

SEARCHERS

Polish Genealogical Soc.
of Western New York
Buffalo, New York



A NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS AND SUBSCRIBERS OF
POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF WESTERN NEW YORK

Dedicated to Polish-American Family Research

No. 1 June 1989

INAUGURAL ISSUE

The Polish Genealogical Society of Western New York was formed in September, 1988. Being the brainchild of Mike Drabik, it was only natural to elect him as President. We do not have a regular address, but meet every month, (on the second Thursday) at the Reinstein Library, 2580 Harlem Rd. in Cheektowaga, New York. This is a centrally located site, as it has easy access to all major highways in town. Our roster contains members from: Niagara Falls, Ontario; Batavia, Dunkirk, Elma, North Tonawanda and Fort Erie, Ontario, Canada. With our present location it is made easy for members to attend meetings.

With this Inaugural Newsletter, we intend to be informative in all aspects of genealogy research. We thank our sister societies for donating past newsletters so that we can determine what type of information will be useful to beginner researchers in our locality.

Now that we have introduced ourselves, we trust that you will enjoy reading a distinct type of newsletter. At the conclusion we know that the reaction will be that we are not another "copy".....SO ENJOY!

OFFICERS:

President

Mike Drabik
299 Barnard St.
Buffalo, N.Y.
14206

Vice-President

Ted Smardz
617 Fulton St.
Buffalo, N.Y.
14210

Secretary

Sharon Schlicht
15 Atwood Pl.
Cheektowaga, N.Y.
14225

Treasurer

Joanne Sarafini
1199 Walden Ave.
Cheektowaga, N.Y.
14225

MONTHLY MEETING UPDATE

December..... Election of Officers for 1989

January..... Installation of Officers

February..... Mrs. Betty Keehn, local representative of the Amherst branch of the Mormon LDS Library. To members present Mrs. Keehn discussion covered the following: simplified record keeping, formation of a system for beginners, a chart of local Vital Statistic Office addresses. Also discussed was a future tour of the local library to see first hand operations and use of equipment.

March..... Mr. Thomas Matecki, a local agent for the local office of the Department of Immigration and Naturalization, had a presentation for members that covered how records were kept locally after an immigrant applied for their Naturalization papers. A short review was shown to members on how the Soundex Code System operates. It was at this meeting that Mr. Matecki notified us that the local Federal Building no longer contains copies of existing Naturalization records. As of last month, the records were crated and forwarded to the Central Office in Bayonne, New Jersey. In the future, any search for an ancestors "papers" will have to be in file form, and the local offices will issue the necessary forms.

April..... Dr. Bronislaw Trzezewski, a retired local pharmacist, and frequent traveler to Poland, presented a slide and talk lecture, along with his personal collection of slides, taken while vacationing or touring Poland. Dr. Trzezewski's presentation started on time, was so interesting to those present that the local County Library notified the Society that we were already 10 minutes past closing time. Another slide presentation has been "booked" for later in the year.

April, 29th.. Mr. Jonathan Shea, President and founder, of the Connecticut branch of the Polish Genealogical Society, held a slide and audience question participation lecture at Villa Maria College. This was co-sponsored by Canisius College Polish Chair and the Polish Genealogical Society of Western New York.

THE SOUND EX INDEX SYSTEM

This system was formulated by the Federal Government, and used by the Bureau of Census. The system is structured on the sound of a name, AND NOT ON THE SPELLING. Names with similar sounds are classified with a code mark. The code mark being one letter and three numbers are given to each SURNAME.

- 1..Only the first letter of a SURNAME is used.
- 2..The vowels(a, e, i, o, u,) are not used, after the first letter of a surname. The letters (y, w, and h,) are not used either.
- 3..The remaining consonant letters are given a code number.
- 4..Double consonants, or letters are given only one number.
- 5..If there are three consonants after the first letter, zeros are used to make up the three numbers.
- 6.. DONT'T FORGET: ONE LETTER and THREE NUMBERS

<u>LETTERS</u>	<u>CODE NUMBERS</u>
B, P, F, V,	1
C, S, K, G, J, Q, X, Z,	2
D, T,	3
L,	4
M, N,	5
R,	6

u/2262
P362
W623

- 7.. In coding, the following prefixes to a surname are sometimes not coded...."van," "Von," "de," "Di," "D," "dela," "du," "le,".
- 8.. When viewing the film, go directly to your code number.
Upon location of the code number, search for the surname.
Upon location of the surname, search for the given name.
- 9.. Three pitfalls you may encounter are:
 - Mistake in spelling the surname.
 - Omitting a letter in surname.(usually by the official)
 - Finding more than one person with the same surname.
- 10.. When trying to locate ancestors from the old country, make sure you know what name they were given at birth. When arriving in the United States, these immigrants used the name they were given in "the old country", unless it was changed there.
- 11.. DON'T ANGLICIZE A POLISH NAME. (Surname or Given)
- 12.. GOOD HUNTING

STO LAT

THE POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF WESTERN NEW YORK

SALUTES

ST. STANISLAUS R. C. CEMETERY

FOR A

CENTENNIAL OF SERVICE

1889 - 1989

by Michael Drabik and Ted Smardz

The Early Years

The events which our society is most concerned with involves the establishment of the first Polish cemetery in Western New York. The need for a Polish burial ground was certainly a priority of Rev. Dean Jan Pitass, then pastor of St. Stanislaus B. & M. Church in Buffalo, New York. The determining factor on this matter came in 1888, when he received a notice from the authorities of the local United German-French cemetery stating they would no longer accept Poles to be buried on their grounds.

Forced to seek a burial place, the pastor decided to purchase a tract of land that was for sale along Walden Avenue. This location was about two miles from the present cemetery. The pastor later learned that the State of New York would not permit this land site to be developed for a burial ground. At that time there existed a law requiring cemeteries to be located at least five miles from the center of any city. So as not to forfeit the down payment, Father Pitass refunded the parish its money and the land was purchased for his personal hobby, which was fruit and tree orchards. The previous year, Father Pitass had purchased land on Harlem Road. This parcel was exchanged for the tract on Walden and was the beginning of the "Old Cemetery". Years later, under the terms of his last will, the Walden property formed the parish of St. John Gualbert. Two existing streets in the area are named: Alexander and Gualbert.

The original twenty acres was purchased from the Samuel Rapin family. Because of the illness of Bishop Stephen Ryan, the cemetery was not dedicated until the fall of 1890. Prior to this time, any burial taking place the priest would bless the grave before interment. The first interment at St. Stanislaus took place on Monday, September, 8, 1890. It was for the remains of Apolonia Burzynska, who died the day before at age 48.

On Sunday, October, 29, 1905, a huge erected cross was blessed. Its cost was in the area of \$1,500.00. With the increasing number of Poles arriving in Buffalo and the local area, Dean Pitass saw the need for an expansion program. On Friday, November, 1, 1907, five more acres were purchased and combined with the original twenty to make up the "Old Cemetery". On Tuesday, January, 2, 1912, fourteen acres were purchased and the expansion program was now on the west side of Pine Ridge Road.

(cemetery continued)

The Expansion Years

With the establishment of the "Old" Cemetery (#1) and the purchase of land for the "New" Cemetery (#2), this era will take us into the administration of the second administrator, Upon the death of Dean Jan Pitass on Thursday, December, 11, 1913, his successor was his nephew Msgr. Aleksander A. Pitass.

When the average person visits or tours a cemetery, they take for granted its appearance. Not taken into consideration is the amount of work and planning to get the grounds into an acceptable appearance.

In the days of "hard labor" and "mules", most of the useless trees, stumps, rocks, and overgrowth had to be removed. A large area of the latest purchase, had to be filled in because of the water and mud. It could be classified as a swamp, and was probably why the land was sold.

The cemetery was planned out with care to insure the esthetic quality as well, and practical. Roads were constructed to a width of twenty feet to enable movement of motor vehicle traffic. Gravesites were staked out in circles and sections. The first burial in Cemetery #2 took place on Monday, December, 6, 1926 for Rose Zalewski.

Msgr. Pitass deserves credit for his foresight in purchasing more land as it became available. This assures the Polish people of the Buffalo diocese, and the Polish parishes, a future burial ground. Total land area up to this time was nearly 100 acres, and included the area between Pine Ridge Road, Sugar Road, Eggert Road, and up to the neighboring cemetery, Mount Calvary.

Between the burials and construction, there were several "blessings. Field masses were held by the huge cross. Several prominent local priests from Polish parishes held homilies and sermons. At one blessing the Moniuszko Singing Society provided appropriate religious hymns. as the land was bought and the area expanded, these blessings were held, as in 1928 and 1932. One section of cemetery has enough space to accomodate burials for 85 years.

With the death of Msgr. Pitass on Sunday, July, 30, 1944, an era of fifty-five years of Pitass love and caring for their fellow man came to an end. Both are resting eternally, in a small circle gravesite, in the "old section, along side another relative, also a priest. The Pitass administrations and leaderships are still remembered by those of the Polish and Roman Catholic faith, who have ancestors buried at St. Stanislaus.

(cemetery continued)

The Transformation Years

The appointment of Msgr. Peter J. Adamski as the third administrator brought about modern ideas. Under his direction, both cemeteries underwent minor transformation policies, that can still be noticed today.

During the 1940's, the cemetery required its own facilities, so it was necessary to construct an office building to house cemetery records. Two other structures were needed to house lawn care equipment, tools, and storage of tombstones and markers. Decorating both sides of Pine Ridge Road are huge impressive stone entrance pillars with wrought iron gates, built during this time. Wrought iron fencing decorates the property line of both cemeteries.

Two deeds that Msgr. Adamski was noted for were his annual processions and out door masses. The construction of an outdoor altar, made of limestone, graced the center circle of Cemetery #2. Upon this altar stood a sculptures statue of St. Stanislaus, made in Poland, of Kielce marble. It was donated by Cardinal Adam Sapieha, of Krakow, Poland.

Depending on the weather, crowds of hundreds to nearly a thousand, graced the landscape, during the outdoor masses. Annual masses were said on Memorial Day, All Soul's Day, Mother's Day, and Father's Day.

During the 1960's, New York State began the construction of the Kensington Expressway as a link between downtown Buffalo and the airport in Cheektowaga. Land was needed, and in the process thirteen acres were acquired. This project caused two major problems. One was the re-interment of those bodies displaced by the construction, and the other was the uniting of the two sections of cemetery now separated by the expressway. As part of the State settlement, a connecting bridge was built.

During the 1970's, the idea of crypt burial was becoming popular. The construction of one Mausoleum proved so successful that two others were erected. The main, or Resurrection Mausoleum now graces the area that once contained the outdoor altar. With the building of St. Stanislaus Mausoleum, the marble statue was removed and placed in front of this edifice. The third Mausoleum, was blessed on Sunday, November, 2, 1975, and dedicated to the memory of Father Maximilian Kolbe, the Polish Saint and Martyr of World War 11.

Msgr. Peter J. Adamski died on Tuesday, September, 21, 1982, age 91. His resting place is in the center chapel of the Resurrection Mausoleum, which he was instrumental in building. His administration shall be remembered for the necessary improvements, repairs, and innovations needed to maintain proper operations.

(cemetery continued)

With the completion of the Expressway, the isolated section of property was identified as Cemetery #3, but the actual name is Garden of the Rosary. The access bridge is located near the Kolbe Mausoleum. The first burial in this area was on Saturday, October, 2, 1954, for Jan Lisowski. Ground area for all three divisions now totaled 105 acres.

The Dark Years

The appointment of the next administrator, shall remain nameless, because of the grief, degradation and added expense to the bereaved, whose loved ones were buried in said cemetery.

The removal of gravestones and markers was begun in the old section. Monuments were discarded or leveled, leaving only the inscription above ground. The remaining part of the monument was buried below the surface. Trees, that provided shade for mourners, were uprooted, leaving this section looking barren. This was hardly a fitting tribute to our early pioneers. A dispute arose between the Diocese and parishioners over the title of ownership to the cemetery.

Without prior knowledge, the property was transferred along with a sizable amount of assets. This action caused a loud outcry from the Polish community of Western New York and the Polish press. This scandalous and disgraceful act led to the downfall and removal of the shameless administrator.

The Present Years

Tuesday, February, 28, 1978, is the official assignment date for the present administrator, Rt. Rev. Msgr. John R. Gabalski. His first order of business was the correcting of the church's future path. Programs were instituted, some corrected and some eliminated and took several months. His able leadership and public relations came in handy during the next several months, as negotiations for transfer to the parish of the cemetery property. This came about on Tuesday, June, 20, 1978, when Msgr. Gabalski was appointed Director of the cemetery.

Instituted early in the cemetery's history was a "Perpetual Care Fund". Each year monies were set aside to insure proper maintenance of the property for years to come. Tuesday, January, 2, 1979, is an historic date in the records of the cemetery. It was on this date that settlement was made and ownership of assets was returned to the original owners.

A cemetery the size of St. Stanislaus requires an enormous amount of upkeep and the present administrator is conscious of this responsibility and is diligent in doing so.

(cemetery continued)

As the cemetery commemorates its centennial year, it is appropriate for Polish-Americans to reflect on the 100 years of service of the cemetery and the great efforts and sacrifices the early settlers made in establishing our Polish cemetery. This hallowed ground is the resting place for over 105,000 bodies.

Some notables that are interred in the cemetery are:

Jakob Rozan, first Pole elected as city supervisor in 1892.

Adam Plewacki, first casualty of World War I.

William J. Grabiarz, Congressional Medal of Honor recipient of World War I.

Chester Kowal, elected Mayor of City of Buffalo.

Stanley Makowski, elected Mayor of City of Buffalo.

Andrew Sordyl, businessman, property owner in "Little Hollywood" section of Buffalo. Also had two streets named in his honor.

Chester Gorski, U.S. Congressman, and Common Council President of Buffalo.

* * * * *

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books and Articles

Haiman, Mieczyslaw., History of St. Stanislaus B. & M. Church 1873-1923

Mikolajczaka, Stefana., 60th Anniversary Book, 1873-1933

Jubilee Committee., Diamond Jubilee Book, 1873-1948

Centennial Committee., Centennial Anniversary Book, 1873-1973

Personal Interviews

Rt. Rev. Msgr. John R. Gabalski, Pastor of St. Stanislaus R.C. Church

David Szyjka, Supervisor of St. Stanislaus R.C. Church Cemetery

Joann Fronczak, Sales Director of St. Stanislaus R.C. Church Cemetery

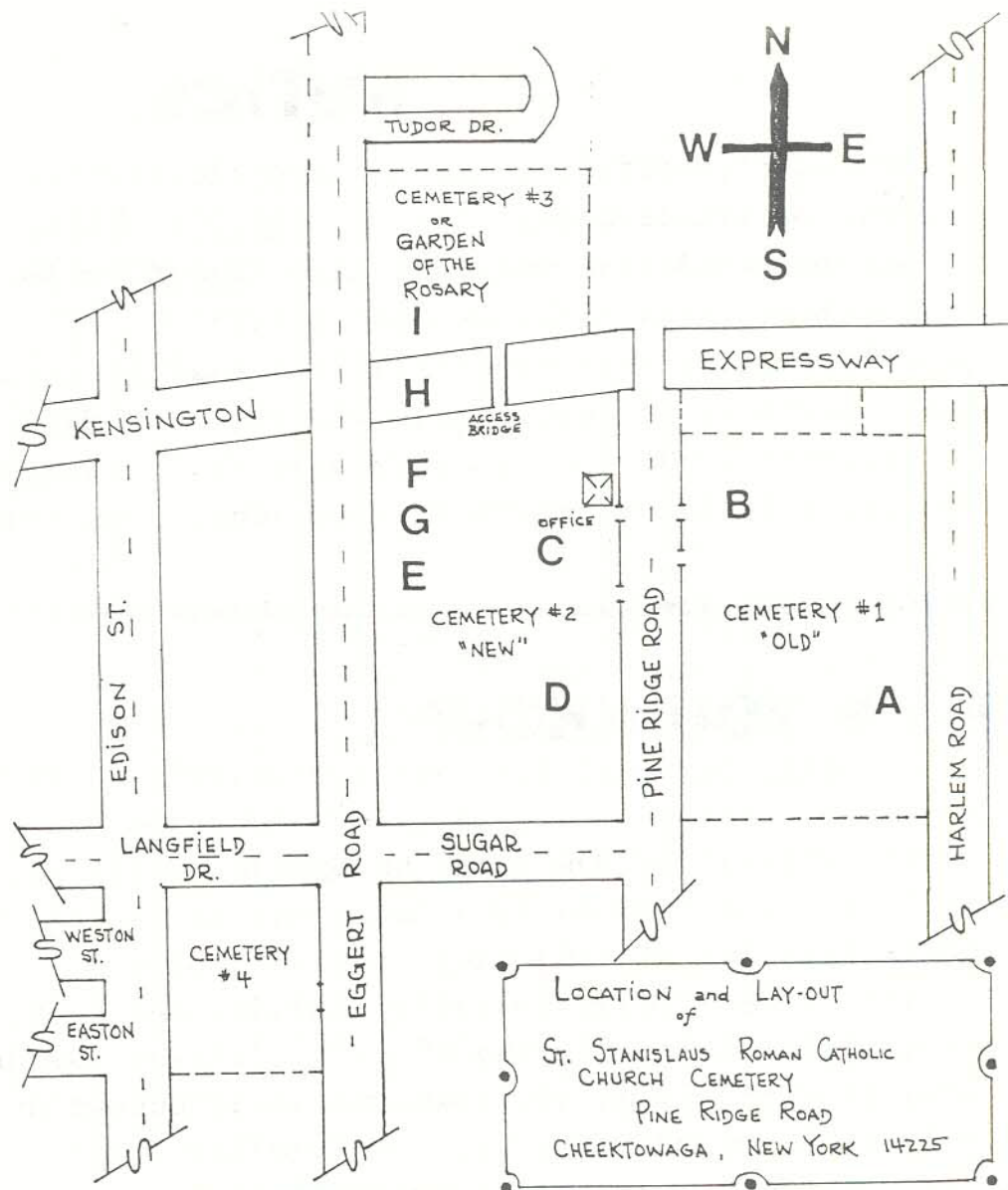
Michelle Kloc, Secretary of St. Stanislaus R.C. Church Cemetery

Manuscripts and Pamphlets

Joseph Drabik, for loan of books from personal library

Michael Drabik, for loan of books from personal library

* * * * *



CHRONOLOGY OF ST. STANISLAUS CEMETERY PURCHASES

DATE	AREA	ACRES	AMOUNT	SELLERS
June 28, 1890	"A"	20.25	\$17,340.00	Samuel, Julia, and Edward Rapin
Nov. 1, 1907	"B"	5.59	\$ 700.00	Edward, Julia, and Samuel Rapin
Jan. 2, 1912	"D"	14.60	\$14,000.00	Margaret Buechi
Mar. 31, 1920	"C"	14.86	\$18,750.00	John Berkes and others
Feb. 27, 1927	"E"	4.00	\$19,000.00	Stephen & Helen Wojtkowiak, Claude & Louise Horn, and Walter Krantz
Nov. 28, 1927	"F"	13.92	\$66,000.00	Stephen & Helen Wojtkowiak, Claude & Louise Horn, and Walter Krantz
July 1, 1929	"I"	6.13	\$21,804.00	William & Magdelene Haag
July 3, 1929	"H"	21.39	\$78,196.00	Stephen & Helen Wojtkowiak, Claude & Louise Horn, and Walter Krantz
Oct. 15, 1929	"G"	4.00	\$ 9,500.00	Gustave & Theresa Heckel, and Newman interests

NOTICE

The elected officials are issuing the following notice to Society members and subscribers:

We recommend that you check with the office before you send any monies through the mail. We have an updated list that was received from authorities that shows certain companies use fraud to entice persons engaged in genealogy to use their services or materials.

Check over the list and make sure the company you intend on doing business with is not on it. Remember the adage: "Buyer beware".

NOW YOU KNOW...

..... Ignace Jan Paderewski was born in Poland, on November 6, 1860. His mother died when he was a baby, and was raised by an older sister and his father. His love of the piano brought him world-wide fame and fortune. The title of Prime Minister came later when he became the official spokesman for a "Free Poland". His many concerts took him to many cities in Europe and the United States, including Buffalo, New York. He remarried after his first wife died. The caring of an invalid son took up most of his spare time. He died on June 29, 1941, but he is buried in two places. His body is interred in Arlington National Cemetery, but his heart was removed and later interred in the Cypress Hills Mausoleum in New York City.

..... Poland, Arkansas and Poland, Ohio are not named for the European country. Both areas had early local settlers with the surname: POLAND

* * * * *

PUTTING ON HEIRS

by AMY SMARDZ





PORTHOLE PEEKERS

Listed below is the name of an immigrant listing a location in Western New York as their final destination.

<u>Vessel</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
S.S. Kroonland	Antwerp, Belgium	New York City, N.Y.
<u>Date of Arrival:</u> Wed. Mar. 6, 1907		

<u>NAME</u>	<u>AGE</u>	<u>AMT.</u>	<u>BIRTHPLACE</u>	<u>DESTINATION</u>
Helena GACH	20	\$46.	Zygodowice, Poland	Buffalo, N.Y.
Jozef MLYNARSKI	36	\$20.	Jarzow, Poland	Depew, N.Y.

submitted by: Ted Smardz

NAME

SEARCH

Below are names being researched,
and the names of our subscribers
who welcome your assistance.

Subscriber

Name Search

Area Research

Donald BRANDON
238 Brentwood Dr.
No. Tonawanda N.Y. 14120

SUWINSKI

Skarlin,
West Prussia, Poland

Dorothy Cook
15 Cecil St.
Buffalo, N.Y. 14216

BURSTYN / BURSZTYN
WIECZOREK
SKIBA / SKIBINSKA

Ropczyce, Tarnow, Pol.
Szczytniki, Poznan, Pol.
Szczytniki, Poznan, Pol.

Florence WITUL
56 Humason Ave.
Buffalo, N.Y. 14211

WITUL

Szczecin, (Stettin) Pol.

Ted SMARDZ
617 Fulton St.
Buffalo, N.Y. 1410

SMARC / SMARDZ
GLICA and DYBUS
PIEPRZNY

Koprzywnica, Kielce, Pol.
Osiek, Kielce, Pol.
Mielec, Rzeszow, Pol.

Mike DRABIK
99 Barnard St.
Buffalo, N.Y. 14206

KURGAN
KASZUTA
GORSKI

Zdzary, Pol.
Poznan, Pol.
Prussian, Pol.

Name Search (continued)

Subscriber

Name Search

Area Research

Eugene CHMURA
25 Cathedral Lane
Cheektowaga, New York 14225

CHMURA
RODAK

Kielce, Poland
Buszko Zdroj, Poland

Rita SWIATEK-HUFFMAN
118 South Pontiac St.
Buffalo, New York 14206

SWIATEK
WILCZAK

Kolbuszowa, Rzeszow,
Wegliska, Poland

Edmund KIEDROWSKI
Box #37- 260 So. Sargent St.
Cowlesville, New York 14037

KREFTA, GRZENIA
KRUZA, KRUZOWA

Pommerania,
(Prussia and Poland)

Regina KOCIECKI
81 Clayton St.
Buffalo, New York 14207

MOL, STEPIEN,

Limanowa, Radwan,
Iwaniska, Poland

Dorothy KRANTZ
88 Floradale Ave.
Tonawanda, New York 14150

KRANTZ, WIRTH
TOLEJKO, ROSOLOWSKI

Buffalo, (Erie Cnty)
Ithaca, (Tompkins Cnty)

Donald KUCIEWSKI
272 Brookside Terrace
Tonawanda, New York 14150

KUCIEWSKI, PIASCIK
SOPATA, KARPINSKI

Kolno- Lomzy, Poland
Limanowa, Gorlice,
Poland

James LYONS
52 Fairview Ave. P.O.Box #392
Dunkirk, New York 14048

BEREK, GOLUBSKI,
TOPALSKI, RUNKOWSKI

Prussia, Poland

Lottie PARTYKA
66 Patton Place
Amherst, New York 14221

BALINSKI,
PASTUSZYNSKI

Radom, Poland
Grodno, Poland

POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY WESTERN ^{of} NEW YORK

STAMP

TO: