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# SEARCHERS

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# PGSNYS - FOR YOUR INFORMATION

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**FOUNDED BY  
MICHAEL  
DRABIK**

**In May 2015, the  
PGSNYS became a  
not-for-profit  
corporation in New  
York State and also  
received Federal  
501(c)(3) tax status**

**Postal Address:  
PGSNYS  
P.O. Box 984  
Cheektowaga, NY  
14225**

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 (\$30 Canada, \$35 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* and  
coincides with the anniversary date of when you joined the Society.

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

PGSNYS  
c/o Membership Chair  
P.O. Box 984  
Cheektowaga, NY 14225

**Please send any changes to your postal or E-mail address to PGSNYS at the above  
address or E-mail: [membership@pgsnys.org](mailto:membership@pgsnys.org)**

**If you are a member, but not receiving E-mail from the PGSNYS mailing list, please  
send an E-mail to [membership@pgsnys.org](mailto:membership@pgsnys.org)**

\*Exceptions: July (annual picnic) and December (Christmas party for members & guests)

## 2017 PGSNYS OFFICERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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### PGSNYS EXECUTIVE BOARD

**President:** Nicole Pohancsek  
**Vice President:** Sherry Sojka  
**Secretary:** Denise Oliansky  
**Treasurer:** Chuck Pyrak

**Webmaster:** Chuck Pyrak

### PGSNYS TRUSTEES

Elizabeth Nowak  
Maria Slomczewski  
Charles Penasack  
Pierre LaJoie  
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**Historian:**

### COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

**Searchers** Denise Oliansky  
**Library** Laurel Keough  
**Media** Maureen Gleason  
**Membership** Donna Ciulis  
**Hospitality** Rita Hider  
**Special Events** Dolores Ferguson  
& Patricia Rooney  
**Dziennik Project** Maureen Gleason

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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 March 1st for April mailing

**2nd issue (Summer)** - due July 1st for August mailing

**3rd issue (Winter)** - due November 1st for December mailing

Submissions to the *Searchers* (articles as MS Word doc; photos as .jpg)  
should be sent via e-mail to: [denise.oliansky@gmail.com](mailto:denise.oliansky@gmail.com)

# PGSNYS PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Let me start off with best wishes for a very prosperous and healthy 2018. As I look back at PGSNYS in 2017, I am very pleased with my first year as president. We have become more visible in our community with our genealogy roadshows. We have gained new members with new ideas on how to make our Society even better. Denise Oliansky has done a wonderful job with planning our 2017 presenters. We have submitted several grants to help us achieve our goal of finishing our *Dziennik* digitization project in 2018.

As part of the *Dziennik* digitization project, we have found there are about 2,500 *Dziennik* issues that were not microfilmed. Joe Rej put me in contact with the president of the Polish Museum of America in Chicago, where 15 years ago David Newman saw the physical copies of the Buffalo *Dziennik* newspapers. I recently spoke with Richard Owsiany, the president of the Polish Museum of America, and he is willing to partner with us to ensure that these issues of the Buffalo *Dziennik* are preserved for future generations. I will give further updates in our next *Searchers* issue in the Spring (April).

I want to thank our members and everyone who has volunteered their time to make another great year for our Society. We could not survive as a group without you. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

~Sincerely, Nicole Pohancsek

## POTPOURRI

### WITAMY! NEW PGSNYS MEMBERS

Diane Glinka-Edinger  
Pine Bush, NY

Robert Garbacz  
Cheektowaga, NY

Joan Sala  
Cheektowaga, NY

Edward Kruszczyński  
Orchard Park, NY

Karen H. Oczek  
West Seneca, NY

David Przepiora  
East Aurora, NY

John A. Nowak  
Hamburg, NY

Andrew Kirisits  
Clarence Center, NY

Claudia Stanek  
East Rochester, NY

Melanie Nowicki  
Depew, NY

Michael Fitzsimmons  
Depew, NY

Tim Hunger  
West Seneca, NY

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

The dates for upcoming 2018 PGSNYS monthly membership meetings at 7 PM in the Villa Maria College cafeteria are Thursday, January 11, February 8, March 8, and April 12.

The PGSNYS elections were held November 9, 2017, and the **2018 Board of Directors** are president, Nicole Pohancsek; vice president, Maureen Gleason; secretary, Denise Oliansky; treasurer, Charlie Penasack; and the five trustees are Maria Slomczewski, Sharon Voigt, Pierre LaJoie, Elizabeth Nowak, and Dolores Ferguson. A heart-felt thank you to Chuck Pyrak for his many years of service as the PGSNYS treasurer and Sherry Sojka for her tenure as vice president. Thank you to Rita Hider and Patricia Rooney for all their hard work as Chairs of Hospitality and Roadshow Equipment, respectively. Volunteers are needed to assume these roles.

## **NEW! Opt-In for Emailed *Searchers* Newsletter**

Electronic newsletters are the norm these days. Nearly every genealogical Society in the country has opted to suspend printing of their newsletters in favor of emailing, or have at least provided an email option to its members. The reason for this has been to cut down on the number of newsletters that must be printed and mailed and the costs associated with that method of distribution. The PGSNYS spends about \$1,500 a year to print and mail out the three issues of the *Searchers* newsletter to its members. That is \$1,500 that could be used toward educational programs, new projects to collect and preserve local and regional Polish and genealogical records, for equipment and software necessary to provide access to those resources, and increased research assistance to our members and the community.

To save on the printing and mailing costs of the *Searchers* newsletter, the current Board has voted to give members the opportunity to OPT-IN to receive their *Searchers* by email. All members will continue to receive three issues a year as a member benefit, regardless of the delivery method; however, each member may receive only one version of the newsletter, not both. The PGSNYS Member Application will be changed to include a newsletter print or email option to be picked by new and renewing members.

Members who prefer to continue receiving the printed newsletter by mail or do not have an email address, do not have to do anything. The printed *Searchers* will continue as it has; each copy will be 16 or 20 pages with the front and back covers in color and the interior pages in black text and grayscale photos.

The email version will be sent as a PDF attachment the same day the printed newsletter is mailed out. It will be identical to the print version except that the entire issue will be in color since there will be no cost associated with colorized photos or text, as there is with the print version. Any Internet links within the text will be live and accessible with a click.

The first email issue of the *Searchers* will be sent out in April 2018. **Members who choose to receive the email version of the newsletter will have to OPT-IN by March 15, 2018 by contacting the *Searchers* Editor at [denise.oliansky@gmail.com](mailto:denise.oliansky@gmail.com). To do this, type 'PGSNYS Searchers OPT-IN' in the subject line of the email and then type your full name and your preferred email address in the body of the email. Please follow these instructions or your email may be missed.**

Any member who decides at a later date to opt-in to receive the email *Searchers* may do so by using these same instructions to notify the Editor at least a month before the next issue is due to go out. The *Searchers* newsletter goes out in April, August, and December each year.

The method of distribution is up to each member. There will be no increased cost in dues to continue receiving the print version. However, it is our hope that the Society can reduce the expense of the *Searchers* and the continued use of natural resources (trees) by offering the email option to those who prefer to receive Society communications in that manner.



## The Second Journey to Poland

by Patricia Filipiak Rooney

Our first journey to Poland was in 2014. No tour guides. We were on our own and in search of my grandparents roots. Their surnames are: Matuszewska, Filipiak, Kedron, and Skora or Skura, depending on who you ask. The first set lived in the Poznan area of Poland in the north, and the other in the Limanowa area in the south.

In preparation for our first trip, I did four years of intense research by using the Internet, Family Search, and Ancestry, collected family stories and documents, viewed microfilm at the Latter Day Saints libraries in Amherst and Orchard Park, asked questions of members of the Polish Genealogical Society of NYS, and reviewed local church records. All of these resources proved to be invaluable in finding living relatives in both locations of Poland.



During our first trip, I unexpectedly connected with a cousin, Mateusz Maserak, when I was sent to the Town Hall in Grabowo where he was working. He was so excited when I answered his one question, “Do you have a Filipiak who was in WWI?” Johann? Yes. He corrected me, “Jan Filipiak was war hero.” We had a lively conversation, and he said he would give us a tour of the town if we could come back the next day. This fulfilled my wildest dreams! Not only did we receive family stories of courage and deep faith from Mateusz's grandmother, Stefania, but our tour guide was the Mayor!

After getting back to America, it was a short process of getting better acquainted with newly-found family members. Facebook and emails among us helped true friendships to develop!

Then, in August of 2017, we were invited to the October wedding of a second cousin in Września, a village one hour east of Poznan. Returning was a must! And, to my surprise, my Irish/English husband was determined to go and fulfill one of his ‘bucket list’ dreams, which was to attend a Polish wedding in Poland.

The serious planning began August 1, with a Facebook message from the mother of the bride. Mirosława Maserak used Google Translate to ask if we would be interested in attending her daughter's wedding on October 21, 2017?

THAT was easy to answer. YES, YES, YES!

She replied to me with a big smiling emoji! She also said the proper invitation would come in the mail later. I was so happy she understood the importance of advance notice!

WOW, was there a lot of planning to be done! This was not going to be a guided tour type of visit. This meant interacting with real family. New traditions. Cultural foods. All kinds of fears danced in my head. So I had to make a timeline type of list to keep priorities straight.

Our first steps were to buy airline tickets, make reservations at the Kosmowski Hotel where we stayed three years prior and, most importantly, buy a cell phone with a SIM card so we could use Google translate to communicate in Polish. After all, neither Joe nor I knew much Polish. And, from our first experience in Poland, we knew not many of my relatives knew English.

Being the planner that I am, this was the tip of the learning curve iceberg. So much to figure out! How long would we stay? Would we visit Limanowa in the south where my mother's extended family lived? Would anyone care if we returned? One family still wasn't sure if we were related!

My timeline list kept me from putting the cart before the horse or getting brain freeze from trying to remember too many details. I hate after-thought questions like: Did you stop mail delivery? Do you have our passports? Did we close the garage door?

Because this was a return trip, we knew some of the necessary plans to make, and we knew there would be bumps no matter how well we planned. And yes, there were bumps. Fortunately, no mountains.

Learning how to use the new cell phone was the first bump. We had to find out who was a good provider in Poland and what phone was most used there in case we had issues while there. The Internet was very helpful and so was talking to the Verizon people face-to-face when I was buying my phone. After a month of practice, I felt ready. Ah, not so fast. There would be hiccups once in Poland.

One of the best things we did was hire a shuttle service to pick us up at our home and take us to the Toronto Airport, with the same service of driving us home again upon our return. Joe found our transportation to be much less expensive, even with the shuttle service added.

On Sunday afternoon, October 15th, we were to fly to Munich, Germany and then Poznan, Poland. However, the stormy weather in Canada delayed our flight, so we missed our connecting flight in Munich. This became a circus of events. Finding the next available flight out of Munich was like letting the clowns in. We were told that it would be faster if we went downstairs to get on another flight instead of waiting in line upstairs. This meant getting misinformation from several people, going through Customs to have our passports stamped, and being left on our own to wander the long hallway to find a customer service desk.

Once we found a service desk, two very intelligent men (one a trainee), were the animal trainers in this circus. They helped us get booked on a flight and arranged for a shuttle cart so we didn't have to walk those long halls again. Because of Joe's walking issues, we boarded a special bus to get us to the plane, and left for Poland with a cheerful group.

Was I nervous? Would our luggage greet us in Poland? Could we buy a SIM card at the airport so I could use Google Translate? YES to all three!

After collecting our luggage, going through Customs meant walking through a set of doors into a lobby. No checking our passports again because we had come from Germany to Poland.

While Joe checked for our rental car, I spotted a small shop advertising SIM cards. I went right over. The young lady did not speak English. I opened my Google Translate and introduced her to the new technology. Fortunately, I knew who I wanted for a provider: PLAY. There were plenty of options available. We worked it out nicely, between her talking to a friend on her phone and me trusting them completely -- which, unfortunately, became a problem later.

No rental car was available right away, but the agency made up for the problem by giving us a larger car. Our luggage fit in the trunk. After a long one hour drive on very good roads, we arrived in Września, ready to check in early if possible. All went well. The familiarity of the place helped me relax. We had three days to acclimate before the big day! The sun was shining

and all looked good.

We took a short nap, and then I emailed the family my new cellphone number. We were happy we packed clothes for warm and cold weather, because it was WARM. Rarely did we need anything more than a light jacket during our ten-day visit.



In Września people walk, ride bicycles, take a bus, or drive a car. The roads were great! No different than driving in any part of Western New York. They have them all-- from loose stone country roads that sometimes turn into mud, to wide smooth major toll roads. Had the signs not been in Polish, we would have thought we were in Eden, New York or Ohio, because of the flat lands and farm fields. Seeing this landscape, I understood why my Filipiak grandparents chose to live in Eden after they left the Eastside of Buffalo in 1918.

Our desire to cruise the countryside was dampened, because we had to find a PLAY store. My phone was not acting properly, and I had no idea why. Thankfully, a medium-sized mall was across the street from the hotel. The young ladies were so pleasant and immediately resolved our issues. The biggest was that we had to register our passports in order to activate the phone properly. Another lesson learned.

We were so grateful that my family was technology-knowledgeable and willing to struggle with limited English, as well as use Google translate. We were all amazed at how much we could communicate! We even understood how nervous we all were. Through it all, I always knew my ancestors were beside me, and God was giving us encouragement to embrace each other as family. Stories flowed like gentle breezes as we filled in so many gaps that were left after immigrations, wars, recovery, and rules imposed by communist rulers in the '80 and '90's.

By the time we parted, the family was speaking better English, and Joe and I were using more Polish words. We knew our friendships would continue when the bride and groom called us Uncle and Aunt. From everyone else, hugs and kisses never needed an explanation.

They say a picture is worth a thousand words, so following are some pictures from the wedding we traveled so far to celebrate.

Don't wait too long to visit this amazing country. The 'old' is gone, but the 'new' is very exciting!



**Mirosława Maserak and her daughter, Paulina Lewicz, the new bride**

**Pictures from the marriage of Paulina Maserak and Kamil Lewicz  
in Września, Poland**





## Learn from A Genealogy Expert: The Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh Is Coming to Amherst, NY!

For the first time, an exciting opportunity for in-depth learning with an expert in the field of genealogy is coming to Amherst, NY in the summer of 2018. Rhonda Konig of the Western New York Genealogical Society (WNYGS) has shared the following information for *Searchers* readers.

Through the efforts of WNYGS Vice President Robert Balistreri and Heidi Bamford, the Outreach and Member Services Coordinator of the Western New York Library Resources Council, the **Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh (GRIP)** will be coming to Amherst, NY. The dates of the event are July 29 - August 3, 2018.

GRIP is unique in that it offers genealogists the chance for focused learning on a single genealogy topic. Institute attendees choose one class for the entire week, from a selection of 7-8 courses. Each class is taught by one or more expert genealogists. The Amherst course instructors include nationally recognized lecturers such as Thomas W. Jones, award-winning genealogist and author of *Mastering Genealogical Proof*; genetic genealogist and author of *The Family Tree Guide to DNA Testing and Genetic Genealogy*, Blaine Bettinger; Cyndi Ingle of *Cyndi's List* ([www.cyndislist.com](http://www.cyndislist.com)); and CeCe Moore, genetic genealogy consultant and scriptwriter for the PBS's *Finding Your Roots with Henry Louis Gates, Jr.*

If that is not enough to entice you, free evening programs will be offered almost every night at GRIP. Additionally, WNYGS and WNYLRC are planning optional, unique research and historical tourism opportunities for attendees.

The Institute will be held at Daemen College, a small private college in Amherst. Affordable, convenient, college lodging packages, including a catered meal plan and apartment-style accommodations, will be offered. While attendees local to Buffalo could choose to commute for the week, the on-campus housing option provides an excellent opportunity for fellowship and problem-solving.

In addition to the week in Amherst, two separate, week-long Institutes will be offered in Pittsburgh, Pa. Detailed course descriptions for all three weeks are available on the GRIP website at <http://www.gripitt.org>. Please note that GRIP courses fill up very quickly (sometimes within minutes of open registration). Registration opens on February 14, 2018. When it gets close to the registration date, be sure to thoroughly read the registration page at <http://www.gripitt.org/registration/>. You will be asked a series of questions when you register, and it is recommended you prepare your answers in advance so that you can cut and paste them into the registration form. For more information about GRIP go to <http://www.gripitt.org>.

We hope you come to Western New York this summer to learn, connect, and break down your genealogical brick walls!

**29 July–3 August 2018  
Amherst, New York**

**Intermediate Genealogy:  
Tools for Digging Deeper**

*Paula Stuart-Warren, CG, FMGS, FUGA*

**Mastering the Art of  
Genealogical Documentation**  
*Thomas W. Jones, Ph.D., CG, CGL, FASG*

**Advanced Genetic Genealogy**  
*CeCe Moore*

**Practical Genetic Genealogy**  
*Blaine Bettinger, Ph.D., J.D.*

**Refining Internet and Digital Skills**  
*Cyndi Ingle*

**Advanced Land Research: Beyond Deeds**  
*Rick Sayre, CG, CGL & Pam Sayre, CG, CGL*

**Tools and Strategies for Tackling Tough  
Research Problems**  
*Kimberly Powell*

## Finding Szembruczek: My Search for My Ancestors' Origins

by Sandra Maciejewski Porter

I started researching family history more than twenty years ago. My father's mother, Marya Szczepanska, had been born in Buffalo in 1887. Her parents, Martin Szczepański and Anna Kalinowska, had immigrated to Buffalo in 1881, and the family grew. By 1997, I was able to identify over three hundred descendants of Martin and Anna Szczepański and self-published a book about them. However, I was not sure from where in Germany-Poland Martin and Anna had come.

From American records, we knew a bit about them. Martin and Anna lived in Buffalo until about 1900, when they bought land in Bennington, New York and began dairy farming. Martin Szczepański was fluent in both German and Polish, and his 1931 obituary in the *Attica News*<sup>1</sup> said he had come from Germany. It may be the obituary was misspelling his name as Martsin, the English phonetic spelling of the Polish name Marcin. Anna's obituary in the *Attica News* in 1938<sup>2</sup> said she had been born in Poland. Other records said that he was born in 1854, and she was born in 1858.

**Martin Szczepanski**  
Martin Szczepanski of the Alexander road in Bennington, died at St. Jerome's hospital in Batavia Sunday near midnight, following an illness of several weeks and a leg amputation. He was born in Germany, November 6, 1854, son of the late John and Mary Szczepanski. He has been a resident of this country for over 50 years, living most of that time on the farm where he and his family have lived. He is survived by his wife, Anna, three sons, Frank of Buffalo, Bernard of Darien, Leo at home; two daughters, Mrs. Anthony Maciejewski of Buffalo and Mrs. Edward Graff of Bennington and a brother Barney of Germany.  
The funeral took place Wednesday morning in Sacred Heart church at Bennington at 10 a. m. Burial was in the church cemetery.

**Mrs. Martin Szczepanski**  
Mrs. Anna Szczepanski, wife of the late Martin Szczepanski, died at her home in Bennington Center, Saturday, Sept. 10, 1938, after a lingering illness. She was born in Poland March 27, 1858, to Mr. and Mrs. John Kalinowski.  
Surviving are two sons, Bernard, at home, and Leo of Bennington; three daughters, Mrs. Mary Maciejewski of Buffalo, Mrs. Felix Klein of Bennington and Mrs. Edward Graff of Bennington; and 32 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.  
A requiem mass was said for the deceased at Sacred Heart church, Bennington Center, Wednesday morning at ten o'clock. Rev. John Sliwinski officiated. Burial was held in Sacred Heart cemetery.

We knew they were married in

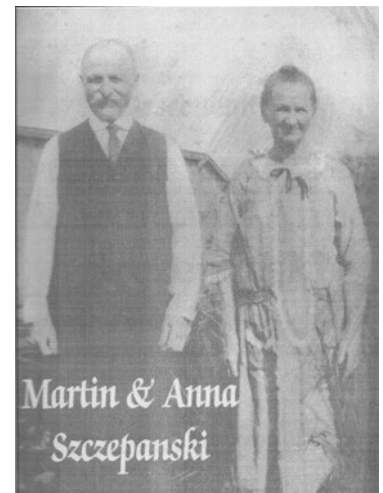
**GOLDEN WEDDING**

Mr. and Mrs. Martin Sczysanski celebrated their golden wedding anniversary with high mass Sunday at 11:00 o'clock in Sacred Heart church, Bennington, Father Pitaas, officiating. A reception followed the service at the home of their daughter, Mrs. Felix Klein, which was attended by seventy-five guests.

1878, because they celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in 1928,<sup>3</sup> and the occasion was published in the *Attica News* on November 15, 1928.<sup>4</sup> This picture of them must have been from about that time.

Martin and Anna had six children. Five of them—Franciszek (1884), Marya (1887), Bernard (1892), Marta (1895), and Leon

(1898)—were baptized at St. Stanislaus Roman Catholic Church in Buffalo, New York.<sup>5</sup> Their childrens' baptism records listed the parents' place of birth as Szombrug, Szömbbrug, Szenbruk, Szenburg, Szönbruk, Szymbruczek or a variation.



Borussia is the Latin name for Prussia. Since umlauts are not used in Polish or Latin, it looked like these were versions of a German name, so in German it probably started with SCH and in Polish SZ. In 1997, I thought their place of birth was Schomberg, Prussia, which would have been something like Szomberg in Polish, but that was not correct. More recently, I suspected the German version of the names in Prussia would be Schomberg, Schömberg, or Schoenberg. There were many places with those names, and I wrote about them in a blog post called “Which Szomberg?”<sup>6</sup>



In 2017, after talking to some researchers at a conference of the Polish Genealogical Society of Connecticut and the Northeast in New Britain, Connecticut, about patterns of Polish migration, I investigated places that had been in West Prussia, especially those that were Schönberg in German and Szymbark in Polish.<sup>7</sup>

When I did not find their records there, I searched for variations of Szymbuczek and Szymbuk, the names from the children’s birth registers that seemed most Polish, and finally found Szembruczek and Szembruk in what used to be West Prussia.

The village of Szembruczek is quite small. In German it was called Klein Schönbrück. The nearby larger village was called Groß Schönbrück. In German, Klein means little, and Groß, also written as Gross, means large. In Polish, Małe and Mały mean little. The Polish suffix -ek indicates a diminutive, something little or cute. Marya's baptism entry actually listed what I now can see was Szembruk Mały, or Little Szembruk.

The database at the website Kartenmeister.com has four entries for Szembruczek:

German Name	County/Kreis
<u>Klein Schönbrück</u>	<u>Graudenz</u>
<u>Male Szembruck 1789 P</u>	<u>Graudenz</u>
<u>Mały Szembruck 1789 P</u>	<u>Graudenz</u>
<u>Szembruczk 1789 P</u>	<u>Graudenz</u>

Wikipedia identified:

Szembruczek [ɕɛm'brutɕɛk] (German: Klein Schönbrück) is a village in the administrative district of Gmina Rogóźno, within Grudziądz County, Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodeship, in north-central Poland. It lies approximately 6 kilometres (4 mi) east of Rogóźno, 17 km (11 mi) north-east of Grudziądz, and 63 km (39 mi) north-east of Toruń. The village has a population of 230.<sup>8</sup>

The Polish name Szembruk is an assimilation of the name Schönbrück, derived from the

German words "schöne Brücke" ("beautiful bridge"). Kartenmeister.com says Groß Schönbrück was also called Duży Zembnik<sup>i</sup> and Wielkie Szembruck. Not surprisingly, Duży is the Polish word for big, and Wielkie means great.

German Name	Groß Schönbrück
Alternate Name 1:	Duży Zembnik 1789
Alternate Name 2:	Wielkie Szembruck 1879 P
Polish/Russian Name	Szembruk
Kreis/County	Graudenz
German Province	Westpreussen
Today's Province	Kujawsko-Pomorskie
Location	East 19°00' North 53°34'
Google Map	<a href="#">Google Maps (Groß Schönbrück)</a>
Map Number	42
Location Description	This village/town is located 5.8 km and 255 degrees from Groß Schönwalde, which is known today as Szywald
Lutheran Parish	Garnsee, Kreis Marienwerder 1905
Catholic Parish	Groß Schönbrück 1905
Standesamt/Civil Registry	Groß Schönbrück 1905
Gemeindelexikon/Town Index	II-13-19
Population By Year/Einwohner	1820: 484 1905: 630
Remarks	Shows in 1789 59 Feuerstellen and is classified as: Königliches Dorf mit einer katholischen Pfarr-Kirche, Freischulzen Gut, wozu die Neussaßerei Przezno gehört. Ein Unterförster und zwey Theerbrenner Wohnungen im nahgeliegenden Walde. In 1820 55 Feuerstellen.



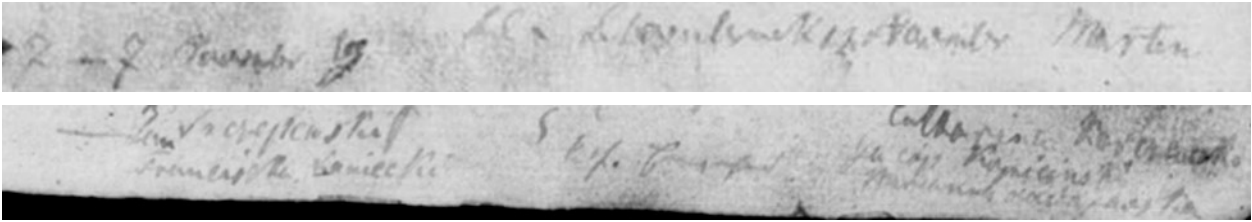
Most importantly, Groß Schönbrück/ Szembruk has a Catholic church, Sw. Bartłomieja (St. Bartholomew). The Church of Latter Day Saints (LDS) filmed the early Parish registers of births, marriages, and deaths for “Groß Schönbruck (Kr. Graudenz), Westpreußen, Germany; now Szembruk (Grudziądz), Bydgoszcz, Poland. Text in Latin, Polish, and German.”<sup>ii</sup> No longer available on microfilm loan, the

records have been digitized, and some are available at the FamilySearch website.<sup>9</sup>

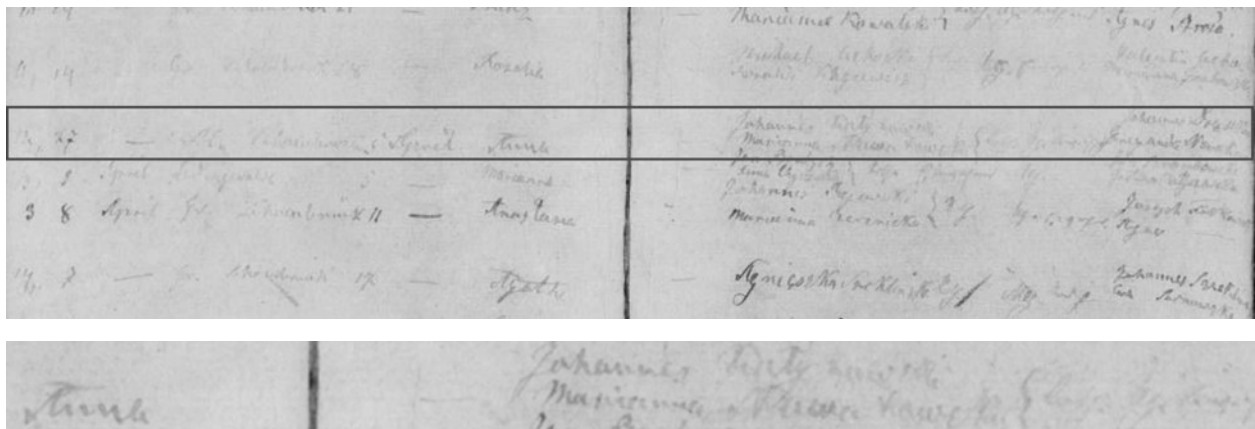
It had been a puzzle for more than twenty years, but in 2017, I found Martin Szczepański's baptism record online!

<sup>i</sup>Zębnik is the Polish word for pinion, a round gear.

<sup>ii</sup>When the church records were filmed in 1954, Szembruk (Grudziądz) was in the Bydgoszcz province of Poland. During the German Occupation of the 19th century, it was Provinz Westpreußen (West Prussia), or Prusy Zachodnie in Polish. After Poland was reunited in 1920, it was in the Pomeranian Province, and between 1975 and 1998, it was in the Toruń Province. Currently, Szembruk is in the Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodeship, or in Polish, Województwo Kujawsko-Pomorskie.

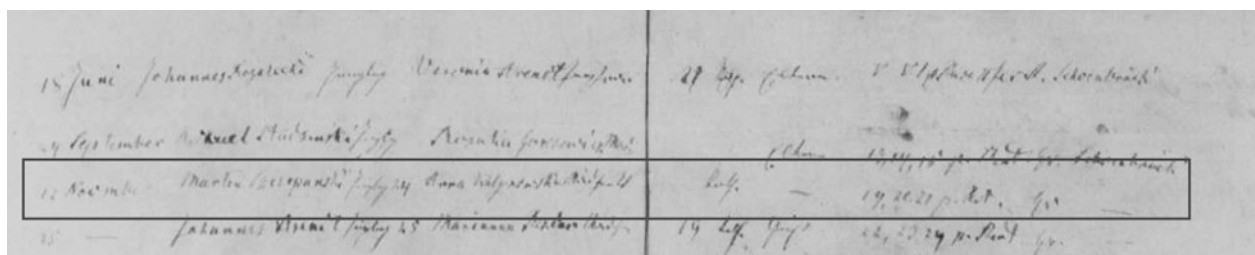


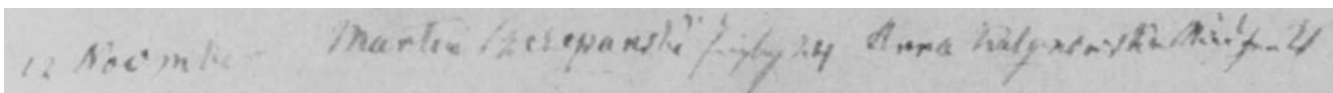
(Above) He was born 7 November, leg. (legitimate), in Kl. Schoenbruck, and baptized 12 November 1854. Because the records are German, his name is listed as Martin, and not the Polish Marcin.<sup>10</sup> The second snippet shows Martin's father's name was **Jan Szczepanski**. His mother's name was **Franciszka Kaniecki**. This information solved an ongoing mystery. In the 1990s, I had asked my father's older sisters, Cele and Imelda (who was called Emily), about their grandparents. Emily thought her grandmother's maiden name had been Kaniecki, because when Martin and Anna moved to their farm in Bennington, their daughter Marya stayed behind in Buffalo with the Kaniecki family. Emily told me that her mother said that Jan Kaniecki was her only uncle from that side of the family. Cele knew that her grandmother's maiden name had been Kalinowski, because it rhymed with her married name, Malinowski. But she did not know how the Kaniecki and Szczepanski families were related. I wrote about the Kaniecki family in Buffalo on pages 156-157 of the *Szczepanski* book.



(Above) Anna Kalynowska was born 27 März, and baptized 5 April 1858.<sup>11</sup> Unfortunately, the ink is faded and her parents' names are indistinct, but her father's name is Johannes (German for Jan) Kalynowski and her mother's name is Marianna Nowakowski. (Marianna's family name is clearer with her other children.)

(Below) Martin Szczepanski and Anna Kalynowski were married 12 November 1878.<sup>12</sup> I think he is identified as Jüngling (young unmarried man), 24 years old, and she is Mädfrau, young unmarried woman of 21. The second snippet (next page) reports the dates that banns were announced and that the ceremony was performed in Gr. Schoenbruck.





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12. <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS8M-3HR9?cat=295340>

# Beloved Ancestral Mothers, Part I: My Mother

by Edward Prabucki

This research of my mother and ancestral mothers' maiden names has the same effect as those of my father's — a sublime mystery— and emotional intrigue — as each had a meaningful purpose. That these women had to bear the unbearable is unquestionable. Therefore, I have to put into print what I had ignored for far too long; that is, to credit, but even more, to offer the respect they earned. I had a deeply rooted point of view — a profound need when I dedicated my time to honor my ancestral fathers, but presently, I feel it is my ancestral mothers who are in need of this dedication, for no other reason than that, in my most inner being, they were the embodiment of devotion, of love, of compassion to their faith and children. So after each find of their maiden names, my devotion and compassion became more profound as the revelations of their infinite sorrows were apparent through the historic and tragic Church records.

To begin, one must start with his own mother, and so I begin. My mother, Mary Petyk, so devoted, so dependable in times of need, left our family far too soon. To me, she was a precious treasure, but more than that, she was a gift from God as certainly were all my ancestral mothers. For each one left a precious endowment to us — their love and faith. I am certain they did not live under the illusion that their riches were of this Earth, as I am well-aware my mother brought us up in dire need. More often than not, she had to bear the unbearable due to the economic conditions of the 1930s.

My mother arrived from Poland in the arms of my maternal grandmother, Jozefa (Rutkowska) Petyk, in 1905. But I sought more, questioning my mother relentlessly when I was a teen for more personal information about her attendance at Corpus Christi parochial school, her first Holy Communion in 1913, her employment at Duffy Silk Co. in WWI, and the events of her first contact with my father. In that regard, I was disappointed, as it was a lackluster meeting, lacking a romantic touch. It would have been romantic to me if they had met at a Dom Polski Social Dance or a Corpus Christi Card Party and Dance, but this was not to be. Grandfather Petyk advertised for boarders during WWI and, fortunately for me, my father, Jan Prabucki, answered the call and ended up as a boarder with my grandparents and future mother. Nevertheless, this unromantic meeting resulted in marriage on June 19, 1919, and three sons and a daughter followed.





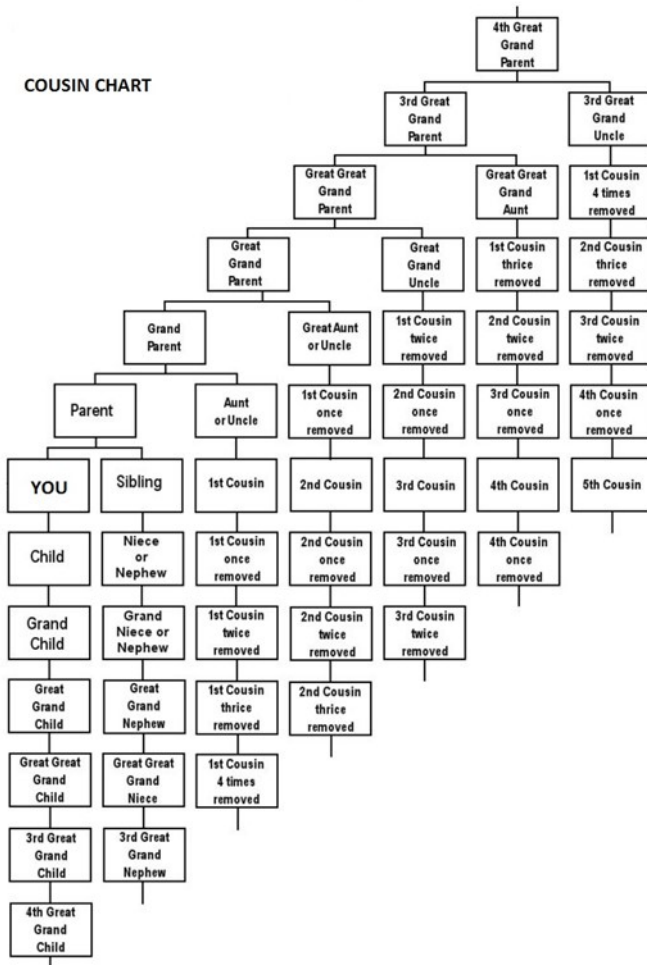
# Who Is Your 3<sup>rd</sup> Cousin Twice Removed?

## Understanding Cousin Relationships

by Denise Oliansky

There are relationship or kinship charts that show how you are related to someone in your family tree based on how you and that person are related to a common ancestor. These charts are useful, no doubt, but not so helpful when it comes to figuring out how you are related to cousins. They typically do not show your siblings and your sibling's children, or children of your cousins, or children of aunts and uncles or grand-aunts and uncles, etc. To figure out complex relationships like second and third cousins or cousins once or twice or three times removed from you, turn to this handy Cousin Chart which is very useful and easy to understand.

COUSIN CHART



**Start with YOU.** Going straight down from you in the chart are your descendants; to the right of you and down are your sibling's descendants and their relationship to you. Examine the links above YOU as well, following them down to determine your relationship to various cousins.

**First cousins:**

Share the same grandparents; they are the children of siblings.

**Second cousins:**

Share the same great-grandparents; they are the children of first cousins.

**Third cousins:**

Share the same great-great-grandparents; they are the children of second cousins.

And so on and so forth...

First, second, and third cousins (and so on) are an equal number of generations removed from the ancestor they have in common. For example, first cousins are both two generations removed from their shared grandparents; second cousins are three generations removed from shared great-grandparents; third cousins are four generations removed from their shared great-great



grandparents, etc.

### **'Removed' Cousins**

Cousins become 'removed' when there is a generational difference between you and a cousin.

#### **Once removed**

Used when there is a one-generation gap, so your first cousin once removed is either your first cousin's child, or the reverse - your parent's first cousin.

#### **Twice removed**

Used when there is a two-generation gap, so your first cousin twice removed would be either the grandchild of your first cousin, or the reverse - your grandparent's first cousin.

And so on ...

### **Grand**

Grand indicates a two-generation gap in grandparent/grandchild relationships or aunt/uncle, niece/nephew relationships. A grandmother is two generations away from you - your parents' parent. Your grand-nephew is the child of your niece or nephew. Your parents' aunts and uncles (a two-generation gap) are your grand-aunts or -uncles (although they are popularly, if erroneously, referred to as great-aunts or -uncles).

### **Great**

Great indicates a three-generation gap, so your great-grandchild is your grandchild's child. Your great-grandfather is three generations away. Your great grand-niece is the grandchild of a niece or nephew.

Take some time to carefully study the chart, and hopefully it will help you make sense of those complex cousin relationships.

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## **An Interesting Excerpt from a News Story in *The Buffalo Courier*, Saturday, 14 Apr 1894**

**Shared by Dolores Konopa**

"Thirteen of the employees of the American Glucose Company are missing, and it is feared that they lost their lives in Thursday night's conflagration...The Poles who were employed at the ill-fated Glucose works, it seems, were known by other names than those of their own nationality. John Hubert, for example, was known among his own people as Lukasz Pizanowski while Walenty Chudy in Polish circles was converted into the euphonious John Blume for American use...John Blume (Walenty Chudy) of No. 190 Townsend Street, 39 years old, leaves a widow and six children."

*Editor's Note:* Buffalo, NY was home to several sugar works factories in the mid to late 1800s, the most successful of which was the American Glucose Company. In terms of sheer presence, the confectioners of early Buffalo outnumbered most other industries. In 1888, when the Buffalo City Directory differentiated for the first time between retailers and wholesalers, the number of confectioners had soared to 126 retailers and thirteen wholesalers. Sweet!

## 2017 PGSNYS Year in Review

### PGSNYS Monthly Meeting Presentations:

February 9: Jim Ciulis, Family History Show & Tell

March 9: Maureen Gleason, Family History Show & Tell

May 11: Daniel Szczesny, 'Polish Boy Abroad: Coming Home to Buffalo'

June 8: Sherry Sojka, Family History Show & Tell

August 10: Marie Tidwell, Family History Show & Tell

September 14: Patricia Fulwiler, 'Genealogy Records in the Erie County Clerk's Office' and Walter Kloc's 100th Birthday celebration

October 12: Denise Oliansky, Family History Show & Tell

November 9: Joseph Golombek, 'Polonia in Polish Week at the Pan-American Exposition'

### PGSNYS Roadshow Events

January 7: Polish Happy Hour, Valley of Buffalo AASR

February 28: Polish Happy Hour, Buffalo Pizza & Ale House

March 11: Polish Happy Hour, Polish Cadets of Buffalo

April 22: Polish Happy Hour, 33 Speakeasy Grill

May 3: Polish Happy Hour, Adam Mickiewicz Library

May 20: Polish Happy Hour, R&L Lounge

June 24: Polish Happy Hour, 33 Speakeasy Grill (raffle to benefit PGSNYS)

July 14: Polish Happy Hour, Cheektowaga Polish Festival

July 14-16: Polish American Arts Festival

August 31: Polish Happy Hour, Valley of Buffalo AASR

October 7: NYG&B and WNYGS Western NY Conference

October 20: Polish Happy Hour, Clinton Street Bar & Grill

November 4: All Souls/Polish Ancestors Day; St. Stanislaus Cemetery, Resurrection Mausoleum

November 5: Polish American Congress 'Zupapalooza'; Leonard Post, Cheektowaga

November 11: Polish Happy Hour, Dom Polski, North Tonawanda



Jim Ciulis Show & Tell



Walter Kloc's 100th birthday



PGSNYS raffle at Polish Happy Hour

December 2: Polish Happy Hour, Polish Villa II

**PGSNYS Events**

September 9: 9th Annual Genealogy Fair, St. Gabriel’s Church; Guest Speaker: Julie Roberts Szczepankiewicz, ‘Grandma Said She Was From Poznań: Getting Started With Tracing Your Polish Ancestors’

October 22: Polish Heritage Month and *Dziennik* Fundraiser Dinner

December 14: PGSNYS Christmas Party

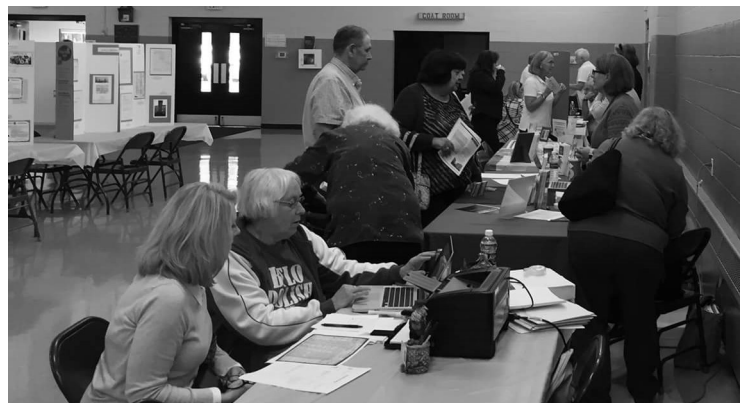
**PGSNYS table at Polish American Arts Festival**



**The hard-working Roadshow crew**



**Helping attendees at PGSNYS Genealogy Fair**



**PGSNYS Fundraiser Dinner**



**PGSNYS dessert table at Zupapalooza**



**Julie Szczepankiewicz at PGSNYS Genealogy Fair**

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