

Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota Newsletter

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Terry Kita, President

Spring is a busy season for us, with programs scheduled for the first Saturday of March, April & May. A description for each is available on pgsmn.org. A link will be emailed to you prior to each program date. If you are a member and do not receive a link prior to the meeting, email us at pgsminnesota@gmail.com, and we'll send you a meeting link.

Steve Wasik, Newsletter Editor

Welcome to the 2022 Spring Edition of the Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota newsletter. The paper's history dates back to 1993, and as the new editor, I strive to continue the tradition of bringing you a paper you can be proud of and enjoy reading.

This is your paper, so I encourage you to reach out to us with your ideas and feedback. We are always looking for content, whether it be a family story, photo, recipe, or something else. We celebrate our roots, and we share our genealogy journey from Poland.

If you see something you like, and want to know more, let us know. We will be posting an "enhanced" version of future newsletters at pgsmn.org for you to:

- Get more information about articles and authors
- See new meetings & events
- Check current events dates & times
- Access to the next newsletter issue the day it goes to print
- Use accessibility tools to "listen" to the newsletter or easily enlarge font, print, copy, etc.
- And more being developed. We hope you enjoy!

Are you receiving our Emails? Komunikat?

Don't miss out on receiving important messages about upcoming program meetings, and the Komunikat electronic member bulletin, emailed 6 times a year with current news and articles as well as genealogy tips in a short video.

Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota

President—Terry Kita

Vice President—Paula Colwell

Treasurer—Gary Wolf

Secretary—Rosanne Betley

Director—Connie Waldherr

Director—Heather Pedersen

Director—Kay Freund

Director—Mike Stodolka

Our Mission

Since 1991, our society has been assisting Polish-Americans with roots in Minnesota and elsewhere to explore their family history.

- Create interest in Polish ancestry and heritage.
- Promote quality genealogy research.
- Encourage the exchange of genealogical information through meetings, forums and publications.
- Preserve the family and institutional history of Poles in Minnesota and globally.
- Work with other genealogy organizations that have similar interests and goals.

About Our Newsletter

A publication of the Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota, a branch of the Minnesota Genealogical Society, and a 501(c)(3) organization per the U.S. Internal Revenue Service rules.

Connect With Us Anytime

Answering Machine: 612-460-7883

Email: newsletter@pgsmn.org

2022 Society Program Meetings

These program meetings will be held virtually. A link will be sent via email approximately one week prior. You can also access all past recorded program meetings under “Members” on pgsmn.org.

Apr 2, 10am—Your Next Step: Write Your Family History

Were your ancestor’s royalty or members of the working class? Were they rich or barely surviving? Whoever they were, we need to preserve their memory. The program will discuss a process and format that makes transforming your research efforts into a written family history easier. Learn a method to easily save your information and tips to help them “come alive.” If we do not preserve the memories and stories of our ancestors for future generations, who will?

About the Speaker: Steve Szabados is a genealogy speaker, author, and columnist. He received a Bachelor of Science Degree from the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana, Illinois and an MBA from Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Illinois. He has been researching his ancestors for about fourteen years and has traced ancestors back to 1600s New England and 1730’s in Poland, Germany, Bohemia, and Slovenia. He has given numerous presentations to genealogical groups and libraries in Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin. His goal is to share his passion for Family History. His website is www.steveszabados.com.

May 7, 10am—Genealogical Sources at the University of Minnesota-Duluth Archives

Join us as Aimee Brown, Archivist and Curator of Special Collections at the University of Minnesota-Duluth (UMD) will be joining us to discuss genealogical resources available at the UMD Archives. Specific mentions will be related to people who worked or attended UMD, as well as local history collections pertaining to Northern Minnesota. The talk will highlight records related to Polish Americans as much as possible, including information on the records of Gnossen Township, named by Polish settlers for the Poznan province city of Gnossen/Gnieszno.

Sep 3, Oct 1, and Nov 5 Program Meetings will be in the Summer Issue!



Join us Saturday, March 19th, 9-10am, for the Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota Live Social Hour! Fire-up your internet contraption or just call-in and enjoy an hour of fun discussion about Polish genealogy, food, music, culture, upcoming events & more. Sit back and listen, or share YOUR story with the group. More details and links soon! - *Steve Wasik, Host*

Pisanki, The Decorated Easter Eggs in Poland

by Dagmara Dziekan | lamusdworski.wordpress.com

The custom of decorating the eggs – an ancient symbol of life and rebirth – was already known in the antiquity. The oldest discovered examples are over 5,000 years old: eggs with various decorations were unearthed in Assyria, ancient Mesopotamia. The custom was popular in many parts of the world, for example ancient Egypt, Persia, Rome and China (where the colorful eggs were gifted with the arrival of spring). It prevailed in all the Slavic cultures up until today.



Example of pisanki with tear-shaped motifs, source: Wiano.eu.

On the Polish lands, the oldest decorated eggs discovered so far come from the 10th century. They were unearthed during the archaeological excavations in Ostrówek (near the city of Opole) where remnants of a Slavic settlement from the early Piast Dynasty era (the first Polish ruling dynasty recognized by the Holy Roman Empire) were found and examined. Similar eggs were discovered in numerous other archaeological sites, for example in Giecz (located in the region of Greater Poland) from the same time period.

The discovery in Ostrówek is the most remarkable: the archaeologists discovered there preserved remains of not only coloured eggshells but also 7 life-sized 'egg sculptures': 4 made of limestone and 3 out of clay, some of them covered with green and yellow stripes and trails. The clay eggs were created in a method similar to the process of making vessels, however some of them were decorated by the batik method: with the use of wax, just like in the contemporary times (article in Polish about that discovery: [here](#)).

The tradition of decorating the eggs was present on the Polish lands throughout the centuries. The best sources describing the custom come only from the 19th century, the time that marked the beginning of the widespread ethnographic research as systematized professional studies in Poland.

The word 'pisanki' is commonly used to name all the 'easter eggs' in Poland nowadays, but that word was originally used to name only one (the oldest) type of the decorated eggs. It is derived from the verb *pisać* – to write. Sharing and gifting the pisanki to family and friends was common as symbolic wishes of health and abundance 'written' with symbols on the eggshells.

Ritual of 'writing' on the eggs was performed strictly during the times of fasting (Lents) before Easter. In many regions of Poland it was a custom reserved for women (if a man entered the room by accident, he'd be rushed out and a ritual of 'purification' of the room with salt was performed).

Pisanki could've been prepared as early as 3-4 weeks before the Easteron wydmuszki (emptied eggshells), but no later than on the day of the Holy Friday. The motifs painted on pisanki have a deep symbolic meaning, connected to rebirth, fertility, beauty, protection, and sun symbolism (vitality). Pisanki are then added into special Easter baskets along with other symbolic food products, and blessed on the Holy Saturday in churches.

These food baskets are called święconki (singular: święconka). Pisanki made fresh out of the boiled eggs are later eaten on the Easter Sunday during the main Easter breakfast. They are divided into small portions and shared around the table with all the people present by the Easter table (similarly to sharing of the opłatek during Christmas – see my earlier post about Polish Christmas).

The blessed food products are remnants of 'pagan' Slavic food offerings for the spring, syncretized over the centuries with the celebrations of Easter. Before the dominance of the Christianity in Poland, the eggs were decorated for the spring equinox: Slavic feast called Jare Gody. The original background of the custom is almost forgotten nowadays, but gains popularity revived by the Rodnover movements (Slavic Native Faith).



Preparing the święconka (Easter basket) in the Sierpc Ethnographic Museum

What is your Easter egg decorating tradition? Did you decorate them when you were younger? What's the best way to eat Easter eggs? Share your story!

Newsletter Answering Machine: 612-460-7883, Email: newsletter@pgsmn.org

Polish Cooking—An Art Form

by Marie Przynski | przynski@comcast.net

My cousin Danny and I were talking, and he stated that he knew one thing: his mother was the greatest cook in the world. I advised him that I beg to disagree, as it was my mother (her sister) who would take that honor. We both laughed, and I then replied that actually, the greatest cook was our grandmother, Annie, as she had taught both, and we started to talk about the myriad of cooking delights we had experienced in her kitchen.

Going to Grandma's could mean Lemon Meringue Pie, the filling just tart enough, with the fluffiest meringue topping, which was oven toasted into brown peaks. On equal par were her infamous sugar cookies, and if you were lucky enough, you would be chosen to stay inside and help cut them out using a mason jar with a 3-inch wide opening. They were all so exquisite. And her home baked bread was to die for.

In addition to the above, she made Czarnina. (My grandfather would go to their farm neighbors and buy a couple of live ducks). What great fun we had watching my grandfather and various uncles in the garage with live ducks, preparing them for my grandmother to use. Of course, grandchildren would make themselves scarce at this time or you would be put on the defeather line. And even though those feathers would ultimately end up in a pierzyna (feathered comforter) that we all loved sleeping in, it didn't make the task any easier.



Image: pasja1000 from Pixabay

My grandfather made the best kielbasa, churning up the pork at the kitchen table with an old hand crank, and he was liberal with the garlic. I believe I inherited his taste buds, as today I gravitate towards kielbasa that is garlic laced. He, his brothers, and their sons were avid fishers and game hunters, adding to whatever produce from the garden that was in-season, and all of this would appear on the dinner table. So going to my grandparents and other family homes are filled with incredible food memories.

My favorite food item is ultimately Grandma's pierogi. Again, the mason jar was pressed into service and the rounds were cut meticulously. She made all kinds, but my favorite was her cheese/green onion filling. She used to make these stuffed pillows of goodness with farmer's cheese, but after moving to town and modernization, she turned to small curd cottage cheese and green onions.

Do you have a recipe to share? Answering Machine: 612-460-7883, Email: newsletter@pgsmn.org

The preparation was a sight to behold—After visiting the creamery, the cottage cheese was drained to remove as much liquid as possible, the green onion were diced or minced into very small pieces, and the filling was pressed into the dough. A fork was used to seal the edges—she claimed her fingers didn't work so well when she was older, so she explained that she had to use a fork. But no matter, they still were exquisite.

After putting them together, she would boil them in a large pot on the stove (it was a monstrosity, and I was told that when they bought the house in town that they removed the stove and replaced it with the stove from the farm.) Definitely a huge affair, with numerous burners, and there was always be something being prepared, with delectable aroma constantly tickling your smell buds.

After the boiling, the pierogi was sauteed in butter and given a nice browning. The dinner menu might be something like: pork chops, pierogi, mizeria (cucumber) salad, red cabbage salad, potato salad or beets, and the lemon meringue pie for dessert. Smaczny!

Behind the house in town, they had purchased an acre lot and had an extensive vegetable garden—everything from cabbage, potatoes, peas, onion, carrots, and even had raspberry bushes. If we landed on the doorstep at the right time, we would be allowed to pick raspberries—I think we ate more than we brought back into the house. Of course, there were lush flower gardens surrounding the house from Spring until Fall. My grandmother put her hands to good work. And my cousin Danny and I continue to attempt to recreate / carry on the cherished cooking methods passed down to us. ♥

Mizeria (Cucumber Salad)

In spring and summer, Mizeria was a constant staple on our table. My mother and sister would eat it like a snack item.

- 2 medium cucumbers
- 2-3 finely chopped spring (green) onions
- ½ cup sour cream
- 2 tablespoons vinegar
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- Finely chopped dill
- Salt & pepper



Image: mrsjoneskitchen.com/mizeria

Peel cucumbers, slice lengthwise, remove seeds. Slice very thin. Spread out the slices and salt (to taste). Let stand for 15-20 minutes, then pat dry with paper towel. In small bowl, combine sour cream, vinegar, spring onions, dill, sugar, salt and pepper to taste. Add sliced cucumber and mix. Chill. Will make approximately 3-4 servings. Enjoy.

The Spring Folk Tradition of Drowning Marzanna

by Nicole Foss | historyfoss@gmail.com

As the last weeks of winter draw to a close, signs of spring are in the air. In Poland and throughout Polonia, Lenten practices are taking place (likely after the consumption of a *pączki* [pączek] or a dozen). Alongside the liturgical calendar, other age-old traditions are also being practiced. Some customs did not survive the journey to new homelands. Others were not carried through to the modern era via political, cultural, and economic upheavals. However, if we look to Poland for ancient celebrations of spring, we can find many. Both villages and metropolitan areas still boast traditions that signal the retreat of winter, and the rebirth of life.



Painting by Maria Orłowska-Gabrys
depicting the Drowning of Marzanna

While some traditions, such as making *pisanki* and weaving budded willow branches into “palms” for Palm Sunday have clear connections to both Easter and spring symbolism, other vernal traditions have more obscure origins. Of these, the “Drowning of Marzanna” might confound those not familiar with the practice. In some parts of Poland, around the time of the Spring Equinox on the fourth Sunday during Lent, a human figure is fashioned of straw and dressed in women’s clothes. This “effigy” represents Marzanna, described sometimes as the representation of winter, death, and misfortune. She could also be described as the personification of the earth’s “death” state during the winter.

In some places, the figure of Marzanna is made from a special kind of straw, leftover from the *chochoły* – the bundled sheafs of straw prepared in the fall to shelter delicate trees and shrubs over the winter. *Chocholy* are more than just a functional item—they were viewed in folklore as spirits that protected the household, but whom were easily angered and could grow dangerously mischievous. Tied into bundles or fastened onto sticks, this straw takes a human shape. The effigy of Marzanna is then dressed in the traditional clothing of a girl or woman, and sometimes further outfitted with accessories such as a coral necklace and wreath. Once she has been given a physical form, Marzanna is placed on a pole, and carried with much fanfare—usually by a group of children or young adults—to the nearest body of water, and ceremoniously tossed in.

Amid Marzanna’s ritual drowning, the group sings songs cautioning that “Death is hanging around, looking for trouble.” As the figure floats away, the singing bids her “swim across the seas. Let flowers bloom, and fields turn green.” Once Marzanna has been dispatched to a watery grave, the group runs home without looking back, stepping carefully to avoid a fall that could foretell an untimely death. In some parts of Poland, a ritual burning brings an end to Marzanna rather than water; in other places, her fate includes both burning and drowning. In some villages, it is the girls who are charged with carrying Marzanna to her watery end.

Once the figure has been consigned to a river or lake, the girls (or in some locations, boys), return to the village carrying a *gaik*—a branch or small tree, usually an evergreen, bedecked with ribbons, trinkets, colored eggs, and bells. The group joyously proclaims in verse, “We have taken death from the village, and brought the green branch to the village.”

The children then take the *gaik* through the village, wishing each household health and luck, and receiving small gifts of food in return. The timing of the parading of the *gaik* varies by location. In some places it takes place immediately after the drowning of Marzanna; in others, on Easter Monday, the Wednesday following Easter, or during Green Week in May. In some communities, there is less dramatic ending to the effigy. In the Beskid Śląsk area of Upper Silesia, the tradition was for two girls to carry a large doll from home to home in the village while they sang Lenten songs. After receiving gifts of money and eggs for their service, the doll would be carefully put away to be brought out again next year.

Who was this Marzanna, whose violent ending ushers in the joy of spring each year? As mentioned above, she is generally understood to represent the personification of winter, death, illness, and misfortune. However, it is likely that her identity was not always so one-dimensional.

Fifteenth-century Polish priest and chronicler Jan Długosz likened Marzanna to the Roman goddess Ceres (whose Greek counterpart was Demeter), the goddess of agriculture. In an intriguing link to winter, Ceres/Demeter is perhaps best known for the theft of her beloved daughter by the god of the underworld. During her daughter’s absence, Ceres/Demeter’s grieving led her to neglect the harvest, bringing famine and death to the people. Perhaps the dramatic dispatching of Marzanna’s effigy is meant to awaken her from her cold, dark slumber to the new season of life and rebirth that has arrived.

—*Nicole Foss is a Minnesota-Based Historian of Kashubian Descent*



Two girls receive small gifts in return for walking the *gaik*, Kozłów, Silesia prior to 1939. Source: Śląska Bibliote-

Sources

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Lamus Dworski (2016) Drowning and burning of Marzanna in Poland. Electronic document, <https://lamusdworski.wordpress.com/2016/03/19/marzanna/>.

Polish School of Charlotte (2012) “Polish Tradition of Drowning ‘Marzanna’”. Electronic document, <http://polishschoolofcharlotte.org/blog/2012/03/22/polish-tradition-of-drowning-marzanna/>.

Śląska Biblioteka Cyfrowa (Silesian Digital Library), Electronic resource, <https://www.sbc.org.pl>.

Znayenko, Myroslava T. (1980) *The Gods of the Ancient Slavs: Tatishchev and the Beginnings of Slavic Mythology*. Slavica Publishers, Bloomington, Indiana.

AllThingsPolish.org (Calendar)

Upcoming Programs, Meetings, Events, Festivals & More (All Times Central)

Some content provided by Judith Tam. Sign-up for her email

Saturday and Sunday all Winter | Only Sundays in Fridley

Farmers Market: Locally grown root veggies, squash, fresh mushrooms, humanely raised meats, eggs, baked goods, honey, syrups, sauces and specialty foods from independent producers. Storage root vegetables, fresh microgreens, mushrooms, humanely raised meats, cheese, eggs, honey, baked goods, jams and jellies, syrups, pierogi, salsa, locally roasted and packaged coffee, and other foods from independent producers. Schedule & Other Locations: stpaulfarmersmarket.com/

March 26, 1pm (Online) —The History of the Toys of Our Polish Ancestors

YOU MUST REGISTER BY MAR 20: www.paf-welcomehome.org

March 26, 7pm—A Polish Celebration at 7:00 PM, FREE OF CHARGE

Holy Cross Church, 1621 University Avenue NE, Minneapolis

Music of Surzynski, Borowski, Gorecki, Bacewi, Rychling, Lukaszewski, Nowowieski, Paciorkiewicz played on the Holy Cross Organ by Gail Archer, Director of Music, Barnard College of Columbia University.

March 27—Farmers Market at Bachman's Stores

The “Pierogi Lady,” Natasha Obuhov will be at Bachman’s (81st and University Ave). March 13 and March 27. Pierogi sells for \$8 a dozen or 3 dozen for \$22. They are hand-made and frozen by the dozen. She offers the following varieties: Potato and onion, Potato and cheese, Potato and mushroom, Potato and bacon, Sauerkraut, Refried beans, Ground beef, and Cherry. She is also selling cabbage rolls in Marinara sauce. A box which contains 4 rolls sells for \$4.15. She offers frozen Beef Stroganoff for \$10.00 too. There is a lot of information on natashaspierogi.com about stores that carry her products, how to order from her and have it delivered, about her Pierogi Wagon, and other farmer’s markets she will be at during the summer. For the Holy Cross folks, Sentyrz has three flavors of pierogi: Sauerkraut, Potato and Onion, and Cherry. They are open on Sundays.

March 19, 9am (Online)—Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota Spring Social Hour! (See page 3)

Members will be sent a link and #. Not a member right now? Send your email to newsletter@pgsmn.org

May 1—40th Anniversary of PACIM: pacim.org

May 7—Chicago Polish Constitution Day Parade

After a two-year void, Chicago’s Polish Constitution Day Parade will take place on Saturday, May 7, 2022. The 131st parade will commence at Balboa Drive and will travel up Columbus Drive. It is considered the largest of all Chicago’s Polonian events. In addition, they are planning a Polish flag raising ceremony, a pre-parade Brunch, and a special Mass at Holy Trinity. The post-parade Celebration banquet will take place on the evening of May 7.

June, July & August Happenings will be in the Summer Issue and at allthingspolish.org

Send us your Happening!

Newsletter Answering Machine: 612-460-7883 | Email: newsletter@pgsmn.org

Support Polish Fooderies & Business

Sara Jane's Bakery—2853 Johnson Street NE, Minneapolis. 612-789-2827. Call and place an order two days in advance if you want to be sure to get some. They offer custard (dipped in chocolate), raspberry (glazed), peach (glazed), strawberry rhubarb (glazed).

They offer pączki through April 16. You should order ahead unless you get there first thing in the morning. They are the real round shape. They also sell whole King's Cake, including the baby, like those sold at Mardi Gras in New Orleans.

Emily's Bakery—1212 Vermillion St. **Hastings**, MN, 651-437-3338. Closed.

Jerry's Foods in Edina and Woodbury (Apparently the Robbinsdale location is closed.)

Woodbury: 7760 Hargis Parkway, 651-458-0240. You may special order at this store only. They would appreciate 24 hours' notice but will have some ready for tomorrow.

Dorothy Ann Bakery—Paczki, The Authentic Polish Donut

An overstuffed bundle of joy: Plain, Custard, Lemon, Raspberry, Blueberry & Prune.

Specialty flavors: Fresh Strawberry, Black Forest, Chocolate Custard, Caramel Apple, Rose Hip, Plum Butter. Address: 710 Commerce Drive, Woodbury, MN. Phone: 651.731.3323. Calling ahead is recommended. Order online at shop.dorothyannbakery.com. Website: dorothyannbakery.com

Polish Arts Center Sale—quite substantial discounts in some cases. Go to polartcenter.com and then click on Sale Items.



Donuts – Pączki. Image by Ceja on Pixabay

Some calendar and food content provided by judytam@usfamily.net

Do you have a favorite Polish / Ethnic food place you want to share with us, and why you like it? We're always looking for good deli's, restaurants, food wagons, markets and more!

Newsletter Answering Machine: 612-460-7883 | Email: newsletter@pgsmn.org

Missing Branches

Szukam cię—I'm looking for you

Welcome to the new members listed below. Thank you for being an important part of the Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota. We strive to provide you with inspiration and knowledge that will help you on your quest in discovering your roots.

1. Dambowy, William, wdambo1@gmail.com, Researching: DAMBOWY of Falcovice, Silesia settled in Morrison County, MN; ORZECZOWSKI settled in Benton County, MN; ZULAWSKI settled in Benton County, MN; KOSTYROK of Falcovice, Silesia settled in central Minnesota; PLOMBON of Falcovice, Silesia settled in central Minnesota.
2. Davis, Theresa, terri0048@gmail.com, Researching: DZIAKOWICZ of Podhajce, Austria, Poland/Ukraine settled in Minnesota; WIECZORKIEWICZ of Podhajce, Austria, Poland/Ukraine; KUBINSKI settled in Minnesota; BRODZIAK; KASSEWICA of Podhajce; BASZNIAK.
3. Gottwalt, Diane, gottwaltdiane@gmail.com,
4. Huebl, Lori, lori.huebl@gmail.com, Researching: PYKA of Opole settled in Opole, MN; MALESKA of Poznan settled in Holdingford, MN area.
5. Janiszeski, Wayne, waynejaniszeski@gmail.com, Researching: JANISZEWSKI of Jarozewo, Żnin, Bydgoszcz, Poland settled in Wilno, Lincoln County, MN; TYKWINSKI of Jarozewo, Żnin, Bydgoszcz, Poland settled in Wilno, Lincoln County, MN; WAURZYNIAK of Słupy, Szubiński, Bydgoszcz, Poland settled in McLeod and Lincoln County, MN; KABAT/KABACZYNSKI/KABOCSYMLIR of Poland (German ruled) settled in Centreville, Manitowoc County, WI and Wilno, Lincoln County, MN; KORCAL/KORKAL/KORKEL of Poland-Holstein Germany settled in Plattsmouth, Cass County, NE and Wilno, Lincoln County, MN; WESOLEK of Jarozewo, Żnin, Bydgoszcz, Poland.
6. Kinsey, Mary, mary@kinsey.us, Researching: KOWALCZYK; SCHWIENTEK; SCHWINTER; MARSOLEK; FAUTSCH.
7. Kramm, Mary, maggi8888@gmail.com, Researching: TRZECINSKI of Warsaw Upiłka and Borowy Młyn, Bytów, Pomorskie settled in Le Sueur County, MN; GOSTOMCZYK of Kiełpiniek Królewski, Chojnice, Pomorskie settled in Lexington, Le Sueur County, MN; DARZYN CIEMIŃSKI/CIEMIŃSKA of Prądzona, Bytów County settled in Lexington, Le Sueur County, MN; LEMAŃCZYK of Kobyle Góry, Lipnica / Bytów, Pomorskie; STANISLAWCZYK of Borowy Młyn, Lipnica, Bytów, Pomorskie; BUKOWSKI/BUKOWSKA of Brzeźno Szlacheckie, Lipnica, Bytów, Pomorskie.
8. Krystosek, Allen, ajkrystosek@gmail.com, Researching: KRYSTOSEK
9. Poveromo, Judith, judithann.poveromo@gmail.com
10. Retka, Michael, Michael.retka@gmail.com, Researching: RETKA of Borzyszkowy settled in Sobieski, MN; BRYNIARSKI of Nowy Targ settled in Browerville, MN.
11. Strot, Patricia, strot003@yahoo.com, Researching: WARPECHA of Galacia, Nowy Targ settled in Minnesota; BATKIEWCZ of Galacia, Nowy Targ settled in Minnesota.
12. Zechmeister, Ronald, ronandmarleen@comcast.net, Researching: MAKOSKI
13. Zilka, Ben, ben.zilka54@icloud.com, Researching: ZILKA/ZYLKA of Bydgoszcz; KNOPIK of Poznań; SPYCHALLA of Silesia; STOLTMAN.

Pgsmn.org Updates

From Poland to Minnesota

Have you experienced "From Poland to Minnesota" on pgsmn.org yet?. Even if you aren't working on your family history, it can be fun to explore the areas of Minnesota where our Polish ancestors settled. We now offer information in the Poland section of the project and encourage you to explore. It includes an Overall Poland page with the country's history and culture, as well as many resource links. You will find a Galicia and Kashubian section, with more to come. We welcome additional content that you may have, as well as feedback on what is available now.

1950 Census Released April 1, 2022

The release of the 1950 census will be on April 1, and although not an April Fool's prank, the census will not be searchable by name for several months. To search before the name index is available, it will be by location, more specifically "enumeration district." To access the census, you will need to have the enumeration district of your desired location.

Enumeration district is the area to be canvassed by a single census taker in the census period. The area varied in size from several city blocks to an entire county depending on the location. To obtain the "ED", you will have to know where they were located at the time of the census. Not sure, information that might reveal the location could be address books, birth, marriage or death records, city directories, phone books, family diaries, employment records, etc. Don't forget to ask family, relatives, and friends for information.

All your questions are answered at the National Archives site and there is even a devoted area for genealogists - with valuable information and resources - and it covers much more than just the 1950 census. <https://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy>.

Library Collection

The Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota maintains a collection of books, newsletters, CDs, microfilms, and maps at the Hoffman Library & Research Center. The books in the Polish section are listed on pgsmn.org & they are shelved together in the library. In addition, our collection also includes:

- Newsletters from at least a dozen genealogical societies in the USA-adjacent to listed books.
- Eight published Polish family histories in the Family History section of the library.
- A number of books and periodicals in the Minnesota section of the library.
- A dozen books catalogued by the Dewey System-adjacent to books listed
- 4 map collections -Poland, German Empire, Austrian Empire, and Poland topographical.
- 3 CDs, including the encyclopedia of Polish villages, and towns-Słownik Geograficzny
- Microfilmed Minnesota church records.

This year we will categorize, & then rearrange books in our collection to make them more user friendly. We will also list each item in our collection on the website, along with its location. We encourage members to familiarize themselves with the Polish Library collection.

Purple Heart Recipients-Registered in the Roll of Honor?

By Nadine Guilbault, nadine17543@yahoo.com

While researching my husband's grandfather, Daniel J.F. Jacobs of Buffalo, NY, I found the paperwork for his Purple Heart, and made a few discoveries I would like to share.

It is unknown how many Purple Hearts have been issued. The National Purple Heart Hall of honor estimates there are 1.8 million Purple hearts awarded. This is only an estimate. Army and Air Force records were destroyed in 1973 at the St. Louis fire of the National Personnel Records Center. The medal was often given out to soldiers on the spot, for example while in the hospital the General would walk down the rows of injured service personnel and hand them out with no record of who received it or that the General even came to a certain hospital. This was done often during the Vietnam, Korean, and World War II wars.



The Purple Heart is the 6th highest medal of honor a soldier can receive. It was originally called the "Badge of Military merit" and was established in 1782 by President George Washington. Only three men are known to have received it. The Purple heart from 1932-1942 was only awarded to wounded or killed service personnel by enemy action on or after 5 April 1917. This award was issued RETROCATIVELY and had to be applied for.

Fourteen years after World War 1 the 1932 ruling-General Order #3 conferred upon 136 World War 1 veterans the Purple heart. It was given EXLUSIVLEY to the Army and Army Air Corps and could not be given posthumously to the next of kin.

After many changes to the Purple Heart medal rules, recipients who qualified had expanded to as late as 25 April 1962, "it authorizes posthumous awards to those killed on or after 5 April 1917 upon application by their next of kin." (thepurpleheart.com).

It took 44 years after the end of World War 1 that the revised language stated "Any member of the Armed Forces of the United States who, while serving under competent authority in any capacity with one of the U. S. Armed Services after 5 April 1917 has been wounded, killed, or has died after being wounded by enemy action." (thepurpleheart.com).

commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/
File:Purple_Heart_Medal.png

Daniel Jacobs was discharged from the Army in 1919 (World War II) serving as an Ambulance driver, he received a gunshot wound to his arm, left foot and right knee, he survived his wounds. He submitted his paperwork-Certificate of Injury form, Honorable Discharge paperwork and other requested paperwork.

He was awarded his purple heart on January 15, 1936 and it was determined he had 10% permanent wounds and was granted a pension of \$10.00 per month for life. Today (2021) that would be about \$189.00. The average price of a house in Buffalo, NY at this time was about \$6,000. This was a great help to the family at the time who had two children and a wife. After the war Daniel continued his career as a Postal Carrier until retirement.

Purple hearts are numbered, but do not correspond to who received them. Purple hearts with a name engraved on it signifies the Veteran died in battle, and was sent to the family, if they had contact information on where to send it to.

If you believe your military service person did not receive their Purple Heart for wounds while in service or for their death you can apply retroactively. Even though Army records were burned in the 1973 fire in St. Louis, be sure to check with your Veterans local Veterans County office. I have found in past searches, for example in Wisconsin that they have duplicate information that St. Louis held. The local Veterans office is a great first step as they know what paperwork is required and can help you.

Check the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor (thepurpleheart.com) and click the "Find a Recipient" page to see if your ancestors name is listed. If it is not, consider enrolling your Veteran. The process is a simple two-page form, they do request a picture of the Veteran and if you so choose, you can include up to 5 pages for a story or other documents. Cost: Free.

Sunday, August 7, 2022 is National Purple Heart Day.

Special Honors goes to the following 3 recipients who received 10 Purple Hearts:

- Charles Berger
- William G "Bill" White, U. S Army (WW2, 9; Korean War, 1)
- Curry T. Haynes, U. S. Army (Vietnam War)

Additional Sources:

- medalmulisha.com/purple-heart-guide.html
- purpleheart.org/
- en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Purple_Heart
- purpleheart.org/HistoryoftheMedal

Polish Church Records of St. Paul & Minneapolis Archdiocese at MGS Library

Microfilm Reels (MGS Library) In the early 1990's, the Archdiocese of St. Paul/Minneapolis microfilmed parish records within the Archdiocese. The St. Paul Archdiocesan Archives allowed genealogy organizations to purchase copies of these microfilm reels. Microfilm reels for many, but not all, of the churches of the Archdiocese are available at the Minnesota Genealogical Society Hoffman Research Library in Mendota Heights, MN.

The Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota purchased church microfilm reels for the MGS library collection for the following eleven (11) churches considered ethnically Polish:

1. All Saints, Minneapolis
2. Holy Cross, Minneapolis
3. Holy Trinity, South Saint Paul
4. St. Adalbert, Saint Paul
5. St. Casimir, St. Paul
6. St. Hedwig, Minneapolis
7. St. John the Baptist, New Brighton
8. St. Joseph, Delano
9. St. Joseph, Lexington
10. St. Mary Czestochowa, Delano
11. St. Philip, Minneapolis



Indexing Project—John Rys indexed early records for these 11 eleven churches primarily for years prior to 1940. Databases contain: 25,357 baptismal records; 5,200 marriage records; & 2,759 burial records.

Printed Indexes Available at MGS Library—Indexes of these marriage, baptismal and burial records are available in printed hardcopy at the Minnesota Genealogical Society (MGS) Hoffman Research Library. Indexes are located in the “Polish Materials Section”.

Search Available at pgsmn.org—These Polish church databases: marriage, baptism, burial records, are available for searching in the “Members” section at www.pgsmn.org.

Surname Custom “Family Ties” Reports Available—Custom printed reports prepared from the marriage and baptismal church records can be created for a specific surname or names upon request. This customized report finds all occurrences of a specific surname for all baptisms: whether the surname is entered as the surname of a baptized child, child’s father, child’s mother, or child’s godparent. For all marriages: whether the surname is entered as the surname of the bride or groom of the marriage, or parents and witnesses.

This “Family Ties” report can be requested from John Rys by e-mail at john@john.rys.name. Label the e-mail “Family Ties Request”. The report will be e-mailed to the requester. For each report, a donation to the Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota of \$20 is suggested.



Member Spotlight

Ten Year Anniversary for John Ryś

John Ryś recently celebrated a 10 year anniversary in October, 2021 on receiving the Wigilia Award Medal from the Polish Genealogical Society of America (pgsa.org). John was recognized ten years ago, on October 1, 2011, with this Commendation called the Wigilia Award which consists of a Silver Medal, presented to him at the 2011 PGSA Annual Meeting in Chicago, Illinois.

“The Wigilia Award Medal is given each year in recognition of a person or organization who has made a significant contribution to the field of Polish genealogy. This year’s award (2011) recognized the efforts of John Ryś who distinguished himself in the preservation of the heritage of Polish immigrants to the state of Minnesota. John’s work is a labor of love and we salute him and wish him continued success in his journey.”

The commendation specifically recognizes the following contributions John has made:

- 1) Indexing approximately 25,000 Minnesota Polish baptismal records and 5,200 Minnesota Polish marriage records,
- 2) Indexing 3,000 Minnesota Polish White Eagle Insurance (PWEA) records,
- 3) Analysis of this extracted data published in the Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota Newsletter and the PGSA Rodziny Journals,
- 4) Maintaining a personal Ryś Genealogy Website, which enabled two European Ryś relatives to find him through his website on the internet, leading to an e-mail relationship with Wanda Ryś living in Poland and Josef Ryś living in Germany (still exchanging Christmas cards) and,
- 5) Making oral presentations at genealogy conferences.

The Wigilia Award Medal remains in a prominent place at the Ryś household.





Smok's Corner

The pandemic has altered everyone in a variety of ways. Mainly for me, it has restricted my travel adventures, and kept me housebound. It only took a few weeks before the desire to do something, anything outdoors, would become daunting.

Back in the day, late 90s, I used the computer at work, but did not have any connection in my home. My daughter who had embraced the computer as an adolescent, and was my version of a “hacker,” finally came over and told me that she was dragging me into the 20th century. Off we went, and I bought my first home system. I even made sure that it was the same as my work computer, so that I didn't have to do a lot of learning, and I bless the day that I learned how to work on stuff and send it back and forth. Since then, I have evolved into even better systems, and have experienced many breakthroughs, and have several great apps that I work with. I came to Facebook late in the game, and it really wasn't until 2010 or so, that I started to explore other Facebook pages.

deviantart.com/
manapi

Several Polish and Genealogy pages later, I was getting all kinds of education and information about various seminars or webinars and started participating. Additionally, I have become almost paper free, and save a ton of postage by paying online. I even order groceries, and then pick up without having to get out in public. I do confess that I look forward to the day that we can move out and about again.

When the global pandemic began, meetings, training sessions, and just general conversation through computer use became a way of life. I've learned about many great genealogical resources and search techniques and have managed to get back to the late 1700s of my mother's paternal line – and with Poland digitizing their records, the search is getting easier, and there is hope to further the research. The internet has been a great tool, and I have been able to see other genealogical societies, gain access to their resources and participate in a variety of webinars.

Recently, one such webinar was put on by the South Orange County California Genealogical Society. (occgs.com) The presenter was Nancy Loe of Sassy Jane Genealogy, and she delightfully explained how to explore federal and state censuses, military records, courthouse records, newspapers, and migration record for the United States. This presentation was free. There was a handout – a general guide, but Ms. Loe gave so much more information, I have four pages of notes. This society offers a variety of webinars (many free) and worth checking out.

And yes, I also looked at the Sassy Jane Genealogy site (sassyjanegenealogy.com) to see what other types of webinars would be available. I'm delighted to say that Ms. Loe will be presenting for the MGS “Researching Ancestral Locations in Prussia, August 2022”. When my grandfather had immigrated, Poland didn't exist, and he is listed as Prussian. I also investigate Prussian research in addition to Polish and have found many interesting research avenues, including the land records from 1772 – that was a banner day for me.

Making an opportunity out of being housebound, there are a ton of resources available for viewing, with many of them being free. Off to the next webinar...

Minnesota Fest Volunteers Needed

Interested in volunteering at MN local community fests this summer? Contact us! We may work one or more of the following:

- The Little Falls Dam Festival—June 18th
- The Bowlus Fun Day Festival—July 3rd
- Wilno Summer Festival—TBD
- Winona Kasubian Fest—TBD
- Twin Cities Polish Festival—TBD
- Your 2022 Fest Idea?

We converse with everyone regarding their family's research efforts and hopefully get new members.

We asked members: What are you looking forward to in '22?

❖ **Kay**—Making good progress on indexing Baptism, Marriage and Death records from St John Cantius Catholic Church (New Ulm Dioceses) located in the village of Wilno, Lincoln County, Minnesota.

Being able to attend Polska Kielbasa Days in Ivanhoe, MN (held the second weekend of August) to share with the attendees information about undertaking genealogical research on their Polish ancestors.

Publish an updated Polish family history as we are planning a family reunion for my father's side of the family for the summer of 2023. (This will be the 150th anniversary of Lincoln County, MN, founded in 1873.)

The families of all four of my grandparents settled in Lincoln County between 1882 and 1886, all of whom were members of St John Cantius Catholic Church in Wilno, MN.

❖ **Heather**—I can't wait for our members to see all the genealogical tools and resources the From Poland to Minnesota team has put together and available online, for free, for all our members! Anything you wanted to know about Minnesota and its Polish History.

Newsletter Contributors Needed

- Recipes to add to the Polish Family Food History
- A family photo or two with a funny or interesting story.
- In a sentence, paragraph or page, tell us what genealogy means to you?
- What are you looking forward to in 2022?

Answering Machine: 612-460-7883

Email: newsletter@pgsmn.org

Back Cover—Kalisz, The Oldest Town in Poland

None of Polish towns can be proud of the older written specification than Kalisz. This specification is 1800 years old. In II century A.D. Greek geographer Claudius Ptolemeus explicitly mentions a town Calisia in his "Geography Outline" and this town is identified with today's Kalisz.

In the ancient times there was an amber route through Kalisz which connected The Roman Empire with the Baltic coast. And already then it was a trade settlement where the Roman merchants stayed in their way to the north looking for the Baltic amber.

The traces of living in a place of today's Kalisz are even older than the specification of Ptolemeus. They reach 8 thousand years B.C. and - which is confirmed by the archeological researches - keep the continuity till our times. Read more at kalisz.info

Back Cover Image by David Mark, Pixabay

