

# Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 20

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No. 1

## *South Meets West: Two Polish Families Merge*

by Jerome Vincent Biedny, Jr.



Mr & Mrs Jerome V. Biedny Sr.

My parents, Jerome and Elizabeth (nee Bartkowiak) Biedny, were both second-generation Americans but because they were raised in the deeply Polish parts of Buffalo, New York, they grew up in a nearly European atmosphere. The schools they

attended, the papers they read, the places where they shopped were all steeped in the Polish language and Polish-American customs. I hope the following narrative is different enough from the stories of many Minnesotans of Polish heritage that



John Fyda; Lottie & Elizabeth Bartkowiak; Jerome, Stella & Vince Biedny

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came to agrarian small towns, to give a glimpse into another type of Polish immigration - the urban experience.

My parents' story follows a general immigration pattern familiar to millions. Their grandparents immigrated to the U.S. for wage work at the turn of the last century, having, and raising most of their children in a large Eastern city. Those first-generation American children worked hard and adapted their parents' Polish ways to a new American lifestyle. They bought small urban homes and raised large families. Most of these second generation children, like Jerry and Betty, were born as the Depression ended. They attended a parochial school attached to a substantial Roman Catholic parish complex that was an educational, spiritual, and social hub of their urban neighborhood. They were taught English as a second language in what today is called an "immersion school." It was staffed by Felician Sisters straight from Poland. These children came of age in the 1940s and 50s, prospered, moved to the suburbs to escape urban decay, and melted into the American

*Two Polish Families .....continued on page 20*

**Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota**

A Branch of the Minnesota Genealogical Society

1185 No. Concord St.

So. St. Paul MN 55075-1150

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**Please use application form on insert page.**

Items submitted for publication are welcomed and encouraged. We require that feature-length articles be submitted exclusively to PGS-MN. Articles, letters, book reviews, news items, queries, etc. should be sent to: Editor, *PGS-MN Newsletter*, 557 98<sup>th</sup> Lane NW, Coon Rapids, MN 55433 or: <[EditorPGSMN@gmail.com](mailto:EditorPGSMN@gmail.com)>.

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**President's Letter**

Dear Members,

Oh, to be twenty again! The world is your oyster. You have boundless energy and determination. Everything is possible. But wait, you ARE twenty- in fact, we are all twenty- again this year. That's right, in 2012 the Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota celebrates the 20th Anniversary of its founding! So, Happy Anniversary members! We will be celebrating all year. Look for an article on our history in the newsletter and special events at the Polish Festival this August. You will also see updating planned for our website and other fresh things this year. So... keep watching.

We had an excellent Annual Meeting in January and reelected all existing Board members up for election. One of our youngest and newest members was elected to fill a one-year term created by an early departure of a Board member. Welcome aboard 17 year old Jeremy Biedny. A big thanks to Rick Theissen, his wife and team for organizing such a nice afternoon. I would like to personally thank all the past Presidents, Board Members, and volunteers who have guided this organization over these past two decades. They are the reason we have the quality organization that exists today.

In March, we had a well attended member meeting focused on the geography and religion of Poland. Now please mark your calendars for April 27/28 and plan to attend the Central and Eastern European Genealogical Conference organized by MGS and its affiliates. This will replace our April and May member meetings at the Library. We are offering a complete Polish Track and other speakers who are also top notch. They will all have general interest sessions. Held right here in Inver Grove Heights, MN, it will be the largest opportunity of its kind in the Upper Midwest for several years to come.

Spring is in the air and you are prone to start thinking "gardening" and other outside activities. But, don't forget, your family needs you too. Keep writing that stuff down- with sources cited of course!

Jerome Biedny [jaybiedny@juno.com](mailto:jaybiedny@juno.com)



## The Bulletin Board

### Correspondence

#### Searching for Rys

The PGS-MN newsletter is always very interesting. On page 3 of the Fall 2011 issue, it appeared that the slides from John Rys' presentation would be included in that newsletter. However, I didn't see them in that issue & thought that maybe they would appear in the Winter issue. When I read the Winter issue, I didn't see them. Thus, I am asking if they could be sent me.

Thanks for all of your hard work on the newsletter,

**Dorothy Pretare**, near Seattle, WA

*Sorry about that folks! I sent Dorothy the document of the slides when I received her e-mail. If you'd like a copy, please send an e-mail to me at [EditorPGSMN@gmail.com](mailto:EditorPGSMN@gmail.com).*

*-Peggy Larson, editor*

#### In Memoriam

We received the PGS-MM Newsletter today and I want to thank you for the beautiful tribute to John (Winter2011, pp. 18-20). Your group was so important to him, he enjoyed you all and the events and programs. I don't know what else to say except thank you. Our family is very thankful for your thoughtfulness.

**Mary Kowles**, Minneapolis, MN

#### Correction

I believe you may need to put out a correction to your newsletter next time.

On Page 21 of the Winter 2011-12 edition it makes reference to a wealthy E.J. Kulis in the Cleveland area. The correct spelling of his name is Kulas

according to info I have. If you google Kulas Foundation you will find all kinds of info on E.J. Kulas, his wife, and the foundation. I believe I read someplace that his father may have been in police work but am not sure of that. I have tried to find out more about Mr E. J. Kulas' family origins but without success.

**Jim Kulas**, [polishpop1@earthlink.net](mailto:polishpop1@earthlink.net)

#### New Article Contributor!!

Hello Peggy, I am a long time member of PGS and a friend of John Rys. John and I have our relatives in the same vicinity in Poland. In my research I have found a friend, [Robert.genealogy@interia.pl](mailto:Robert.genealogy@interia.pl). He is doing some research for me and has asked if he could write articles in our Newsletter and the PGSA. What do you and John think?

**Richard Lubinski** <[lubnor@comcast.net](mailto:lubnor@comcast.net)>

#### Responded

By all means, have Robert submit an article. It would make a great article! And it would be of interest for many people from NE Minneapolis because many emigrated from that area.

I would just love to read an article about the project and the area of my grandparents.

- John Rys

*Absolutely Richard! Have Robert send articles for the newsletter to [editorpgsmn@gmail.com](mailto:editorpgsmn@gmail.com)*

*-Peggy Larson, editor*

*Note: Robert's article begins on page 11*

#### From Plotzk to Boston

Upon reading your introduction to the article in the last PGS magazine I was disappointed. Now I need to tell you what a wonderful choice and thank you for bringing it to my attention. Our families came in the 1870s and throughout my reading I pictured them making that awesome journey. I will pass it on to my family and hopefully read it at my (104 yr) mother's nursing home. Thank you.

**Pat Bumgarner**, Minneapolis, MN

I enjoyed the featured article in the Winter issue. It caught my eye and I read it immediately when the issue arrived. I usually don't get to the featured article until weeks later. Keep up the good work

Jan Bias, Apple Valley, MN

I enjoyed reading "From Plotzk to Boston" by Mary Antin in your Winter 2011-12 newsletter. Her account in the year 1891 is eleven years later than my ancestors' journey to America, but most likely very similar. My great-grandparents Franciszek and Antonia Wielebski were married in Wysoka, Wyrzysk, Poland on April 18, 1880 (see marriage record below) and left for America on their

honeymoon also traveling into Germany. Bremen, Germany, was their Port of Departure on the steamship S.S. Hermann. The sixteen day journey crossing the Atlantic to America described by Mary Antin compares with the length of days between April 18, 1880, the date of the my great-grandparents' wedding, to Frank and Antonia's date of arrival on May 7, 1880 in Baltimore, MA, USA—a total of nineteen days. This of course would have included travel by train from Wysoka to Bremen which would have been their most probable means of transportation.

Mary's story also included the mention of the deadly disease cholera which brought some inconvenience and unexpected added expense to her family's journey. Earlier, cholera played a life-

ANNUS DOMINI 1880.						ANNUS DOMINI 1880.								
Nu- me- rus.	Annus, dies et mensis copula- tionis.	Nomen sacerdotis benedicentis matrimo- nium.	Nomen et Cognomen copulato- rum, denominatio domicilii, status artis vel conditionis vitae, et utrum in ecclesia an in privato consecrati sint.	Num copulati vel una pars eorum antes vinculo matrimo- nii obstricti aut obstricti fuit. Num sub potestate parentum vel tutorum existunt.	Aetas		Religio		Nomen et Cognomen parentum		Num cum consensu parentum vel tutorum vel iudicii tutelaribus matrimo- nium contractum sit.	Dies promul- gationum.	Num cum dispensatio- ne aliquo matrimo- nium con- traxerunt et de quo dato.	Nomen et cognomen ad
					spou- si.	spou- sae	spou- si.	spou- sae						
	1880 Die 29 Februarii	A. Has.	Petrus Matynastri juve- nis ex Wysoka et Rosalia Smorok wigo defflorata ex Opilla Wyporka	non	27	24	Cath.	Cath.	Paulina Mat. Czysnal et Michaela Smorok et Rosalia Smorok Leg. long. Cath.	Michaela Smorok et Maria Czysnal Leg. long. Cath.	cum cons. juv.	28/1/2 et 5/2	non	Male Plo
	Die 18 Aprilis	1 <sup>o</sup>	Franciscus Wielebski juve- nis ex Wysoka / villa / et Anto- nina Januski wigo ex villa	non	28	20	1 <sup>o</sup>	1 <sup>o</sup>	Lion Wielebski et Marianna Januski Leg. long. Cath.	Thomas Januski et Marianna Januski Leg. long. Cath.	cum cons. par.		non	Jan Jo
	Die 11 Augusti	1 <sup>o</sup>	Antonius Depta juve- nis ex Kamierow paroch. Tu- sartowina et Marianna Januski wigo ex Wysoka	sub potest. parentum.	27	28	1 <sup>o</sup>	1 <sup>o</sup>	Josephus Depta et Maria Januski Leg. long. Cath.	Adalbertus Januski et Francisca Januski Leg. long. Cath.	cum cons. pa- rentum	20/1/2 et 7/2	non	Lase Mi

1880 wedding record of Franciszek and Antonia Wielebski

changing role in the lives of Franciszek's mother, siblings and step-siblings in the village of Poborka, Poland--the year was 1866.

In researching my family this fall I came upon the death record of the stepfather of Frank, Antonius Szarapata, the second husband of Marianna Donajkoska Wielebski Szarapata from cholera on July 28, 1866 at the age of 46. He was buried the same day. On the LDS film records for that sum-

mer there were entry after entry of cholera deaths in this village preceding and following Antonius' death record. I wondered how Frank escaped the disease along with his mother, Marianna, and his Wielebski siblings (recorded on the death record of Marianna's first husband Simon in September, 1864 in Zelazno, Poland who were Joannes 22, Peter 18, Agnes 10, [Frank 9] and Thomas 3). Antonius' children from a previous marriage (also recorded on Antonius' death record who were Martinus, Paulus

2 41	July	22	27	27	7	Poborka	Antoni	Marianna	3	6	1865	Adamus	Franciszek	1865	Adamus	Marianna	1865	Adamus	Marianna	1865
3 42	July	28	10	28	7	Poborka	Antoni	Szarapata	7	16	1865	Adamus	Franciszek	1865	Adamus	Marianna	1865	Adamus	Marianna	1865
4 43	July	28	12	28	7	Poborka	Antoni	Szarapata	7	16	1865	Adamus	Franciszek	1865	Adamus	Marianna	1865	Adamus	Marianna	1865

1866 death record of Antonius Szarapata

and Joannes) were not found on the death records in 1866 nor subsequent years so they also must have escaped the deadly disease.

After the death of Marianna's first husband in 1864 in Zelazno, her remarriage only ten months later to Antonius Szarapata in Sadke, Poland in July 1865, and the moving of her family to Poborka, Poland, Marianna's second marriage lasted only one full year to July 1866 due to the cholera epidemic! I can understand why the attendants in Mary Antin's story were so diligent to steam and smoke their clothes and belongings for germs before the crossing of the Atlantic due to the deadly disease cholera!

Marianna's third marriage to Martinus Ciezki who was a viduus from Krostkowo took place in Poborka, Poland on January 24, 1869. Marianna's oldest sons were married in Poborka as well. Joannes Wielebski to Carolina Mayer on November 3, 1867 and Peter Wielebski to Josepha Sawinska on February 2, 1869.

All the families made the voyage across to America at different times. My great-grandfather Frank with his new bride Antonia Januzik Wielebski came later than most of the Wielebski family in 1880. His final destination after Baltimore, LaSalle IL, was Minnesota--first Wilno, near Ivanhoe, MN and then north to Kittson County where he is buried in Holy Rosary Cemetery in rural Lancaster (Orleans), Minnesota. His brother Peter is buried in Kittson County also. His sister Agnes (Matthew Smarzyk) is buried in Wilno, MN. His brother Joannes died in Tracy, Minnesota but his body was buried in LaSalle, IL where the youngest brother, Thomas, who lived his life in LaSalle, IL is buried.

[LDS film Wysoka #0073020 & LDS film Krostkowo #-0585980 & Krostkowo #0585981]

All these marriages mentioned can be found on the Poznan Project Marriage website along with their LDS film information.

The Zelazno death of Simon Wielebski is on Sadke LDS film # 544835 Sadki (Sadke) Wyrzysk. The 2nd marriage of Marianna Wielebski to Czarapata/Szarapata in July, 1865 is also on this same microfilm #544835 Sadki (Sadke) Wyrzysk.

**Kathryn Wielebski Schafer**, Strathcona, MN

### *Extra Contributions...*

We thank the following for their extra monetary contributions to PGS-MN – to the Library Fund, to Family Ties or to the 2011 Capital Campaign Fund:

- James Franczyk
- Judy Guzman
- George Hamernick
- Gerald Keevile
- Mary Kowles
- Larry & Betty Kulis
- Carol Russell
- Nancy Sansone
- Phyllis Sulkowski

**Dziękuję**

[Thank you!]

We are a non-profit, educational organization. Contributions beyond basic membership dues may be income tax deductible. PGS-MN

### *Recently at PGS-MN Meetings*

**Membership meeting on March 3, 2012.**

**John Rys** gave an excellent presentation on some of the geography of Poland including the Carpathian Mountain areas in southern Poland and the Polish

górale (highlander clans) who live in the Carpathians. John's presentation included beautiful photography and interesting stories about the geography of Poland's varied terrain.

**Jeremy Biedny** presented a very detailed history of Catholicism in Poland. Jeremy truly researched this facet of Polish history and had many slides and stories of how important and influential the Catholic faith and church have been to the Polish race.

**Sister Margaret Mewhorter**, a nun from the order of Poor Clare Sisters, conducted a question and answer session after the formal presentations. Sister Margaret lived in a Polish monastery during the communist period. It was fun and interesting to hear her stories of traveling into and out of Eastern Europe during the rule of the communist regime.

## ***Upcoming Meetings, Programs, Events.....***

**Central and Eastern European Genealogy Conference**, April 27-28, Inver Hills Community College in Inver Grove Heights, MN

One of America's most popular genealogical speakers, **John Philip Colletta, Ph.D.** leads off the conference on Friday evening at 6:00 p.m. with a lively lecture.....

▪ ***"Finding the REAL Stories of Your Immigrant Ancestors"***

Dr. Colletta specializes in teaching how to write narrative family history that is well documented and readable. You don't want to miss hearing him bring ancestors to life through story!

A dessert reception will follow the lecture.

On Saturday the conference continues with a full day with two more lectures by Dr. Colletta

- U.S. Passenger Arrival Records, 1820-1930: Sources and Strategies for Challenging Cases
- The County Courthouse: Your 'Trunk in the Attic'

Plus, 15 breakout session in five interest tracks: German/Pommern, Czech and Slovak, Polish, Romanian, and maps and DNA for all ethnicities.

John L. Rys and Jerome Biedny, Jr. are break-out session presenters from the Polish Group.

**10:30 am - Early Records from Twin City Polish Churches - John L. Rys**

This seminar will describe a 9 year Polish Church indexing endeavor. The talk will include a project history and sampling of problems encountered while indexing these early 1900's records. Twelve ethnically Polish churches are included in the database. Some interesting statistical analysis of the extracted data will also be presented.

**12:45 pm - American Records in Polish-American Research - Jerome V. Biedny, Jr.**

Jay will touch on the basics of Parish, land, census and other governmental records for the beginner and then move into less used records of particular use. The presentation is full of real examples and will promote lively discussion.

**2:00 pm - European Records in Polish Genealogical Research - Jerome V. Biedny, Jr.**

A discussion of how to find your ancestral village will be followed by examples of the kinds of European records you can hope to find about your family and their surroundings before immigration. German and Austrian parish records plus maps and gazetteers will be the main focus. Time at the end of the session will be reserved for specific questions.

**12:45 pm "DNA for Genealogists - John L. Rys**  
 "DNA for Genealogists" covers basic DNA concepts. This presentation includes descriptions of 3 DNA tests (Y-chromosome, mitochondrial and autosomal tests) currently used by genealogists. The presentation describes how DNA tests are translated into understandable numeric values for use in searching genealogy databases. Examples of DNA test certificates and information on how different websites handle DNA searching will be presented.

For descriptions of ALL the conference sessions and speaker bios log on to <http://www.mgs.org>.

**Register now!**

Online at <http://www.mgs.org>

## Pommern Regional Group Meetings

### 2012 Calendar

Calendar subject to change. Updates posted on the web  
<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mnprgm/PRG.html>

May 5: Paul Sternberg will talk about finding your village of origin using 28 different sources.

June 2: Sandy Anderson's cruise on the Elbe in Germany and the coast of Norway

July 7: Pomeranians of Wausau, WI

Aug 4: Dr. Professor LaVern Ripley will talk the growth of the German railroad system in Hinterpommern.- Open

Sept 1: A Quick Lesson in German and another topic TBD

Oct 6: MGS Fall Conference

Nov 3: Joint meeting with the Polish group. *What is Pomerania?* (PRG tentative program)

Dec 1: Christmas Celebration Program

Meeting Location: MN Genealogy Society  
 1185 Concord St.  
 South St. Paul, MN

1:30-4:00 PM

4th flr conference room or 1st flr auditorium

Any questions, please contact me.

Thanks

Jim Neuenfeldt

Chairperson - Pommern Regional Group MN  
[neunan334@msn.com](mailto:neunan334@msn.com)

PGS-MN

### 1940 U.S. Census Community Project

The Minnesota Genealogical Society has joined the 1940 U.S. Census Community Project, to help index the 1940 U.S. Census. We will be an essential part of this grass-roots effort that will put one of the richest genealogical data sets online, complete and free of charge.

The 1940 U.S. Census Community Project is a joint initiative of Archives.com, FamilySearch.com, FindMY Past.com., and other leading genealogical organizations and societies. They will coordinate

efforts to provide quick access to these digital images.

To participate follow these steps:

1. Go to : [www.the1940census.com/society](http://www.the1940census.com/society)
2. Click on "Societies" at the top of the page
3. Under the heading "Society Members", click "get started"
4. The software will then be downloaded - see system requirements below.
5. After download is complete, complete the Profile Screen-choose Country, State or Group (Minnesota Genealogical Society is a participating Group)
6. Minimum recommended system requirements:
  - a. Microsoft windows-Windows XP Home, Vista, 7. Browser-Explorer 7.0.5730.11, Firefox 3.0.8. Speed-Pentium IV. Memory- 1 GB or greater. Broadband high speed internet recommended (DSL, cable, satellite).
  - b. Mac is not fully supported: processor- G4 or Intel Mac OS X-compatible. Operating system-Apple Mac OS X version 10.5.x. Browser-Safari 3.2.1, or Firefox 3.0.4 Memory-1 GB.
  - c. Linux is not fully supported: PC or PC compatible. Operating system-Redhat Fedora Desktop 10, Open SUSE 11.1, Ubuntu 8.04. Browser-Firefox 3.0.8. Speed-Pentium IV. Memory- 1 Gb.

Refer to page 4/7 of the "Getting Started Kit"- note the schedule for webinars available to indexers.

To participate in this indexing project with MGS to help put the 1940 Census online check the website, [www.mnsgs.org](http://www.mnsgs.org) for questions, and information. PGS-MN

### Michael Clark Writing Competition

New this year, the contest accepts entries in two Award Categories:

**Research Article**, demonstrating family history research and problem-solving.

**Family Story**, engaging the reader in persons, place, and time.

1. Entries must be postmarked no later than 15 July 2012; electronic entries will not be accepted. The winning entries will receive Michael Clark Family





## Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota 2011 Financial Report

	2010 Actual	2011 Budget	2011 Actual
Starting Cash Balance	\$ 4,573.89	\$5,910.41	\$5,910.41
<b>RECEIPTS</b>			
Advertising	0.00	0.00	0.00
Back Issues	68.00	100.00	112.00
Donations / Library Fund	191.53	150.00	245.00
Dues	4,440.00	4,930.00	4,365.00
Miscellaneous	159.60	0.00	976.40
Program Attendance	1,360.25	1,200.00	987.00
Sales (Books)	595.40	800.00	1,003.79
Sales Tax Collected	37.29	50.10	67.47
Freight/Shipping Out	12.65	10.00	7.50
Surnames/Family Ties	175.00	200.00	90.00
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>\$7,039.72</b>	<b>\$7,440.10</b>	<b>\$7,854.16</b>
<b>DISBURSEMENTS</b>			
Advertising	0.00	0.00	0.00
Bank Charges	0.00	0.00	0.00
CD purchased	(1,602.24)	1,000.00	1,000.00
Items for Resale	373.78	450.00	164.85
Library Expense	0.00	200.00	0.00
Meetings/Speaker Fees Office	1,949.12	1,700.00	1,674.33
Supplies/Copies/Misc.	267.58	420.00	505.14
Postage	483.34	700.00	631.23
Publishing Expense	2,793.10	2,900.00	2,469.00
Rent/Insurance MGS	1,372.00	1,372.00	1,372.00
Sales Tax Paid for Prior Year	66.52	37.29	37.29
<b>TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS</b>	<b>\$5,703.20</b>	<b>\$8,779.29</b>	<b>\$7,853.84</b>
<b>TOTAL DIFFERENCE IN CASH</b>	<b>\$1,336.52</b>	<b>(\$1,339.19)</b>	<b>\$ 0.32</b>
Ending Cash Balance	<b>\$5,910.41</b>	<b>\$4,571.22</b>	<b>\$5,910.73</b>
TCF CD	<b>\$5,035.03</b>	<b>\$6,074.13</b>	<b>\$6,063.97</b>
<b>Total Ending Assets</b>	<b>\$10,945.44</b>	<b>\$10,645.35</b>	<b>\$11,974.70</b>
New Members	<b>34</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>19</b>
Paying Members at year end	<b>304</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>285</b>

## PGS-MN Annual Meeting 14 January 2012

A traditional Polish buffet was served at Gastof zur Gemutlichkeit restaurant in Northeast Minneapolis. Forty-six members and guests were in attendance.

Election of Officers was held. All officers were re-elected. An election was held for the vacant position of Director I. Jeremy Biedny was nominated and elected for a one year term.

Treasury's Report was read by Mike Eckman. Dates for 2012 programs were confirmed: March 5, April 27/28 MGS Eastern Europe Conference, with September, October, and November meetings topics TBD.

Jim Neunfelt from the Pommern Group shared their group's programs for 2012 and invited GPS members to attend. The Pommern group meetings are listed in this newsletter on page 7.

A suggestion for a program topic was submitted: website guidance; listing of good internet websites for research and how to use them.

Library is looking for volunteers for Thursday evening and Saturday.

Website committee is being formed and will be co-chaired by Dana Halberg and Jason Waldowski. There was an informal poll taken for base information to give the committee a starting point.

PGS-MN

## A Friend with Special Interest in Cemeteries

By Albert Kowalczyk

My friend, Matt Roers, was his family's historian and had a special appreciation for visiting cemeteries where his relatives are buried.

Matt would spend much time tracking down the exact location where each of his grandparents are buried. As many were buried many years ago, the letters and numbers on the grave markers were faded. One time Matt had a can of black paint and brush and repainted the name and year over the faded letters and numbers so others could read the grave marker.

I loaned Matt a couple of issues of this newsletter and later he subscribed for a year. Through the MN-PGS newsletter, Matt was able to make some searches and contacts where some relatives lived, and still live, in Poland. In 2006, Matt traveled to Poland with his children.

They flew into Warsaw and took a train to Gdansk where they met Adam Klimek and his daughter Joanna Czerska. Several years before their trip, Matt had sent out a number of letters to people in Poland with the last name Klimek in hopes of connecting with some long lost relatives. Adam's daughter, Joanna responded to Matt's letter on behalf of Adam as Joanna could read and speak English. Adam was also very interested in family history. Joanna (on behalf of Adam) and Matt corresponded for several years before Matt decided to travel to Poland to meet them in person.

Adam and Joanna drove Matt and his family to visit Matt's 3<sup>rd</sup> cousin, Bernard Turczyn. Bernard's great, great grandmother Micalina Klimek was the sister of Matt's great, great grandfather, Paul Klimek. Therefore, Adam was also interested to know what Bernard knew about the Klimek family.

Bernard and his wife, Jadwiga live in Kleszczyna in Woj. Wielkopolskie. In Kleszczyna, they visited the family farm where Bernard which has been in family for generations, and is where Matt's ancestors were from.

Bernard's daughter, Ludmila lives in the nearby town of Krajenka. Matt and family traveled there and were taken to several other towns near Krajenka. They visited cemeteries and a church in where

Micalina Klimek and her brother Paul Klimek got married in a double wedding in the late 1800s to another sister and brother, Elizabeth Turczyn and Franz Turczyn. After the wedding, Micalina and Franz Turczyn stayed in Poland and became Bernard's great-great-grandparents with Elizabeth and Paul Klimek immigrated to America, settled in central Minnesota and became Matt's great-great-grandparents.

Matt Roers passed away on Thanksgiving 2011. At Matt's funeral, his daughter Monica told a story of their trip to Poland that expresses Matt's special appreciation for cemeteries. I'd like to share the story here:

"In 2006, my dad and I traveled to Poland with my brothers, Merlin and Marty, to the land of our Klimek ancestors. My dad's third cousin, Bernard Turczyn, (who is also my mom's third cousin) showed us around the farming community where our shared relatives had once lived. Along with all of the Bernard's children and grandchildren, we visited several graveyards in the area. I can't tell you the delight my dad had in wandering through these graveyards in search of his relatives.

My dad had brought along with him a list of the last names we were looking for ... Klimek and Turczyn ... Cichy and Suchy. As my dad found a last name that he recognized, he'd call to us and we'd all rush over to see who it was.

The enthusiasm was catchy. Not only did Merlin, Marty, and I catch the bug, but very soon all of Bernard's kids and grandkids got into the act as well. Most of the Polish relatives could barely speak a word of English ... and we could only speak a few words of Polish. But we all could read the names. So when someone found a grave with a family name on it, he called it out to the rest of us ... and we'd rush over to see the final resting place of this family member, to remark on the date, to say a private prayer and to take a photo."

It was because of Matt's persistence and contacts through the MN-PGS newsletter he was able to meet some cousins in Poland. Matt shared his enthusiasm for family history and cemeteries with his own children and some relatives in a distant land.

PGS-MN

## HOW TO FIND YOUR ROOTS? JORDANÓW DEANERY.

By **Robert Twardowski**, Your Roots In Poland  
[your.roots.in.poland@gmail.com](mailto:your.roots.in.poland@gmail.com)  
(Translated by **Kinga Borowiec**)

For some of you it might occur as just a piece of land in southern Poland, the land in the heart of Old Continent which doesn't arouse any particular emotions. Some of you it's probably don't even know this area even exists. But I'm completely sure there are still some of you whose hearts will start beating faster hearing names like Jordanów, Wysoka, or Toporzysko. Present article is a great greeting addressed to all of those ones who are familiar in any way with this part of Poland but as well for all of you who have their "little homeland" somewhere out there.

Jordanów deanery is divided to 9 parish aggregates with the main one – Saint Trinity parish in Jordanów. Whole deanery includes parishes in: Wysoka, Łętownia, Naprawa, Sidzin, Skomielna Biała i Czarna, Bystra and Toporzysko. Today's Jordanów deanery administratively belongs to Suski district in Małopolska (Lesser Poland) province. Obviously it wasn't always like that. In the time of Polish People's Republic (times of communism), between 1975 – 1998, Jordanów city with all the surrounding villages were part of Nowosądeckie province. Before 1918 (so before the year in which Poland regain its freedom after 123 years of living in partition) whole area belonged to Austrian part-so Galicia and was coordinated by Austria-Hungary Monarchy administration. The city Jordanów itself was settled in the half of XVI century so we can just imagine how variable and difficult was its political and administrative lots. The knowledge and understanding of this history is especially important from a genealogical point of view to create the most reliable view of our fathers past.

Jordanów is a small city. However, according to different databases there are just about five thousand inhabitants. Jordanów played a vital role in Polish history. For over five hundred years city was part of important trade route (connected inter alia with high quality Polish salt from Wieliczka).

Because of its commercial character the city held also a permanent market, where the goods like cloth were exchanged. During the time of partition (1772-1918) the city lost a little bit of its sparkle and became less meaningful for Polish development. In XX century and two world wars brought different perspective. During Polish defensive war of 1939 Jordanów noticeably showed its resistance against Wermah forces. Today, apart from its touristic values the city is placing important industry branches.

First Jordanów's church was settled just before 1595 – in the same time city itself was mentioned in Polish historical documentation. The church wasn't an independent parish from the very beginning. A chapel itself belonged to Łętownia parish. The saint patron of Jordanów chapel was St. Laurence. Saint Trinity church was raised on Cracovian chatelaine Anna form Sieniawa own initiative. Parish community was being constantly broadened - in XVII an XVIII first rosary circles was formed and some renovation work in church was being initiated. Because of all that Jordanów community continuously made endeavors towards conferring Saint Trinity church a parish status. Communities dream finally came true on 18 of June 1856 – the church was erected into parish by Bishop Józef Alojzy Pukalski. The new church was consecrated in 1912.

The project of new church building was created by a Lvovian professor Jan Sas – Zubrzycki. The temple had a brief-taking belfry which included three bells with the oldest one from 1545, called "Maria". It had engraved sentence: "Dum Maria Sonat, omnia plasmata fuginat"<sup>1</sup>. Unfortunately during World War I some bells from Jordanów deanery were recasted for needs of growing metal and war industry. The ones left were confiscated in 1941 by Germans during World War II. As it's written here, story of Jordanów and the surrounding area was constantly interlaced with Polish history. Probably one of the most significant moments in Jordnaów deanery history was the new church consecration, in 1972 made by future pope John Paul II, Karol Wojtyła.

<sup>1</sup> "When Mary starts talking, all the evil creatures fly away".

It was in 1992 when he returned to Saint Trinity church— this time as a pope. He came here for beatification World War II Jordanów's martyrs-priest Sebastian Pyrtek and priest Piotr Dańkowski.

As we all know Jordanów and its surroundings is a homeland of many Polish emigrants. As a matter of fact Jordanów itself is a main point of our interest in this article, although all neighboring villages arouse an obvious concern. Until 2007, Wysoka village was merged with Saint Trinity parish. Since this year Nawiedzenia Najświętszej Marii Panny (Visitation of Blessed Virgin Mary: BVM) church has become parish itself. The village was first noticed in historical chronics in 1581 – it was written there that Wysoka belonged to the voivode of Kalisz: Kacper Zebrzydowski. First Zakopane's rector Józef Stolarczyk came from Wysoka as well. You can still find here a historical manor house. The tragic World War II aftermath didn't omit Wysoka. The village community was decorated with Grunwald Cross Order for its heroism during the time of war.

Another important part of the deanery is Skomielna Biała village (previous name Skomielna). The name itself is probably connected with the historical owner or nearby creek. The area was most likely inhabited since antiquity, which is connected with discoveries in the valley of the Raba (they are currently the property of the Archaeological Museum in Cracow). Polish colonization in this region began probably in the XIV century and was developing in times of King Casimir the Great reign (1333-1370). There was a wonderful large church (until 3<sup>rd</sup> of September 1939), which unfortunately burned down as a result of German aggression. The new one was built in Neo-Romanesque style and consecrated by Cardinal Franciszek Macharski.

"Twin sister" of Biała, Czarna Skomielna has her own parish since 1971. This parish also includes Bogdanówka village - which can be useful information for all of family investigators.

Nearby you can find another parish of the deanery - Łętowia. Until the mid XX century, it was an independent municipality. After that it became part of the municipality Jordanów. Because of the nearness of the famous "Zakopianka" highway, the

great asset of the village is well-organized infrastructure. The village was well-known in the country because since the Middle Ages it was placed on the one of the most famous rout called "Polish road" (trade route from Krakow to Hungary). There is a historical, beautiful saint Jude Thaddeus church.

First information about Naprawa village came from 1529. This one has (as well as Łętowina) good connection with "Zakopianka" highway.

Sidzina village is located along the Sidzinka creek. Because of the specific landscaping, Sidzina is a kind of "heritage park" because faced with difficult conditions, some houses are still not electrified, which is a real shock in the XXI century reality. On the other hand that is a great tourism centre. The interesting thing about this village is the fact that local community protected Sidziny nobles in 1846, threatened during the "Galician slaughter" (1846)<sup>2</sup>.

Because of the quite intensive land parcellement in this area, the population in general was very poor. Each village has often changed its owners and legal and social conditions which certainly couldn't be a catalyst for their enrichment. In the Middle Ages there were many merchants and craftsmen, especially lumbers. In the XIX century agriculture was the main occupation. This is actually one of the main reasons of migration from these area, which started in the XIX century. Some people migrated to the cities, where they could've found more work, mostly as the servants. As it was mentioned above a large group of these people chose America as their new homeland. Today, the descendants of these people, often with a success, are searching for their roots.

Before starting one's family history researches in the archival materials, it's necessary to get familiarized with all the historical and genealogical publications which regards the individual case. It is also important to get to know the background of the

<sup>2</sup> Galician slaughter - the events of early 1846, the background of the Krakow Uprising. They were actually bloody Uprisings of Galicia's farmers against the nobility, who reportedly did not want their enfranchisement. Riot instigators were predatory the Austrian authorities, often inciting peasants against the owners of the village. The most famous form of riot, was a wheelwright by Smarzowy, farmer James Szela.

researching period- especially with the history of the region. The basic information in this area will be helpful in the documentation analysis or could help to understand its absence. If we have some information about the origin of an ancestor from a particular village, in this case we are referring to Jordanów, we need to determine his or her national, administrative and ecclesiastical adherence. The territorial divisions and names changed repeatedly over the centuries. It is also important to become familiar with the social structure of the population living in Jordanów. We need to make sure that we are referring to this particular place, in a particular province and county, as names of places often repeat themselves. Archival materials are stored

according to specific rules-territorial belonging and archival units. Therefore it is necessary to know when, where and who produced the particular documentation. Moreover the fact that most of the existing materials are manuscripts, which are mostly not even in Polish but Latin, German or Russian or other foreign languages can cause certain problems. Information (in case of Jordanów) can be obtained among others, in the local institutions such as: Archives of the Metropolitan Curia – Register Books, parishes - Residter Books, National Archives - Records of the Jordanów, Municipal Office and Civil Status Office of Jordanów and so on, etc. As an example the following table:

**Table shows records availability by parishes and Municipal offices.**

Parish Name, Regidter Books and its liabled villages	Regidter Books and available records years		
	Births	Marriages	Deaths
Osielec Regidter Books (includes: Osielec, Wieprzec, Kojaszówka)	1890-1945	1890-1945	1890-1945
Łętownia Regidter Books	1906-1945	1890-1945	1890-1945
Toporzysko	1890-1945	1890-1945	1893-1945
<b>Register Books</b>			
Naprawa Regidter Books	1890-1945	1890-1945	1890-1945
Wysoka Regidter Books	1890-1945	1890-1945	1890-1945
Osielec Municipal Office	1955-1959	1955-1959	1955-1959
Łętownia Municipal Office	1955-1959	1955-1959	1955-1959
Toporzysku Municipal Office	1955-1959	1955-1959	1955-1959
Naprawa Municipal Office	1955-1959	1955-1959	1955-1959
Jordanów Municipal Office (includes: Osielec, Łętownia, Naprawa, Toporzysko, Wysoka)	2003-2010 and still	2003-2010 and still	2003-2010 and still

And here's a question- what do we want to obtain by family researches? Background history knowledge? Knowing the regional geography? Foreign languages? Knowledge of how to read old documents? It will all probably help to get you closer to find what you're searching for but still there's no clear way how to do it with 100% success. Will and passion- these are probably the most essential things that are needed from the very beginning. Hearing questions such as: Who am I? Where do I come from? Who were my ancestors? You are supposed to feel excited and highly involved in discovering who you really are. People who professionally research others' roots know very well that each of us is not just about the present. Every human-being is connected with his or her very complex history, past, present and future in other words: everything that we will left behind.

The other key-word in researching environment is patience. The famous old Polish saying conveys: "Cracow wasn't built straight away"- it's just the same with genealogy. Hundreds of records, information, traces are not going to put itself in one piece just like that. Many researchers give up very quickly even though they just begin their work. The ones who endured usually get what they looking for. It is important to understand that genealogical researches occur to be a complicated process. Working on different cases with my partners from *Your Roots in Poland* we face the complications almost every day. Unfortunately people's good will (especially the ones who hold the records) appears to be the most difficult barrier to overcome in genealogy researches. On Polish ground it's mostly connected with church documentation and administrative procedures and Polish private data law policy.

In some cases it takes quite long to verify entirely if the certain person can have the access to particular documentation. This might be especially hard for those who sometimes tramp thousands of miles to get even a bit closer to their family history. On the other side you could have everything, you're sure that your researches are completed and then some new record gets in your hands and changes the story completely. But you're still asking yourself – maybe it's some kind of mistake? Or maybe I was wrong from the very beginning? In our work there

cannot be any mistake but on the other hand we always inform our clients about each doubt which comes in our way.

I think that it's not hard to believe that some genealogical researchers bring out lots of emotions. Even if you get to the information you were looking for it doesn't always mean a happy ending. Sometimes you got to know some sad stories as well. In our work it is an essential to convey the truth – everybody deserves it. I can definitely say that thanks to working for our clients we have become not just better genealogists but developing the way that we're looking at our life in general.

At the end I wanted to write some wise sentence which could convince or even improve you in the further researches on your family history. I also wanted to highlight the value of such activity. But genealogy it's not like bread, so I could've said: "come and have some loaf!". I'm sure that it's an individual matter and everyone has to get round to it by her or himself.

***YOUR ROOTS IN POLAND*** is a genealogical project being developed by professional historians and archivists (all with university master degree; some of us are making PHD as well). The main point of our work is to provide a complete genealogical service which is going to be based on both electronic and archival sources- using Internet and our knowledge of Polish genealogical researching process in state archives. We are all widely experienced in archival researches (having practice in places like Polish State Archives in Cracow, Polish Institute of National Remembrance and a few company archives), working with any kind of documentation, in a few languages. **PGS-MN**



## Fun Fact

**Marzanna** is a tradition where people weave straw dolls and decorate them with ribbons.

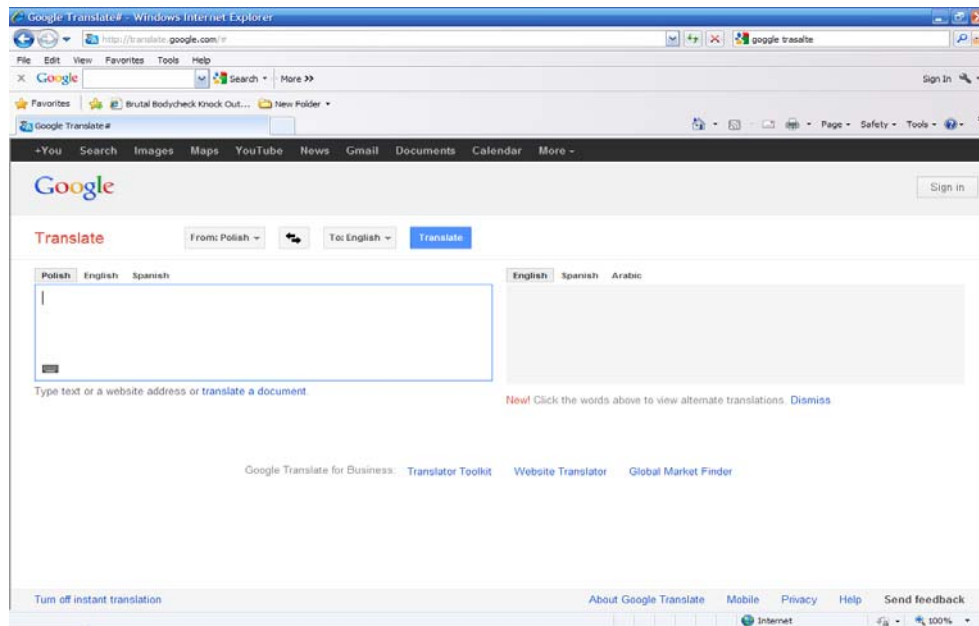
These represent the end of winter and the beginning of spring. When the snow starts to melt, they proclaim the beginning of spring and chuck the Marzannas into the river or stream, symbolically “killing” the winter.

(source: [www.swiftpassportservices.com](http://www.swiftpassportservices.com))

## Technology Corner

By Jason Waldowski

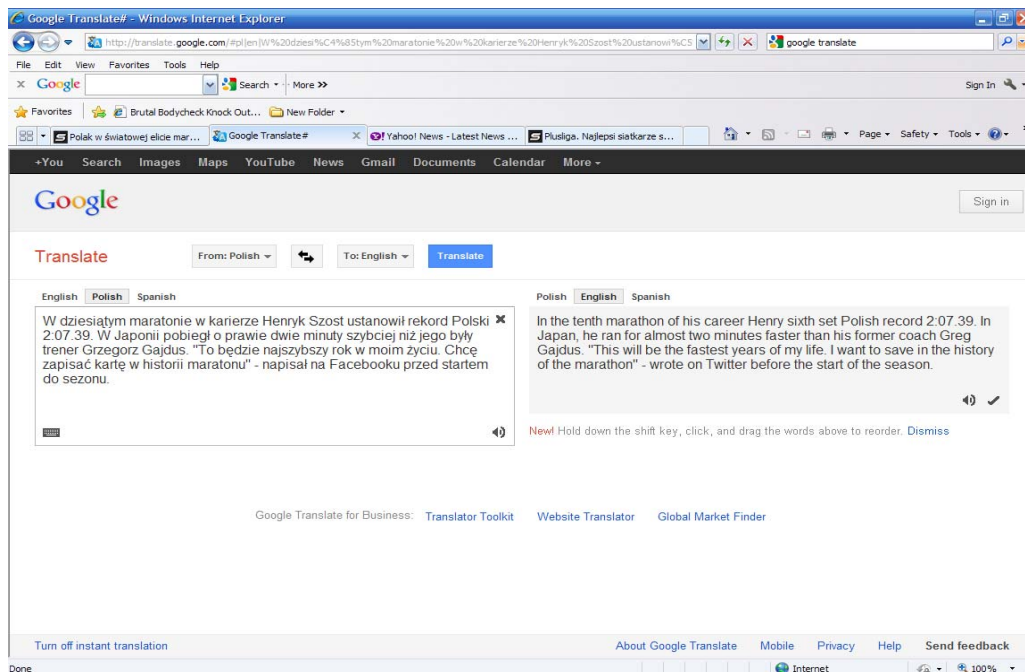
A quick summary on translating Polish to English using the Google Translate website. Web Address:  
<http://translate.google.com/#>



Assuming you are looking to translate a web page or words in Polish, you will want to have the **From** Drop Down Box as “Polish” and the **To** Drop Down Box as “English.”

Now you have a few options, you can either type in the words; or website you want translated or do a Copy and Paste. Both the text and the website address would be put in the FROM box on the left hand side.

If you do translate a web page once you paste or type in the address, the web page should be translated to English.



If you type or paste in a words you can also get have Google Translate do a Text to Voice option. If you want this option you can click on the lower right hand corner where the Speaker Icon is.

Dom postawiony "na głowie" - Polecamy - Wiadomości - Polska.pl - Windows Internet Explorer

http://wiadomosci.polska.pl/polecamy/article\_Dom\_postawiony\_na\_glowie\_id,278620.htm

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Dokumenty z czasów Jagiellty ze zbiorów Archiwum Głównego Akt Dawnych

Polska.pl > Wiadomości > Polecamy > Dom postawiony "na głowie"

Polityka Gospodarka Nauka Kultura Społeczeństwo **Polecamy** Raporty Polska.pl

**Polecamy**

Dom postawiony "na głowie"

**Dom postawiony na dachu wbitym w ziemię? Czy to ma jakikolwiek sens? Przecież w takim domu nie można mieszkać... Taki budynek jednak istnieje – wystarczy pojechać do Szymbarka na Kaszubach, aby się o tym przekonać. Według jego budowniczych dom postawiony na dachu ma skłaniać zwiedzających do refleksji o współczesności do zadawania samemu sobie pytań, czy nasze życie codzienne też nie jest „postawione na głowie”.**

Autorzy projektu podkreślają, że na co dzień mieszkamy w domu, który nazywa się świat. W domu, w którym codziennie jedni ludzie zabijają się w okrutny sposób, inni pokazują to na ekranach telewizorów jako newsy i dostają za to nagrody. W domu, w którym jedni tracą rozum z nadmiaru dóbr wszelakich i marzą o pigułce, która zapewni im nieśmiertelność, inni tracą rozum z powodu nędzy, niedostatku, niedoli swoich najbliższych. W domu, w którym nie brakuje symbolów wolności, demokracji, w którym działają organizacje o niezwykle szlachetnych celach, a jednak na oczach współmieszkańców wycina się w pierś całe narody.

- „Nie mówcie więc, że nie da się mieszkać w domu „do góry nogami”, w domu postawionym na dachu. To nasz świat, nasz dom, tak mieszkamy... Dom wbity dachem w ziemię to tylko jego metafora” - akie słowa

Zobacz galerię zdjęć:  
Skansen budownictwa drewnianego w Szymbarku

17 marca 2012  
77 dzień roku 289 dni do końca roku  
Imieniny:  
Patrika, Zbigniewa

Marzec 2012

Po	Wt	Śr	Cz	Pt	So	Ni
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**Polska na skróty**

- » Mapy i atlasy
- » Rozkłady jazdy
- » Pogoda w Polsce
- » Informacja turystyczna
- » Baza Nolegowa

**Wersja RSS**

Co to jest RSS?

House placed "on the head" - Recommended - News - Polska.pl - Windows Internet Explorer

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Rok 2011 ROKIEM JANA HEWELIUSZA

Polska.pl > News > Recommended > House placed "on the head"

Policy Economy Science Culture Society **We** Reports Polska.pl

**We recommend**

House placed "on the head"

**House placed on the roof fixed on the ground? Does that make any sense? But in such a house you can not live ... but there is a building - just go to Szymbark Kashubia to find that out. According to its builders placed on the roof of the house has a lead visitors to think about the present to ask yourself questions, and our daily lives is not "put on his head."**

The authors emphasize that every day we live in a house which is called the world. In the house where every day some people kill themselves in a cruel way, others show it on TV as a news and get a prize. In the house where they lose some sense of excess goods of all kinds and dream of a pill that will give them immortality, others lose their mind because of poverty, deprivation, misery of their loved ones. The house in which there is no shortage of symbols of freedom, democracy, in which organizations operate on a very noble purpose, but the sight of fellow cut down the trunk of entire nations.

- "Do not talk so that you can not live in a house" upside down ", at home, upturned on the roof. This is our world, our home, so we live ... House roof stuck in the ground is just the metaphor" - WHAT words accompany visitors wooden building.

So start exploring: home - not the world we enter through the door, but through the top window. We walk on the ceiling, go under the table, carefully avoiding the lamp, which can inadvertently fall over and set fire to the whole world ... We

See photo gallery: museum of wooden architecture in Szymbark

March 17, 2012  
Years 77 days 289 days until the end of  
Name:  
Patrick, Zbigniew

March 2012

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19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1

**Poland shortcuts**

- » Maps and atlases
- » Timetables
- » Weather in Poland
- » Tourist Information
- » Tourist Accommodation

**RSS Version**

What is RSS?

Note sometimes the whole web page may not be translated to English, due to how the web page was setup and or formatted.



## Kurier Polski of Minnesota Newspaper

The Kurier Polski of Minnesota is the only Polish-American newspaper in Minnesota and in the Midwest apart from Chicago, IL.

There are over 10,000 Polish immigrants who originally emigrated from Poland plus approx. 90,000 people of Polish descent in Twin Cities alone and approx. 280,000 in the state of Minnesota. In addition and as importantly we service the at large Russian immigrant community, as well as the Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Slovak, Czech, and Bulgarian combined communities. They number in the tens of thousands, with over 40,000 people coming from the former Soviet Union alone. A large portion of that population is still involved in their ethnic community in one way or another and they are the readers of our newspaper.

That's why we also direct the content of our newspaper toward that community as well as other affiliated communities with similar experiences and languages. It is also why it's bilingual. The ads within the paper service the larger Slavic communities. Because of the larger commercial appeal of our paper we also run ads in other languages. Translation into other languages is not an issue for us.

We are also involved in the Twin Cities Polish Festival in Minneapolis that takes place in August each year. This event attracts approximately 20,000 visitors each year.

Most of the paper is distributed within the metro area. It is also sent to the Polish communities within the greater Minnesota such as Winona, Rochester, Mankato, St. Cloud areas plus western and central Wisconsin and Des Moines, IA. As an aside we have a postal subscription to a dozen states and overseas.

Print media still relies heavily on advertisement revenue. If you would like to post your products or services to the local Polish and other Slavic communities in this newspaper, please contact the paper at [kurierpolski@yahoo.com](mailto:kurierpolski@yahoo.com) or phone 952-457-1305. **PGS-MN**



### *In Memoriam*

## Lucy Phillips Kruchowski

+December 11, 2011

We at PGS-MN mourn the death of long-time PGS-MN member, Lucy Phillips Kruchowski.

A member since 1999, Lucy attended many of our meetings and was a frequent contributor of items to our newsletter. She was actively researching the Silesian origins of her ancestral surnames: WARZECHA, PHILIPSEK/PHILIPCZYK and WARWAS.

Lucy contributed a copy and a translation of her ancestor's "Release from Prussian Citizenship" for publication in our newsletter (Summer 2000, p. 7). The document was a request for emigration for "the 50 year old gardener Nikolaus Warzecha of Dammratsch from the County of Oppeln."

Lucy described her research trip to Silesia in "A Return to the Homeland of My Ancestors" in the Winter 2000-01 (pp. 18-19) issue. She also authored "More about the Warzecha surname" (Winter 1999-2000, p. 6) and "Researching Philipsek" (Spring 2004, p. 8) and many items for the Missing Branches section of our newsletter.

Lou, we will miss you. R.I.P.



### **Missing Branches...***continued from page 32*

**Paul Patient**, 8437 Jeffery Ave. So., Cottage Grove MN 55016 <[pmpatient@mmm.com](mailto:pmpatient@mmm.com)> is researching RAMANOWSKI in Poland.

**Carol Russell**, 6623 Londonderry Dr., Edina MN 55436 <[russellc73@hotmail.com](mailto:russellc73@hotmail.com)> is researching Boleslaw\* SERAFINSKI in Kolno and Zaskrodzie in Poland and in Indiana, Ohio and Michigan; Marianna\* KOZIOLCZYK in Zaskrodzie and Porite and in Ohio and Michigan; Jozef SERAFINSKI and Ludwiga PTAK in Kolno. Carol writes: "I have seen numerous variations on the spelling for William\* and Marianna\*"

**Kathy Warzecha**, 2603 Olive Lane, Sauk Rapids, MN 56379 is a new member (*see entry for Grace Kramer above*).

*Editor's note: Kathy, I believe that you are a former member. Welcome back. I recall writing an article entitled "Where is Prussia?" in response to a question that you raised (See PGS-MN Newsletter [Winter, 2004-05]: pp. 22, 23). By the way, our newsletter has listed several members researching the WARZECHA surname over the years. I hope that you have been in touch with all of them. And when you publish your family history I hope that you will consider donating a copy to our library. --PTK*

**UPDATES--***The following members have sent us updated information:*

**Joan Davy**, 8711 Summit Dr., Eden Prairie MN 55347 <jcdavy@aol.com> is researching NOVAK, JANBOSKI in Chaska, Willow River and St. Paul Minn.; ZYWICKI and JACZKOWSKA in Winona and Willow River, Minn.

**Thomas Draus Sr.**, 888 HWY 11, Box 464, Hazel Green WI 53811-0464 <tjdraus@centurytel.net> is researching DRAUS in Trzciana, Poland; OPYD in Kamienica, Poland; and both in Chicago IL.

**James Franczyk**, 1322 Portland Ave., St. Paul MN 55104 <jimfranczyk45@msn.com> is researching FRANCYK, DRABIK in Limanova in Poland; FLOREK, SZLAGA in Zakopane; CZOP in Warsaw; and all in Chicago.

**John & Nancy Grech**, 11548 Mississippi Dr., Champlin MN 55316 <njgrech@comcast.net> are researching GORCZYCA in Glowinka in SE Poland, S. of Krosno; VOS in Trzebuska, N. of Rzeszow; HAIDER (adopted) in possible Wokla Niedzwiczka; GRECH originated in Nysze Ruzbacy Slovika; and all in N.E. Mpls. close to Holy Cross.

**Judy Guzman**, 6616 N. Mill Lane, Peoria IL <judy@marknrupa.com> is researching KOCAN in Przybyszowka in Poland; GUZMAN in Lipinski, Plochocin, Kwidzyn; WIERNIK in ? in Poland; and all in WI.

**George Hamernick**, 1323 Manomin Ave., West St. Paul MN 55118 <ghamernick@comcast.net> is researching HAMERNICK in Borzyskowy, Karpno, Meilno in Poland and settled in Believue and the Milwaukee area about 1872 to 1874; PROZINSKI, PRONDZINSKI, PRADZYNSKI in Brzezno or Neu Briesen - Schlocau in Poland.

**Michael Jarmuz**, 808 Green Street, Hudson WI 54016 <myjarmuz@yahoo.com> is researching JARMUZ in Juncewo & Znin in Poland; KALASA in Znin; GLUBA in Silver Lake MN.

**Mary Jerde**, 1443 97th Ave NW, Coon Rapids MN 55433 <Jerde.Mary@gmail.com> is researching the KOZACZ and PIEKLO surnames.

**Kevin & Mary Ann Johnson**, 3210 - 139th Ln NW, Andover MN 55304, <kmmmkjohanson@msn.com> are researching MANIAK, CIESIELSKI in Raschkow and Beganin, Poznan and in Buffalo NY, Superior WI and Split Rock Township, MN; BUTKIEWICZ, SZEDIS in Suwalki, Poland and Vilnius, Lithuania and in Superior, WI and Kettle River, MN; KUBICKI, KRZESZEWSKI, OLSZEWSKI in Miescisko and Kozielsko in Poznan and in Duluth, MN. Mary Ann writes: "I sent in an extensive list in previous years. I am still researching all names but these are the main ones."

**Judith Keller**, W1211 Meadowview Dr., Lot 72, Sullivan WI 53178 <judykeller2@yahoo.com> is researching KASPRZAK, PROBULIS, NAPIERALLA (NAPIERALA), MUR (MOHR) in Posen, Sulawki and Posnan in Poland and in Milwaukee WI.

**Terry Kita**, 5036 Queen Ave S., Mpls. MN 55410 <terrykita@earthlink.net> is researching KITA, SZMIT, ZIELINSKA, RZAZA, WIZA, KACZMAREK, CZARNECKI, SCHRAM, ZAK, NAPIERAŁA, KRISHKA, FURMAN in Czarnkow, Lubasz, Polajewo--all in Poznan, Poland and all in "Polish Settlement," Door County, Wisconsin.

**Walter Kornel Kondy**, 619 S.E. 7th St. Mpls. MN 55414-1327 <ydnok@yahoo.com> is researching KONDEJ'/CYRAN and KRÓL/GRZEBIEŃ in Ustrobnia/Tulkowice, Dobrzechów (Podbarpacze) in Poland and in Adams and Salem MA, Menasha WI, and Manchester NH.

**Peter Lamusga**, 10503 2nd St., Gheen MN 55771 is researching LAMUSGA, KALA, WARWAS, PLOTNIK, CEBULA in Browerville, MN.

**Richard Lubinski**, 14047 Yancy St. NE, Ham Lake MN 55304 <Lubnor@comcast.net> is researching LUBINSKI in Wysoka, Jordanow, Spytkowice in Poland and in Mpls.

**Gilbert Mros**, 1996 Langton Lake Dr., Unit 205, Roseville MN 55113 <gil.mros@gmail.com> is researching MROS in Cupel in Poland and in MI and PA; GUTOWSKI in Łomza and in MI and OH; MROCZKA/MROZKA in Sokolow and in MN.

**Mary Victoria Myslajek**, 3806 46th Ave N., Robbinsdale 55422 <mvmys@yahoo.com> is researching MIGACZ, MYSLAJEK in southern Poland and in Minneapolis and Pennsylvania.

**Sandra Nuss**, 1800 So. Prairie Ave., Fairmont MN 56031 <senuss@midco.net> is researching SOLARZ in Falkowice in Poland and in North Prairie and Holdingford, MN; JARNOT in Kety and Brzeszcze and in Holdingford; PHILIPSEK in Twardawa and in Holdingford.

**Rita Peterson**, 5752 154th St. W., Prior Lake MN 55372 <whosit@integra.net> is researching PLASZCZ in Toporzysko in Poland and in Wisconsin, KUFEL in Gallzia and in Minnesota.

**Dorothy J. Pretare**, 2344 SE 8th Place, Renton WA 98055-3950 <dp2cats@yahoo.com> is researching BLASZKOWSKI and RUDNIK in Oslawa Dabrowa in Poland (Oslawdamerow, Pommern; BORZYSZKOWSKI in Prussia; KIEDROWSKI in Lipusz (Lippusch, Westpreussen); KONKOL/KONKEL in Koscierzyna (Berent, Westpreussen); all in Winona MN and Trempealeau County WI; Blaszkowski also in Jamestown ND and Kiedrowski also in Portage County WI and Warsaw ND.

**Gene & Janet Retka**, 6524 90th Street, Swanville MN 56382 <retkains@fallsnet.com> are researching RETKA in Retka in Poland, BRYNIARSKI in Nowy Targ, BELINSKI or

BIELINSKI in Poznan, CICHA, and all in Minnesota.

**Helen M. Richard**, 18984 Ermine Drive, Burtrum MN 56318-4650 <JAHMRichard@Juno.com> is researching KRZESZEWSKI, SOBIESZCYK (married in 1864 in Debowo [Gniezno area?]) in Duluth, Little Falls and North Prairie, MN; ROSINSKI, NOWAKOWSKA (married 1872 in Kozielsko [Wagrowiec]) in Duluth. She writes: "Just found these marriages in the Poznan Marriage Project! A 'break' in my brick wall? Hope so!"

*Editor's comment: Anyone who suspects that their ancestors are from Poznan (now the province of Wielkopolskie but called "Provinz Posen" during the Prussian occupation) should check the Poznan Project marriage database at: <<http://poznan-project.psn.com>>. This is a wonderful site for finding marriages that took place in that province between 1800 and 1899. I personally have made contact with distant relatives (both in the US and in Europe) through the use of this website. --PTK*

**Nancy Sansone**, 2447 Skyline Dr., Bloomington MN 55425 <NancySansone@msn.com> is researching PEPERA and STANEK in ? in Poland and in St. Paul.

**Kathryn Schafer**, 30222 120th St., Strathcona MN 56759 <dkschafer@wiktel.com> is researching WIELEBSKI/WILEBSKI in Jutrosin, Smogulecka Weis, Zelazno/Sadke Poborka/Krostkowo Wyrzysk and in LaSalle IL, Wilno MN and Lancaster MN (Orleans); JANUZIK/JANUSIK in Koszkowo Wyrzysk; MASLOSKI/MASLOWSKI location unknown in Poland.

**Thomas L. Skorczeski**, 2107 Juno Ave, St. Paul MN 55116 <TomSkor@usfamily.net> is researching SKORCZEWSKI, ADAMCZEWSKI in Raszków in Poland and in Lincoln and Yellow Medicine counties in MN.

**Connie Waldherr**, 56 - 102nd Avenue North, Brooklyn Park MN 55443 <waldh001@umn.edu> is researching JUREK in Makow, Galicia; JANIK in Sycha, Galicia; KALISZEWSKI in Guberna, Sedlecka; KAMINSKI; and all in Minnesota.

**PGS-MN**

## *Two Polish Families. continued from page 1*

fabric of life. Eventually, they celebrated their 'Polishness' only at holidays and festivals. I, and many Baby Boomers with me, are the children of these second- generation parents many who are now in their 70's and 80's or gone. Our Generation X children probably have not: married Polish Americans, lived in the same city as their grandparents, or used many Polish words anymore. They probably did: go to college and maybe graduate school, and are having children of their own who will grow up in a different world.

With this backdrop, I will take you for a tour of my family and the surprising story of how someone can be third-generation American and still 100% Polish. My roots are in European farming towns carved out of the mountain woods of the Carpathians and the river valleys of Greater Poland. They represent the accomplishments of a smart, simple people that worked hard to get what they wanted: a fresh start in a new land. Jerry and Betty Biedny had five children, all of whom married. Together we children have produced thirteen grandchildren. At this writing, none have yet married or had children. After decades of research, this story has been written for Jerry and Betty's grandchildren and generations yet to come.

### My Father's side

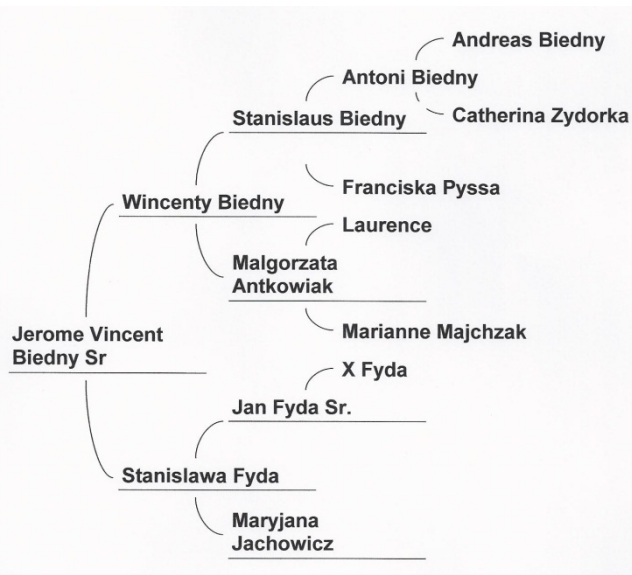
My father, **Jerome Vincent Biedny, Sr.** (Jerry) was born 28 July 1935 at home in the kitchen of 80 Schutrum Street on the Polish "Eastside" of Buffalo, New York. Jerry had one sibling, Ronald, born 4 years later who married but had no children. Jerry attended St. John Kanty's Parish School and went on to Hutchison Technical High School. With that training, he worked for several large architectural practices before becoming a Registered Architect on 4 September 1973. Within a decade he started his own firm, Jerome Biedny & Associates, which provided engineering services to other architects. He retired in 2009 after over 50 years in the profession. He was an avid golfer and member of the Lancaster Country Club for 25 years. He died of lung cancer on 24 Oct 2010



and is buried next to his wife in St. Adalbert's Cemetery in Lancaster, NY.

Jerry's father, **Wincenty Stanislaus Biedny** (Vince) was born on the Eastside at 53 Lombard Street on 8 July 1906 to Stanley Biedny and Malgorzata I. Antkowiak. Vince had a brother Tony and two sisters, Celia and Veronika, who lived to adulthood and married. He had two sisters that died in infancy and a brother that died at age 19. After Lombard Street, the family lived at 13 Koons Avenue.

Vince loved his violin and met his wife Stella while playing in the band at a wedding. They were married at St. John Cantius (Kanty's) Church on 28 Jun 1932. Vince worked at American Optical as a master machinist for 45 years, retiring with a gold watch. He would tell me how proud he was that America "was decades ahead of the Russians in optics." He was a wizard



at anything mechanical and maintained a home shop that was a true “man cave.” He produced many of the tools in the shop including a multispeed drill press. Vince and Stella were married 49 years until he died in his sleep on 30 May 1981. He is buried alongside his wife in St. Stanislaus Cemetery, Sec OO, Lot 317, in Cheektowaga, NY.

Jerry's mother, **Stanislawa M. Fyda** (Stella) was born in Buffalo on 10 April 1914 to John Fyda, Sr. and Maryanna Jachowicz. Stella had two brothers, John, Jr. and Teddy, and two sisters, Julia and Irene. Her family lived at 80 Schutrum Street and, like Vince, attended St. John Cantius parish and school. She kept an immaculate house- you could actually see yourself in the polish on the doors. She was an excellent cook of Polish cuisine and taught Betty many "secret recipes" of Polonia. They actually had two kitchens in the house: one upstairs “for show” and the second in the basement, where it was cooler in the summer - more about the basement later.

Stella was very close to her siblings especially Julia. Julia did not walk very well, so Stella would often go up the block to sit with her on the porch. They would enjoy the breeze, streetscape, and gossip as half the neighborhood would pass by. She and Vince lived in the duplex home that her father John bought when coming to America. After Stella's brother John's wife died, he lived with them in the back apartment until he passed. Stella died of stomach cancer in August 1989 at the age of 75.

The "**Eastside**" of Buffalo runs roughly from west of Fillmore, east to Bailey Avenue, and is bounded by Sycamore on the north and William Street on the south. Broadway is its spine, running the length of the area and dividing it roughly in two. Through the 1970s, for three generations, it was the heart of one of the largest Polish communities in America. Like similar areas in Chicago, Detroit and New York City, it was an ethnic ghetto that offered its inhabitants the ability to make the transition to American prosperity while holding onto their European roots.

The story of its development starts with the ordination of Salesian Fr. John Pitass by Bishop Stephan Ryan in 1873. Until then, Buffalo was only a railroad connection point for immigrant Poles going to cities or farms in the Midwest. The Catholic Church in Buffalo wanted to give travelers a reason to stop and stay. In his first parish, *St. Stanislaus, Bishop and Martyr*, Pitass envisioned a huge (30,000 person) parish for all Poles in the area. Over the next two decades, as the tide of new settlers became a tsunami, this single mega-parish model proved impractical. He adapted and, by his death in 1912, he had personally seen to the creation of eight other Catholic parishes of the Eastside- most within blocks of each other. Some say he was maniacal, others simply single-minded, but by his sheer will he oversaw the building of church/school complexes that became the center of life for hundreds of thousands of immigrant and first-generation Americans. Early in his reign as the "irremovable pastor" of St. Stanislaus, he was given the title of Dean by the bishop. With it, he held sway over Catholic Polonia in Buffalo. My father attended church and school at St. John Kanty's, the parish where his parents were baptized and schooled. Under his watchful eye, it was founded in 1892 to serve the growing neighborhood east of the beltline railroad. The parish had an impressive collection of brick buildings including the church, rectory and convent. In 1920 they built the 2000 seat Lyceum- a combination community center and school building. Children were taught there during the day, adults at night, and dances and other events were held on weekends.

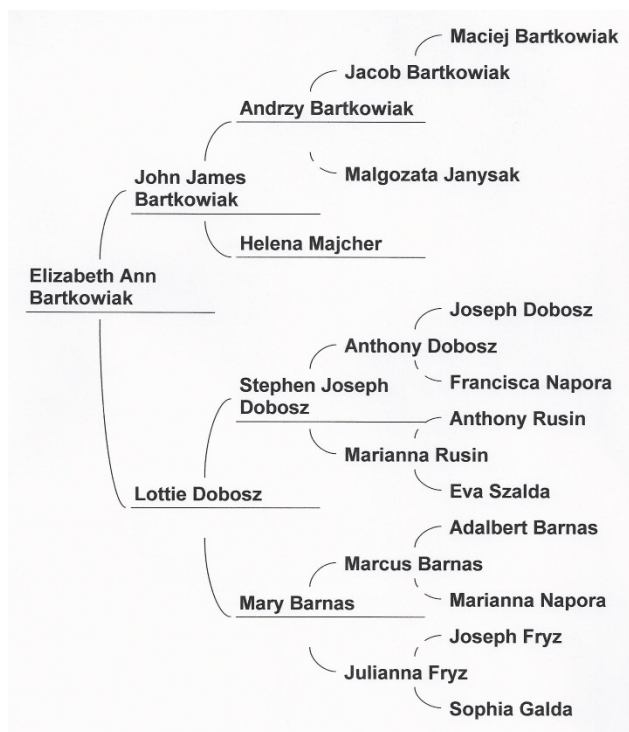
The shops, markets, newspapers, bars and social clubs that sprang up among the neat duplex newly mushrooming around these churches are the settings of much of the lives of the Biedny and allied families. My sister bought her first home on the Eastside before moving to the 'burbs. Urban decay has since claimed most of the Eastside. Currently, 8 of its 12 churches are closed or combined, with only St. Stanislaus scraping by with its Polish identity intact. Like its founding pastor, it is stubborn to the end.

## My Mother's side

My mother, **Elizabeth Ann Bartkowiak** (Betty) was born 13 May 1937 in Buffalo, New York and grew up in the "Kaisertown" neighborhood, which was a German farming area that yielded to new homes for Poles in the early 1900s. Betty had two brothers, John and Gerald and two sisters, Loretta Pikul and Rosemary Drzewiecki. She attended St. Casimir's parish and grade school and then Fosdick Masten Girl's Vocational High School. Trained as a fashion designer, she worked as a furrier at Joseph Palanker and Son's before marrying.

Betty met Jerry through mutual friends and dated in the "greaser years" of sock hops and hot rod cars. They were married (and later celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary) in the stunningly beautiful St. Casimir Basilica on 1 Sept 1956. They raised their five children at 53 Tamark Court, while attending St.

Josaphat's parish and school in Cheektowaga, NY. Betty was a devoted mother and active church lady. As empty nesters, she and Jerry moved to Amherst, NY and their children followed nearby. Her family gave her exceeding joy, and she traveled to attend their birthdays, recitals, dance performances, and the like. Betty was married to Jerry for 53 years until her unexpected death due to blood clots on 21 August 2010. She was 73.



**John and Lottie (Dobosz) Bartkowiak with Loretta, Elizabeth and John c 1939**

Betty's father, John **James Bartkowiak** (John) was born in Buffalo on 15 November 1913 to Andrew Bartkowiak and Helena Majcher. John had three brothers: Edmund, Marion, and Bronisluas (who they called "Brownie", or more formally Ernest). Brownie shortened his last name to "Bart" as it went along with his business "Bart Heating and Plumbing." John had a half-sister, Jane by his father's first wife Stella, and five sisters: Lottie, Alfreda, Emily, Helen, and Wanda. They all grew up together at 11 Newton Street on the Eastside of Buffalo. Unfortunately, John abandoned his family for another leaving his wife Lottie a single mother. He died on 6 July 1971 of a heart attack at a relatively young age.

Betty's mother, **Lotislawa Dobosz** (Lottie) was born in Buffalo, NY on 2 October 1909 and was raised at a home on 62 Schmarbeck on the Eastside. She had two brothers, Edward and Teddy, and two sisters, Eugenea, and Stephania. Lottie was a devoted Catholic, attending daily Mass even after losing her eyesight late in life. She was tall, thin, and exceptionally beautiful in her youth - something she shared with Betty.

To support her children after John left them, Lottie worked at the Buffalo Envelope Company. She raised the children in a large single family home at 320 Barnard Street in Kaisertown. It was a double lot with one half undeveloped. So even though it was urban it had a wide open feel. The two pines have taken over now and the white and fire engine red has been painted out green. She hosted Sunday afternoon gatherings with cottage cheese & noodles with apple pie for dessert. After battling a pituitary gland problem for decades, Lottie died 26 Sept 1994. She is buried at St. Matthew's Cemetery in West Seneca, NY with a shining apple on her tombstone because her favorite saying was, "an apple a day, keeps the doctor away"- apparently for 85 years!

**Kaisertown** was originally Native American land north of the Buffalo River and south of the rail line that became Interstate 90, bounded by Bailey Avenue on the west and the city line near South Ogden on the east. As its name implies, it was originally a German farming community on the very edge of Buffalo. As Polish immigrants came to work in the nearby factories, urban housing displaced the farms. Because of its relative geographic isolation, a village-like atmosphere came with the development along its commercial backbone- Clinton Street. A hallmark of the area was Houlton Park. It had a swimming pool in the summer and an ice rink in the winter. On its huge play fields the local fire department hosted Easter egg hunts for hundreds of families each year.

Not as homogeneously Polish as the Eastside, but still very much Catholic, here too was a home church - St. Casimir's. Dating from 1883, its original buildings always included a church and school. In 1926, the magnificent Byzantine church was built to replace its predecessor. In 1985, this minor Basilica hosted John Paul II when he was a Cardinal visiting America. My mother attended church and grade school here and was married "out of" this parish. Her mother attended mass until she moved to a nursing home. Grandma Lottie would cross busy Clinton Street daily, without a white cane, even though she was completely blind later in life.

Perhaps because of its isolation or proximity to a first ring suburb, Kaisertown is holding its own against urban decay. Even with the deficits in City schools, some of my friends bought homes and are raising families there. Its housing stock is now a century old. Time will tell if the current residents have the income and resolve to transform the buildings for another hundred years. Or, will they move over the line to West Seneca or Cheektowaga?

## The Immigrants



Stanislaus & Margaret  
(Antkowiak) Biedny with  
Veronika & Anthony c 1909

Vince Biedny's father, **Stanislaus Biedny** (Stanley) was born 17 March 1875 in Objezierze, in the German partition of Poland. The town is southwest of the county seat at Oborniki. Stanley grew up in the small rural village with his brothers Joseph, John, and Jacob and two sisters, Marianna and Prakseda. The family attended church in town. He met **Malgorzata I. Antkowiak** (Margaret) at church and married her on 30 January 1898. Margaret was born 8 July 1876 in Nieszawa, a village to the east of Oborniki. They had two sons, Anthony and Ignacy, in Poland and immigrated with them in 1901. They came aboard the maiden voyage of the *SS Zeeland* from Antwerp, Belgium arriving in New York City on 23 April 1901. Ignacy did not survive infancy but they had more children in America: Veronika, Vince, Jan, Zophia, and Celia. Zophia too died in infancy and John died in his late teens.

The Biedny family lived at 16 Koons Avenue on the Eastside and all were naturalized together on 21 September 1921. Tragically, Stanley died

young on 14 June 1925 from complications to burns suffered in an explosion at Hall & Sons fire brick works where he was stoking a kiln. Margaret went on, living with her youngest daughter Celia until her death on 5 October 1948. Stanley and Margaret are buried in St. Stanislaus Cemetery in Cheektowaga, NY. They are not next to each other as the death of another family member took Margaret's place next to Stanley.

Eventually, Margaret's two sisters Josephine and Katherine also immigrated to Buffalo. Josephine came married to Thomas Flipowski and Katherine married Peter Laskowski in Buffalo. Margaret's brother Andrew was already living in Buffalo and sent for each sister. Because of this wife-initiated immigration, no other Biednys of this family immigrated to America. In fact, there are only three branches of Biednys in the U.S: Stanley's family, a Jewish family coming after WWII, and a farming family from Minnesota.

Stella's father, **Jan Fyda, Sr.** (John) was born in the village of Kruzlowo on 7 March 1884. John met and married his wife, **Maryjana Jachowicz** (Mary Ann), before immigrating. Mary Ann was born about 1887. They came to America in two phases: John arrived first aboard the new and fast *SS Kaiser Wilhelm II* via Hamburg, landing in New York City on 24 March 1904. He was planned to meet his brother-in-law Antoni, but that Tony never came. So, John was detained until his cousin Tony Tiurzak of Islip, Long Island came to get him. That cost him three meals at the detainment facility.

Mary Ann and their first child Julia arrived six years later aboard the more humble *SS Wittekind* to Baltimore, Maryland in June of 1910. The family reunited and settled at 42 Krupp Street on the Eastside and then bought the home at 80 Schutrum. Mary Ann died about 1920 and John married the newly immigrated Maryanna Parafincuk shortly thereafter. She was the only mother the children ever really knew; she died on 21 July 1955. John lived on until 10 June 1966. They are all buried in St. Stanislaus cemetery.



**John & Maryanna (2<sup>nd</sup> Wife) Fyda  
Anniversary c 1942**

John Fyda was a hardworking man who spoke mostly Polish. He had a good job at the New York Central Railroad and was able to put away many gold coins before they became obsolete to own. Decades after coming off the Gold Standard, he would still give them as gifts for weddings, christenings and the like. He purchased the duplex house at 80 Schutrum where eventually the Biednys family would live. The house was jacked up and the basement, which runs only under the back apartment, was hand dug. Back then you paid for the excavation by the block course. Being shorter in height and a frugal man, he stopped at 6 feet deep. Little did he know that his great grandchildren would grow to 6'6", and be hitting their heads on the joists for years to come!



In the late 1800s, the Catholic Church in America had an Irish and German hierarchy that coexisted with, rather than overtly battling, the "Papist" prejudices of a mostly Protestant America. By the 1880s this leadership began to wrestle with the waves of immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe. With these new flocks came languages and customs that conflicted with mainstream America and often disrupted the balance of religious power struck in the previous two generations.

This played out most notably in urban centers where proximity did not always allow for the "churches by ethnicity" mode seen in rural areas. In 1886 St. Adalbert was the first church fledged out of St. Stanislaus. Almost immediately upon founding, the parishioners were split over the governance of the real estate and the selection of the pastor. In 1895 nearly half the congregation left and bought land around the corner where they could establish their own parish, Holy Mother of the Rosary, on their terms. The local Bishop was having nothing to do with that approach and called in the police, which provoked mob violence. After a court battle, almost five years' operating semi-autonomously, and direct appeals to Rome, the parishioners could make no peace with the local Bishop.

So, the parish banded together with likeminded churches from Chicago & Detroit to Pittsburgh & Scranton to form the **Polish National Catholic Church** in 1900. Its founder, Fr. Francis Hodur, became the first PNCC Bishop when he was consecrated by the Old Catholic Church in Holland. Using a canonical construct known as the Union of Utrecht, the new denomination claimed Apostolic Succession back to Peter without the overlaying authority of Rome. Theologically very close to the Roman Catholic Church, it eventually left the Union in 2003 as Utrecht's views liberalized. Despite a Polish pope in John Paul II and much negotiation, the PNCC (now known as the National Catholic Church) has only limited relations with Rome.

My great-grandparents Jacob and Margaret were members of this movement and are buried under a fine marker at the old PNCC cemetery. Eventually, their children married back into the Roman Catholic Church. So, for our family, the movement was an aberration. As a testament to how things change, the original Holy Rosary building closed in 1989 and the congregation moved to an exurb, building its new Cathedral in a cornfield 20 miles from the city. The original church building is now a well-cared for mosque. The new owner replaced the crosses atop the steeples with crescent moons.

John Bartkowiak's father, **Andrzej Bartkowiak** (Andrew) was born in Nov 1883 in Ryczywół, Poland. Andrew emigrated as an infant with his mother and older brother and sister the following year (1884). Andrew's father Jacob Bartkowiak had arrived in America a year earlier (1883). Coming this early, they were one of the first Bartkowiak families in the City of Buffalo.

Andrew met his first wife, Stanisława Imbersowska in 1906 and they had a daughter Jane before Stella's death in 1910. He then married his second wife **Helena Majcher**. Nothing is known about Helen's immigration to the U.S. other than her family was from the Russian partition of Poland. Together Andrew and Helena had the four sons and five daughters mentioned above. After moving around on the Eastside, they purchased a home at 11 Newton Street a stone's throw from the railroad tracks leading to the passenger train terminal. According to the Railroad Retirement Board, Andrew worked for the New York Central Railroad as a mechanic and boilermaker from 1937-1951. He died 28 February 1957 at age 73. Helena died 19 June 1965.

The Bartkowiak's came to America through Castle Garden and a decade before the Statue of Liberty was erected. Ellis Island did not open until 1892. Andrew came with his older siblings, Michael and

Franziska and mother Margaret aboard the steamer *SS Suevia*. They left Hamburg on 4 June 1884, arriving in New York two weeks later. Andrew's father, Jacob, came on an earlier voyage of the same ship in April 1883.

My mom remembered only English being spoken at her grandparents' house as they stressed being American. Living at 11 Newton Street, which they bought for \$100 in 1888, Jacob and Margaret made a good home for the new family at the center of growth on the Eastside. They were present at the very foundation of Polonia in Buffalo. They were even swept into the creation of the Polish National Catholic Church, and are buried in the original PNCC cemetery near Harlem & Genesee in Cheektowaga, NY. Within a generation their children had married Roman Catholics and the family association with the PNC Church ended. Margaret died in 1918 and Jacob four years later. The house on Newton then passed to Andrew and Helena.

Lottie's father, **Stephen Joseph Dobosz** (Joe) was born in Biały Bór in the Austrian Partition on 10 January 1884. Joe immigrated aboard the *SS Batavia* on 25 May and arrived on 8 June 1903. He is listed as Hebrew in the Hamburg passenger records but all other records show him to be Catholic. It is also recorded there that he is traveling to Buffalo, NY to visit his cousin Ludwig Frys (see Frzys references to Przeclaw below). **Maryjanna (Barnas) Dobosz** (Mary Ann) was also born in Biały Bór on 1 November 1883. Mary Ann came separately to America from Bremen aboard the *SS Barbarossa* on 16 April 1903. She and Joe married in Buffalo on 5 June 1906. We believe they had known each other growing up but were not married until uniting in Buffalo. Together they had all their children (previously mentioned) in Buffalo.



Joe and Mary Ann made a home for the family at 62 Schmarbeck on the Eastside down Broadway from their parish St. John Kanty. Joe worked as a grinder at Pratt and Lamberth for many years. Mary was naturalized with the children in August of 1932. For reasons unknown, Joe was naturalized alone on 7 December 1944.

## **Objezierze & Powowko Parishes, Oborniki Powiat, Poznań (Wielkopolska) Voivodeship**

Stanley's father was **Antoni Biedny**, who was born in the village of Sławienko on 1 May 1839. He married **Franciska Pyssa** in Oborniki on 20 Oct 1864. Franciska was born in 1845 in the nearby village of Lulin. On Stanley's German birth papers, Antoni's occupation is listed as a "Shepherd." Together they had: Joseph, John, Jacob, Stanley, Maryanna, and Prakseda. Joe and John actually married sisters, but little is known of the others' lives in Poland.

Antoni's parents were **Andreas and Catherine (Zydorka) Biedny**, both born in Niemieskowo in the late 1700s. They were recorded in Latin as 'Semi Cmento' farmers meaning they cultivated a half-sized peasant claim. Catherine died of Cholera in 1852. Andreas then married Josepha Wadkowiak on 10 July 1853. He was 60; she was 45.

In the 1800's the long, thin, shallow Lake Objezierze formed the center of these villages. It has subsequently been drained, but with *Google Earth* you can see the crop fields shadowing where the lake had been. In Tony's time, the villages were not more than a few buildings along a road.

Objezierze was not very big, really only the church and a few cross streets. But, it had a large manor house of some note. The owners were known as patrons of the arts and luminaries of the day. Adam Mickiewicz, the Polish national bard, came to rest there.

Oborniki, the county seat for these towns, was founded before 1300 as a fortified village at the confluence of the Warta and Welna rivers. The town has been a center for trade ever since. It lies on the ancient “salt road” and routes to the sea. Glass manufacture has been going on for centuries. But the town remains small; even today Oborniki has a population of only 17,000.

The tiny settlements of Niemieszkowo, Stawienko, and their parish town of Objezierze, pepper the records of the Biedny family. Still today, they are agrarian villages west of the town of Oborniki, about 15 miles north of the major city of Poznań. Stawienko and Niemieszkowo are within a mile of each other on the edge of the Notecka Primeval Forest- now a natural preserve.

Poznań (Posen in German) was the first capitol of Poland. It is a major economic center – as it was even in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. Like “New York,” when my ancestors immigrated ‘Posen’ was both a city and a “state”- in Polish, a Voivodeship. In the 1800s, this area was part of the Voivodeship of Poznań, but since the 1999 reorganization this is part of the larger Wielkopolskie State.

Margaret’s father, **Laurence Antkowiak** was born near Nieszawa in 1838. He married **Marianne Majchzak** on 8 Nov 1863 in Objezierze. She was born about 1845. This village was to the east of Oborniki about 4 miles in the parish of Białężyn. Neither the Antkowiak nor the Biedny family owned land, but worked the fields of others.

The Antkowiaks must have had some seed money as the first family member to immigrate to the U.S., Laurence and Maryann's older son Andrew, not only made a good living for their family but were able to send for and help establish his three sisters’ families in Buffalo. Through this branch of the family we have pharmacists and physicians graduating from the University of Buffalo as early as the 1920s. It is through the Antkowiaks that we also have many accomplished musicians and, some say, a distant relation to Chopin.



From the German Empire Maps 1883

In the late 1700s, Poland found itself surrounded by some of the most powerful empires of that age. With a struggling, pseudo- democratic elected monarchy, the country was weak and ripe for pillage. In what is termed the **Partition**, three waves of coordinated actions among Russia, Prussia, and Austria-Hungary carved Poland up and by 1798 it disappeared from the map of Europe completely. It was restored as one of Europe's largest nations after WWI. Its borders moved west 100 miles after WWII, when it lost ground to Russia and gained parts of Germany.

So when researching European records of the 1800s (plus or minus 20 years) one needs to be aware that colonial powers held sway over Poland. The eastern lands under Russian control were the most agrarian as well as the poorest. The peasant worker did not move around much and could least afford to immigrate. The records are in the Cyrillic Script. The Poles of the southern mountains, controlled by Austria, fared a bit better. They were more mobile and had access to Baltic ports via the southern railway system. Their records are mostly in Latin.

The German west was the most prosperous area. This made the peasants more mobile and ready to immigrate -especially in the midst of the Germanization campaigns of the late 1800s which disallowed the use of Polish in school and gave preferences in civil work to German speakers. Church records are in Latin but civil registry work is in Gothic German. The Poles of all three areas were drafted into military service by their colonial masters; many immigrated before they could be conscripted.

### **Krużłowa Parish, Nowy Sącz Powiat, Krakow (Małopolska) Voivodeship**

Krużłowa, the home town of the Fyda and Jachowicz families, was in the Austrian Partition in southern Poland about eight miles east of Nowy Sącz. The place actually has three towns with similar names: Krużłowa, Krużłowa Niżna (lower), Krużłowa Wyżna (higher) which makes sorting out the families very difficult. Jan Fyda is also recorded as Wojciech Fuda/ Fyda in alternate sources. This region is close to the Carpathian Mountains and the forests of those foothills are just to the south of the towns. In the 1800s, this area was part of the Voivodeship (Province) of Krakow, but since the 1999 reorganization this is part of the larger Małopolska State.

### **Ryczywół & Białężyn Parishes, Oborniki Powiat, Poznań (Wielkopolskie) Voivodeship**

Andrew's father, **Jacob Bartkowiak**, was born 23 July 1857 in Ryczywół. It is both a parish town and a 'Gmina' or administrative district seat. It lies about 8 miles north of Oborniki. His wife **Malgorzata Janysak** was born there too, in July 1852. They married about 1870 in the town of Kiekrz before immigrating in the 1880s. Their eldest son Andrew was born in Ryczywół but his other siblings were born in the village of Pacholewo in Białężyn parish east of Oborniki - the same parish as the Antkowiak family! The Hamburg passenger lists call out 'Werdom, Posen' as Jacob's home place. This was a German term for the region – not a town name. By the time Margret came with the children, home places were no longer listed. But, by luck we have Ryczywół listed on a WWI draft card for Jacob. Like many Polish-speaking members of the German Partition, Jacob would be leaving Poland before being pressed into the Prussian Army. In the 1800s, this area was part of the Voivodeship of Poznań, but since the 1999 reorganization this is part of the larger Wielkopolskie State.

## **Przeclaw Parish, Mielec Powiat, Rzeszów (Subcarpathian) Voivodeship**

Joe's father, **Anthony Dobosz**, was born 24 March 1856 in Biały Bór, the son of **Joseph Dobosz** and **Francisca Napora**. Joseph was born about 1819 and married Francisca on 10 July 1854. His parents were **Mathias Dobosz** (b. 2 September 1794) and **Maria Zawora** (born about 1795) who married on 10 Feb 1817. Their respective parents were **Valentine & Eva (Busek) Dobosz** and **Paul & Agnes Zawora**. These four were born from 1760 to 1770. Francis' parents were **Adalbert Napora** and **Maria Rusin**, who were married on 22 November 1826. Their parents were **Jan & Marie (Kopacz) Napora** and **Bartłomiej & Agnes (Cholewa) Rusin**. The Rusins were from Tuszyma, the town just a mile west of Biały Bór.

Joe's mother, **Marianna Rusin**, was born in 1859. Her parents were **Anthony Rusin** (b. 1830) and **Eva Szalda** (b. 1832). Anthony's parents were **Joseph Rusin** (b. 1806) and **Anna Moskal** (b. 1808). Joseph's parents were **Walenty** (b. 1760) and **Maria (Ozmek)** (b. 1774) **Rusin** while Anna's were **Wawrzyniec** and **Zofia (Bartacz) Moskol**. Eva's parents were **Walenty Szalda** (b. 1790) and **Katarzyna Fryz** (b. 1799).

Mary's father, **Marcus Barnaś**, was born on 9 July 1849 in Biały Bór the son of **Adalbert Barnaś** and **Marianna Napora**. They were each born about 1822 and married 23 November 1841. Adalbert's parents were **Valentine** (b. 1774) & **Hedwegis [Bogdan]** (b. 1779) **Barnaś** who were married 25 November 1796. Marianna's father **Mathias Napora** was born in 1798 and married **Rosalia Ozimek** (b. 1805) on 3 Feb 1819. Mathias' parents **John & Marianna (Kopaczawza) Napora** were both born about 1770. Rosalia's parents, **Paul Ozimek** (b. 1772) & **Marianna Piskor** (b 1770) were married 9 November 1794.

Mary's mother, **Jullianne Fryz** married **Marcus Barnaś** on 3 March 1878. She was born 20 August 1856 to **Joseph Fryz** (1814-68) and **Sophia Gałda** (b. 1827) who married on 4 August 1851. Joseph's parents **Joannes Fryz** (b. 1777) and **Marianna Lanucha** (b 1780) were married on 27 February 1797. Marianna's parents were **Casimer & Regina (Piskowak) Lanucha** who were born in the 1750s. Sophia's parents were **Simeon and Helena (Napora) Gałda**, both born about 1800. Helena's father was **Wojciech Napora**.

All the events cited in the previous four paragraphs occurred in Biały Bór or Tuszyma, villages on the plain at the base of the Carpathian Mountains. Tuszyma lies along the Wisłoka River and Biały Bór was carved out of the forest that once covered the area. It literally translates "White Forest." They are in the Przeclaw 'Gmina' or administrative district seat, which is also a parish town of 1,200 people about 10 miles south of Mielec- the county seat. In the 1800s, this area was part of the Voivodeship of Rzeszów, but since the 1999 reorganization it is part of the larger Subcarpathian State.

The names of Dobosz and Barnas go back in this parish to the earliest records of the 1620's. However, the specific links through the 1700s are sketchy and broken. Note the repetition in the surnames: Fryz, Ozimek, Piskowak/Piskor. Through the Kopacz connection, we know for sure that Wojciech and Mathias Napora were brothers and that Helena may have been a sister. In the late 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries one family continued at the same house number for over 125 years. This area has excellent Austrian records. The births often list parents (with towns and ages) and grandparents allowing for easy tie-back to the marriage records. The tie between the post- and pre- Partition records is difficult, as they moved from paragraphed form in very small vellum books to the columnar forms of the Austrian Empire.

## It All Comes Together



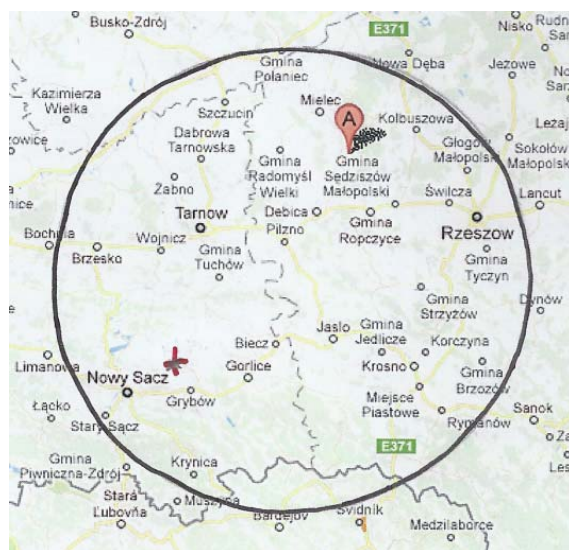
Oborniki Area,  
circle 20 miles across

It amazes me to think that Poland is roughly the size of North and South Dakota combined, and yet my roots touch back to two small areas in the west and south- each not much larger than an American county. This is quite typical for people coming to Buffalo (or Detroit, Chicago, etc., for that matter). You can see from my family tree that when people immigrated to Buffalo, they often came from the same region and sometimes the same town.

The **Biedny** family immigrated after marrying in the German Partition of Poland. Their births, marriages, and deaths occurred among a handful of towns in the same parish or adjacent parishes. Specifically, the Biedny ancestors came from settlements a few miles apart and 3 miles west of Oborniki. The Antkowiak family came from towns 10 miles east and north of Oborniki- still easily

within the "county." A generation earlier, the Bartkowiak family came from some of the same eastern towns that the **Antkowiaks** inhabited. In fact, the passenger lists show ships bringing both families to America at the same time. Although no direct kinship has been proven out on those voyages, it is clear they brought with them the same rural experiences of German domination.

The **Fyda** clan, who married into the Biednys in Buffalo, came from Krużłowa east of Nowy Sącz in the Austrian Partition. Moving to my mother's side of the family, the **Dobosz** and **Barnas** families came from southern Poland too. They and their allied families came from two adjacent villages east of the town of Przeclaw. These three families came from areas only 50 miles apart, but certainly did not know each other until my parents married and brought them together. Some of my immigrant ancestors from these areas were "Górale" Highlanders. Known now mostly from images of costumed folk dancers, back then the Górales represented a strong, proud people working hard in a difficult mountainous area.



South Central Poland,  
circle 80 miles across



View of Eastside with St. Stanislaus beyond

My parents, Jerry and Betty, each had these strong Polish roots. They and their parents helped build Buffalo's Polonia. They are the product of the first, urban parochial schools and occupied the first wave of housing in Kaisertown and the Eastside. They and their families transferred the homeland traditions to America. Even when they moved to the suburbs and started our family, they first came to the Polish suburbs! While

growing up, I did not know why everyone in my grade school had a Polish last name- I just took it for granted. With the exception of some Italians, my high school year book reads the same: Nowak, Pawlak, Katkowki, Mishka, etc. Now separated from it by many miles and the death of my parents, I am still drawn through Buffalo to my Polish roots in Europe.

It is hard to imagine today, but until about 1910, the Catholic Church in America was considered a **mission territory**. The new immigration from eastern and southern Europe was often assisted by efforts from the "home country." Religious Orders like the Salesians saw it as their duty to provide priests to minister to these transplanted flocks. Many new orders were also created for this service.

Cheektowaga, the suburban neighborhood where Betty and Jerry raised their children, has a perfect example of this: Fr. Pitass brought Felician Sisters from Poland to help him staff the parish schools of the Eastside. Originally they were to teach domestic arts to the girls only. But Fr. Pitass was quickly overwhelmed by the number of pupils and the sisters were then "invited" into all levels of teaching at Polish parishes throughout the Diocese. In 1905, the order established a Provincial Mother House on William Street in Cheektowaga, NY. The property encompassed several blocks and included: convents for the sisters, their postulants and novices; an orphanage for boys and girls with associated school and play fields, and a large Chapel. This chapel served the surrounding families and the Felician chaplain was the *de facto* parish priest until St. Josaphat Parish opened, four blocks away in 1907.

The parish actually ran a school out of a frame building in 1906. A single sister educated 76 pupils that year! A fire in 1924 destroyed the wood school and church. The parish moved another ten blocks west and replaced the old buildings with a brick complex including a combined school/church, a convent and a rectory. The parish outgrew the combined structure and built a new church in 1952 so that it could renovate the combined building to serve as a dedicated school. By 1962, enrollment was over 500 and a new school building was created with a gymnasium. Both the Old (K-6) and the New (7/8grade) School buildings were used in the 1970s when I attended. My brothers sent their children there in the 1990s. By then, there were no sisters teaching, and the only professed religious was the Franciscan Principal. The school is now closed.

Please note: All information on places and dates were authenticated by the author with first source records. Original documents and copies of the parish records, naturalization papers and other documents remain in the possession of the author, in trust for his family. The official name of a person, often as spelled in Latin records, is shown as **bold**, all other occurrences of the name use the common (or nick) name most often used during their lifetime. If that common name is not known the official name is used.

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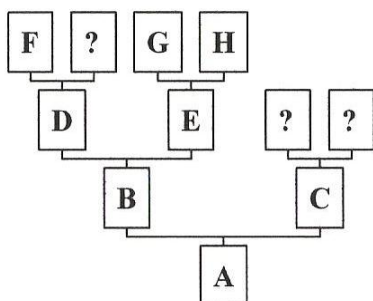
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### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

**Rosanne Betley**, 810 - 98th Ave. NW, #203, Coon Rapids MN 55433  
[<rbetley@hotmail.com>](mailto:rbetley@hotmail.com) is researching BETLEY in Maków Pódhalanski in Poland; WASIK in ? in Poland and in Weyerhauser WI; ULMAN in Pciem in Poland; PIEWINSKI in Potok-Stary, near Krajnik; and all in Minneapolis MN.

**Lonita (Lori) Fortier**, 69 Darlene St., St. Paul MN 55119 [<ljfortier5@msn.com>](mailto:ljfortier5@msn.com) is researching Jan RUDNICKI and SCHREIBER or SZREJBER in Russia/Poland and in Alberta Township, Benton County MN.

**Nancy Howe**, 2500 S.W. 17th Place, Cape Coral Fl 33914 is a new member.

**Grace Warzecha Kramer**, P.O. Box 23081, Vernon B.C. V1T 9L8, Canada is a new member. Her immigrant ancestors settled in Holdingford and St. Anna, Minnesota. She writes: "I learned about your society through my sister, Phyllis Warzecha, and my cousin, Paul Kulas. My cousin, Kathy Warzecha, has been gathering information about our family for years and soon plans to publish her work. If she isn't already a member of your society, I want her to be for all the work she has been doing for our family (*see entry below*). I look forward to reading your newsletter."

**Michael McGee**, 4233 Jefferson St NE, Columbia Heights MN 55421  
[<mlmcgee763@comcast.net>](mailto:mlmcgee763@comcast.net) is researching KUJAWA in Niestronno, Gorsany in Poland and in MN; DOMBECK in Niestronno and MN; HYLLA in Poland and in MN; GABRIELCZIK in Poland.

**Missing Branches ...continued on page 17**