



# SEARCHERS



Number 25

POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF NEW YORK STATE

Spring 2000

Preserving Our Past Since 1988

## Yes, Their Memory Lives On

by Michael Drabik

**S**ome say this is the new Millennium, others say it starts at the end of the year 2000, but these things are just trivial when we consider the entire picture of time and history. For Polish Americans, this new year also holds a special anniversary, eighty years since the Battle on the Vistula-*Cud nad Wisła*, a military maneuver involving some of the soldiers of General Jozef Haller's *Blekitna Armia*.

The "Blue Army" or as it was called the Polish Army in France, has a significant

meaning to the WNY and Southern Ontario area. Our Society was fortunate to have been able to bring to

*All the recruits came  
through Buffalo on their  
way to Camp Kosciuszko,  
as it was named during this  
period.*

unique phenomenon in American and Polish history.

In the past two issues of "The Searchers" we have printed material about the "Blue Army", the last issue giving information on newly uncovered records in the Polish Museum in Chicago. But what about Buffalo? This is a place that holds unique ties to this military action. If you really are interested in this particular era, you are in luck. After permission to recruit Polish citizens living in the US was granted. The *Sokoly*-Polish Falcons and others went into action for the Polish cause.

Enrollment stations were set up across the Polish American communities. In Buffalo the *Dom Polski* at Broadway and Playter streets served this purpose; other sites were also located in Polish settlements like Depew, Perry, Batavia and Dunkirk. A Citizens Organization was established to aid in the Polish freedom cause. Since, only recruitment was allowed in the US, the volunteers were transferred to a Canadian camp at Niagara-on-the-Lake, where training of the men took place before shipping out to France. All the recruits came through Buffalo on their way to Camp Kosciuszko, as it was named during this period. With the assistance of the *Komitet Obywatelski* or Citizens Organization, the young men were given small gifts of knitted socks, cigarettes, paper and religious items as they set off for training.

Some troops were forced to remain in

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Buffalo in May 1990, Dr. Joseph Hapak, a Polonian scholar and Blue Army authority. In his lecture at Villa Maria College, Dr. Hapak explained the history of this unusual military expedition. Through his slide presentation and memorabilia on loan from the Polish Veterans' Post No. 1, of Buffalo, the audience could begin to appreciate this

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

The PGSNYS meets the second Thursday of each month in the Villa Maria College cafeteria,  
240 Pine Ridge Road, Cheektowaga, New York,  
at 7:00 p.m.

### ***Membership Dues... A reminder from the Treasurer:***

Dues are \$15.00 for the year. This entitles you to 3 editions of the Searchers. New members receive an information package to help them get started. Annual membership dues are to be received by your expiration date which will be listed in the upper right hand corner of the mailing label. Please refer to this date when paying dues the following year.

***Please notify us of any change of address.***

### ***For submission to the Searchers Newsletter, deadlines are as follows:***

Spring Edition - April 15th for June mailing  
Summer Edition - June 15th for August mailing  
Winter Edition - October 15th for December mailing

### ***Mail***

Due to the large amount of mail received, please take note when writing us for assistance: The PGSNYS will answer ONLY correspondence that includes a self-addressed, stamped reply envelope. All correspondence should be directed to:

The Polish Genealogical Society of New York State  
299 Barnard Street  
Buffalo, New York 14206

If you wish to contact one of our committees, please write the committee name on the front of the envelope.

### **PGSNYS Officers For Year 2000:**

President	David E. Newman	president@pgsnys.org
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Secretary	Florence Witul	secretary@pgsnys.org
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All meeting cancellations due to bad weather will be announced on News Radio 930, AM WBEN

*Please Visit The Polish Genealogical Society Of New York State's Web Site:*

**[www.pgsnys.org](http://www.pgsnys.org)**

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## President's Message



*Spring 2000*

The year 2000 has started off to be quite busy. I think the progress of our goals

and web page reflects this. This president is reporting the following "Goals Update" and "Web Site Statistics".

Goals Update:

### ***Update the New Member Package***

Lynn Mycek-Rzepecki is heading up this project. She has identified areas of improvement such as providing information about Polish Genealogical Research in other areas of New York State. I encourage members of the society to take a look at your membership booklet you received as a new member and submit your suggestions to Lynn either at the PGSNYS postal address or email Lynn directly at Mycek@prodigy.net

### ***Move a large portion of PGSNYS library holdings in library to the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library.***

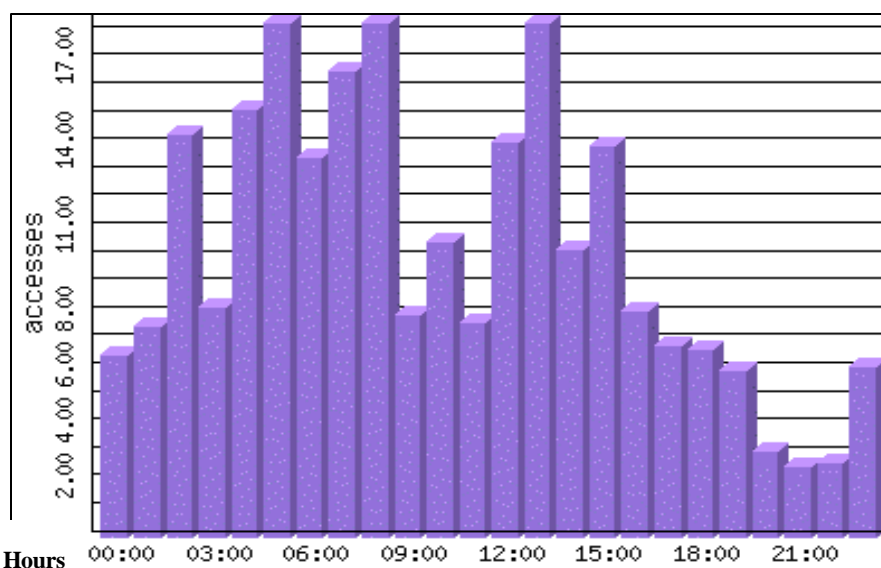
The PGSNYS has acquired some new library materials that need to be added to our database. Mike Drabik, Lynn Mycek Rzepecki and I will be working during the next few months to ensure our library is catalogued and all library materials are accounted for.

### ***Update PGSNYS Web Page with 1999 Surname Index and Dziennik Database***

Development is under way to add the PGSNYS Surname Index and a search feature for the Dziennik Index to our web site. I'm expecting both of the indexes to be up and running by mid summer.

### ***PGSNYS Website Statistics***

When do most people visit?



### ***Percentage of Hits***

What pages are they accessing?

⇒ Home Page	22%
⇒ Buffalo Genealogical Resources	18%
⇒ Churches Project	15%
⇒ Polish Priests	12%
⇒ Polish Links Page	12%
⇒ Gen Links	7%
⇒ Dziennik Project	6%
⇒ Polish Army	5%
⇒ Polish Heritage	3%

Sincerely, David Newman,  
*Your President*



## Yes, Their Memory Lives On

(Continued from page 1)

the city overnight and with the help of the *Komitet*, were quartered in the *Dom Polski* building.

Some of the officers of the newly

Paderewski, who made hundreds of stops across Polonia appealing for an army of 100,000 men to join. Final figures show that around 25,000 Polish men took part in this action, from the United States, Canada and Europe. A local advocate for Polish freedom and a personal friend of *Mistrz* Paderewski, was Dr. Franciszek E. Fronczak, Buffalo

committees and encouraged participation in the cause. The contribution of the parish can be read about in the commemorative album printed in 1923 to mark both the parish's and Buffalo Polonia's 50th anniversary. A list of volunteers from the parish can be found in the album and also an Honor Roll of those who fought is

located in the vestibule of the church. The cemetery of the parish on Pine Ridge Road in Cheektowaga is the resting-place of several of these brave volunteers. Along the Sugar Road side of the second parish cemetery is a small plot with the graves of some of these men, along with a large stone dedicated to the Haller Army troops. The insignia of the Army can be found on the grave



**PRESENTATION OF COLORS TO THE 3rd BATTALION CADETS BY IGNACE PADEREWSKI, THE GREAT PIANIST, AT NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE. (December 1917)**

created *Armia* were sent to a specially founded school to train. Located just 120 miles south of Buffalo, Alliance College in Cambridge Springs, Pennsylvania, served this purpose.

Sponsored by the Polish Falcons and *Zwiazek Narodowy Polski*, (Polish National Alliance), this officers' training school prepared those men to be leaders of the Polish Army in France. A strong advocate of an independent Poland was world-renowned pianist, Ignace Jan

Health Commissioner. Dr. Fronczak's

contribution to all Polish and Polish American causes are documented in his journals and other personal files donated to the SUNY College at Buffalo on Elmwood Avenue, where a special archives hold his collection.

St. Stanislaus Church, the Mother Church of Polonia, played a significant role in the fight for Polish freedom. Rev. Dr. Aleksander Pitass, the pastor, served on various

### List of those buried at Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, Canada

K. Kozlowski \*Antoni Skop \*Adam Murawski \*Felix Nowak \*Jerzy Zabocznych \*Michal Byzewski \*Adam Martin \*Piotr Losinski \*J. Bobaczyn \*Stanislaw Ptak \*Jan Kucia \*Jozef Sztopyka \*Jan Siatkowski \*Jerzy Doliwa \*Walenty Witalec \*Wladyslaw Boruszowski \*Wojciech Bonczka \*Bartlomiej Cupoch \*Frederek Glowacz \*A. Klumpinski \*Wladyslaw Plata \*Jan Morowicz \*Walenty Wisniewski \*W. Bester \*Stanislaw Krukowski \*Wawrzyniec Jakubas \*Ks. Pulk. Jan Dekowski



monument. A larger plot honoring Polish Veterans is also found at the foot of the bridge crossing over to Cemetery 3, past the Kensington Expressway.

Some troops never made it to France or the war theater. During the winter of 1918 influenza struck the Camp and several recruits died and

holy sacrifice of Mass and concludes with wreath laying ceremonies.

Following the armistice of the First World War, many troops returned to the United States, and others were shipped to Poland to be part of the army of the newly established Polish Republic. Those who returned to the U.S. soon organized their own

Veteran posts. The first to do so were the veterans of the Buffalo area, who formed Post No. 1 under the patronage of Dr. Teofil Starzynski. Starzynski was the president of the Polish Falcons of America a group firmly dedicated to the cause of Polish independence. Polish Veterans' posts sprang up around the country and developed into a national movement with officers and offices located in New York City.

Since many veterans came home suffering from injuries and were not eligible for medical treatment in U.S. military hospitals, the Veterans organized Blue Cornflower Days

(Dzien Blawater), when their members took up canisters to ask for donations to aid their disabled brothers in arms.

The next time you come to the Polish Genealogical Society of New York State meetings, remember that just a few streets east of Pine Ridge is a street dedicated to General Jozef Haller, and at the end of the road is located St. Stanislaus Cemetery, all

part of the history of that era. Buffalo has many lasting memories of the dedicated men of Haller's Army and those who supported them.

~ ~ ~



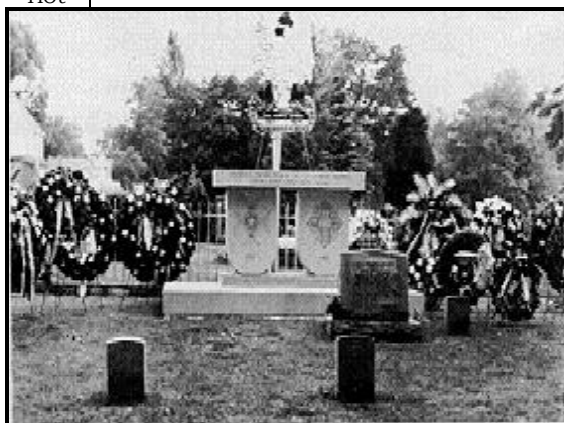
**Located in St. Stanislaus Cemetery, Cheektowaga, NY, is this stone honoring the veterans who fought for Polish independence under the leadership of Gen. Jozef Haller.**



**This stone, located in St. Vincent de Paul Cemetery, Niagara-On-The-Lake, Ontario, Canada, is dedicated to the Haller Army Veterans who gave their life so Poland would rise again .**

were buried in St. Vincent's Cemetery at Niagara-on-the-Lake. To honor these men who volunteered to fight for Polish freedom, an annual pilgrimage takes

place each June and is hosted by the Citizens Organization and both Polish American and Polish Canadian Veterans' posts. Beginning with a Veterans' parade with marching band, the group then commemorates the dead with the



**Located in St Vincent de Paul Cemetery at Niagara-on-the-Lake, is a small parcel dedicated to the 26 young Polish lads who died while training for service in the Blue Army. An annual pilgrimage is held to honor these deceased, an altar has been built where the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is celebrated**

# Polish Immigration In The U.S.

by **Julitta Grocholska**

*(Editor's note: This is a scholarly work about Polish immigration by Julitta Grocholska, wife of Michal Grocholski, Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Chicago. Although it focuses particularly on immigration from southern Poland to the Chicago metropolitan area, much of it is applicable to any place Poles have settled in America. Originally published by National-Louis University in Nowy Sacz, Poland, this is its second publication in the United States)*

**This is Part 3 and 4 in the final series taken from the Straz, Scranton, Pa.**

## Second Wave of

### Immigrants

(1939-1959)

The second wave of Polish immigrants arrived in the U.S. during and after World War II. Due to the Yalta conference resolutions, Poland lost its independence and became prey of the Soviet Bloc. Therefore, after World War II, there were mostly political refugees rather than economic emigrants. The post-war political situation forced people to leave their homes, often against their will. Among these people were former soldiers who stayed abroad after the end of war; some of them were prisoners in the German camps, liberated by the Western army coalition. Other people had tragic experiences being taken to Siberia and Soviet camps there. Moreover, their family places, once belonging to the Eastern Provinces of Poland, were incorporated into Soviet Union because of the border changes. It is obvious that all

these people were afraid to return to Poland.

Among political refugees were more specialists, army veterans, and young soldiers. In the beginning they stayed in Western Europe, then decided to emigrate to the U.S., which they considered as a country of greater opportunities for them. A great number of these people obtained professional education and knowledge of English in Western countries, which pre-

***Due to the Yalta conference resolutions, Poland lost its independence and became part of the Soviet Bloc.***

pared them for professions and made their process of adaptation easier than their predecessors. It is estimated that approximately 250,000 Polish immigrants arrived in the U. S. after World War II.

## Third Wave of Immigrants

(1978-1990)

Under Communist regimes, international mobility was discouraged and borders were sealed. The Polish gov-

ernment, as other governments in the Soviet bloc, tolerated work by teams of workers.

The years between 1978 and 1990 was the period of arrival of the third inflow of Polish immigrants to the United States called the "Solidarity Emigration." Those immigrants had a different background and orientation towards their homeland, the country of new settlement, and American Polonia. During these years the Solidarity union and democratic opposition developed. America's Polonia helped and supported the actions of the independence movement in Poland (Erdmans, 1994). These new realities changed and reoriented Polonia's activities, because the needs of the homeland had changed.

Former members of the Solidarity Union entered the United States under refugee quotas and as nonquota immigrants. These so-called political immigrants turned out [under the law] to be about 80% economic immigrants. Real political immigrants during Poland's martial law were estimated at 20% of the total emigration. They obtained only a permit to leave the country without the right to come back. This cohort of Polish immigrants consisted of various people, who brought new ideas and new expectations to the U.S. A part of them had knowledge of English and relatively good educational backgrounds.

(Continued from page 6)

Those newcomers integrated faster into a new life and new conditions than their predecessors. Most of them were young and middle-aged people, who tried to be active in their professional lives. They also had a difficult beginning, but solved their problems faster.

Certain people who represented a more elevated socio-economic status avoided the Polish community and attempted to integrate with American society. But after a few years of "acclimatization" they began to be more Polish oriented. It has been expressed in their participation in the existing professional Polish organizations (such as physicians, engineers, etc.), or they established new ones (e. g., the Jagiellonian University Graduates Association.)

The most recent immigrants founded numerous new regional organizations, which attracted people arriving from the same part of Poland. It is a very interesting phenomenon, which can be interpreted as the sociological necessity to be "together" with compatriots in a "foreign world." It is a sort of manifestation of the strong ties with the so-called "small homeland."

Poles who arrived recently in the U. S. on a temporary basis without any special professional preparation have worked often as construction laborers or "contractors", if they are male, and in cleaning service if female. Many of them have only one desire: to earn money and go back to Poland.



*The official shade of red used in Poland's flag is known as "cynober" (cinnobar or vermillion), the color of mercuric sulphide. At one time the official color was amaranth, a red with a purplish tinge.*

## PGSNYS

### Annual Picnic

This year the PGSNYS Picnic will be held at Como Lake Park in the Lancaster Place Shelter on Thursday, July 13th.

Dinner will catered by Kotecki's Grandview Grove. Anyone wishing to attend, please email

Dave Newman or Contact Rita Prabucki at 20 Pine Court North, West Seneca, NY 14224

Or ph. Dave (716) 652-9120 for reservations. You may also sign up at the or June Meeting.

Cost of picnic to membership is \$5 per member.



### In Memory Of

Sister Ellen Marie Kuznicka  
CSSF

A Mass of Christian Burial for the late Sister Ellen Marie (Admirabilis) Kuznicka, 82, a Felician Sister for 63 years was offered at 9AM Thursday February 24th, 2000 in Villa Maria Convent Chapel, 600 Doat Street with burial at St. Stanislaus Cemetery, Cheektowaga, NY.

The former Helena Kuznicka died Monday Feb. 21, 2000 in the Villa Maria Infirmary, where she had been a patient since August 1998.

A member of St. Hyacinth Parish in Dunkirk, NY, Sister Kuznicka entered the Buffalo Province of Felician Sisters in 1936 and professed her final vows in Aug 1938. She was a graduate of Immaculate Heart of Mary Academy and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Social Studies from Canisius College and a Masters of Science from Medaille College locally. She received a Doctor of Philosophy from Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kan. She also held a certificate for secondary school librarianship from Nazareth College of Rochester, NY.

(Continued on page 21)



~REWERS, PATRICIA~

JAMESTOWN, NY

~GOULD, LINDA~

WEST SENECA, NY

~PALERMO, ESTHER H.~

NAPLES, FL

~FLIPSKI, MATTHEW M.~

DEPEW, NY

~DOMINO, DANIEL A.~

LANCASTER, NY

~BONCZAR, TOM~

ELLICOTT CITY, MD

~WOLSKI, MARK J.~

HAMBURG, NY

~POCZCIWINSKI, JOSEPH J.~

GASPORT, NY

~OTT, CAROL S.~

WASHINGTON, DC

~LASKOWSKI, CHRISTINA~

CHAFFEE, NY

~INDA, JEROME~

BUFFALO, NY

~JONES, SEVERINA~

HERMITAGE, TN

~THROMAN, JAMES E.~

HAMBURG, NY

~SLOMINSKI, ALFREDA W.~

HOLLAND, NY

~MEDRALA, JEAN~

MELUN, FRANCE





## New York Mills' *Armia Sw. Jerzego*: Definitely NOT Gen. Haller's "Blue Army"!

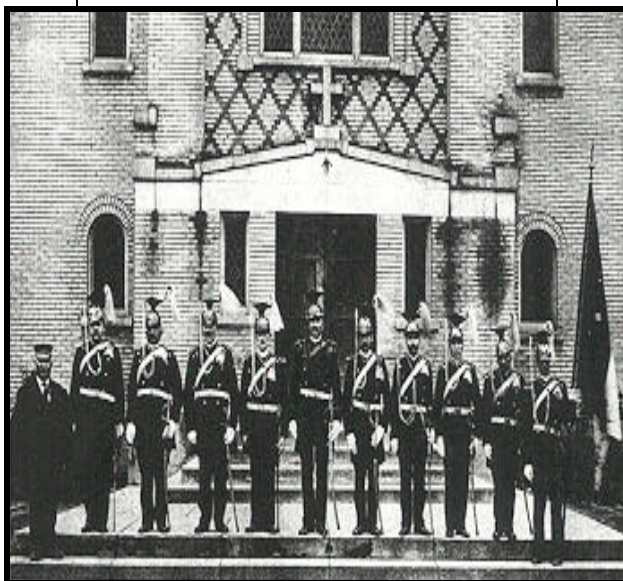
by Daniel J. Kij

In 1936, three years before the Nazis and Soviets invaded Poland to begin World War II, Warsaw's Institute of Social Economy [*Instytut Gospodarstwa Społecznego*] announced a contest for memoirs written by Poles who had emigrated, seeking better economic opportunities. Some of the entries from South America and France appeared in print in Poland before the outbreak of the war, and Canadian memoirs were published in Warsaw in 1971.

It was not until forty-one years after these Polish-language memoirs from the United States were first collected, however, that they were finally published (*Pamiętniki Emigrantów - Stany Zjednoczone* /Memoirs of Polish Emigrants - USA], *Książka i Wiedza*, Warsaw 1977). These two volumes cover over twelve hundred pages, and contain selections from among ninety American entries that vary in length from one handwritten to over six hundred typewritten pages. Most of these memoirs reflect the bitter-sweet and often humorous experiences of many immigrants who, lacking educational opportunities and knowing no English, pulled themselves and their families up the ladder of American society by hard work, faith and perseverance.

The following is a translated excerpt of memoirs (awarded a \$10 third prize) written by Jan A., then a cobbler in Miami, who was born in 1882 in Austrian-occupied Galicia. On December 26, 1908, he secretly escaped to Bremen with his wife and

child on learning that the authorities were about to draft him into the Austrian armed forces. After a two-week voyage, Jan A. and family arrived in New York City, and, within a week, settled in New York Mills in Oneida County, then a bustling industrial community near Utica, New York.



Here is one of his impressions of life among fellow Poles in a new country:

"One Sunday morning shortly after our arrival [in New York Mills], I watched our boarding house landlord dressing up in some strange uniform. From a large trunk, he took out a somewhat rusty tin sword and attached it to his belt.

The uniform was blue, and had pushed-out shoulder straps with gold fringes, gold buttons, and trousers with two wide red stripes, like for an Austrian general. His shako helmet was in the style of a Napoleonic hussar's, but instead of being rounded, it had a drooping horse tail.

He looked like a circus clown!

Curious about this display, I asked him: 'What sort of an army is that? Infantry? Cavalry?'

He proudly replied that it was the 'Army of St. George.' 'We are members of the *ulan* corps, and today we are going to serve as an honor guard in church.'

'Is your corps large?', I asked.

'There are forty of us here, but in Utica they have a hundred,' he replied.

Intrigued with this comical army, I dressed quickly and hurried to church with my 'General' in order to get to know his 'army' better.

On the way to the trolley, I asked: 'But where are your horses?'

'Bah!', He replied. 'We have no horses. Whadya want, Mister? You want to ride on horses into church?'

I asked: 'Then where is your *hartillery*'?

'Aw! You're kidding! But I'll show you the *hartillery* after church.'

'Will you be using them to fire a salute?', I asked.

'Yeah! You bet!'

The assembly took place in a saloon, about a hundred steps from the church [probably St. Mary, New York Mills. *djk*] Everybody was already waiting there for 'Mister General. When we entered, they greeted the 'General' with 'Hi, Mike!', but nobody stood at attention and nobody saluted.

I poked the 'General' with my elbow and asked: 'What's this? Don't you have a corps trumpeter who announces when the General ap-



proaches?'

In response, the 'General' smiled, and, taking me by the arm, he said: 'Let's have a drink!'

It was only then that I realized that we were standing at a bar. At the first sound of church bells, everybody went out to the street. Several who were already well 'tanked' were wobbling about, with some standing in ranks, pushing one another like 'recruits'.

Finally, the general drew his sword so clumsily that it appeared as it's a stanchion at work. Somebody yelled from the ranks: 'Hey, Mike! Louder with those orders, 'cause I don't hear well!' 'At...ten...TION! Right... **FACE!**

Then, utter chaos, with some turning right, some left, and others doing an about face.

A roar of abusive laughter followed, and then somebody shouted again from the ranks: 'Look, when I bust you in the puss, then you'll know what's your right!'

People kept watching, and there was another storm of laughter. 'For... **WARD! MARCH!**

And they moved like a herd of cattle, except that their swords, trailing along the cobblestone pavement, created an ungodly clangor.

Going up the steps to the church, the first one at the edge got his sword caught between his legs, which caused him to fall headlong, holding up the entrance of the entire corps.

In church, swords fell out of their hands when they were presenting arms, which scared the congregation and caused people to move away from them.

After this church hullabaloo, they all packed themselves into the saloon. Barrels of beer were already set up on the bar, and everybody poured as much as he wanted for himself..

My 'General' grabbed me by the arm, saying: 'You asked me about the *har-tillery!* Well, do you see it?', pointing to the barrels on the bar.

When I returned home, I began thinking about all this, and decided to organize an amateur theatrical group for young people."

## HOW DO YOU LIVE

### YOUR DASH?

**I read of a man who stood to speak  
At the funeral of a friend  
He referred to the dates on her tombstone  
From the beginning..to the end**

**He noted that first came her date of birth  
And spoke the following date with tears,**

**But he said what mattered most of all  
Was the dash between those years**

**For that dash represents all the time  
That she spent alive on earth...  
And now only those who loved her  
Know what that little line is worth**

**For it matters not, how much we own;  
The cars...the house...the cash,  
What matters is how we live and love  
And how we spend our dash**

**So think about this long and hard...  
Are there things you'd like to change?  
For you never know how much time is left,  
That can still be rearranged**

**If we could just slow down enough  
To consider what's true and real,  
And always try to understand  
The way other people feel**

**And be less quick to anger,  
And show appreciation more  
And love the people in our lives  
Like we've never loved before**

**If we treat each other with respect,  
And more often wear a smile...  
Remembering that this special dash  
Might only last a little while**

**So, when your eulogy's being read  
With your life's actions to relish...  
Would you be proud of the things they say  
About how you spent your dash?**

**Linda Ellis © 1996**

# SOLVING THE PAPER TRAIL



*This is an ongoing series of articles for membership to share and discuss with others, their quest in genealogy. We encourage articles for submission to this series, answers to the authors questions, genealogical information you would like to share with others, or if you have a connection to one of our researchers.*

This edition's guest is

**Bill Culliton, 17 Dairy Farm Road,  
Norwalk, CT., 06851**

**M**y grandmother died in 1957 but I really didn't get interested in genealogy until my wife died in 1996 and I suddenly realized that I was the last surviving member in my generation of several family groups. I had transcribed some notes of reminiscences that Granny had related to me back in the early 1950s but these were all related to the family's early life in Buffalo. The only things I knew about their life in Poland was they came over on a ship called the Gera from Hamburg through Castle Garden in New York City, she was one of 8 children and from the flyleaf in a prayer book the date of her mother's death. I did not know the name of the village they came from but knew it was near Schrimm (now Srem) in Poznan Province. She did not dwell on life in "the Old Country". When my mother died I found an envelope from a letter that some relative had mailed in the post war period and it was postmarked Wieszczyn in Poznan Province. I made an assumption that this was her na-

tive village. I went to the local LDS Family History Center and really lucked out, as there were parish records for St. Rochas Church in Wieszczyn. This parish served several villages but it was my good fortune that the parish church just happened to be located where it was. Otherwise my search would have been much longer. The records had been filmed by the Mormons and were available at the local LDS Family History Center. The parish had been established in the 1400s but the records dated from 1787 and were complete for baptisms, marriages and

**When my mother died I found an envelope from a letter that some relative had mailed in the post war period and it was postmarked Wieszczyn in Poznan Province.**

deaths. Using my grandmothers birth date of 1869 as a starting place I found her baptismal record and that for 6 of her siblings. I also found her mother's maiden name which had not been listed on her death certificate (obtained from Buffalo City Hall) It was Catherine Poloczky. Her parents were listed on the baptismal record and I misread the Polish script for her mother's last name as Galarzyko. I also found a baptismal record for a Francis Sobkowiak and at a later date found a marriage record for a Frank Sobkowiak to another woman. But I could not find a marriage record to my great grandmother. So I as-

sumed wrongly that there were two Frank Sobkowiaks in the village. I also found a death record for a Hedwig (Jadwiga) Sobkowiak born in 1789 who had a son Frank but no parents listed. Since I was still under the misapprehension that there were two Frank Sobkowiaks in the parish I was uncertain if she was an ancestor. At this point I felt I was beginning to spin my wheels. I got tapes of several adjacent parishes to find the marriage of Frank and Catherine Polowycz but in each case the marriage records for the proper time period were missing. In a word I was frustrated and tired of scanning these old records with no hope of getting further information. That was during the summer of 1999 and I just gave up.

The last issue of Searchers listed some web sites and I was just fooling around one day and on one of the sites entered the name Sobkowiak. I got a hit and the person listed was looking for Sobkowiaks in an area adjacent to Wieszczyn. I contacted the man via email. He was Christian Orpel in Henin-Beaumont France and I sent him what information I had collected. He replied with a number of corrections that were invaluable in my search. First he corrected my misspellings of Polish words and then my interpretations of some of the records. For instance I showed one sibling of my grandmother as Martin whereas it should have been Matianna which was written down instead of Martianna. The sister I had as

Marcianna was really Marianna. Then too he had a record of the death of Frank Sobkowiaks first wife and the baptism of her 8-day-old son. So now here was the 8<sup>th</sup> sibling. He also corrected the spelling of the name I interpreted as starting with a "G" as Talarczyk. With his help things started to make more sense and I started through the old records with renewed interest. At this juncture I can locate some of my grandchildren's Polish ancestors back for 8 generations and some hopes of even going back further. The fact that these church records still exist today amazes me with all the political changes and wars that took place in this area. For the Irish ancestry I can only go back about 5 generations and then am truly dead-ended since Catholics in Ireland were forbidden to keep records until the 1840s. I only happened to get a birth date for my great grandfather because he served in the 17th of Foot in the British Army and the date appeared on his enlistment form.

I guess the point of this little piece is to use every resource you can in the search for your heritage. The cards that were given out at funerals are a great source for death dates. I think my wife kept every one she ever got. From there you can get death certificates. I was fortunate in that all my grandparents died in Buffalo and I could get them from the Bureau of Vital Statistics in City Hall. These listed things like where born and names of their parents which were always not filled out as they depended on the next of kin to fill these out. Also sometimes they would list how long in the city or how long in the country. Buffalo was very good about sending these. On my wife's family I have had good luck with some towns such as Water-

ford who were very cooperative and no luck with other towns in the area where they just kept the money as a search fee and did nothing.

At one point I did hire a professional researcher. From my grandfather Culliton's death record I found out he was born in Plymouth England which seemed a little unusual for an Irishman. For a nominal fee I got a record of his birth from the British Records office and thus found out that his father was in the 17<sup>th</sup> of Foot. However I could not get access to the War Office records unless I went to London or selected a private researcher from a list I was given. I hired a Patricia Martin, who was not cheap but did an extremely effective job in digging up the facts I needed.

My brother in law was a Yankee from Niantic Connecticut and his family had a bible that dated back to the 1820's with a record of births, deaths and weddings dating back to that time. My son in law also has one for his family. If you have access to one for your clan it really does save hours of research.

You must be on the lookout for alternate spellings of names. My great grandfather signed his name as Culliton but the clerk who worked on his military record spelled it as Cullerton and the person who recorded my grandfather's birth used Culleton.

An even more extreme case is my wife's last name which was Don Brosky. The record of her fathers birth is for Willie Dobrounsky while the baptismal record shows the name as Dombroski. To add to the confusion my wife had 4 siblings that died as infants. The birth certificate for only one is correct the variations are Dombroski, Dom Brosky and Dombrowsky. This is a relatively

simple name so imagine what happened to the more complex Polish names when people on this side of the pond tried to spell them.

Towns and villages can disappear from the map. My mother in law was born in Eperjesi Hungary which was supposed to be near Budapest but when we visited Budapest 5 years ago no one knew about the place.

I had my grandfather Piechnik's Naturalization papers and applied to the INS for a copy of his request for naturalization. From these I got the name of the village he came from in Poland and when he immigrated and the name of the ship.

The Latter Day Saints Family History Centers are an invaluable source as they have filmed records all over the world. I have only dealt with the people at the one located in New Canaan Connecticut but found them all most helpful.

Another source or may be multitude of sources is the Internet. If you don't know where to start just type in Genealogy and click on the search button.



*Before the outbreak of World War II, 3.5 million Jews lived in Poland or 10% of the country's total population. The single largest concentration was the central city of Lodz which in 1939 had 388,000 Poles, 230,000 Jews and 60,000 Germans.*

*Interesting reading material: "Foreign and Female, Immigrant Women in America, 1840-1930" by Doris Weatherford.*

*Some chapter titles include: Fatalistic Conceptions; Those Uncontrolled Births; The Immigrant Way of Death; Marriage, Divorce and Desertion; Hovels, Homes and Hope; Supporting Families; Foreign Domestic; Travails of Travel; An Ocean Apart: Separation and Its Effects.*





## Trip To A Polish Graveyard

*From Straz December 9<sup>th</sup>, 1999*

**C**emeteries always seem a bit scary, but in Poland such visits can provide insight into the national character.

As cultural heritage sites, Polish cemeteries are important for historians, students of art and literature, philosophers, cultural anthropologists and poets. They are a place for reflection as well. According to Krystyna Kosy from the Historical Landscape Protection Center, there are almost 26,000 cemeteries on record in Poland, of which 15,166 are Catholic or communal, 6,470 Protestant, 1,060 Jewish, 16 Muslim, and five for other religions.

One of the oldest and most famous of cemeteries in Poland is Powazkowski in Warsaw, in which one can find a pantheon of dignitaries from Polish culture and history. From the 10<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century, cemeteries were placed within churchyard walls. But with the turn to romanticism in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries the old habit



of burying the dead around churches was replaced by a new fashion of suburban cemeteries, imitating the sentimental English ideas of garden-parks.

The cemetery, as a location for great ancestors and memories, became a place for mediation, remembrance, reverie and reflection. Pure-Lachaise cemetery in Paris was used as a model for Poland's older cemeteries. The two most famous ones were inspired by these ideas: the cemetery in Vilnius, founded in 1769, and Lyczakowski cemetery in Lviv, founded in 1786.

Warsaw's Posazkowski Cemetery was founded in 1790 on the grounds of a village called Powazki, which belonged to the Czartoryski family and was known for its romantic gardens planted by Princess Izabela. The dominant feature of the cemetery is its chapel, built in 1792-93 by Warsaw architect Dominik Mer-

The cemetery, as a location for great ancestors and memories, became a place for meditation, remembrance, reverie and reflection.

min. He also designed catacombs that were originally intended for powerful aristocratic families. Powazkowski cemetery shaded by stately old trees, is worth a visit for its artistic value.

There you can explore the changes in sculptural and architectural styles over the last 200 years. Classical tombstones quoting ancient canons stand side by side with the neo-Gothic markers favored by romanticism. Next to these could be eclectic monuments with Renaissance and even imitations of ancient Egyptian and Assyrian art. Also present are tombstones inspired by secessionism and modernism dominant in the

early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

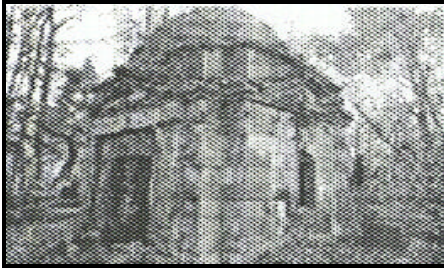
Adjacent to the old cemetery is Powazkowski communal cemetery. Founded in 1912, it was formerly known as the Military cemetery. Buried here are Polish soldiers who fell in the November Uprising of 1830-31, World War I, and the Warsaw Uprising of 1944.



After a stroll in Powazkowski, some neighboring, non-Catholic cemeteries are worth a visit: two Protestant, a Jewish and a Muslim cemetery. The Lutheran cemetery and the Calvinist cemetery can both be found on Mlynarska Street. They were founded in 1792 on the grounds of the former village of Leszno which was bought by the banker Karol Schulta. Like Powazkowski, they constitute a gallery of sepulchral architecture and sculpture, created by the finest Warsaw artists of the 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The architectural highlight of the Lutheran cemetery is the magnificent classical burial chapel of the Halpert family. It was built in 1834 by Adolf Schuch, and the sculptures were made by Pawel Malinski.

The cemeteries of Warsaw were often the scenes for patriotic protests, as well as the site of battles during



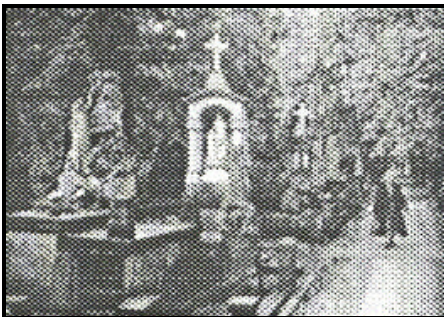


the Kosciuszko Uprising of 1794 and the November Uprising of 1831.

The most tragic period was during the Warsaw Uprising of 1944, when the cemeteries became bloody battlefields for the Home Army battalions Parasol, Zoska and Wigry.

The Jewish cemetery on Okopowa Street, founded in 1802, was badly damaged during the 1944 uprising. Nevertheless, it is the best-preserved Jewish cemetery in Poland. On the tombstones you can find the names of many dignitaries of Polish culture. The cemetery has a large number of precious 19<sup>th</sup>-century monuments, such as the tombstone of Berek Szmulowicz, created by David Friedlander, a distinguished synagogue sculptor and architect.

The Tatar Muslim cemeteries, known as *mizary*, are interesting Polish tourist attractions. This small ethnic group of about 5,000 people brought to Poland in the 16<sup>th</sup> century by the Golden Horde, still live near the eastern borders of Poland, in Podlasie province and area around Białystok. Smaller Muslim communities can be found in the Tricity area of Gdansk, Gdynia and Sopot, as



well as in Warsaw and Bydgoszcz.

The Tatar Muslim cemetery in Warsaw on Tatarska Street, close to Powazkowski cemetery, is still in use. It was founded in 1867 for Russian merchants, diplomats and soldiers in

Warsaw. Later, Polish Muslims were also buried there. The cemetery was badly damaged during World War II, but several dozen historical tombstones from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup>, decorated with oriental inscriptions, were preserved.

It is worth visiting some other cities besides Warsaw in search of historic burial grounds. The Protestant cemetery in Lodz, located on Ogrodowa Street, was created in the 1890s. It is a reminder of the important role that the Lutheran community played in the birth of large-scale capitalism in Poland. The cemetery is famous for the richness of the tombstones of Lodz factory owners, the pioneers of the Polish textile industry. The monumental burial chapel of the Scheibler family is considered an architectural gem.

Jewish cemeteries, called *kirkuty* in Polish, play an important role in Polish culture. The oldest such historical site in Poland is the Remuh cemetery in Cracow, founded in 1552. It is located in Kazimierz district, on the corner of Szeroka and Sw. Jakuba streets.

In Renaissance times, Kazimierz

Tatar Muslim  
cemeteries, known  
as *mizary*, are  
interesting Polish  
tourist attractions.

housed the wealthiest Jewish community in Poland. Next to the cemetery is a synagogue built by Izrael Isserles, a banker from Regensburg who served King Zygmunt August. The grave of his son, Rabbi Mojzesz Isserles, is in this cemetery. The name of the cemetery is borrowed from the rabbi's nickname, Remuh.

In the 1970s, intensive restoration and archeological work began at the cemetery. Workers discovered more than 700 Renaissance sarcophagi, buried in 1704 when the Swedes occupied Cracow, after World War II, a symbolic wall was built from the destroyed tombstones of the Remuh cemetery to serve as a wailing wall of remembrance.

In Lodz is the largest Jewish cemetery in Europe. It was founded in 1811, but by 1888 it needed enlargement. A new Jewish cemetery was founded just at the start of the city's industrial boom. It's a unique urban Jewish cemetery. The plan was designed by Lodz architect Hilary Majewski, in



1890. From 1892 until 1939, more than 80,000 tombstones were planted in the 45-hectare cemetery.

Those who want to avoid large urban cemeteries should visit some of Poland's charming rural graveyards. Pzksowy Brzyzek cemetery in Zakopane was founded in 1851 by Father Jozef Stolarczyk. It is named after Jan Peksa, who endowed the burial ground. Originally, it was a typical mountaineer cemetery, but after the funeral of the famous physician Tytus Chalubinski in 1889, its character changed. Now it is the burial site of more than 5,000 dignitaries of Polish culture. It is also a unique gallery of wood carvings by folk artists of Podhale region.

Another region quite attractive for tourists seeking cemeteries is eastern Malopolski, especially the Bieszczady Mountains and the San Valley. Rural Greek-Catholic and Orthodox cemeteries from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries have been preserved in Bieliowa, Berehy, Gorne, Carynskie, Chmiel, Lutowska, Sianki, Ustrzyki Gorne, Disna, Solinka and Wetlina. Decaying tombstones with iron crosses stand in small churchyards surrounded by stone walls.

In Podlasie province and around Białystok, you can find small rural Tatar cemeteries that are around 300 years old. The *mizary* in Kruszyniany and Bohoniki near Białystok, and in Studzianka and Lebieziew in Podlasie, were founded by the first Tatar settlements in Poland.

## HRC Moves Into The 21st Century

The story of America's immigrant past can now be explored in a modern setting. With its recent move into a new state-of-the-art archives center, the Immigration History Research Center (IHRC), a unit of the University of Minnesota's College of Liberal Arts, is poised to provide expanded services to ethnic communities, researchers of immigration and ethnicity, and the general public concerned about immigration issues. The Center invites anyone interested to use its collections of books, periodicals, manuscripts, and audiovisual materials or attend any of its public programs, which include conferences, seminars, and exhibits. Much more information about the IHRC's resources and services is available at its Web site, <<http://www.umn.edu/ihrc>>

Now celebrating its 35th anniversary, the IHRC is one of this country's foremost resources on immigrant and ethnic history. While the holdings and programs are especially rich for immigrants from eastern, central, and southern Europe and the Near East, materials and interpretation encompass every major theme of immigration and its consequences. The Center's materials are used by community organizations, family historians, artists, and the news media, in addition to scholars - ranging from high school students working on History Day projects to professors doing comparative studies across ethnic groups.

Coincident with its move to wonderful new quarters, friends of the IHRC have other reasons to rejoice. In spring 1999, the White House Millennium Council and the National Trust for Historic Preservation honored the IHRC's "Documentation of the Immigrant Experience" as one of the initial 101 Official Projects of Save America's Treasures, a public/private partnership encouraging protection of threatened US cultural treasures. Such recognition, providing additional publicity for the IHRC and promising access to corporate and foundation funders, comes as the Center begins a major fundraising campaign.

The IHRC has undertaken, as part of the University's capital campaign,

to create a \$4 million endowment. The funds raised will enable it to provide ongoing support for community outreach and scholarly work on immigration and related subjects. Four areas have been targeted for the funds:

- 1) an endowed professorship/directorship in American immigration history.
- 2) staff to acquire, organize, and preserve collections, including curatorial and graduate research assistant positions.
- 3) research and scholarship support, such as grants in-aid and summer fellowships; yearly publications of the IHRC's research journal *Spectrum*; and an annual symposium to assess research trends and chart new directions for immigration and ethnic history.
- 4) community outreach to promote heritage preservation by ethnic organizations and to provide information about immigration history to K-12 teachers and students.

For more information about the endowment campaign or any of the IHRC's services, contact the Center at 311 Andersen Library, 22-21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455 phone: 612-625-4800

### IN MEMORY OF

Our dear friend and fellow member



Sigmund Dory passed away on February 15th of this year. Sigmund was 93 years young. He is survived by his lovely wife Laura, also a member of our society, 2 daughters, Elaine Paddock and Letitia Dory, five grandchildren and 21 great grandchildren. A Black Rock native, Mr. Dory was better

known as Mr. Dorywalski, whose family owned the Dorywalski Dance Hall on Grant St., opposite from Polish Cadets. He was a member of St. Benedict's Church, The Polish Arts Club and Chopin Singing Society. He will be missed by all.

## Name Search



*Member and non member researchers wishing to submit surnames for this page are asked to send submissions to the Searchers Committee.*

*To submit listings for publication, please send your name and address, the surnames your researching and location if known. Please keep limit to - six surnames of research. Non members please include \$3.00*

**Mrs. Esther Palermo** 7025 Dennis Cir, Apt G205, Naples, Florida 34104-8772

**Adamowicz, Hajduk, Opiela, Drozda, Makarczyk**

**G.Beck** bbeck1234@aol.com  
308 N. Annapolis Ave., Atlantic City, N.J. 08401

**Marcin/Martinius Maruszewski**, born mid 1800's in Gniw. Married - **Frances/Eva/Rosalia Chwalanska** or **Chodzinska**. Ten or more children born in Buffalo. Belonged to St. John Kanty parish in Buffalo, NY. Looking for names of Martin's brothers.

**Dorothy Krantz** 88 Floradale Ave. Tonawanda, New York 14150

**Janus, Tolejko, Awarski, Rosolowski,, Wolentarski**

**Martin Nowak** 21 Stonehedge Drive Lancaster, New York, 14086-1431

**Bubacz, Nowak, Myszkowski, Olek, Olejniczak, Pietrzak, Bubacz**

**James Lyons** 52 Fairview Ave. Dunkirk, New York, 14048  
jjklyons@froggernet.com

**Golicki, Wolff, Skrzeczowski, Topolski, Szynski, Ceranowicz, Kosciuszko, Ronkoski, Supkoski, Berek, Golubski, Sekula, Głowski, Skibinski**



# Assumption Of The Blessed Virgin Mary Church Albion, New York

by Michael Drabik

**B**efore the turn of the century, eleven Polish parishes were in existence in the Diocese of Buffalo. Of this number three, were in a rural setting, the oldest of these being Assumption parish in Albion, New York, Orleans County.

Albion a small agricultural settlement on the Erie Canal, is located about 40 miles east of Buffalo. Poles were drawn to this town because of job opportunities in the newly opened stone quarries in the vicinity. The employers encouraged their employees to invite relatives and friends to work the quarries, even making loans in some cases to assist the new arrivals in covering transportation costs. Thus the Poles came and sent word to their brethren here and abroad.

The Rev. Castaldi pastor of St. Joseph's church in Albion, was aware of the foreigners in his midst and arranged for a Polish speaking priest from Buffalo to come several times a year to confess and administer to them. By 1890, Bishop Ryan of the Diocese of Buffalo formed a mission parish at St. Joseph's dedicated to the Poles. The following year on August 12, 1891, Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish was officially established with the Rev. Bartlomiej Swinko appointed first resident pastor. Assisted by Szczepan Danielewski and Jozef Cichocki, Fr. Swinko purchased a tract of farmland along the Canal for the sum of

\$2500. On this parcel were two structures, one was converted into a residence for Fr. Swinko the other for a parish school. The services of the Mercy Sisters was arranged, with them commuting from St. Joseph's. The Sunday Masses were temporarily celebrated in St. Joseph's school hall. Early records indicate that there were approximately 150 Polish families in the parish.

A great day for the Poles of Albion occurred on August 14, 1892, when Bishop Ryan came to town to bless the cornerstone of the Polish church. About 2,000 persons from Buffalo and an additional 400 from Rochester came to partake in the procession and blessing. Six months later, the red brick structure was completed with a seating capacity for 300 people. Fr. Swinko remained in Albion until 1896, he was followed by pastors: Basinski, Dyminski and Marcinkiewicz. In 1906, the Rev. Leopold Stein became pastor. This deeply religious administrator was very concerned with the moral and devotional life of his parishioners. He was the spiritual leader of 800 souls, many of them children. Under his guidance a new parochial school was built, with quarters for the teaching nuns.

It was the Rev. Stanislaw Bubacz who petitioned the Felician Sisters to come and staff his school with Polish speaking nuns. Three Sisters arrived in 1909 and would continue for the next 70 years. The Rev. Karol Mioduszeewski was responsible for the construction of a rectory located next to the church in 1912.

The parish reached its zenith under the pastorate of Rev. Jan Szymkowski (1914-1919), when the parish population hit 1100 souls and the parochial school had 150 students attending. The Golden Anniversary of the parish was a reason to celebrate and was overseen by its pastor, Rev. Jan Hrycyna. The Rev. Wladyslaw Waligora served as pastor of Assumption Parish the longest, 23 years. He was at the helm when the parish celebrated its Diamond Anniversary and also saw the parish school combined with St. Joseph in 1970. With continued decline in student enrollment, the parish was forced to finally close the school forever in 1977. Fr. Waligora retired from the pastorate in 1990 and the Rev. Francis Cybulski became resident pastor. With the dwindling of the parish population and the departure of Fr. Cybulski, Bishop Edward Head of the Diocese of Buffalo did not appoint a new pastor at Assumption Parish. Instead the parish was twinned with St. Joseph, sharing a common pastor, Fr. Richard Czimir.

## About the Church:

*Assumption Church was built in 1892-93, of red brick and trimmed with cut medina sandstone. It's stain-glass windows depict the mysteries of the rosary, while the sanctuary windows display imagines of the 4 evangelicalists. The sanctuary also is graced by a wooden white high altar and on its back wall, a mural of the Assumption is painted. This is flanked by murals of the sacrifices of Abraham and that of Mechizadek. The ceiling of the nave is painted with 6 religious murals. There are two side altars, one dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus with a statue of St. Joseph and Jesus, the other is in honor of the Blessed Virgin and flanked by a statue of St. Stanislaus B.M.*





## Potpourri



### An Interesting Fact

1930 Census destroyed  
According to Claire Prechtel-Klusken from National Archives & Records Administration, who is on the NARA 1930 census committee, *"the 1930 census schedules were filmed, then destroyed, by the Bureau of the Census long long ago (we are talking decades ago) pursuant to Congressional approval. I don't have the specific destruction authorization dates handy here at home but I will keep you informed on them as soon as I can."*

### Work Begins On New Katyn Memorial

**(Source Am Pol Eagle)** The National Katyn Memorial Committee in Baltimore, MD held the official ground breaking for its new, national monument on April 17, 2000. "It has taken us more than ten years to achieve our goal," said Alfred B. Wisniewski, committee chairman. "The base for the monument will be constructed and the entire traffic circle will be landscaped and developed in preparation for the arrival of the completed memorial later this summer. During 1940, The Soviet Union's NKVD took about 15,000 Polish officers from prisoner of war camps and secretly executed them in the Katyn Forest and other places and buried them in mass graves. The total details of their murders were not revealed until the Soviet Union collapsed and documents, including the death warrant signed by Josef Stalin were released from the archives in Moscow. The National Katyn Memorial Committee successfully completed a \$1.4 million fund raising drive to build the monument which is being cast at a foundry in Poland. The bronze memorial will stand more than five stories high and weigh in excess of 12 tons. The completed monument will be shipped to Baltimore where it will be dedicated on Sept. 10, 2000.

### Addressing Envelopes

Addressing letters to Poland, the name of the wojwodship (Province) is not necessary. Important is to include the five-digit hyphenated postal code which precedes the name of the locality as in 35-303 Rzeszow, 250498 Kielce, 15-836 Bialystok, etc.

### Sophie Hodorowicz Knab

Author of *"Polish Customs, Traditions and Folklore"*, *"Polish Herbs, Flowers & Folk Medicine"* and *"Polish Weddings Customs & Traditions"* and her latest, *"Polish First Names"* was a guest speaker at our April 2000 meeting. Sophie was gracious enough to discuss her new book and hold a book signing for membership and guests. For those of you with new arrivals on the way, it's a wonderful gift item, and a way to re-introduce our special given names to the next generation.

### Niagara-On-the-Lake Blue Army Pilgrimage

by Joe Maciel ag

### Polish American Congress

**Sun, June 11, 2000**, Buffalo's Polish Army Veterans Assn., Post #1 will be one of many groups participating in the annual "Blue Army Pilgrimage" at Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario. The focus of the day will be on the noon Polish Mass which will be offered at the Polish Soldiers' plot located on the cemetery grounds of St. Vincent de Paul R. C. Church. The Post together with the Polish American Congress are willing to organize round trip bus transportation with lunch included after the commemorative rituals if enough people show interest. (This would hopefully fine many of the Am-Pol Eagle readers, who generously donated funds for the cemetery's renovation, a chance to see what has been accomplished.) Arrangements would be made by Wiesia Abczynska of Travel Avenue Ltd. or obtain additional information from Maria Przystal, chairperson of the PAC's Polish Affairs Committee.

Her phone number is (716) 773-9141 and her address is 1721 West River Rd., Grand Island, NY 14072.

**Historical Background** This annual event memorializes the lives of those volunteer soldiers who died during their training due to an influenza epidemic. Their dream and desire to fight in helping Poland gain its independence was never fulfilled. During 1917-18, over 22,000 Poles from the United States were trained at a military camp in Niagara-on-the-Lake and later at Fort Niagara in Youngstown, NY. They were subsequently transported to France to join General Jozef Haller's *"Blekitna Armia - Blue Army."* It was November 11, 1918 that Poland officially regained its independence after its total partition by its powerful neighbors in 1795. Many factors were involved in this achievement. Much credit must be given to the genius of Marshall Jozef Pilsudski along with U.S. President Woodrow Wilson's inclusion of Poland's right to sovereignty in his points to the League of Nations. However, the Blue Army's job was not yet completed. Poland still was at war because in 1919-1920 the Soviets tried to overrun Warsaw. These Blue Army soldiers joined the Polish forces and handily defeated the Soviets in a battle referred to as the "Miracle on the Vistula." June 11, will be a time to remember and honor all Poles who died and suffered during two world wars. It will be a time to reflect on the barbaric brutality inflicted on the Poles by both Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia.

### May Becomes Polish American Heritage Month

*Polish American Congress Western New York Division, Inc.* Last June at our general membership meeting, after months of discussion and deliberation, the membership of our Division had voted to designate the month of May as Polish American Heritage Month starting this year 2000.

## 1873: POLONIA'S "VERY GOOD YEAR" 3 FRATERNALS, INVENTIONS, CHURCHES AND BRIDGES!

by Daniel J. Kij

The year **1873** proved to be quite a significant date for our country's young and growing Polish-American community, which in the following half-century saw the steady influx to the United States of millions of Poles from a once-powerful nation that had been partitioned by Russia, Prussia and Austria since 1772.

In **1873**, less than a decade after the end of our Civil War, there was organized in Detroit, by Jan Barzynski and Father Teodor Gieryk, Polonia's first national fraternal insurance and benefit society, *Zjednoczenie Polsko-Rzymsko Katolickie w Ameryce* (ZPRKwA). Today, the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America, with tens of thousands of members throughout America, continues to be based in Chicago's oldest Polonia neighborhood. In its home office building at 984 North Milwaukee Avenue, the PRCUA also houses the headquarters of the Polish Genealogical Society of America as well as the magnificent Polish Museum of America.

That same year -- **1873** -- a young Pole exiled for anti-Czarist activities arrived in New York via France and received the first of 16 American patents for his pioneer work in the illuminating gas industry. Baron Erazm Jerzmanowski (1844-1909), during 23 short years in America, became a wealthy and influential captain of industry, an early leader in the Polish National Alliance of North America, and a benefactor of Polish libraries and of organizations like the Polish Falcons of America. Jerzmanowski helped Polish immigrants erect St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Jersey City NJ with the unique concept of matching funds. He became the leader of a "Polish Government in Exile" in Rapperswil, Switzerland, was the first person in America to receive a high Papal honor, and was a partner of the Rockefellers in certain ventures. The only Pole listed in New York's exclusive Social Register ("the Blue Book"), Jerzmanowski resided in an exclusive Madison Avenue apartment complex, where his neighbor was President Grover Cleveland

On his return to Austrian-partitioned

Galicia in 1896, millionaire Jerzmanowski purchased the village of Prokocim (now incorporated into Krakow) as his estate, and continued his philanthropies by starting credit unions, libraries, etc. Before his death, he and his American wife allocated a million Austrian *korony* to establish a Jerzmanowski Prize (patterned after the Nobel Awards), to be awarded to Poles from the historic Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth who had distinguished themselves in any field.

**1873 -- a young Pole exiled for anti -Czarist activities arrived in New York via France and received the first of 16 American patents for his pioneer work in the illuminating gas industry.**

On a Saturday in June, **1873**, Jan Pitass, a Silesian Pole, was ordained a Roman Catholic priest in Buffalo, New York. The following day, he celebrated his first Mass and, that afternoon, organized the Saint Stanislaus BM Church, the first church for Polish immigrants in New York State. For 40 years until his death in 1913, *Ksiadz Dziekan* Pitass not only ministered to a congregation that grew to over **35,000** souls (second only to the 50,000 in St. Stanislaus Kostka parish in Chicago), but he was instrumental in inviting the Felician Sisters into Western New York, establishing a daily newspaper (*Polak w Ameryce*), bringing the Polish Union of America as a leading fraternal benefit society into Buffalo, and founding the parish cemetery that now cares for more than 100,000 graves.

A leader of the church not only in Western New York -- he hosted two American Polonia Catholic Conventions in Buffalo --, he was a trusted

advisor to the Bishop and was named by him "Dean" of all the Polish clergy in the diocese. A staunch supporter of the SS. Cyril and Methodius "Polish" Seminary in Orchard Lake MI, Rev. Pitass helped establish parishes in other states and dioceses, and was a leader in the movement to have more Polonia priests named to the American hierarchy

Rev. Dean Jan Pitass was succeeded as head of St. Stanislaus BM parish in Buffalo by his nephew, Rev. Dr. Alexander Pitass, and with the latter's pastorate of thirty years, it constituted a "Pitass Dynasty" at St. Stanislaus BM church of an unprecedented seventy years! The charismatic Msgr. Peter J. Adamski PA served as third pastor until the close of the centennial celebrations of the parish in 1973 -- only three pastors in a century!

Following the three Polish-born pastors, Msgr. Chester A. Meloch served for a short period, to be succeeded by Msgr. John R. Gabalski PA, the present pastor who presided at the 125th anniversary of a parish that has hosted visits by dignitaries such as Cardinals Karol Wojtyla (Pope John Paul II) and Adam Maida, and Presidents Theodore Roosevelt, Gerald Ford and Lech Walesa. A former teacher at St. Mary's Prep in Orchard Lake and at the Buffalo Diocesan Preparatory Seminary, Msgr. Gabalski shares a wealth of experience not only with his parishioners, but with the thousands who have listened to the Sunday radio Polish Mass broadcast regularly from the "Mother Church of Polonia" for more than fifty years.

Again, in that momentous year of **1873**, when the autocratic Rev. Jan Pitass was establishing an East Side Catholic church on land donated by building contractor Joseph Bork, great things were happening at the other end of town on the Niagara River. Growing commercial contacts between Canada and the United States required a railroad bridge to span the mighty Niagara, and Casimir Gzowski, a Pole born in St. Petersburg, was selected to be the chief engineer of the project.

Who was this Kazimierz Stanislaw Gzowski, who later was knighted by Queen Victoria and had the Canadian government issue a postage stamp with his likeness?

**Look for Part II ,next edition of Searchers!**



## *Our Ancestors From Begining Of Time*

by Edward Prabucki

**A**s a naïve youth in the 1930's, I lived in a world of illusion. So common to all my age, that life as I lived it did not exist prior to my birth. Still so prevalent with the youth of today.

After parental enlightenment during my assiduous grammar school days of the mid 1930's, my response on ancestral research was in character with all youth. If I had any ancestors, it was still indifference but more so of no historic significance.

Time moved on. My life advanced me to more education in High School. Yet I circumvent my father's desire to enlighten me on the ever burdened lives of his father's family from the first partitions. As I considered that research was still a frivolous pursuit, for in that age, I regarded sports to be my forte and life went on.

War was approaching, life had a little more meaning – aware and reaching an age of more interest over my ancestors that preceded me. Spent many evenings in the tranquility of my home to listen attentively to my father as he revealed many stories of his ancestors – burdened by the cruel

administrations of foreign nations on Polish soil.

Due to the partitions of Poland by Hitler and Stalin, I became curious and more enlightened of the very same conditions that was so apparent in (1800) Poland during the reign of the Czars in Russia and the Emperor of Prussia. So thanks to my father, I

to be unfathomable. Though it came down to me by word of mouth, I placed much faith in my pious father, even though in that period, I was unaware that Church Records were kept of my ancestors.

Sadly time marched on. Father passed away. I was engaged in the service under two employers and my desire to research was obviously limited.

Then I corresponded—though seldom with father's relatives with little success—a Mr. Obal enlightened me but that also was limited, until I retired. One evening scanning the Am-Pol Eagle, an article mentioned of a Polish Genealogical Society conducting meetings of its members at the Reinstien Library in Cheektowaga.

Needless to say, I attended. In course of time, Mike Drabik, Ted Smardz, Lynn Mycek Rzepecki, Laurel Keough, Ed Kornowski, Keith Kaszubik and many more steered me to the Family History Center, UB Lockwood Library, Butler Library, City and County Hall and all my prior frustrations gradually turned into a sunrise of a new day in research.

Throughout my attendance at these meetings, some researchers felt as

*(Continued on next page)*



John & Mary Prabucki 6/19/1919

Corpus Christi Church, Bflo. NY

shall always recall his often repeated saying, "The past of our ancestors can not be washed away let alone wasted for all time."

Needless to say, I perked my ears to father's stories constantly of his youth and his father's youth and began to fathom what I always thought

(continued from pg. 18)

orphans, frustrated, averse to continue, but due to the dedication of other members, Walter Kloc, Rita Hider and Dave Newman, guided them to other avenues of research in other Polish Genealogical Societies in Warsaw, Poland, Cleveland, Ohio, Detroit, Mich., Northampton, MA, Milwaukee, WI., Chicago, Illinois and many more. It improved their knowledge, their desire to go on increased, their dedication to their ancestors was answered and what to them was inconceivable became conceivable.

As my father would say, it is noble, it is gratifying, never fritter away time that can be put to good use.

And I say, remember our ancestors survived through their intense and infinite faith so that we, as their descendants, will continue this same intense and infinity faith. Without their love of family, it is pathetic to conjecture our fate.

So as I continue to reflect on my life as well as on my ancestors, I became aware that some of my kin were forced by whatever reason to migrate to other areas of the world

So wherever they may Live, whatever language it is written of Our Ancestors;

Nasz Przodek

Notre Ancetre

Tugha Pradik

Unser Vorfahr

Noster Priores

They are still Our Ancestors.



## Remembering Michael

by Edward William Kornowski

**M**ay 3rd has a special meaning for me. My Great Grandfather Michael Kornowski (the immigrant 1880) had the misfortune to die on May 2nd, 1891. His funeral would have been May 3rd, 1891. Michael and his family were parishioners of St. Stanislaus Church.

Since May 3rd 1891 was the 100th anniversary of the Polish Constitution, it was impossible for his funeral to be held at St. Stanislaus Church.

According to newspaper accounts and I quote from the, Buffalo Daily Courier, May, 1891; *"The celebration will extend over three days. The Polish quarter of the city has a gala appearance. Banners stretched across the streets, and almost every house is decorated with flags. There are banners of red and white, some are with a red cross on them, some with the arms of Poland."*

They continued the story with, *"The celebration began last night, with two large processions and two mass meetings. One procession was made up of the societies of St. Stanislaus Church, St. Casimir, the St. Adalbert, and the St. Valentine societies, also including members of Polish Catholic Union Societies. It is estimated there are 50,000 Poles in Buffalo. The procession route of which will be confined to their district at east Buffalo, will include five societies which will probably have altogether about 1,200 members in line. Tomorrow will be a Polish national holiday. No Pole will work if he can help it."*

St. Stanislaus church, being the center of Buffalo Polonia naturally was the starting place for the parade. Groups lined up on Peckham Street in front of the church. The school and social halls were used for meetings and parties.

Because of this celebration Michael Kornowski's funeral Mass was held at St. Adalbert's Church. On the 5th of May he was buried in St Adalberts Old Cemetery. All of his family and most of mine are buried at St. Stanislaus Cemetery.

He was the only Kornowski to be buried in St. Adalberts until 1973. All because he happened to die on the wrong day.

Its hard for me not to think about him every May 3rd.



*Polish Bank Notes; 10 zlotys equals (abt. \$2.50). 20zl (\$5) and 200zl (\$50).*

*Actor Daniel Kaminski is better known as Danny Kaye.*

*Looking for the gene pool you inherited that balding spot, gray hair, etc. from, this one will really take you back: [www.oxfordancestors.com](http://www.oxfordancestors.com)*

*Polish-American musician Patricia Andrezewski is better known as Pat Benatar.*

*Polish-American Astronomer Charles Kowal discovered the 13th moon of Jupiter.*

*Born Stefania Federkiewicz, this actress is known as Stefanie Powers.*



# W E B R E V I E W

by  
*Dave Newman*

computer database of German emigration available to visitors of the museum. Nearly every person who has left Europe from a German port between 1820 and 1939 will be in the database. Much of the information will be coming from US passenger arrival records. This project is being done in cooperation between the University of Bremen and the Balch Institute for Immigration studies in Philadelphia. A partial database will be ready in June with 3.5 million names (covering 1850-1888). When completed the entire database will contain about 10 million names.

The site is in German, but an English language version is planned. The database itself will not be on the Internet at this time, but you can order searches through the mail for a fee (DM45 for non-Europeans).

For more information please see the following web site: <http://home.att.net/~wee-monster/ei.html>

**Stay tuned for the next Web Review when I review "MyFamily.Com" web site.**

## Are you Looking for your 'Roots'?

Persons interested in their ethnic ancestry and family genealogy will be pleased to learn that two volumes of Straz Newspaper Indexes are available for purchase from the PNU Book Department. Straz Index Vol. I covers the period of Straz publishing from 1897 to 1915. The price for Volume I is \$10 plus \$3.00 for shipping and handling. Straz Index Vol. II is a twin book edition which covers the period 1916 to 1925. It costs \$25.00 plus \$6.00 shipping and handling. Each of these indexes contain thousands of names of individuals who were active in the Polish National Catholic Church, the Polish National Union, the labor movement and politics. Could your ancestors be among them? Begin your ancestral research today by ordering your index(es) from the PNU Book Department, c/o Regina Orzell, 1006 Pittston Ave., Scranton, PA. make you check or money order payable to PNU Book Dept./Straz Index. Be sure to indicate which Index you want.



### Polish Genealogical Society of Michigan Review

The Polish Genealogical Society of Michigan (PGSM) website is well developed. Whenever I visit, I'm always finding new things of interest. It's easy to navigate to anything the site has to offer. Hat's Off to the Webmaster! This review will discuss the highlights found on the PGST Web Site:

#### **Home Page:**

Nice introduction page. Just the right amount of information to whet my appetite

#### **News and Views**

Contains the latest news regarding the society.

#### **About US**

Information about the PGSM to include Society Contact Information, Listing of the Board of Directors and Directors at Large.

#### **Society Journal**

The Polish Eaglet is the PGSM's Newsletter. Information about Editorial Committee, Request For Articles, Regarding Submissions, Address Corrections and Advertising are presented here.

#### **Membership**

A printable on-line application and

information on how to join is found here.

#### **Schedule**

A schedule of events regarding the happenings

The PGSM web site can be found at <http://www.pgsm.org>

### Polish Genealogical Related Web Sites of Interest

A couple of web sites have brought to my attention that I thought I'd share:

#### **Search Rzeszów Vital Records**

<http://home.earthlink.net/~mmb5/rzeszow.html>

Mike Burger has transcribed approximately 14,000 vital records from various microfilms from The Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah. This web page allows you to search his work. You can search Birth, Marriages by Groom, Marriages by Bride and Death records. You can also search using Polish letters with diacritical marks (e.g.: Laczak, L<sup>1</sup>czak or Lanczak).

This is email I received via The Ship List :

#### **The Ships List Digest Archive**

<http://www.cimorelli.com/ShipsList/digest>

#### **Bremerhaven, Germany will have Computer Database**

Web Site: <http://www.deutsche-auswanderer-datenbank.de/> (Site is in German)

Exciting news! The Historical Museum of Bremerhaven will have a





By the time you read this we will have indexed 20,000 names of Polish-Americans who had death notices printed in the *Dziennik dla Wszystkich*, also known as "Everybody's Daily."

We have completed the following years: 1911 to 1925, 1927 to 1939 also years 1941, 1948. Other years have some scattered months that are complete, they amount to additional 23 months finished.

We have answered email and post mail requests from many genealogists. We also have had requests from Australia, Canada, Poland, France, and all over America. It is very rewarding to find lost ancestors for so many people. I only wish that our Polish Genealogical Society of NY volunteers could read the many emails we received, and the thank you notes that follow them. We have been very instrumental in solving the family tree puzzles for so many.

I wish to personally thank everyone who has assisted this project, remember each and every name is important to someone. We still have a way to go before this project is finished, so anyone interested in helping please contact PGSNYS or my self, Edward W. Korowski at EKorowski@aol.com

## MISSING

One very important video from our library is missing at the PGSNYS. The video of **Dr. Joseph Hapek**, from 1991 addressing our society from our Annual Workshop. If you or someone you know has borrowed this please return it **as soon as possible** to one of the officers.

### Sister Ellen Marie Kuznicka CSSF

*(Continued from page 7)*

She taught at junior high school level in various Catholic schools in the Diocese of Buffalo for 18 years and the Diocese of Syracuse for two years. In 1957, she began teaching social studies at Bishop Colton High School and continued at Villa Maria Academy. She began serving as a part time instructor at Villa Maria College in 1961 while teaching at the Academy full time. In 1970 she began her 15 year stay as instructor at the college.

She also was chairwoman of the language and social science department and served as the college historian. In 1985, she devoted her time to part time instruction in Polish and French and eventually assisted as an aide. After spending 29 years at Villa Maria College, she was awarded the title of professor emerita in 1996.

Sister Ellen began research on the educational system of the Felician sisters in the Polish American Catholic Schools of Western New York as part of her doctoral studies in 1967. She was then challenged by her superiors to write the history of the province. On April 27, 1996, at an annual Joy Day celebration in the Buffalo Province, Sister Kuznicka, author and researcher, received the first copy of the book, "Journey in Faith: The History of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Province of the Felician Sisters, Buffalo, New York, 1900-1976".

She was a member of the American Association of Teachers of French and the American Historical Association. She was active in the Polish American Historical Association for more than 30 years and a member of the Kosciuszko Foundation. Sister was named AmPol Eagle 1974 Citizen of the Year.

*We remember Sister Ellen Marie for her efforts in our lean years, for the words of encouragement also for her assistance along with our dear honorary member Dr. Bob Pantera, in securing for us the meeting space at Villa Maria College. Sister served as our go between for several years.*

*Wieczny odpoczynek racz daj jej Panie, a swiatosc wiekuisty niech swieci na ja na wieki wiekow Amen.*

### A Legend, Farewell to Stas

*(Source AmPol Eagle)*

For the past 60 years Stan "Stas" Jasinski has served Western New York's Polish American community through his radio broadcasts that have become a community tradition. That tradition will end on **Sunday, June 4, 2000** when Stan signs off his Polish language program for the last time. He will be sorely missed as will this vehicle for Polish American news and entertainment.

It is essential for a community as large as WNY's Polonia to have as many strong voices as possible. These voices provide an alternative to the mainstream media which tend to ignore or insult Polish Americans. For years this program has been chock full with content that put a positive spotlight on our community.

Stan Jasinski's unique talents have been showcased on area stations ever since he moved to Western New York from his native Hamtramck, MI in 1940. His annual appeals for the Blind Children's Home in Laski, Poland raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for Polish children and his efforts on behalf of other charities were equally successful. He also added Polish culture in the community through his sponsorship of Polish theater, song, and dance, including numerous appearances by Mazowsze and Slask dance troupes and presentations brought to the U.S. by Jan Wojedwouka. He also brought recognition to our community through his efforts in starting WUTV-Channel 29, the independent television station that in its early days was the home to several Polish American programs.

Stan Jasinski's stellar career has provided tremendous benefit to Polonia. His contributions will set the standard for those who attempt to follow him.

# Letters To The Editor

**Dear fellow PGSNYS friends,**

*Residing in Arizona, most of my information comes via Searchers. I look forward eagerly to each new issue, both for (family genealogy) clues and Polish history.*

*I ebb and flow in my pursuit of research, depending upon my success rate, but when ever Searchers arrives, my fire is rekindled and I enthusiastically dig away.*

*Thank you for your efforts! I know it is a lot of extra work besides researching your own family and the chores of everyday life. I for one appreciate your work and hope you continue for a long time.*

**DonnaLee Fleming.**



**Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,**

*As members of a genealogical society, you are very aware of the significance the City of Hamburg portrays in emigration to the United States of America. You also certainly know, that Hamburg is the only city of emigration having succeeded in keeping complete passenger lists from 1850 to 1934 in its Federal Archives.*

*Utilizing the Internet, we have managed to date, to provide access to this immense scientific milestone to anyone engaged in genealogical research. On the 20th of March this year, in Chicago, our twin town, my deputy, Hamburg's second mayor Krista Sager, will initiate the very first query of our project called "Link To Your Roots" on the Internet and with that enable millions of interested Americans the use of this facility.*

*Commencing at first with the years 1890–*

*1892, we will continuously be adding more years on a regular basis. After a period of four years, the Internet will contain the data of all the 5 million people having emigrated to the United States of America through Hamburg.*

*It is my conviction, that through this project, the name of the City of Hamburg will become exceedingly better known in the USA, encouraging an increased influx of visitors to come and see the city from whence their ancestors once embarked upon ships to the new world. On the other hand, access to the Hamburg Passenger Lists will for the very first time, create a very real possibility to research ones ancestors in detail, with data showing emigrant's towns of origin, their ages, fellow traveling family members and very much more.*

*Most Sincerely,*

**Ortwin Runde,**

*President of the Senate, First Mayor of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, Germany*

**\*Note:** *The city of Hamburg, accommodating emigrants in the past and to this very day, is in exclusive possession of lists of those who passed through her utilizing the harbor. Bremen and other cities lost almost all these precious lists, but only Hamburg managed to safeguard complete records covering the flow of emigrants from 1850 to 1934. Web site is located at: <http://www.hamburg.de/LinkToYourRoots/english/welcome.htm>*

## Web Sites of Interest

**DNA AND AFRICAN/JEWISH GENEALOGY.** Recently reported that it has been proven through DNA testing that the Lemba tribe of South Africa, whose members, claim Jewish ancestry, indeed have Jewish ancestry. "Not only do they have 'Jewish genes' but DNA tests proved the subset of their culture, who claim to be of the priestly class, do have the Cohanic Y-chromosome genes. Anthropological research has demonstrated they are likely descended from Yemenite Jews who plied the African east coast trade routes more than 1,000 years ago." For more information about the Lemba tribe visit [http://www.gsnweb.com/gsnlib\\_a/gsn1999/99\\_05/990509/41013.html](http://www.gsnweb.com/gsnlib_a/gsn1999/99_05/990509/41013.html)

**ANCESTORS BOOK/TV SERIES.** "Ancestors," the highly successful PBS series, returns in June 2000 with a new format and 13 new episodes -- shot on location around the world. The series highlights records that genealogists use such as newspapers, immigration, military and the census. For information about the companion book and a full list of the new televised segments, <http://www.rootsweb.com/~rwguide/notable/tv.htm>

## NARA REPRODUCTION FEE SCHEDULE PROPOSED RULE -- COMMENTS INVITED

The National Archives and Records Administration published a proposed rule beginning on page 24164 in the April 25, 2000, FEDERAL REGISTER to revise its fee schedule for reproduction of records in its custody. A copy of the proposed rule is also posted on NARA's web site at

<http://www.nara.gov/nara/fees-pro.html>

The proposed rule includes proposed changes to fees for self-service copying and the "fixed-fee" orders for certain genealogical records, including military service, pension, census, and passenger arrival records. Please read the proposed rule for further details. Comments must be submitted to the NARA Regulation Comment Desk by June 26, 2000.

## FINDING FEMALE ANCESTORS,

[http://www.genealogy.com/50\\_donna.html](http://www.genealogy.com/50_donna.html).

*Items previously published by RootsWeb.com, Inc., RootsWeb Review: RootsWeb's Genealogy News, Vol. 3, No. 18, 3 May 2000. RootsWeb: <http://www.rootsweb.com/>*

## General Haller's Army Research Project

We were very fortunate this past month of April to have been contacted by teacher Glenn Johnston, from Cleveland Hill High School in Cheektowaga, New York and his sophomore honor students in Global Studies, to inform us of a major project they are working on.

Students; Michael Getz; Sheila Stading; Pat Barrett; Matt Pegg; and Chris Quail, Steven Puff; Stephanie Gilliam, Doug McGowan, Sean Klinck, Melissa Vito, Victoria Everett, Eric Sobczynski, and Katherine Wojtylak, are on a fact finding mission gathering information on General Haller's Blue Army for a project that will be submitted to the NYS Archives at the end of May and will go into competition against other school research projects throughout the State of New York.

Their devoted teacher states, "I am using this project as a way for any student to learn that history is neat, even if it didn't involve you. It's even better if you are "returning" history to those who may have forgotten it, but would be proud to know it".

Some of their research goals include; to as accurately as possible, identify the WNYers who were in the Blue Army; identify Blue Army members who returned to WNY and died in this area; develop an understanding of their recruitment, training, and employment in both the French and Polish armies; in some way evaluate the impact these boys had on those of us living today; and finally, to return to Polonia some of the history of

these men.

Currently they have used the names of those Buffalonians who joined the Polish Army as listed in Sweeney (Buffalo and Erie County in the World War: 1914-1919) as listed on the PGSNYS website, cross-referenced those names with those listed on the PGSA website and in the process they have "discovered" nearly 300 Poles from Buffalo who were not listed in Sweeney.

The students have also identified all of the boys from WNY, as well as those from New York State overall. They have taken many field trips to locations associated with the Army including, St Stanislaus Cemetery and identified Blue Army members who weren't from this area originally, yet died here. They are also making use of the naturalization records in the basement of County Hall in Buffalo, the Social Security death notice index online, and the records of the genealogy room in the Buffalo library downtown.

We invited these faithful researchers and their leader to our April monthly meeting and they gave a very enthusiastic and inspiring speech on their goals for this project. They would like to carry this project forward to flesh out the lives of these individuals. In order to do this they are seeking the active involvement of any Blue Army descendants who may be in the area and who have documentation of their ancestor's involvement overseas. Additionally they desperately need to get some representative documentation like that held by the PGSA in the form of A, C, or L records.

Our society has written to our sister society the PGSA, in hopes of helping the

students obtain the information they need with this endeavor. We hope to be receiving a reply very soon.

We find the students and Mr. Johnston's ideas very refreshing, especially when a group this young is trying to give something back to Polonia. We encourage those of you who might be able to give them any type of information, clues photos or copies of documentation to contact Mr. Glenn Johnston and the students either by Email at:

euz769@localnet.com

Or, by postal mail :

Mr. Glenn Johnston

c/o Haller's Blue Army Project

100 Kirkwood Drive

East Aurora, New York 14052

In future issues of the Searchers we hope to keep you updated on the progress of their research and have invited this group to submit their final project for publication in our newsletter. Mr. Johnston has also informed us he has vowed to continue on with this research even after the school year ends. We wish them well and best of luck in the competition. Your choice of subject material is outstanding!



*Some 95% of all Poles are Roman Catholics, of which 75% declare themselves to be practicing Catholics. Other denominations include Eastern Orthodox (app. 600,000 followers) and Lutherans (90,000).*

*We urge all our membership and those descendants of Polish Ancestry to fill out the Census 2000 and to identify yourself as Polish. If using the short form census, check the box for OTHER, and identify yourself as POLISH.*





**POLISH GENEALOGICAL  
SOCIETY OF N.Y.S.  
299 BARNARD STREET  
BUFFALO, NEW YORK  
14206  
RETURN REQUESTED**

**PLEASE CHECK YOUR EXPIRATION DATE**

**NOTIFY US OF ANY CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

## Did You Know About Lockport, NY?

by Mike Drabik

**A**s most of you know, the Dziennik Death Notice Project is going along rather smoothly and has over 20,000 surnames in its databank already. Quite an accomplishment for our Society. While researching the names from the paper, you also get a first hand look at "news" of that particular time. I came across a short but interesting article about a Polish settlement in Niagara County, Lockport, New York in a 1941 issue of the newspaper. This was the first time I had ever heard that there was a sizable Polish community located there.

The article reads that Poles began arriving in the city about 1900 and listed the first Polish residents as: Pani Kaczewska, Paulina Dill, Andrzej Kukla, Andrzej Figura, Ludwik Gniewek and Piotr Haber.

According to the paper, in 1941 there were 325 Poles in the city. As strong Catholics, the Poles at first attended Mass in the Irish church of St. Joseph, but soon transferred their allegiance to St. Anthony's parish, founded by the Italians. As their numbers grew, the pastor asked priests from Buffalo and Niagara Falls to attend to the needs of the Poles at the holidays. Soon they petitioned the Bishop of Buffalo to send them a Polish speaking priest, this was done when the Rev. A Parwulski was transferred to St. Anthony's.

Typical of the Poles, this community also organized societies to serve their nationalistic needs. In 1931, the Society of the Most Sacred Heart, a branch of the Polish Roman Catholic Union was organized. Its founders included, Franciszka Nowakowska, Marja Guziejewska and Piotr Haber. Under the auspices of the PRCU, a Polish Language Saturday School was organized in Lockport, to insure that even though distant from the larger Polish communities, their children had the opportunity to study the language and traditions of their parents and grandparents. The Kazimierz Pulaski Saturday School was operated from a pub-

lic school located on Clinton Street and under the direction of the Felician Sisters who commuted from North Tonawanda. Polonian activist, Piotr Haber was the organizer of the Kazimierz Pulaski Citizen's Committee in 1938, its goal was to educate the community in civic matters and to assist Poles in applying and studying for citizenship. A Mothers Club existed for women who organized social and national functions for the community. A Republican Polonia Club also was organized in the city and W. Trudnowski served many years as its president.

Rounding out the life in the Polish community were its businesses, Ludwik Gardon operated a liquor store, Leon Marcinek, Jan Trybulec, Jozef Kiendzia, and P. Kendra all ran restaurants, Piotr Haber was the proprietor of the Union Hotel on Union Street, and Mr. S. Kierek owned the Polish market on Jackson Street.

Though small in numbers, the early Poles made their presence known and did their part to bring up their children to be good citizens of this country and respect the language and customs of the old world.