

PRESERVING  
OUR PAST  
SINCE 1988

# SEARCHERS

NO. 59

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## WŁADYSŁAW H. ZAWADZKI: THREE PERSPECTIVES

Translations from the  
*Przewodnik Handlowy* and *Dziennik dla Wszystkich*  
and Obituary from the *Buffalo Morning Express*



# PGSNYS - FOR YOUR INFORMATION

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**PRESERVING  
OUR PAST  
SINCE 1988**

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.

Annual dues are \$15 (\$18 Canada, \$25 other countries), and membership entitles you to three issues of the *Searchers* and participation in the PGSNYS Yahoo Group. As a new member you will receive an information packet to help you get started. The expiration date of your membership is on the mailing label of the *Searchers*.

**FOUNDED BY  
MICHAEL  
DRABIK  
(1950-2001)**

Please remit your membership dues by check or money order to:

PGSNYS  
c/o Chuck Pyrak  
12 Grant Road  
Snyder, NY 14226

Please send any changes to your postal or e-mail address to PGSNYS at the above address or E-mail: [cpyrak@roadrunner.com](mailto:cpyrak@roadrunner.com)

## 2012 PGSNYS OFFICERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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## THE SEARCHERS NEWSLETTER

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For submissions to the *Searchers* newsletter, deadlines are as follows:

- 1st issue (Spring) - due February 15th for April mailing
- 2nd issue (Summer) - due June 15th for August mailing
- 3rd issue (Winter) - due October 15th for December mailing

Submissions to the *Searchers* can be sent by postal mail (c/o *Searchers* Editor:  
12645 Route 78, East Aurora, NY 14052) or via e-mail to:  
[editor@pgsnys.org](mailto:editor@pgsnys.org) or [denise.oliansky@gmail.com](mailto:denise.oliansky@gmail.com)

# PGSNYS PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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By the time you read this *Searchers* issue, the 1940 United States Census will be available to the public for the first time. Unlike previous census years, images of the 1940 U.S. Federal Census will be made available as free digital images. The 1940 US Census will NOT yet be indexed for you to search.

Upon its release, the 1940 U.S. Census Community Project, a joint initiative between Archives.com, familysearch.org, findmypast.com, and other leading genealogy organizations, will coordinate efforts to provide quick access to these digital images, and immediately start indexing these records to make them searchable online with free and open access.

The PGSNYS is involved in this unprecedented indexing project. I highly encourage everyone to get involved. If you're interested in becoming an indexer for this project, please contact Dolores Ferguson by email at [dolores\\_ferg@juno.com](mailto:dolores_ferg@juno.com). ~Sincerely, Dave Newman



David Newman

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## POTPOURRI

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### WITAMY! TO NEW PGSNYS MEMBERS

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Brian Stanley  
Hull, MA

Thomas A. Kalis  
Depew, NY

David Przepiora  
East Aurora, NY

Mike Mierzwa  
Forestville, NY

Fred Kazmierczak  
San Jose, CA

Kathie Helmich  
Delevan, NY

The dates for upcoming PGSNYS monthly meetings in the Villa Maria College cafeteria are Thursday, April 12, May 10, June 14, August 9. (no meeting in July). We hope to see you.

**IMPORTANT PGSNYS ANNOUNCEMENT:  
The Board has voted to raise the membership dues to \$20.00, effective July 1, 2012. If you choose, you can renew for one or more years before July 1st at the current dues rate of \$15.00.**

*Przewodnik Handlowy***WŁADYSŁAW ZAWADZKI**

Article translated by

**Agnieszka and David Newman**

*The Przewodnik Handlowy* (published 1906-1918) contains biographies of noted citizens of the Buffalo, New York Polonia community. In this issue we present another biography translated verbatim from the original Polish articles.

We don't have many intelligent people in Buffalo who want to educate themselves and build their own future.

Although born in Europe, Poznań, 1872, Władysław Zawadzki finished high school and at a young age immigrated to America with his parents. This lively young man, quickly orientated himself to American life, with an unusual attraction to deepen his knowledge. He didn't neglect any opportunity to be educated. Thus he completed higher education.

Subsequently, he studied privately with the renowned Mr. Schmidehousen from Buffalo, formerly the Chief Architect from the city of Lwów, and in a short time became a great architectural drafter. Because he was skilled, he started to work with the most popular architects in Buffalo. He then began working for the American Bridge Company and soon received a promotion to the factory projection office at Lackawanna Steel Company, where he was one of the most important persons in the company.

After six years of working for this big company, Mr. Zawadzki, a landscape architect, began building his own residential old houses.

This work helped him develop his architectural skills and bring out his fullest potential. The nice houses Mr. Zawadzki built in the Polish Community (Polonia) started to beautify the neighborhood, and because Polonia loved his work in building their houses, they unanimously decided to contract him to build their Polish Community Center (Dom Polski). He is the first Polish architect from Buffalo that did a wonderful job, despite financial difficulties. He was able to complete construction of the Dom Polski, with the main emphasis placed on good design and practicality.

His work on this monumental building, popularized the young architect even more. As a result, he received many contracts for buildings not only on the east side Polish Community in Buffalo, but also from the west side of the city and its surroundings.

The more important buildings designed by Mr. Zawadzki in years past, are Hodkiewicz's Bakery, Polish School in Depew, NY, and the Dangel's Hotel. Currently Mr. Zawadzki has received several orders for the contraction of schools and churches, in which his talent even will further develop and he is certainly not shy with his work. You

can have confidence that his architectural work is the best in this area.

Because of his good entrepreneurial ethics, Mr. Zawadzki is modest in the requirements for his projects. He doesn't want to quickly get rich. He only wants his buildings to be built well, beautiful, durable and inexpensive.

As a Citizen of Poland, Mr. Zawadzki is a prominent social activist. Although he not yet had the opportunity to get acquainted with his Homeland, he loved it from the traditions and the many books that he read in his spare time. In working for Polonia with all his might, he hopes that someday, he will become a meritorious Polish citizen.

An architect by profession, he would like to build houses for the future Polish immigrants that settle in Buffalo. In addition, he is a member of many Polish organizations, a longtime member of the Polish National Alliance, and along with a handful of equally-minded societies that are trying to create many various kinds of associations, and organizations, which are to become beacons of Polish customs and traditions for future generations. In Poland he was a Democratic-Nationalist, but in America he is a Republican. He knows how to reconcile these two seemingly contradictory political parties and although he is a true Polish Patriot, he also knows how to be a good citizen of the United States. In America, which for a long time he not only worked, but also lived with the need for greater contact with Americans, Mr. Zawadzki distinguished himself as being a genuinely respected friend.

In 1898, he married Stanisława née Żydowicz, from Kruszwica. They have two sons that were brought up in a Polish environment and have no doubt been implanted with his ideals.

If more citizens in Buffalo's Polonia were like Mr. Zawadzki, American people would think differently about Polonia, and would be doing a big favor for the Polish Homeland.

#### **TRANSLATION NOTES:**

As with many of the articles in the *Przewodnik Handlowy*, this article is no different in that it was clearly written by the very person to whom the article is written about. The translators duly note that Mr. Zawadzki overemphasized throughout the article about how "great he is/was." We therefore acknowledge that in translating this article we both reduced and modified the number of times the word "great" was used. Otherwise the article when read in English wouldn't flow well and be utterly boring. This man really thought he was the greatest at whatever he did. Many of these men gave themselves a pat on the back. Mr. Zawadzki went a little overboard.

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph Mr. Zawadzki mentions he completed higher education. This we believe is probably college, but article doesn't specify.

Also in paragraph 2, Mr. Zawadzki mentions the American Bridge Company and in parenthesis explains in Polish what the company does: (an American company building bridges). In the English translation, we felt this explanation wasn't needed.

In paragraph 5, when referring to the buildings Mr. Zawadzki designed, we assumed that the name was associated with the type of business. Bakery of Mr. Hodkiewicz, we translated to Hodkiewicz's Bakery. Hotel of Mr. Dangla's was translated to Dangel's Hotel. This is not necessarily the business name. It just made better English sense to translate it this way. Also note the change in spelling of the surname Dangla to Dangel. This is because we feel the surname was misspelled.

In the 8<sup>th</sup> paragraph Mr. Zawadzki mentions that in Poland he was a Democratic Nationalist. We don't know politically what that translates to in today's terms. Probably he was a Democrat.

*Next: the life and death of Władysław Zawadzki from the Dziennik dla Wszystkich*

## From the *Dziennik dla Wszystkich*

### WŁADYSŁAW ZAWADZKI

Article translated by

Agnieszka and David Newman

**JANUARY 18th, 1926**

Death has no mercy with tears in our midst of the growing number of patriotic Poles, ranking among whom is the late Władysław H. Zawadzki, Pole and an outstanding citizen, who died yesterday morning, having suffered a heart attack when he was delivering a speech at a rally of the Polish Council of Welfare in the parish hall of St. Valentine's Church on the south side of town.

Yesterday, he was in the best of health and in the company of Mr. E. Partyka, Mr. Constantine Bergner, Dr. Borowiak and several others, posing for a picture which was taken in Fr. Stefan Szczepański Presbytery, after which he went to the parish hall to organize Prosa.

Everyone knew him. He was a man who was an Entrepreneur and who possessed an extraordinary perseverance and focus, dedicating his life to acquire knowledge and skills, so that he could build his own future.

Those who work for themselves owe their success to the example of the late architect, Władysław H. Zawadzki, born in Poznań in 1872. As a boy he came to America with his parents. This lively young man, quickly orien-

tated himself to American life and didn't give up the opportunity to learn. Thus, he completed higher education. Subsequently, he studied privately with the renowned Mr. Schmidehousen from Buffalo, formerly the Chief Architect from the city of Lwów, and in a short time, became a great architectural drawer. Because he was skilled, he started to work with the most popular architects in Buffalo.

After six years working as an architect for the Lackawanna Steel Company, he began to work on his own. Among the more important buildings built by Mr. Zawadzki are the Polish Home, Polish Union House, rectory, parish schools and numerous churches. He also put his construction talent and a lot of work toward further development in Cambridge Springs, Pennsylvania.

As a dedicated Pole, Mr. Zawadzki was a prominent social activist. Although he not yet had the opportunity to get acquainted with his Homeland, he loved it from the traditions and the many books that he read in his spare time. He was a great worker for the Polish Reading Society and was the first librarian in the Polish Reading Room, working there without payment.

Apart from the Reading Room of the Polish Society the deceased was

*“Everyone knew him. He was a man who was an Entrepreneur and who possessed an extraordinary perseverance and focus, dedicating his life to acquire knowledge and skills, so that he could build his own future.”*

a member of many other Polish Societies.

He was a longtime member of the Polish National Alliance, where he played an important role in many of the meetings of the organization to which he was dedicated. The local municipality also lost a brave member to death. His job in the municipality was writing letters. Indeed not only that, over the many years he held the duties of the President and worked on several committees.

There were no major celebrations in Buffalo in which the deceased would not take part, especially the patriotic and national celebrations. Often he appeared as a speaker at the celebration of anniversaries of organizations, where he always experienced a warm reception from the audience.

He was also a member of the Polish Union of America, the Polish Legion. No. 256, Polish Singing Circle, Polish Falcons, and many others. He was one of the most successful volunteers for Capacitive Saver Fund and was a shareholder of the Polish Joint Stock Company and many others.

In Poland he was a Democratic-Nationalist, but in America he is a Republican. He knows how to reconcile these two seemingly contradictory political parties, and although he is a true Polish Patriot, he also knows how to be a good citizen of the United States. In America, where for a long time he not only worked, but also lived, Mr. Zawadzki distinguished himself as being a genuinely respected friend.

His last task was to chair the social committee that dealt with the adoption of the Polish Parliamentarians when they visit Buffalo. Mourning the death of the deceased is his wife, Stanisława née Żydowicz, and two sons, one of whom is Casimir, who is the American Vice-Counsel in Munich.

The deceased also leaves behind three brothers, Charles Zawadzki, renowned chemist on Rother and Broadway Avenue, Louis, and Vincent, and three sisters, Kazimiera Partyka, Sophia Małecka and Jadwiga Kozanowska. Details of the funeral will follow in tomorrow's issue.

Today, without mercy, his death cut short his life, shrouding the close kindred feeling and great feeling of loss by his many friends and acquaintances. Warm heartfelt sympathy to the family.



**Obituary from  
*The Buffalo Morning Express***

**Monday, January 18, 1926**

**W.H. ZAWADZKI, ARCHITECT  
OF NOTE, STRICKEN.**

**Died Suddenly While Addressing Meeting of  
Polish National Society in Church Hall**

Wladyslaus H. Zawadzki, 238 Fillmore Avenue, prominent Polish architect and father of Casimir T. Zawadzki, American Vice-Counsel in Germany, died suddenly last night while delivering an address in the hall of Saint Valentine's Catholic church at No. 422 Elk Street. He was stricken with heart disease.

Mr. Zawadzki was attending a meeting at which was being formed a local branch of the Polish National organization Prosa. He had been appearing but a short time when he was stricken. Several physicians in the audience administered first aid, but Mr. Zawadzki succumbed before the arrival of the ambulance.

Mr. Zawadzki was born in Buffalo and received his education in the city school. He designed many Catholic schools and churches on the east side of the city and designed Dom Polski. At the time of his death, he was working on plans for a new \$500,000 orphanage.



## YESTERDAY'S NEWS

This is a replication of selected segments of a news article published in the *Buffalo Courier Express* on March 26, 1894

Researched by Laurel Myszker Keough

### *Easter Anthems How the Christian Festival Was Observed*

#### **THE FLOWERS AND MUSIC**

#### *Special Services in the Various Temples of Buffalo -- A Day of Rejoicing*

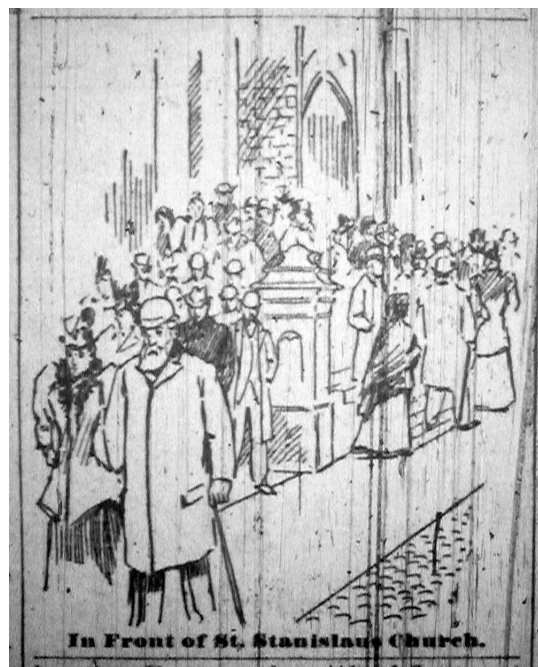
It was a cold, cloudy, almost cheerless Easter Sunday. Easter is a movable feast, and of recent years has become a principal Christian feast day. Last year there was rain on Easter Sunday. Yesterday -- three weeks earlier than last year -- dust flew through the streets, the air was keen, the wind cold and slight traces of snow were seen in some parts of the city. It was a great disappointment to those anxious to display new spring costumes, especially the girls -- of all ages -- eager to exhibit the fanciful and more or less poetic creations in the millinery art.

It was a great day for the florists, and many of them worked all night Saturday, in decorating churches and deliver-

ing lilies, potted plants, cut flowers, baskets and bouquets. Every lover is in duty bound to send his sweetheart an Easter card or gift of flowers at Eastertide and the card dealers and florists are bound to encourage this custom.

#### **On the East Side**

In the Polish quarter, Easter Sunday was devoutly celebrated.



The Poles are fond of their religion. Ninety-nine out of every 100 profess the Roman Catholic religion. At St. Stanislaus Church the services were well attended, the congregation at 10 a.m. completely filling the great edifice and overflowing into the vesti-

*“Street loungers were scarce and the saloons appeared to be closed, although the “little side door” may have been open. It is creditable that very few “well-loaded” individuals appeared to mar the scene.”*





bule. At St. Adalbert's Church the congregation was about as large, and the vestibule was completely filled. It was an inspiring sight to see the devout people kneeling in prayer on the bare floor, shut out from sight of the priest and decorated altar. Thousands also attended the services at St. John Kanty's Church on Broadway, corner of Swinburne Street. It is a fine edifice and the congregation is large and composed principally of well-to-do people.

### Scenes on Broadway

Broadway at 12:30 p.m. resembled its New York namesake. There are several large churches on this broad thoroughfare of the East Side, including St. Mary's, St. Ann's and St. John Kanty's. It is said that the congregation of St. Mary's numbers 12,000 persons. Numerous services were held Easter Sunday to accommodate the multitude, and at 12 o'clock when the

service ended, the street was choked with thrifty and well-dressed German-Americans. Beyond Fillmore Avenue the scenes were animated and picturesque. The trolley cars were well-filled, vehicles of all descriptions were out, and pedestrianism was extremely popular. Nearly all of the people were dressed in holiday attire. One buxom lass bore a striking resemblance to the lass described as looking like "the red, red rose," as her dress, shoes, gloves, and hat were red as fire. Street loungers were scarce and the saloons appeared to be closed, although the "little side door" may have been open. It is creditable that very few "well-loaded" individuals appeared to mar the scene.

Fifteen years ago the first Polish contingent arrived in Buffalo. The immigrants were penniless, homeless, and among strangers. The generous people built the so-called "barracks" on Fillmore Avenue for the new-settlers, and provided food and work for the thrifty people. At that time the Polish colony here did not exceed 200. Others followed in rapid succession. Great public improvements were being made, work was plentiful and wages liberal. The Poles flocked to Buffalo like moths around a candle, and they were not scorched either. They came by the thousands and tens of thousands and prospered marvelously. Scores of streets at East Buffalo today are populated exclusively by Polish citizens. The Polish population of Buffalo probably exceeds 50,000. They have seven churches ranging in value from \$10,000 to \$125,000. One Polish school cost \$45,000. They have two newspapers and some of the leading Poles are wealthy. The majority own their own homes. Almost every home is decorated with religious pictures. Altogether the lot of the average Polish American citizen in Buffalo is a happy one, although they work hard, early and late. The religious spirit dominates the Pole and priests are much gratified at the results of their work.



# MEMBER MOMENTS

## MEMORIES OF LONG, LONG AGO

by M. Dolores Dysarz Hausch

It wasn't over the river and through the woods, but just a ten mile ride down Michigan Avenue, from Dearborn to Detroit, MI, to visit our Dysarz grandparents in their large red brick house that was built in 1911. As oldsters now, we each have some recall of those long ago times we spent on Clippert Street. I have taken excerpts from memories written by me, my sister and two brothers, at the time when each of us had attained the age of at least 70 years.



My grandparents, John and Emilia (Grucza) Dysarz, were 63 years old in 1925 when the oldest of us six children were born. I only knew them as being old and a bit decrepit, as each walked with a slow gait. They were both bothered by rheumatism, and the house very often was permeated with the smell of the liniment they rubbed on their aching joints.

Grandma was a devout Catholic, and walked the half mile to church most every day. She constantly burned a votive candle at the foot of a plaster-cast Virgin Mary statue that stood on a pedestal in the parlor of the house. The parlor contained a huge black leather horsehair-stuffed davenport with matching chair and rocker, both with lots of buttons, where we sat to look at picture albums of the family. There were two huge pictures on one wall; one was the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the other the Sacred Heart of Mary. (I learned that those pictures are part of the Sacred Heart movement which began in 17th century France. The practice centers on the belief that a person who regularly prays to Jesus is linked to his heart which is united with God's heart. Homes were "consecrated" with the hanging of these pictures and recitation of specific prayers.)

On another wall was a very large picture of Grandma when she was young and beautiful in her black dress with mutton-leg sleeves, and a full length photo of a son who died as a teenager. Grandma was rather superstitious, and kept red ribbons tied to the plants in the bay window of her

*"Grandma was rather superstitious, and kept red ribbons tied to the plants in the bay window of her dining room, to 'keep the Devil away.'"*

dining room, to "keep the Devil away." She was a rather heavy set woman and wore her dark dresses nearly to shoe length. She always "dyed" her hair with tea, to cover any gray.

Her kitchen table always had a can of Postum ready for a hot drink for the elders. She served us kids hot Ovaltine and those spicy windmill cookies she had on hand for all her grandchildren. I remember the horse-drawn wagon of the vendor who sold waffles as he rode through the neighborhood. There were several sour red cherry trees in their side yard. Each year, around the 4th of July, my father helped us pick them, to be brought home for us kids to remove the pits before my mother canned them. We enjoyed many good cherry pies and upside down cakes for all our work!

Grandpa was a somewhat stocky man, with big forearms, probably because he was a blacksmith in his earlier career. He had a kindly face, topped with thin white hair. He always wore a vest, with a striped shirt, and the chain of a gold watch crossed his chest. His shirt sleeves were either rolled up or held up by garters.

I remember going into the large garage at the back of their lot, and seeing a big blacksmith's anvil sitting on a wood stump. Nailed on one of the walls was an array of old license plates from Grandpa's cars, and an American flag. He was proud to be an American citizen.

Grandpa's office (he sold insurance and real estate), the room at the home's entrance, contained a large oak roll-top desk along with a swivel chair, cabinets, a glass-topped oak table and, of course, an old Underwood typewriter, on which he



John and Emily (Grucza) Dysarz

would peck away as he worked. There was a glue pot on the desk, with a brush that he swiped over envelope flaps in lieu of licking them. I can still see Grandpa snorting the snuff he placed on the first knuckle of his hand! He had a good command of English, which he learned as a requirement for citizenship, but Grandma's ability was limited. The elders always conversed in Polish when we visited, and we couldn't understand them.

At their deaths (five years apart, in 1943 and 1948, at ages 81 and 87) they were viewed in the parlor of their home, with full open caskets. The entrance door of the house was draped with a black bunting. It was customary for someone to stay up all night with the deceased, called a "wake." Both services were held at St. Francis Church in Detroit, Michigan, of which my grandfather was one of the organizers.



*“Nailed on one of the walls was an array of old license plates from Grandpa's cars, and an American flag. He was proud to be an American citizen.”*

## Sunday Afternoons with Grandma

### by Dolores Konopa



Bronislaw (Bernice) and Dolores Szalasny on steps of 23 Mills Street, Buffalo, NY

My parents ran a restaurant-bar or gin-mill at 23 Mills Street in Buffalo NY. On Sundays, after lunch, the bar was filled with patrons who came to watch football and other sports on the television set in the bar. So I was sent to visit my grandmother, Katherine (née Wenckowska) Woźniak.

I would head east down Broadway, but when I got near the railroad bridge near Memorial Drive, I would run so that I would not be under the bridge should it decide to fall. Then I would walk toward the "silk mill" area and cross at the street light there onto Mohr Avenue. It was a quiet neighborhood, with small flower gardens, mostly roses as I recall. My grandmother's house was at 60 Ashley Street, right on the corner of Mohr. She lived in the upstairs back flat with her youngest son, Stanley Nasolowski, from her second marriage. Uncle Stanley was a baker at National Biscuit on Furgeron Street, working the graveyard shift from 12 am - 8 am.

So when I arrived, Grandma would remind me to be quiet, since Stanley needed his sleep. So we would play cards-- rummy, war, and when she started dinner, I played solitaire. If the weather was nice, we would go downstairs and sit on a bench. That was where I would ask her questions about where she grew up, etc. I learned that she had two sisters, Josephine and Franciszka. Her mother, Julianna, was similar to what we now have as a nurse practitioner, you could say.

Grandma traveled alone by boat to live with her sister Josephine and brother-in-law, Jan Lisiewski, here in Buffalo, NY, where she met my grandfather, Ignatz Szalasny. She said he told her he wanted to marry her, but she refused because she needed to find work first. So he took her by the hand to the priest at Corpus Christi and asked the priest to help her find work. They did marry on 15 January, 1901, and they moved to 71 Mohr Street and had two sons, Michael and Walter (my father).

She told me that Ignatz died from a work related accident while a signalman -- foot caught and he was cut in three. A few years ago, I did locate an article in the Buffalo Enquirer dated 23 Dec 1909 -- "the crew of a switch engine in the NY Central Railroad yards at Harlem Ave, Cheektowaga, found the mutilated remains of Ignatz Salanski, a laborer, on the tracks shortly after 4 this morning. The man had been run down & killed. He was employed to keep the switches clean from snow that they may be easily operated. The supposition is that he may have stooped over a switch and did not hear the train coming. He was 38 years old, married, and lived at 87 Mohr Avenue. ME Danser sent body to the Morgue."

According to his death certificate, under the spelling of Salasny, he

was 34 years of age, born in Germany, his occupation was Section Hand, and he died of crushed chest/abdomen from RR accident at the NYC & HRRR yards near Harlem Ave. He was buried 26 Dec, 1909, in St Stanislaus Cemetery. Frank Felski at 1342 Broadway was the undertaker.

She married her second husband, Franciszek Nasiołowski, Stanley's father. She also told me that she had a fourth son, who died in infancy. Then Frank also died. So she took a job cleaning bank offices downtown to support her three young sons. She said that she would walk to a place on Fillmore Avenue that was run by the Felician nuns taking care of children, so parents could work. She married a third time to John Wozniak, they had no children, and upon his passing she decided not to marry again. I was amazed that in spite of her hard times, Grandma was always quick to laugh and said life was too short to be cross.

After Uncle Stanley woke up, we would have dinner, which was prepared on a white enamel wood/gas stove. Afterwards we would watch, Lawrence Welk and the Evening News -- I can't remember if it was Walter Cronkite or the Huntley-Brinkley Report. Anyway, at the end of the news, when the anchor said good night, my grandmother would respond to the television, saying "good-night." My Uncle Stanley would say, "Ma, they can't hear you," and she said she knew that, but it would not be polite not to say anything.

After we did the dishes, I would be sent home with Twinkies that my Uncle brought home from work for me. I'm sad to say that my own children, never had such fond memories as I did, since my parents and Dennis' father died prior to their being born. His mother Celia (nee Kuzara) Konopa passed when they were 5 and 2 years of age. We spoke of them often, and showed them pictures, but it is not the same as being able to share a laugh or two.



## (Untitled)

### by Mary Stahura Hawrylczak

**Editor's Note: Mary Stahura Hawrylczak wrote her family history on December 14, 1984, and gave it to a family friend, Frank Martin, a long-time PGSNYS member, who is sharing it with PGSNYS members. Mary passed away in 2008. Because of its length, I have divided the story into two parts: first, where her parents lived in Poland and the family's arrival in the U.S., and the second part, their family life in Western New York, which will appear in the Summer 2012 issue. This article was written in the first person by Mary, and is reproduced here with minor edits to spelling, grammar, and paragraph order (so as to divide the story).**

I am writing this so you will know about my family and childhood. My mother and father seldom spoke of their life in Poland or the year that they came to America (Ameriki), the United States. I never talked with my father about his family because we were not close. The most that I know about my father's family is that his father was a tailor (krawiec), and he was his assistant. Once in a while I would ask my mother about her life in Poland. There were quite a few in her family, and they lived on a good size farm. Everyone worked feeding the livestock, working in the fields, scouring wooden utensils, and flaying the flax they grew. They did not weave their own linen; they sent their fibers to a professional weaver. They also kept geese and plucked the soft feathers to make down comforters (pierzyny).

*“I sent dollar bills that I had hidden inside of wooden spools of thread and replaced the label. In my next letter to them, I would say where the money could be found.”*

I asked my mother whether she knew my father in Poland, and she said no, because they did not live near each other. My father lived in the village of Monowice, near the town of Oświęcim, in the Township (powiat) of Oświęcim, in the County or District (Wojestwo) of Kraków. My mother lived in the village of Przeciszow, several miles south of Oświęcim, in the township of Bielsko Biało, Wojestwa, Kraków.

Oświęcim (Auschwitz) was where one of the concentration camps was located during WW2. It was where the infamous ovens were used by the Germans to burn the bodies of Poles and Jews they killed. One of the letters from my father's family said that the ovens could not take care of the corpses fast enough, so the Germans stacked the bodies in the fields and burned them. The people nearby were terribly sick from the stench and dense smoke. I used to send boxes of clothing, sewing thread and such, including my children's surplus of toys and dolls they had received for Christmas. I sent dollar bills that I had hidden inside of wooden spools of thread and replaced the label. In my next letter to them, I would say where the money could be found. Mail was often opened before it reached them, and some of our letters from them had been opened and resealed again.

When I spent two weeks touring Poland, June 6-19, 1976, I skipped the tour to the concentration camp at Oświęcim because I knew it would be too sad for me. Instead, I hired a taxi for the entire morning at \$25.00 and traveled about 75 miles, a long ride, to visit my mother's birthplace, Przeciszow. We arrived at a little cluster of simple homes. The driver went into a tiny post office/store combination and got directions to Julian Calus' house. Julian was my mother's nephew, her brother Ludwik's son. My mother had deeded her piece of property of several acres (morgi) to Julian, whose land was adjacent to hers.

Julian and his family lived in a modest stucco house that was fenced to keep in the chickens. A boardwalk led to the side door. In the back, there was a small unpainted barn, very European looking inside and out, like the ones found in a Christmas manger scene. The barn was empty except for some huge beets that were used for cattle feed. The livestock pastured somewhere out of sight. In the back, the fields stretched up and away over a slight rise. I never did see just how far the farm went. Julian was not at home because he worked another job besides farming. I asked Julian's wife if she would show me to my mother's house. It saddened me to learn that it was no longer there. When I insisted that she at least show me the spot where the house had been, she hesitated and then said that other people now owned the property, and they were not on friendly terms. While the taxi driver ate breakfast in the kitchen, Julian's wife led me across the lane — there were no roads as we know them— and into a neighbor's

backyard, which was about one or two doors down. She introduced me to the neighbor, who was working in her garden. When she told her what I wanted to see, the neighbor pointed over the fence to the next backyard and said that was where my mother's house had stood. The new owners had it torn down because it was an old, damp, cold cottage that had a thatched roof. The roof needed work that would have been too expensive to replace or repair, if they could even have found someone who knew how to do the work.

My cousin, Frank Sanak, who also lived in the U.S., was visiting his relatives, cousins, who lived nearby. His daughter, Madeline Brown, was visiting with him. I could see that the cousin's house and barns were more prosperous than Julian's. The cousin had a government job that had something to do with farming. He was a consultant who was either in charge of something similar to our Extension Bureau, or the supervisor of a co-op farm.

Frank was invited to join us and was so excited to see me that he took over the conversation. I couldn't get a lead-in to ask for some of the information that I really wanted to know. I thought he was knowledgeable about the family history, because my mother and his mother were sisters. I finally gave up, which was a mistake. With age (he was 99 years old when he died this year), he had forgotten a lot and was very mixed up about the rest. I couldn't have been too far away from the church that my mother attended and perhaps could have spoken with the priest and gotten any available records.

It was getting close to noon, and I had a long way to go to rejoin the group at the hotel in Krakow, so I declined lunch. Instead I had some tea and homemade cookies in a tiny wallpapered parlor. I could smell chicken cooking in the kitchen. I was not shown around the house, but I saw an electric washing machine in the alcove. There was a utility-type table covered with a cloth and two chairs near a window, a cedar-type chest, another

straight-back chair, and a couple of holy pictures on the wall. There were no easy chairs.

I do not know the year that either of my parents came over from Poland or with whom they boarded. New immigrants usually boarded with relatives or family friends who had settled in America earlier, which is the reason there were so many boarding houses in those days.

My Uncle Ludwik came to America, as did my mother and her brother, Frank. Frank settled in Gary, Indiana, and never married. Ludwik was the only one of the three to return to Poland because he had a wife and children there. Ludwik died when he was 97 years old.

My father, Jan (John) Stachura (the 'c' was dropped when we went to school because no one pronounced the name correctly), came to America with two of his sisters, Sophia and Anna. His sister Sophia settled in Chicago, Illinois, and was married to a Marczak. She had four children, Bertha, Stanley, Frank, and Joe. Bertha married and had a daughter. She got divorced and never saw her daughter again. She was remarried to Stanley Erber and had no children from that marriage. Stanley and Joe both got married, but I do not know about their children. Frank remained a bachelor.

My father's sister, Anna, settled in Great Falls, Montana. She married Andrew Obstarczyk who worked in the copper mines. They had seven or eight children: Mary, John, Genevieve, Phyllis, Helen, and a brother or two. The family prospered with a dairy farm, roller skating rink, and other properties. As the children grew up, they also invested in real estate, a car agency, and became involved in politics. All of their children are well-educated and doing very well.

My mother worked for, and lived with, a Jewish family who owned a bakery. My mother had an Uncle Słomka, who must have been her mother's brother. Uncle Słomka lived in Buffalo, New York, with his family on Fillmore Avenue near the old Dold Packing Factory. It was a

*“Times were hard because a deep depression had set in and jobs were very scarce. People were out of work, there was no government assistance, and many went hungry.”*

horrible smelling neighborhood.

My father worked in the Pennsylvania coal mines for a short time loading cars. A foreman used a rod across the backs of miners to make them work faster. He used it once too often on my father, who wrestled the rod away and gave the foreman a good drubbing. Then he took off—FAST.

Times were hard because a deep depression had set in and jobs were very scarce. People were out of work, there was no government assistance, and many went hungry. My father talked about the time he was so weak from hunger he fell in the street and lay there until someone helped him up. My father spoke of working as a cook’s helper on a train to Saskatchewan and Manitoba, about the long train ride, and the great flat fields of grain along the way. Cold too!

Eventually, my part of history began in Blasdell, New York. (**Editor’s note:** Mary was born in 1909). My mother spoke of coming to America to earn money to return to Poland, enter a convent, and become a nun. Instead she met my father while working at a furniture factory and they married and had three children. My brother, Henry (Hendrick), is a year and a half older than me. My sister, Gladys (Wladyslawa) is about a year and a half younger than me.

My father did not go to work at the Lackawanna Steel Plant like many of the other Poles and the Irish coming from the coal mines in Pennsylvania. He wanted no part of the dangerous and heavy industry. He worked at a furniture factory, where he did fine furniture instead. My father went to night school and earned his Citizenship papers. My mother automatically became a citizen through my father’s citizenship.

*Mary’s story of her family’s life in Blasdell, then Dunkirk, and finally Brockton, NY will continue in the 2012 summer (August) issue.*

We value and enjoy articles from our members.

Please consider writing about your family history research experiences, helpful websites or other resources you have found, and interesting stories about your ancestors for inclusion in future issues of the *Searchers*.

Please email to [denise.oliansky@gmail.com](mailto:denise.oliansky@gmail.com).

Thank you!



# ADOPT-A-ROLL



PGSNYS is getting ready to begin the digitization, from microfilm, of all the *Dziennik dla Wszystkich* newspapers from 1911 through the early 1940s. This is a huge project, under the direction of PGSNYS member, Maureen Gleason. This project will result in all pages of this local Polish newspaper being preserved for posterity, and even better, being searchable by surname, business name, phrase, date, or any other term, making it a tremendous resource for our members.

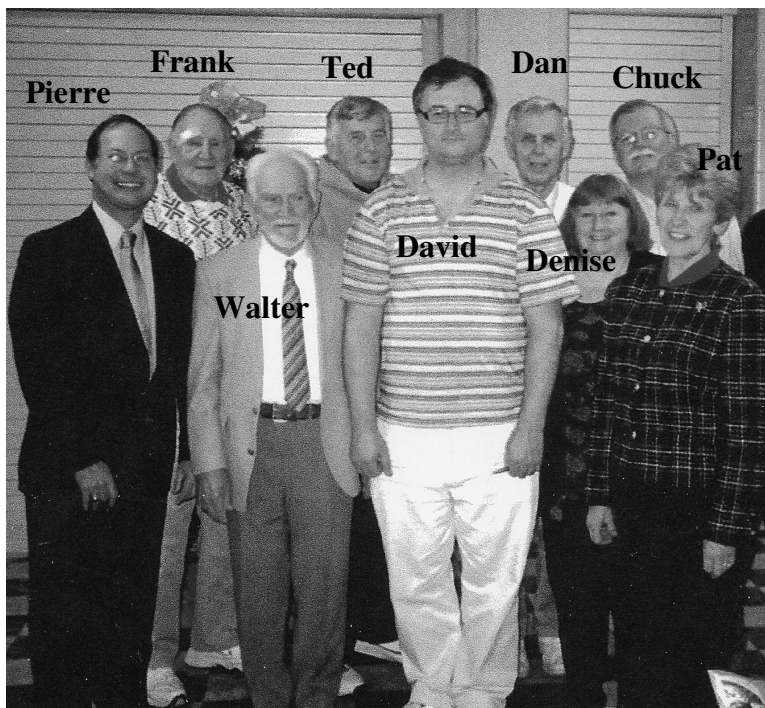
There are 83 rolls of microfilm to be digitized by Biels, at a cost of about \$82.50 per roll. PGSNYS has designated \$2000 to this effort, and Ted Smardz has donated an additional \$1000 to get the process started on the first 23 rolls. We are also applying for grant funding which, if received, would help to defray some of the cost.

In the meantime, we are offering our membership (and anyone else who is interested) the opportunity to “Adopt-A-Roll” (or partial roll), either in memory of a loved one or simply to help make this endeavor a reality. You can adopt a full roll at \$82.50, or a partial roll at \$41.25. However, any contribution amount is appreciated and will get us closer to our goal.

A designated account has been set up specifically for these funds. Contact the PGSNYS treasurer, Chuck Pyrak, at email: [chuck@pyrak.com](mailto:chuck@pyrak.com) to contribute or for more information.

The PGSNYS Board sincerely thanks in advance all who **Adopt-A-Roll!**

## 2012 PGSNYS Board & Trustees



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# POINT and CLICK!

## Laurel Keough presents ideas and links for web research

### Select Death Notice Index Buffalo NY 1880 - Present

<http://www.buffalonydeaths.com>

This website, owned by Jan Wernicki, provides an index to death notices and obituaries from Buffalo newspapers. It includes the date the item appeared in a newspaper and the type of article. Jan will do look up requests for a nominal fee for death notices (all years) and marriage licenses (1894 – 1935). The site has over 105,611 names listed.

### Recording Unmarried or Childless Kin In Your Family Tree

In the ancestry.com blog, they suggested that if you determine an individual in your family tree never married or never had children, it would be an excellent idea to record these facts in your tree. It will save other family researchers from wasting time on fruitless searches.

This tip came from Tana L. Petersen of Family Tree Maker: If the individual never married, enter “Never married” in the Marriage Date Field. This information will then appear on charts and reports. This entry process will not work in older versions of Family Tree Maker software.

### Poor House Records on Ancestry New York, Census of Inmates in Almshouses and Poorhouses 1830 – 1920

<http://www.ancestry.com>

Many members of our Society have wished to obtain records from the poorhouses. The above records have been on the Ancestry site for a while, but I thought it worth a mention. I believe you can sign in to see the index of names even if you do not subscribe. Go to the card catalog and enter: New York, Census, etc. If you find a name of interest, you can then go to your local library to use Ancestry at no charge. The records cover all of New York State and many for Erie County.

### City Directories on Ancestry

Many city directories have been added to Ancestry.com. This has made it extremely easy to follow your ancestors through the years, showing their changes of residence and their places of employment in many cases. Interestingly, I also found that the listings for some years showed all of the residents living on a particular street. Also, you may want to look in “Google Books” as many city directories are available online.

# COMING SOON!

## The All New Surname and Pedigree Chart Directory of PGSNYS Members!

With your help, PGSNYS plans to compile a new directory of all the surnames being researched by each of our members. In addition, each member's 4-generation pedigree chart, including (as available) dates and places of births, marriages, and deaths, is being requested and, when collected, will provide a wealth of information to others who are researching the same surnames.

**Inserted into this issue of the *Searchers* is a 4-generation pedigree chart**, which was also emailed to current members on March 17th. We are asking all of our PGSNYS members, near and far, to complete this chart and to also list, at the top of the form, any additional surnames you are researching.

In lieu of using this particular chart, you can print a 4-generation chart from whatever genealogy software you are using, and simply note on the page any additional surnames you are researching beyond the four generations.

Regardless of the format you choose, you can either bring your completed chart to the next meeting, or mail it to **Denise Oliansky, 35 Gervan Drive, West Seneca, NY 14224 or email [denise.oliansky@gmail.com](mailto:denise.oliansky@gmail.com)**. Please consider that we cannot have a comprehensive directory without every member's cooperation.

We would like to begin compilation of the directory in June, so please return your completed chart and surname list by May 31, 2012.

Thank you for your help!!

It is greatly appreciated!

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# Spring/Summer 2012 - Goings On Around Town

**April 8-15:** Dyngus Festival begins Easter Sunday and continues for a week. Events can be found all around town, from Corpus Christi and St. Stanislaus, to the Central Terminal, and beyond. Check out the official schedule of events at <http://www.dyngusdaybuffalo.com/dyngusday.html>.

**April 12:** PGSNYS monthly meeting. Presentation by Scott Drzewiecki on researching at St. Adalbert cemetery.

**May 10:** PGSNYS monthly meeting. Presentation by Peter Filim on Tombstone Symbology (Iconology).

**June 8 & 9:** The 10th Annual Polish Heritage Festival at the Hamburg Fairgrounds. The theme for this year's festival is "10 Year Celebration of Polish Culture & Traditions." PGSNYS will have a booth at this event.

**June 14:** PGSNYS monthly meeting. Presentation by author Edward Zawadzki.

**July 12:** No regular PGSNYS meeting this month. Join us at the annual PGSNYS picnic. Date TBA, probably Saturday, July 14th.

**July 20, 21 & 22:** Cheektowaga Polish American Arts Festival in Cheektowaga Town Park. PGSNYS will have a booth at this event.

**August 9:** PGSNYS monthly meeting. Presentation by Denise Oliansky on resources available from the Polish Genealogical Society of America.

**SEARCHERS NEWSLETTER**

**POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF NEW YORK STATE**

**12645 ROUTE 78**

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