

PRESERVING
OUR PAST
SINCE 1988

SEARCHERS

NO. 61

WINTER

2012, ISSUE 3

INSIDE THIS
ISSUE:

For Your
Information 2

President's
Message and
Potpourri 3

In Memory
of Daniel
Joseph Kij 4

Christmas
Cards to
Michigan 6

Everyone has
a Story 10

The Bee
Keeper
Cometh 12

PGSNYS
News &
Notes 14

Point &
Click 16

PGSNYS
Year in
Review 18

Keep in
Mind &
Surname
Index 19

Photo - 2013
PGSNYS
Officers 20

*Wesołych Świąt, Bożego Narodzenia i
Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku!
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year
from PGSNYS!*



Dolores Szalaszny Konopa discussing her
Christmas wish-list with Santa Claus
in December, 1952

“Christmas Cards to Michigan” pg. 6

PGSNYS - FOR YOUR INFORMATION

**PRESERVING
OUR PAST
SINCE 1988**

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

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 \$20 (\$25 Canada, \$30 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*.

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

If you are a member, but not receiving E-mail from the PGSNYS mailing list, please send an E-mail to cpyrak@roadrunner.com

*Exceptions: July - picnic and December - Christmas party

2013 PGSNYS OFFICERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

PGSNYS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: David Newman
Vice President: Ted Smardz
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THE SEARCHERS NEWSLETTER

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 or denise.oliansky@gmail.com

PGSNYS PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

From the Editor: At this special time of year, please keep in your prayers our members who are facing difficult challenges in their lives. As many of you know, David Newman's wife, Agnieszka, has had a recurrence of brain cancer. They are beginning a long treatment process for Aga in hopes of a definitive cure. Long-time member, Edward Prabucki, appreciates your prayers for his wife, Rita, who is in intensive care. Please keep Ed in your prayers as well.



David Newman

David and all the PGSNYS officers wish all members and their families a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. May 2013 be filled with health, healing, and happiness for all of us.

POTPOURRI

WITAMY! TO NEW PGSNYS MEMBERS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

JANICE BARTOSZEK, HOLLAND, NY
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STAN TOPOR, CHEEKTOWAGA, NY
RANDY RAUSCHER, HOLMDEL, NJ
ROBERT MICHALEK, WEST SENECA, NY

- ⇒ Election of the 2013 Board of Directors and Trustees was held during the November 8, 2012 membership meeting. The 2013 Officers are listed on Page 2. See photo on Page 20.
- ⇒ The dates for upcoming 2013 PGSNYS monthly meetings in the Villa Maria College cafeteria are Thursday, January 10, February 14, March 14, and April 11th.
- ⇒ Member Ed Kornowski shared that the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society is allowing free use of the research library to Veterans. He used his VA medical card as proof of service.

In Memory of Daniel Joseph Kij

July 5, 1930 - August 2, 2012

The PGSNYS lost one of its favorite sons this past summer with the passing of long-time member Daniel Joseph Kij. Daniel touched the lives of many of our members with his extensive knowledge, generous spirit, and voracious love of Polish history and culture. Always ready to help with an event, provide a translation, or share a joke, Daniel inspired and fostered many members' enthusiasm for Polish genealogy and commitment to the preservation of western New York's Polonia. He will always be a part of PGSNYS in the hearts and memories of his fellow members.

"He was the leader of Polonia in Western New York," said Thomas J. Mazur, an Erie County legislator. "He had such a command of the culture and the language. He had the stature of a Polish aristocrat."

Obituary from the *Buffalo News*, August 7, 2012

Daniel Joseph Kij, prominent in Polish-American community

July 5, 1930 - Aug. 2, 2012

Daniel Joseph Kij's lifelong love of Poland and Polish-American culture took him far from his Lackawanna home - to places such as the White House, where he spoke with U.S. presidents, and Polish capitals, where he knew leaders including Lech Walesa.

But Mr. Kij, a lifelong Western New Yorker, wasn't motivated by fancy titles and honors. Rather, he loved spreading his vast knowledge of Polish and Polish-American history, culture and language to all he met - from high-ranking officials to regular Western New Yorkers to schoolchildren.

And, most of all, he loved a good joke and a hearty laugh.

Mr. Kij, a landmark figure in Western New York's Polonia community and a man known nationally during his heyday for his work, died Thursday in Mercy Hospital. He was 82.

"He was the leader of Polonia in Western New York," said Thomas J. Mazur, an Erie County legislator. "He had such a command of the culture and the language. He had the stature of a Polish aristocrat."

A Lackawanna native, Mr. Kij was educated at St. Barbara's Elementary School and then at St. John Kanty, a preparatory school in Erie, Pa.

In 1954, he married the former Alicya Lasota, whom he met while singing in the Paderewski Singing Society. She died in 1990.

Mr. Kij served in the U.S. Army, including in Germany. In 1960, he graduated from the University at Buffalo's Law School. He entered private practice with Alois C. Mazur, who later became a Buffalo City Court judge.

He ran for Congress in 1962, but was defeated. He also served as second assistant county attorney before returning to private practice.

Mr. Kij served for many years as president of various local Polish-American groups, including the Polish Union of America, a nationwide fraternal organization, where he served as president for more than 20 years, and the Polish Singers Alliance. He also served as president of the Lackawanna Historical Association.

Invited often to the White House to discuss Polish-American affairs, Mr. Kij met and spoke with every president from John F. Kennedy to George H.W. Bush.

Mr. Kij traveled to Poland 17 times. He particularly enjoyed serving as a guide and translator for visitors new to the country - and could be counted on for his adept translation skills, a pervasive sense of humor and a deep love for the country's bookstores.

"He knew more about Polish history, Polish geography, and Polish culture than anyone else," said Michael N. Vogel, a former Buffalo News editorial page editor who traveled to Poland twice with Mr. Kij as a guide. "And he did more to share that knowledge across cultural lines than anyone in Western New York."

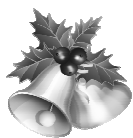
In 2010, Mr. Kij suffered a stroke, which led to his move into the Courtyards, an assisted-living facility in Hamburg.

Mr. Kij is survived by his daughter, Valerie Kij Longfellow; a brother, Dr. Joseph Kij Jr.; and his companion, Dorothy Mozg.

A Mass of Christian Burial was offered Monday in Queen of Angels Church.



“And, most of all, he loved a good joke and a hearty laugh.”



Christmas Cards to Michigan

by Dolores Szalasny Konopa

“...my mother had one of the tables in the dining room of the restaurant set up with boxes of Christmas cards, her address book, stamps, a fountain pen, and an ink bottle.”

The upcoming Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays bring memories of the Santa Claus parade and Christmas card writing during my childhood on Mills Street. My sister, Lori, worked at Kobacker’s in the drapery department. On Black Friday, she would take me to the store offices located on the second floor overlooking Broadway. Fridays were always busy, but since this was the start of the Christmas shopping season, it was even more so. The women there had a chair near the window where I stood watching the marching bands and finally Santa Claus arriving to welcome the start of the Christmas shopping season. When the parade stopped, Lori would take me to the toy department to visit Santa. After sharing with him my wish list, we would return home.

Since I was off from school, my mother had one of the tables in the dining room of the restaurant set up with boxes of Christmas cards, her address book, stamps, a fountain pen, and an ink bottle. It was my important job to do the Christmas cards...most likely to keep me occupied. I remember the Polish family names: Szalasny, Przybysz, Wackowski, Sikorski, Petyk, etc. But then there were the English names: Rugg, Whip, Alan, and Presby. I knew Rugg was my mother’s cousin, Cassie, since she did visit us when here from San Diego, California. But the other names were from Dearborn and Detroit in Michigan. I did not remember ever seeing these people, so I asked my mother who they were. My mother said they were her cousins, but because the restaurant was busy, and I had finished the cards, I went out to play with my friends in the neighborhood.

This ritual, except for asking my mother about the people in Michigan, continued every year, even after my mother’s passing in October of 1957. After my father’s passing in May of 1968, I found an envelope with a picture of the Whip children. I placed them with the other pictures from my grandmother, Katarzyna. There they stayed until about 1996.

We had gotten a Tandy computer from Radio Shack, and my daughter, Deborah, introduced me to the Internet, encouraging me to re-start my family research. I posted a query on Ancestry.com regarding Christmas cards to the Whip family in Dearborn, Michigan. I received a reply from Rose Brown in Florida. Her parents were Roy and Alice Whip, and their son, Roy, was her twin brother. She advised me that both her parents were deceased, and she knew only bits and pieces of her family line and was eager to learn more. The pictures my father had were of their high school graduation, one of Roy and two of Rose (different

hairdo's). We exchanged information back and forth. She knew her maternal grandparents were Walter Presby and Rose Grabowski, and that they arrived through New York, but she did not know when. She also knew Rose's father's given name was Thomas. She also knew her mother had a couple of brothers, but they were not close for some reason.

Rose's mother, Alice, had been previously married to an Elton A. Retzlaff (sometimes spelled Retzloff), and after his death her half-siblings were raised by Elton's parents. Rose remembered that when she was a child her family visited a female relative who only spoke Polish in Buffalo, NY, and it was in a brick, two-story building. She wondered if that was our home. Sadly, it was not, but after much thought I think it may have been Aunt Josephine (nee Przybysz, widow Sikorski) Wackowski's house. Aunt Josephine never learned the English language, nor how to read or write. She depended on her daughter, Bertha, to handle all her affairs.

With this new information about Alice and her parents, I did a search on Ellis Island.org for 'Rose Przybysz.' I found 'Rozalja Przybysz' arriving 28 Oct 1911, with her daughter, Lenora, and two sons, Mieczyslaw and Ryszard, going to her husband, Wojciech Przybysz of 206 Freeman Street, Brooklyn, NY. I also found that she left the home of her father, Tomasz Grabowski. Everything seemed to fit except for Wojciech, which usually translates to George or Albert, not Walter. Also Rose said, "They changed their name when they came to the USA, because my mother told me that her mother said they changed my mother's name because the man who was taking information didn't know how to speak Polish, so put her down as Alice. So many stories. Which ones are true? That one might be since it seems names where changed. Also, my mother told me she was born in New York, but her documents got burnt up in a fire and she had to have new ones made up. But Rose Przybysz was in Poland in 1909 as far as we know?????..."

While I was disappointed, I decided to hold onto this bit of information because Rozalja was born in Alexandrowo, a place where my grandfather, Walter, was from. As time went on, neither Rose nor I were able to find her mother's family prior to her marriage to Elton. Rose connected with a cousin on her father's side and was told that Alice was Lenora at birth, and they had the same information about the birth place, possibly Brooklyn. Meanwhile, through the years we exchanged the good news and the sad news about our families, both feeling that we were related somehow. I tried to see if I could find Dick or Frank (Ryszard and Mieczyslaw), but no luck. Joyce, who is Rose's half-sister (Alice's daughter from her first marriage to Elton), told Rose she did not know anything about either brother, which was discouraging.

I also requested a copy of Alice's SS-5 application, to see if the birth/name information was there. But it had the information of NY/Presby signed by Alice Retzlaff. I forwarded this to Rose for her records. I also, sent to her a picture of my mother taken on her birthday in 1953. Rose then sent me one of her mother Alice taken in 1956. The likeness of the two was a pleasant surprise, they looked like sisters.

Then in 2008, a posting appeared (*provided as written without editing*): "I hope someone in the presby family gets this message Frank Presby is buried in michigan my grandmother mary married frank were they lived on E Jefferson in detroit before

"Meanwhile, through the years we exchanged the good news and the sad news about our families, both feeling that we were related somehow."

“I was thrilled that they may finally have some information from Poland, where Agnes’ mother was still living and doing research.”

moving to garden city michigan. were Frank passed away and he is buried next to my grandmother and my father. I have several items of Franks that i Would like to pass on to his kin so please feel free to contact me Walter Davis.”

I passed this on to Rose, but she was not able to contact Walter at the number provided in the post. A bit of a let down to say the least. But then a couple of years later, I got a message from Harold Allen, son of Richard Allen, who was trying to research his father’s family and having a hard time as well. He was in touch with Frank, son of Frank Presby and Ann Caldwell. Both were happy to share what they knew about their fathers, and Rose was also happy to share with them what she knew. I was happy for them, but it still did not answer my mother’s connection.

More time passed, and then I got a message from Agnes in the UK regarding Rose and her father Tomasz. I explained that I was not related to either, but possibly to Rose’s husband, Walter Presby, and was in contact with their grandchildren. I then checked with Rose, Harold, and Frank and got their okay to share their contact information with Agnes. I was thrilled that they may finally have some information from Poland, where Agnes’ mother was still living and doing research.

Agnes responded (*provided as written, without editing*); “Thank you for replying me so quickly. I'm so excited. After many years we (I and my mum: I just search in internet, my mum collects data and searches in paper documents) found new trace. I better start from the beginning: Rozalia Przybysz (nee Grabowski) (b 2.3.1884), daughter of Tomasz Grabowski and Marianna (nee Wisniewska) got married 21.1.1882 in Ostrowas and then they moved to Kruszynek, had 4 sisters: Ewa (b 9.11.1883), Stanislaw (b 3 or 15.11.1891)(probably married to Wojciech Przybysz brother but we are not quite sure), Bronislawa (b 10 or 22. 8.1894), Nepomucena (b 27.11.1888) and 1 brother: Jozef (b 9.3.1886). She was married to Wojciech Przybysz in 28.12.1903 or 10.01.1904 in Ostrowas but the marriage certificate is in Russian and it's hard to read. There were: Wojciech- 20 years old and Rozalia 19 years old. Wojciech's parents were: Felicjan Przybysz and Jozefa Przybysz (nee Jozefczak). Rozalia and Wojciech had probably 3 children but we can not find their birth certificate. My mum remembers that her mum said they had two sons but she didn't mention daughter or my mum doesn't remember. But we found that in 1909 Wojciech Przybysz went to the US and after 2 years his wife Rozalia joined him with 2 children : Mieczyslaw (Wilczyslaw) age 3 and Leonora age 3 or 9 months. We don't know why Rozalia travelled without her older son Zygmunt but we found that in 1913 Rozalia's sister Stanislaw with company of Jacob Niedziolkowski traveled with her nephew Zygmunt Przybysz to her brother in law

Wojciech Przybysz. It was November 1913. Meanwhile my great-grandfather went to join his brother in law, Wojciech, and his sister, in march 1913. These are facts what we've got so far. The rest my mum just remembers from her mother's story telling but she doesn't remember everything. My great grandmother Agnieszka, Jozef Grabowski's wife, refused, in the last moment, to join him and probably in 1923 he died there. We know that his sister Stanislawina was involved in his funeral and she brought in person that sad news to my mum's family. And this is it what we've got so far. We don't know when and where he died or what happened to his sisters who lived there. In one post you mention that Rose and Walter graves are in St Mary's Queen of Creation cemetery. What I think is the fact that probably my great grandfather's grave could be there, too, because they used to live together or in the neighborhood, but this is just my idea. Of course there were many stories but we think they are just stories not connected to the true. I'm waiting for any news from you. If you have any pictures of Rozalia and Wojciech Przybysz graves, can you please send us?"

I happily sent the picture, never expecting more information on my Przybysz side. But as it turned out, that was not the case. Agnes has since sent copies of baptismal and marriage certificates not only for the Grabowski, but for Przybysz as well. We have since figured out the Walter/Wojciech name thing...one of my cousins, Barbara, who said she would eaves-drop, did recall that our grandfather, during one of his visits to her mother, Adele Bukolt, spoke of his brother Wojciech, who had run away from the Red Army and was in fear for his family's life, so he changed the name and moved to Michigan. So now we know that Rose, Harold, Frank and their siblings are indeed connected.

It took a while, but we finally have the answers to our questions. I am now trying to help Agnes in the search for her grandfather, Joseph Grabowski. And the search continues...

"I happily sent the picture, never expecting more information on my Przybysz side. But as it turned out, that was not the case."



My mother, Bronislawa Szalasnay
January 1, 1953



Alice Whip 1956

MEMBER MOMENTS

Everyone has a Story

by Nicole Lodyga Pohancsek

“Everyone in your family knows a little piece of the puzzle; it is just a matter of finding those people.”

When most people start off doing family research, they want to get as far back as possible. Genealogy books often talk about reaching out to your oldest living relative, but people miss out on great information by not reaching out to second and third cousins. In doing genealogy these last 20 years, I have found the most information from long-lost living relatives. Everyone in your family knows a little piece of the puzzle; it is just a matter of finding those people. So how do we do this?

1) **Facebook:** If you don't have Facebook, find someone who does and ask to use their account. Search your relatives' names and the towns they were from and search often. Over the summer I searched the last name Nowaczewski and came up with three Nowaczewski in the Buffalo area. I contacted all three of them and one of them contacted me back. It was my dad's 2nd cousin whom he never met. My great-grandmother (Eva Nowaczewski Lodyga) had 18 brothers and sisters. I knew there had to be more of them out there. Facebook was a great way to contact them (without calling them on the phone). You can even narrow Facebook down to search for specific towns in Poland.

2) **Old letters:** In my grandparents' and my husband's grandparents' belongings, I have come across about 10 old letters with European addresses on them. I have written to all of them and had two replies. One was from relatives who moved to France after WWI, and another was my husband's family in Hungary. We have made life-long connections with these distant relatives we did not even know existed. I even had the opportunity to go to France last year and visit my grandmother's first cousins (Mikolajek family). They had pictures from the 1950s of my mom and her family. Some of these pictures my mom had never seen before. It was quite strange seeing pictures of my mom that someone was keeping in a scrap book in France.

3) **Online phone directories:** Although there is no online phone directory in Poland due to privacy issues, there are online phone directo-

ries for other Eastern European countries, such as Hungary and Lithuania. Back in 2003, I used a Hungarian phone directory to look up the last name Pohancsek. My father-in-law always told me that he was the last Pohancsek in the entire world, and I wanted to prove him wrong. I found one other Pohancsek family in Hungary and had my father-in-law, who speaks Hungarian, call them. By talking they found out they are first cousins, and they never knew the other existed. Although you cannot do this with more common names, such as Krawczyk or Lewandowski, if you know the language and what area your family is from, you may have some luck.

4) **Myheritage.com**: Once you create a log in, go to the bottom of the screen and click on last names (under the heading of Genealogy). For family tree info, I found this [free](#) site much better than Ancestry.com. Earlier this year, I was able to connect with two distant cousins on my mom's side of the family. One lives in Michigan and the other lives in Germany. We have been able to share information on common relatives that we had dating back to the early 1800's.

In closing, try finding those family members who have been trimmed off the family tree. I have attached a picture I had that was only labeled "Marek Wedding." My grandmother could name a couple of the children in the picture, but did not know who the others were. I found a Jeff Patronek on Facebook (he is my grandmother's 1st cousin whom she never knew) and shared the picture with him. He told me that he had that same picture hanging on his wall, and it listed all of the children's names on the back. I was able to come up with additional names of two new families who were related to me that I never knew!

*"...try
finding
those family
members
who have
been
trimmed off
the family
tree."*



"Marek Wedding"

The Bee Keeper Cometh

by Pat Filipiak Rooney

“As I watched, I noticed that indeed they were honey bees and some were flying in with pollen clinging to their legs.”

If you believe that bees are messengers, you are going to like this story.

Upon returning to Western New York in May from a stay in Cary, North Carolina to avoid the northern winter of 2012, I went about my usual tour of the property. My first place of concern was the raised garden where I had planted strawberry plants two years previously. To my disappointment, they had yet to produce any sizable berries.

However, this day there was an abundance of white flowers, giving me a thrill of hope! Images of shortcake sprang to mind.

As I walked toward my macaw parrot windmill, I heard a buzzing sound. Since I am allergic to bee stings, I made a cautious inspection. To my surprise, I spotted a swarm of honey bees gathered near and under the plastic window planter. They were fanning the space between two boards of a wooden step I was using to raise a planter.

As I watched, I noticed that indeed they were honey bees and some were flying in with pollen clinging to their legs. Fascinated, I watched for a few moments before rushing to the house for my camera.

Not wanting to destroy the hive, I searched first the phone book and then the Internet for an area beekeeper.

There was one nearby in Orchard Park!!!

I called and left a message. I took no chances and emailed pictures too.

Later that night, a return call came.

Yes, he was interested and would come for the hive on Sunday about 8 pm when the bees would be in for the night.

On Sunday, there were five of us sitting on the porch. When the small pickup truck rounded the bend, we knew it was the beekeeper. I was so happy that these little creatures would get a new home.

The keeper was a young man and eager to greet us. "Ryszard Biernat," he said with a broad smile.

He made me think of Santa Claus as he wanted to get straight to his work. He was happy to see the hive outdoors and very accessible. Several questions were asked before he went to the truck to get his tools.

I followed like a little kid, asking several questions of my own, like why he didn't cover himself. He said the bees don't bother him when they are smoked.

He smiled when I asked if I could photograph him working,

because I wanted to share this with my grandchildren and students at a school where I once taught.

He posed with the hive and did more sharing.

"Where did you teach?"

Saint Joe's in Gowanda.

My curiosity piqued when he said, "Oh, a Parochial school. I am a priest at Saint Amelia's in Tonawanda."

More conversation flowed as he lifted the hive out and asked if I wanted the honey.

I asked about his accent.

"I'm Polish."

I said my grandparents were all from Poland.

"Where?"

Stara Wies, near Limanowa.

"I was born there. What house?"

Number 69.

"Names?"

Kedron and Kita.

"Do you have any pictures or documents?"

With great glee, I ran to get my book and whispered thank you to Daniel Kij and Walter Kloc over and over for helping me find my relatives!

After Father cleaned up, he scoured the documents now resting on the hood of his truck. His comments were like wrapped gifts opening! Stara Wies was coming alive as he commented about several names listed on the Baptismal records!

"My brother-in-law lives over the hill."

Before parting, he encouraged me to send him some documents, a family chart, and pictures. He knew the Kita family and would be going home in October.

Christmas had indeed come early!!!



**Beekeeper, Ryszard Biernat,
with the hive**

PGSNYS News & Notes



In Remembrance

The PGSNYS offers condolences to our longtime member, Dr. Leonard E. Amborski, on the passing of his beloved wife, Irene Kazmierczak Amborski, on July 30, 2012. Leonard and Irene were married October 3, 1944, at the Holy Name of Jesus Church, Buffalo, NY, and had been married 67 years. Our thoughts and prayers are with Leonard and his family at this sad time.



Irene Kazmierczak
Amborski

FYI from the November, 2012 PGSA Notebook* : Easier Access to Freedom of Information Act Documents

While the U.S. Congress is focusing on ways of limiting access to government records such as the Social Security Death Index, the National Archives and Records Administration, Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Commerce have partnered to develop an online system aimed at expanding public access to information requested under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

They have developed a site, <http://FOIAonline.Regulations.gov>, that offers the public one place to submit FOIA requests, track their progress, communicate with the processing agency, search other requests, access previously released responsive documents and file appeals with participating agencies.

It benefits government agencies too by providing a secure website to receive and store requests, assign and process requests, post responses, generate metrics, manage records electronically, create management reports and electronically generate the annual report required from each agency by FOIA.

From Nu? What's Nu? Volume 13, Number 41 | October 7, 2012 (<http://www.avotaynu.com/nu.htm>)

*PGSA is the Polish Genealogical Society of America; the Notebook is their online newsletter

An Update on the PGSNYS Funeral Card Database

by Dolores Ferguson

We currently have a little over 5,000 funeral cards added to our searchable database of deceased Polonia from the Western New York area from 1909 to 2012 donated from PGSNYS members. These cards can be a frequently overlooked source of missing information. Some memorial cards provide minimal information, i.e. name of deceased and date of death, while other cards can include such data (especially the older ones) as maiden name, spouse name, children's names, date of birth, age at death, date of death, date of burial, home street address, church name, cemetery name and plot locations, as well as funeral arranger.

It's a shame we sometimes hear of personal funeral card collections being tossed in the garbage after the death of a loved one, especially when the cards may be of friends and not relatives, or when someone dies and someone unrelated is entrusted to clean out personal belongings. If you would like to add to our database, we accept unwanted cards or copies of cards (can be copied up to 6-8 cards on a page and submitted via hard copy or scanned and emailed to dolores_ferg@juno.com). We also accept cards at our monthly meetings and at any of our information tables at local festivals or we can arrange pick up. Help us preserve this information for current and future generations.

If a member needs a search of the funeral card database, please send an email to David Newman at: niewczyk@verizon.net.

Currently, Dolores Ferguson has taken the lead on the funeral card project. Other members who have worked on this project in the past include David Newman, Dolores Konopa, and Pauline Gebura.

Some Professional Researchers in Poland

(As recommended by Debbie Greenlee on the Poland Roots list)

You might want to hire different researchers for the different areas, as it might be cheaper. It costs more if a researcher has to travel.

For Poznan and midwest Poland (Kargowa, Ojerzyce, and Glińsk, all near Świebodzin) you might consider Łukasz Bielecki. He owns Discovering Roots and is responsible for the Poznan Project: <http://www.discovering-roots.pl/welcome.htm>

For Biała (near Zgierz and Łódź) you might consider Iwona Dakiniewicz: genealogy@sys.com.pl or genealogy@pro.onet.pl

For Ciechanowiec near Białystok (eastern Poland), you have several choices:

Michał Marciniak, office@polgenresearch.com

<http://polgenresearch.com/en/index.php>

Danusia (Danuta) Jampolska — jampolska@wp.pl

Tad at RootsPoland, searchcoordinator@rootspoland.com

<http://www.rootspoland.com/>

Tomasz Wisniewski — <http://www.zchor.org/tomek.htm>

POINT and CLICK!

Laurel Keough presents ideas and links for web research

Polish Culture & Traditions

<http://culture.polishsite.us>

This site covers a myriad of topics related to Polish culture and traditions. History, politics, genealogy, education, folk costumes, and recipes for Polish food are only a few of the subjects that will enlighten you here.

There are new links to the All Saints Day traditions that took place on November 2nd and 3rd, 2012.

With Christmas just around the corner, check out "How to decorate a Polish Christmas Tree I and II, Nativity Scenes (szopkas) in Krakow," and personal stories and memories of Christmas both old and new.

You can also link to news from Poland updated daily from this site and subscribe to their newsletter.

Iwona's Sources

<http://www.ipgs.us/iwonad/iwona.html>

This site is owned by Iwona Dakiniewicz, the Polish correspondent for the internet for the Polish Genealogical Society of America in Chicago. You will find a collection of surnames and records from Galicia, Prussia, and Russia in the 19th century.

The collection is continuously expanding, so check out the index. Iwona will also arrange for genea-

logical tours in Poland.

Dictier - FREE Google Online Text Translator Program

<http://www.dictier.net/>

I have been visiting Polish websites frequently and find this program invaluable. *Google Translate* works well in many cases and some sites will have the flag icon and you can choose the English flag. There are times, though, that the index will be in English and the rest of the page in Polish; then I turn to *Dictier*.

This translator uses the *Google Translate* application. You download the FREE software, highlight the words or paragraphs that need translation, press the ctrl and alt keys, and a dialogue box opens showing your translation. So simple, no cutting and pasting. (However, if the page will not allow you to highlight the words, the program will not function). It is fast and easy to use and you can also listen to the content in Polish if you wish. It will translate in over 40 languages. The site will give you full instructions. I have used this software for over a year and never had any problems with it.

GenDobry!

The e-zine of Polish Roots

<http://polishroots.org/>

Just a reminder to check out this informative site or subscribe to this e-zine. Once you reach the Polish Roots site, the link to *GenDobry!* is in the upper right corner. Not only are there wonderful articles and updates on all of Polonia each month, but links to great websites that all Polish genealogists will find of interest.

CCSU - Polish American Pamphlets
<http://content.library.ccsu.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/cpaa/>

Do a search for "Buffalo, New York" and you will get six results, including The Polish Singers Alliance of America Annual Convention held in Buffalo, NY in 1953, many photos in here and the Golden Jubilee Book of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Home for Children in Buffalo, NY run by the Felician nuns.

Search for Erie, PA and you will find the "25th Anniversary Book of St. John Kanty Preparatory School in Erie, PA, 1912 – 1937." Many Polish young men from the Buffalo area attended this school, so you may find an ancestor in the pages. There are photos of all the graduating classes (pages 113 to 138), and most identify the pictures by name, but some are difficult to read, while others are very clear. Of course you can search for any location that may be of interest to you.

Google and Google.pl

Search for your ancestral towns and villages in Google and in Polish Google. You may be surprised to find websites with the town history, old photos and postcards, and also current information on the locale. There may also be video in Youtube. You may get good results if the locale currently has a large population. For the tiny villages with only a small number of residents now, you will not find much information.

The Catholic Gene
Exploring Our Catholic Family History
<http://catholicgene.wordpress.com/>

This blog was founded by friends who love genealogical research and the Roman Catholic faith. Their mission is to provide useful information about the Catholic faith as seen through the eyes of a family historian.

Here you will find articles covering ecclesiastical archives, Catholic feast days, lives of the saints, book reviews, and Catholic customs, to name just a few. There are posts covering 48 different locations, including six for Poland.

This is an exceptional blog with exquisite photographs. Be sure to check the post for November 2, 2012, titled "The Catholic Genealogists' Feast Day: Lifting Your Family Tree to Heaven on All Souls Day." I think you will enjoy it! (<http://catholicgene.wordpress.com/> <http://catholicgene.wordpress.com/2012/11/01/all-saints-day/>)



Editor's Note: After reading Laurel's *Point & Click*, I checked out the *Polish Culture & Traditions* website at <http://culture.polishsite.us> and the brief article Laurel mentioned on "All Saints' Day Celebration in Poland: Polish Cemeteries" by Jagoda Urban-Klaehn. Here's a great picture that accompanied the article, showing all the candles and flowers placed on a grave for All Saints' Day, November 1st. Beautiful! (Even better in color on the website!)



PGSNYS Year in Review

2012 was another busy year for PGSNYS. The Board of Directors and Trustees acknowledge and thank all of its members for their participation and support. We are especially grateful to those who tirelessly contribute their time, experience, and resources to our meetings, projects, events, and other functions throughout the year. PGSNYS is nothing without its members, and it is with sincere appreciation that we take a look back at this past year. Following are some of the activities and events which made 2012 a great year for PGSNYS.

Monthly Membership Meetings:

Jan 12	Dave Newman "Genealogy Experiences in Poland"
Feb 9	Dave Newman "An Interactive Polish Historical Map"
March 8	Greg Witul "Corpus Christi Stained Glass"
April 12	Scott Drzewiecki, director, St. Adalbert Cemetery "Finding Relatives Using Cemetery Records"
May 10	Peter Filim "Tombstone Symbology"
June 14	Edward Zawadzki
July 12	PGSNYS picnic (no regular membership meeting)
Aug 9	Denise Oliansky "PGSA Databases: Haller's Army & PRCUA Insurance Claims"
Sept 13	Memorial for Daniel Joseph Kij
Oct 11	Open forum for questions and research
Nov 8	Open forum for questions and research
Dec 13	PGSNYS Wigilia & Fr. Czesław Krysa's discussion of his book <i>Polish Christmas Eve</i>

Traveling Road Show (PGSNYS at Community Events):

March 24	St. Casimer Oratory's Kiemasz (Easter-related activities)
June 8-9	10th Annual Polish Heritage Festival, Hamburg Fairgrounds
July 21-22	23th Annual Cheektowaga Polish American Arts Festival

PGSNYS Community Events and New PGSNYS Projects

Sept 8	5th Annual PGSNYS Genealogy Fair at St. Gabriel Church & presentation from Krakow Poland by Daniel Bucko
Oct 20	Sessions at the LDS Genealogy Seminar at Maple Rd FHC
	Several PGSNYS members volunteered to index for the Family Search 1940 Census Indexing Project

Dziennik Digitization Project - PGSNYS Board in negotiations with BECHS to digitize microfilms; Adopt-a-Roll donation program instituted
 PGSNYS Surname Directory - members contributing the surnames they are researching; currently being compiled into a database.

Keep in Mind...

Presentation by Daniel Bucko, Krakow Archivist, Available on Youtube

At the September 8th annual PGSNYS Genealogy Fair at St. Gabriel Church in Elma, NY, Daniel Bucko, an archivist at the Krakow Archives, spoke to us live from Krakow, Poland via Skype. The title of his presentation was, "Searching Polish Roots Onsite in Archives of Belarus and Lithuania." His presentation was recorded by Gene and Nicole Pohancsek and has been placed on youtube. Use the following url to access the presentation: <http://youtu.be/Q9cC5fzrbHM>

Surname Directory of PGSNYS Members

If you haven't already, please remember to turn in the list of surnames you are researching and a 4-generation pedigree chart to Denise Oliansky at a meeting or by email (denise.oliansky@gmail.com) or snail mail to 35 Gervan Drive, West Seneca, NY 14224. There is no time limit on this project. New surnames can be added at any time to the developing surname database, which will soon be accessible on the PGSNYS website. The 4-generation pedigree charts will not be publically available online, but will be available to members at regular monthly meetings (once they are all compiled). Both of these resources will provide a wealth of information to those who are researching the same surnames. If you need another pedigree chart, check with Denise at a meeting.

Adopt-A-Roll

To help finance the *Dziennik dla Wszystkich* project, we continue to offer the opportunity to "Adopt-A-Roll" (or partial roll) of microfilm, 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. Contact the PGSNYS treasurer, Chuck Pyrak, at chuck@pyrak.com to contribute or for additional information.

Index of SURNAMES in this Issue

(Due to limited space, only new members and surnames from the articles are listed)

Surname	Page(s)	Surname	Page(s)
Alan/Allen	6, 8	Lewandowski	11
Amborski	14	Lodyga	10
Bartoszek	3	Longfellow	5
Bielecki	15	Marciniak	15
Biernat	12	Marek	11
Brown	6	Martin	2, 15
Bucko	18, 19	Mazur	4, 5
Bukolt	9	Michalek	3
Caldwell	8	Mikolajek	10
Creenan	3	Newman	2, 3, 15, 19
Dakiniewicz	15	Nowzczewski	10
Davis	7	Oczek	3
Drzewiecki	18	Oliansky	19
Ferguson	15	O'Shea	3
Filim	18	Patronek	11
Filipiak	12	Petyk	6
Gebura	15	Placek	3
Grabowski	7-9	Pohancsek	10, 11, 19
Grote	3	Presby	6, 8
Hacker	3	Przybysz	6-9
Haller	18	Pyrak	2, 18
Hejza-		Rauscher	3
Trauscht	3	Retzlaff/Retzloff	7
Hupkowicz	3	Rooney	12
Jampolski/a	15	Rugg	6
Jozefczak	8	Sikorski	6, 7
Kaczmierczak	14	Stengel	3
Karlinski-		Szalasny	6, 9
Gorlick	3	Topor	3
Keough	16	Uhl	3
Kij	4, 13, 18	Vogel	5
Kloc	13	Wackowski	6, 7
Konopa	6, 15	Whip	6, 9
Krawczyk	11	Wisniewski/a	8, 15
Krysa	18	Witul	18
Lasota	4	Zawadzki	18
Laynor	3		

❧ **2013 PGSNYS Officers** ❧



From left: Walter Kloc, Trustee; Patricia Neuland, Trustee; Maureen Gleason, Trustee; Pierre LaJoie, Trustee; David Newman, President; Denise Oliansky, Secretary; Ted Smardz, Vice President; Chuck Pyrak, Treasurer; Frank Martin, Trustee

SEARCHERS NEWSLETTER

POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF NEW YORK STATE

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PLEASE CHECK YOUR MEMBERSHIP EXPIRATION DATE

PLEASE NOTIFY US OF ANY CHANGE OF ADDRESS