freely available to Internet genealogists. If you would like to help RootsWeb by becoming a member, sponsor, donor, or patron, please visit:

www.rootsweb.com/rootsweb/how-to-subscribe.html

GBHS Fall Meeting

The GBHS 1998 Fall Meeting will take place on Saturday October 24, 1998. The meeting will be held at 9 a.m. in the lower level of the New Ulm Public Library.

The details of the meeting were still being worked out as this issue of the Heimatbief went to press. A separate mailing will be sent to members prior to the meeting detailing the event.

*A sincere thank you for being a member of the
German-Bohemian Heritage Society!*

German-Bohemian Heritage Society Non-Profit Org.

P.O. Box 822 U.S. Postage Paid
New Ulm, MN 56073-0822 Permit No. 54
New Ulm, MN
56073-0822

Join Us

Membership Form For The German-Bohemian Heritage Society
Family Membership \$10.00 per Year

Name _____ Phone # _____

Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Please list surnames you are researching including geographical locations. (Optional)

**Mail with your check to: GBHS
P.O. Box 822
New Ulm, MN 56073-0822**

#