



Our Polish ANCESTORS



THE QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF GREATER CLEVELAND

JAN. / MAR. 2014 VOL. 23 NO. 1

“Cleveland's Sprint Queen” Polish American Olympian Stella Walsh

By Trina Goss Galauner

Legend states that the original Olympic games were established by Heracles (or Hercules), the son of Zeus. At Olympic games held in 776 B.C., a runner named Coroebus became the first Olympic champion in recorded history. These games were held every four years until the year 393 A.D. when Holy Roman Emperor Theodosius I censored them for being pagan. In the late 1800s, a Frenchman named Pierre de Coubertin rallied to re-establish the Olympics and the Games of the I Olympiad were held in April 1896 in Athens, Greece.

The country of Poland has participated in the Olympic games since 1924 and their athletes have won more than 280 medals. But it would be Polish American track star from Cleveland, Ohio who would secure the gold medal for Poland in the 100 meter race at the summer Olympics in Los Angeles, CA in 1932. Her name was Stanislawa Walasiewicz and she was later known as Stella Walsh.

Stella was born in Wierzychownia, Poland (then Russian Poland) on April 3, 1911 to Julius (Julian) Walasiewicz and Weronika Ucinski. Julius had left Poland prior to Stella's birth to immigrate to the U.S. He arrived in Philadelphia on the Graf Waldersee on November 10, 1910 and went to live with his brother, Boleslaw, on Warsaw Street in Cleveland. He obtained work as a roller in the steel mills and sent for his wife and baby daughter. Stella and her mother arrived in Baltimore on the Chemnitz on July 1, 1912. Weronika would give birth to two more daughters, Sophia and Clara and they would eventually settle in their home at 6630 Clement Avenue in May of 1926.



Stanislawa Walasiewicz, 1926
Courtesy of www.cleveland.com

Stella attended Immaculate Heart of Mary's grade school and then moved on to South High School. She would hone her running skills on the track at South High. At the age of 16, she made her debut at the Cleveland Press Junior Olympics and won a gold medal running the 50-yard dash. Her amazing speed and agility qualified her to compete for a spot on the U.S.

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Welcome

If you are not already a member of the PGSGC and would like to become one and receive this quarterly newsletter (cost is \$24.00 per year), please contact Membership Chairman, Ron Kraine, at ronkraine@aol.com for more information.





Letter from the President

It's been three months since my last letter and about all there is to report is snow and cold! The 2014 meeting season hasn't gotten off to a good start because of the weather! The January 7th meeting was canceled due to extreme sub zero temperatures. I figured there was no sense in risking our members' health. February 4th wasn't much better! It wasn't as cold during the day but there was a threat of a snow storm later on that evening. Since it looked good during the day, I refrained from canceling the meeting. That was an error in judgement on my part! I got about a half hour into my trip to the meeting when the heavy snow started coming down. I continued on to the meeting as did nine other hearty members. The ten of us socialized until 7:45 p.m., and when it appeared that no one else was going to show up, I canceled the meeting and told everyone to be careful driving home.

We held our annual Christmas Party on December 3rd and we had our smallest turnout ever! Actually, for the first time, our expenses were greater than our income! This is something we'll have to address for the 2014 party. Those that did attend the party had a great time and were treated to some good food and desserts. As usual, nobody went home hungry! I would like to thank all those who helped to make the party a success, either by cooking, working in the kitchen, set up or clean up. You all contributed to make the evening enjoyable.



Back for another year as officers of the PGSGC are left to right: Ron Kraine (VP), Ben Kman (Treasurer), Sonia Chapnick (Secretary), and John F. Szuch (President)

Our organization's main concern for 2014 and the future is to try and get new members to join. Somehow we need to reach out and get younger generations interested in their family history and their Polish ethnic background. Any suggestions would be greatly appreciated.

John F. Szuch, President

Polish Genealogical Society of Greater Cleveland

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A Polish Sweetie - Helena Modjeska

By Trina Goss Galauner

Over the Christmas holiday our family took a vacation to Florida. On our drive down from Ohio we stopped at a Cracker Barrel restaurant. After our meal I had a craving for something sweet. Near the register was a small bowl of candies called "Modjeskas". Of course, with a name that sounded Polish, I had to try one. The sweet confection was one I had never tasted before. It was soft caramel surrounding a delightful marshmallow. I was pleasantly surprised and it satisfied my sweet tooth. But I wondered, why was this sweet candy named "Modjeska"? A quick Google search on my iPhone traced the candy's name back to a Shakespearean actress named, Helena Modjeska.



Helena's mother, Jozefa Mizel Bendowa was a widow of a successful property owner and Polish patriot named Szymon Benda who died about 1834. When Szymon died, he left his middle class widow with two houses on which to support her three eldest children. Helena was born Helena Jadwiga Mizel in Krakow, Poland on October 12, 1840. It was rumored that she was the illegitimate result of an affair her mother had with Prince Wladyslaw Sanguszko. After Helena's birth, a music teacher named Michal Opid moved in with the family and in 1842, Helena's youngest sister, Jozefa, was born. Even though Helena referred to him as her legitimate father, Michal Opid was not the father of Helena and Jozefa. However, both girls took the surname Opid as their own. Opid died in 1845 but Helena credits him with cultivating her love of the arts at a young age.



Helena Modjeska, 1878
Courtesy of www.lib.utk.edu

The city of Krakow in the 1840s and 1850s was a depressed town marred by political unrest. Since the partitioning of Poland in 1795, Krakow was a divided city at the border of Austrian, Russian and Prussian control. The Free City of Krakow was established in 1815 by a treaty between Austria, Prussia and Russia which made it a hub of Polish political activity and rebellion. After the November uprising of 1830-31, Austria occupied the city and after the unsuccessful Krakow uprising of 1846, Krakow was annexed to Austria leading to further political turmoil. The Austrian bombardment of the city in 1848 introduced a young Helena to the horrors of war and death.

The great fire of Krakow in July 1850 destroyed Jozefa's properties. Up until the fire, Jozefa was able to manage her assets well and provide prestigious educations to her older sons and private tutoring for her daughters. Now she was left with only a small coffeehouse she had established which would support the family thereafter. This left the family somewhat impoverished. Helena and her sister would now study at St. John's Convent with occasional lessons in French, dance and music.

Later in 1850, a married man estranged from his wife named Gustaw Zimajer moved in with the family. He would serve as the family's German teacher and theatrical mentor and would call himself "Mr. Modjeski". Gustaw would introduce Helena to Shakespeare, take her to the Krakow Theatre and eventually woo her to marry him despite their age differences. Helena's



theatrical interests were also influenced by her older brothers, Jozef and Feliks, who were actors, and Szymon, who was a musician who studied at the Vienna Conservatory. Her constant interaction with performers, along with Zimajer's guidance would lay the groundwork for the formation of Helena's professional theatre career.

Helena would become the star in Zimajer's travelling theatre troupe. He would go by the stage name "Gustaw Modrzejewski" and she would be "Helena Modrzejewska". The touring troupe travelled by foot or in wagons throughout the Austrian partition of Poland to Bochnia, Czerniowce and Nowy Sacz performing nightly. During their theatrical tour, Helena would give birth to two children, Rudolf (Ralph) and Marylka. The troupe was not highly regarded in aristocratic circles but Helena's performances had caught the attention of the higher social classes. Through connections, Zimajer had Helena engaged by the Lwow Theatre and later by the Czerniowce Theatre. He pushed to have her master the German language so that she could perform in the German partition but Helena's patriotism to her native Poland made her reluctant.

Due to unconfirmed reasons, Helena left Zimajer taking her son with her in August of 1865. Her young daughter, Marylka, had died suddenly the previous Spring and it was insinuated that her death was the result of domestic violence at the hands of Zimajer. Helena had also learned that her marriage to Gustaw was not valid since he was still legally married to his first wife. So she returned home to her mother's house in Krakow and accepted a four year theatrical contract with the Krakow Theatre. Her husband abducted their son Rudolf in 1866 and Helena would struggle over the next four years to get Rudolf back.

During this time, a Polish aristocrat revolutionary turned nationalistic journalist, named Karol Bozenta Chlapowski, would discover Helena performing in the Krakow Theatre and fall in love with her passion for the arts and her shy beauty. Due to Helena's middle class upbringing and the fact she was a performer (an occupation looked down upon by the socially elite), it was difficult for her to garner the respect of the higher social classes. But several donned her as being able to enact the roles of high class characters with an expertise unsurpassed by other famed actresses. Chlapowski would write reviews that would elevate Helena to that level and as they courted he would bring her into the elite social circles. In 1868, through these measures and her marriage to Chlapowski, she debuted at the Warsaw Imperial Theatres and would become their prima donna for the next 8 years.

But stress and illness would plague Helena during those years. In 1870, Helena returned from a three month vacation in the Carpathian Mountains with typhoid fever. Her recovery was slow and a false report of her death filled newspapers. She was also discouraged by the behavior among the artistic community at the Warsaw Theatre. The multiple personalities and selfish motives of the directors, writers and performers made it difficult for the company to produce the true art that Helena was passionate about. Also at that time, a novel written by a jealous ex-suitor called "The Actress" was published which mirrored her early life with Zimajer and painted a picture of a naive, dominated woman who is taken advantage of. Later, a play written by the same man called "The Bat", was a satire that too closely caricatured Helena's current husband as a freeloader off his wife. Several performers and theatre personnel succumbed to diseases over a few years and her beloved actor and step brother, Feliks, died from tuberculosis in 1875. These events, attacks, a grueling theatrical schedule and fatigue from previous illness ultimately lead Helena to take a leave of absence from the Warsaw Theatre.

Helena and her husband kept company with a small, tight knit group of writers, performers and artists. One of the group suggested a trip to the U.S. and raved about the benefits of the California mountain air and a lush land full of orchards and livestock. Chlapowski added that they should start a colony there and settle on a ranch where they could farm and live a simple life of artistic expression.

So the group set out for the U.S. on the Donau and arrived in New York on August 5, 1876. They would eventually sail on to San Francisco, by way of the isthmus of Panama, and settle on a farm in Anaheim. But the colony would end up a failure as the group was not accustomed to the labor required of farmers.

Helena hired an English teacher to learn the English language so she could retake the stage in America. Her intent was to become a sensation in the United States and then return to her beloved Warsaw Theatre. She Americanized her name to Helena "Modjeska" and debuted in San Francisco at the California Theatre on August 20, 1877. She was a complete success and soon after began her East Coast tour in New York and then spent three years in London before returning to the U.S. She would become an American theatre sweetheart and several times travel back to Poland to perform in her homeland.

.....continued on page 8



Unidentified Family Photos

These two photos were found in the collection of my great grandmother, Mary Wisniewski-Moniak. It is believed they date from 1895-1910. There is a family story that Mary's mother had given birth to twins that died young and that these may be the twins. Birth records for all her live births within that time frame have been found and none are twins. The exact seating, blanket placement, and pose of the child seem to indicate this is the same child being photographed, one without a cap and one with a cap. If anyone has any thoughts as to the identity of these babies, please contact Trina Galauner at Galauner@yahoo.com.



Welcome — New Member — Witamy

Elizabeth Joy
2811 George Ave.
Parma, OH 44134
digitaljoyful@aol.com

Strzyzakowska(i), Trojanowska(i), Suchodolska(i), Krasowska(i), Majerowska(i),
Kanarek, Dabek, Kinach, Porzucek, Sen, Liszkiewicz, Kruczkowska(i),
Dynowska(i), Iwanczyk

David Reed
11485 Cheyenne Trail, #301
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GMDaver1@aol.com

Giza, Nadolski, Bachorz, Bednarek, Gorzelanczyk, Juzwa, Bortnyk, Sawicki,
Drzewiecki, Dowkopolyj

Kay Sturgeon
5706 Archmere Ave.
Cleveland, OH 44144

Wolkovich, Wolkoff, Wolotkovich, Buch, Butch, Safrona, Rzeszatek

Lottie M. Hotz
2806 George Ave.
Parma, OH 44134

Cielma, Roback

Jacqueline Lasik
4048 Washginton Park
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Staron, Szendel, Fregant

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735-23 Windward Dr.
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Kowalik, Lech, Augustine

Mary Lenzo
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Garfield Hts., OH 44125
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Chudzik, Dragan

Cindy Mallik
1702 Roselawn Rd.
Mayfield Hts., OH 44124
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Malek, Malec, Malak, Malleck, Molek, Molleck, Mollick, Kasionczuk, Kasanczuk,
Kasonucuk



“Cleveland’s Sprint Queen” continued from page 1.....

Olympic team. However, she was not yet a naturalized citizen so could not represent the U.S. in the 1928 Olympics.

She continued her training and began competing in world competitions and breaking records. She broke her first world's record in 1930 when she ran the 50 yard dash in 6.1 seconds. Again, she set a goal of representing the U.S. in the 1932 Olympics but the Depression had cost Stella her job with the New York Central Railroad. Without a job, she could not afford the trip to Los Angeles for the 1932 Olympics. So in order to be able to compete, she took a job with the Polish Consulate in New York City and represented Poland at the 1932 Olympics. She won the gold medal for Poland that summer and with a world's record in the 100 meter race at 11.9 seconds. Her amazing feat drew attention to her "long, man-like strides" as termed by one official. Fans quietly questioned her gender.

Once again, Stella desired to compete for the U.S. in the 1936 Olympics in Berlin, however, since she had previously competed for Poland the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service denied her citizenship deeming her ineligible to compete. Stella competed for Poland again but this time taking the silver medal in the 100 meter race losing to U.S. competitor Helen Stephens. Ironically, a Polish newspaper challenged Helen's gender with allegations that she was actually a man. Helen submitted to a physical by Olympic officials to prove the allegations were false.

Stella continued to compete worldwide during and after World War 2. In 1947, she finally was granted U.S. citizenship and announced her plans for the 1948 Olympics. But the Olympic rule book still prohibited her from competing for the U.S. due



Image from Cleveland Plain Dealer, March 6, 1930

to her previous Olympic allegiance. And now that she was a U.S. citizen, it would be unpatriotic to compete for Poland. So Stella continued to compete nationally. She would collect over 5,000 medals in her lifetime. She pleaded with Olympic officials to allow her to compete for the U.S. in the 1952 Olympics but was still turned down due to her previous competing for Poland.

In August 1955, she married Harry Olson while she was living and working in California. An Olympic rule allowed an athlete who previously competed for another country to compete for the U.S. if the contender is married to a U.S. citizen. Stella went to the tryout for the 1956 Olympics but her 44 years of age had caught up with her and she could not qualify for the Olympic team. Her marriage to Olson lasted only two months.

Stella continued competing and she topped off her career in a U.S.-Soviet international competition in July 1958. After that, she concentrated on studying Eastern European training techniques and training children to compete in track and field. She returned to Cleveland in 1964 after spending 15 years in California and took a job as a bartender at the Sunrise Cafe near E. 71st Street and Harvard. She also trained future Olympians, Irena Kirszenstein and Eva Klobukowska. Stella was inducted into the Polish American Sports Hall of Fame in 1974, the U.S. Track and Field Hall of Fame in 1975 and the Ohio Women's Hall of Fame in 1978. The Cleveland Recreation Department hired her as a trainer in 1979.

On December 4, 1980, Stella began planning for a reception for the Polish women's Olympic basketball team who was



coming to Kent State University for an exhibition game. She left her home on Clement Avenue to pick up some party supplies at the Broadway Avenue Uncle Bill's department store. On her way back to her car, she was accosted by a gunman and shot in the abdomen. The attack was reported immediately but the paramedics did not arrive quickly enough. The Cleveland Police took Stella to the hospital but she succumbed to her injuries. Police believed the murderer intended to rob her but when she struggled he shot and ran.

When an autopsy was performed, her transgender was discovered. Stella was born with an abnormality called mosaicism in which she possessed both male and female genitalia. But despite her questionable gender, Stella was mourned by her fans. Her memory lives on through South High School's Stella Walsh Recreation Center. While her murder remains unsolved, she will be ever known as an Olympic champion and "Cleveland's Sprint Queen".

Postscript: An investigation of Stella's gender by the International Olympic Committee concluded that Stella Walsh would retain all of her medals, and all of her national and world record-setting race times remain credited to her as a female athlete.

Polish Americans and the Olympics

By *Trina Goss Galauner*

Since the official first World Olympics in 1896, there have been few Olympians that consider themselves Polish Americans. Some earned the Gold, Silver or Bronze and some went home with the honor that they competed for their country at this famous event. Here are a few of their stories.

Myer Prinstein (born Mejer Prinsztejn) is considered the first Polish American Gold Medalist. He was born in 1878 in Szczeczyn, Poland, the son of Polish Jews. His family immigrated to the U.S. when he was 5 years old and settled in Syracuse, New York. At Syracuse University he was captain of the track team. He competed in his first Olympic games in 1900 in Paris and won the Gold medal for the U.S. in the Triple Jump.

Stella Walsh (born Stanislaw Walasiewicz) was a well known Polish American track star who, ironically, never competed for the U.S. at the Olympics. Immigrating with her parents at the age of five and having grown up in Cleveland, Ohio, she was not an American citizen by the time of her first Olympics in 1932. When she was unable to afford the cost to travel to the Olympics, the Polish embassy offered her a job if she would compete for Poland. She wished to compete for the U.S. at future Olympic games but an Olympic rule banned her from ever being able to. She won the Gold medal for Poland in the 100 meter dash at the 1932 Olympics in Los Angeles.

Norbert Schemansky was born in Detroit, Michigan, the son of 1st generation Polish Americans. He was the first weightlifter to earn four Olympic medals. His interest in weightlifting began in the late 1930s but his competing was interrupted with the outbreak of World War 2. Schemansky enlisted in the Army and fought in the Battle of the Bulge. When he returned from the war, he resumed his training. When he asked his employer for a leave of absence in order to compete in the Olympics they fired him. At those 1952 Olympics in Helsinki, Finland, he beat the Soviets and brought home a Gold medal.

College ice hockey legend Len Ceglarski was born in 1926 in Walpole, Massachusetts. His parents, Antoni and Stella Ceglarski, were Polish immigrants. Len was an All American left wing at Boston College on their 1949 NCAA championship team. He also played baseball at Boston College and had the best batting average in New England as a senior second baseman. Len was a member of the U.S. Olympic hockey team that brought home the silver medal from Oslo, Norway in 1952. He started his hockey coaching career in 1958 at Clarkson College and returned to coach at his alma mater Boston College in 1972. In



Myer Prinstein, 1904
Courtesy of the Chicago Historical Society



1992, he retired as the coach with the most wins in the history of college hockey.

Figure skating sweetheart Tara Lipinski was born in Philadelphia in 1982. She was the only child of Jack Lipinski and Patricia Brozyniak. Tara started competing at a young age and in 1994 won the U.S. Olympic Festival competition. Then in 1995, she placed second in the junior level at the 1995 U.S. Championships. Her skill won her a spot to compete at the 1998 winter Olympics in Nagano, Japan. Her amazing triple loop/triple loop combination and triple toe/half loop/triple Salchow sequence secured her the gold medal. At age 15, she became the youngest ever ladies' Olympic Figure Skating Champion and the youngest single gold medalist in Winter Olympic history.

Polish Americans that have just competed at the 2014 Sochi Olympics include Joe Pavelski (USA Men's Hockey Team), J. R. Celski (USA Speed Skater), Lauren Cholewinski (USA Speed Skater), Alyson Dudek (USA Short Track Speed Skater) and Megan Bozek (USA Women's Hockey Team). There is a rumor that Krakow is a Polish bid for the 2022 Olympics. How fun would that be for a Polish American Olympic contender?

"A Polish Sweetie" continued from page 4.....

In 1893, she was asked to speak at the World's Fair Auxiliary Congress in Chicago regarding women in theatre and on the position of women in her native country. Other women from Russian Poland were also to speak but refused the engagement. During Helena's speech she apologized for the absence of these other speakers stating it was due to the government's restricting the freedom for Poles to speak of their situation under Russian and Prussian rule. News of her speech reached newspapers immediately and her words would ban her from traveling and performing in Russian Poland.

Her health would plague her again in 1895 as she suffered from thrombophlebitis and became ill for several months. She tried to return to acting but continually fell victim to illness. Her engagements became shorter and less often and in 1907 she retired from the theatre. Helena died at her home in Newport Beach, California on April 8, 1909 at age 68 and is buried in Krakow. Her autobiography "Memories and Impressions of Helena Modjeska" was published posthumously in 1910.

Regarding the "Modjeska" candy, when Helena appeared at the McCauley Theater in Louisville, Kentucky in 1883, candy maker Anton Busath was so enamored with her performance that he asked her permission to create a candy and name it after her. The original recipe Modjeska "caramel biscuit" is still sold at Muth's in downtown Louisville. If you stay at a hotel in Louisville, you may just find a "Modjeska" on your pillow.

*On an interesting side note, Helena's son, Ralph Modjeski, was a world reknown engineer responsible for the building of the San Francisco Bay Bridge, the Quebec City Bridge and the Benjamin Franklin Bridge.

FURTHER READING: *Memories and Impressions of Helena Modjeska* by Helena Modjeska
Starring Madame Modjeska by Beth Holmgren

EUCLID AVENUE OPERA HOUSE.

The Management beg to announce they have arranged with Mr. H. J. Sargent for

One Week Only

AND

CHRISTMAS AND SATURDAY,
Commencing MONDAY, December 23d, the Famous Actress, MME. **HELENA**

MODJESKA,
(COUNTESS BOZENTA)

Supported by a Dramatic Company selected with great care to accompany her during her present season.

MONDAY	[CAMILLE
TUESDAY	FROU FROU
CHRISTMAS MATINEE.....	EAST LYNNE
CHRISTMAS NIGHT.....	CAMILLE
THURSDAY	ADRIENNE
FRIDAY	ROMEO AND JULIET
SATURDAY MATINEE.....	FROU FROU
SATURDAY NIGHT.....	EAST LYNNE

Box Sheet now open. MONDAY excursion from Ashtabula and intermediate stations. Thursday excursion from Norwalk, Sandusky and intermediate stations.

advertisement for Helena Modjeska
Cleveland Plain Dealer, December 23, 1878



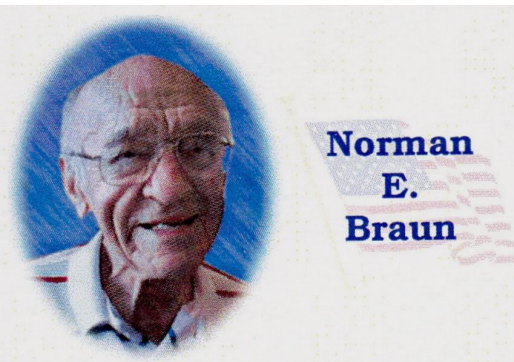
PGSGC Family Tree

By John F. Szuch

Our Family Tree added a new sprout with the addition of Fr. Jason Soltysiak, the new Pastor of St. Mary's PNC Church where we meet. He and his wife, Natalie, were transferred here from Scranton, PA via the University of Hartford in Connecticut, Westfield, MA and Naugatuck, CT.

Father arrived in time to be able to attend our annual Christmas party. I believe he enjoyed the food and the company of our members in attendance. We look forward to years of working with Fr. Jason and his parish.

Unfortunately, as is sometimes the case, I have to report the loss of one of our members. On December 27, 2013, long time member Norm Braun passed away at the age of 95. His death came 5 months after that of his wife, Edna. Norm was a native Clevelander and graduated from John Adams High School on the southeast side of the city. He attended Fenn College briefly before being drafted in January of 1941. He spent 4-1/2 years in the U. S.



Army's Finance Corps and was stationed at various locations in the Pacific Theater. After his discharge in July of 1945, he met Edna and they married in November of 1946. They had two sons, Don and Ralph.

After 35 years at Cleveland Builders Supply as a Sales Manager, Norm retired to his second career as a volunteer. He was very active with the Garfield Heights Historical Society and other church and senior help activities. Around 2003, he was named "Garfield Heights Volunteer of the Year"!

Members of the PGSGC were well aware of his helpfulness. If you needed help with a document translation or trying to locate a town, Norm was the man to talk to. He'd often stay after a meeting to help someone with their genealogical problem and sometimes even spent time outside of the meeting working on it. His pleasant and cheerful smile will be missed by all. An interesting fact about Norm was that he wasn't Polish but German and could trace his family back to the 1500s!

If you have some family news, please email me at pulaskipro@aol.com.

Schedule of Speakers for Upcoming Meetings

March: Ron Marec, Member, *Trivial Pursuit in Polish History*

April: Judith Cetina, Cuyahoga County Archives, *Spirits in the Rhodes House and Records at the County Archives*

May: Members, *What Was Your Most Memorable Genealogical Fine? Where Did You Find It? And How Did You Find It?*

June: Chris Staats, Staats Genealogical Services and Seminar Chairperson for Western Reserve Historical Society's Genealogical Committee, *U.S. Research Topics using Family Search (tentative)*





Cleveland's Polonia: Poznan

The neighborhood's history stems back to the arrival of Ansel Young and family in 1817. Ansel was a tanner and a fuller with a factory on Doan Brook near Wade Park Avenue. Ansel Avenue was named after Ansel Young as his home once stood there.

In the 1830s, German immigrants such as Henry and Christina Hecker settled in the area. A German immigrant named Joseph Hoffman arrived in 1850. He and many other German immigrants were gardeners by trade.

As early as 1878, Poles were settling near E. 79th Street and Superior Avenue. These Poles were primarily Prussian Poles. They came to Cleveland to work in factories and probably chose the area because of the existing German population. The neighborhood became known as "Poznan", named after the Polish province that the immigrants were from.

By 1892, the Polish population in the area was large enough to establish a Polish Roman Catholic parish. Joseph Hoffman donated the land for St. Casimir's Church located on Sowinski Avenue. St. Casimir's is the 2nd oldest Polish parish in the city of Cleveland.

The neighborhood of Poznan encompasses the area bounded by Liberty Blvd., E. 79th Street, Superior Avenue and St. Clair Avenue.

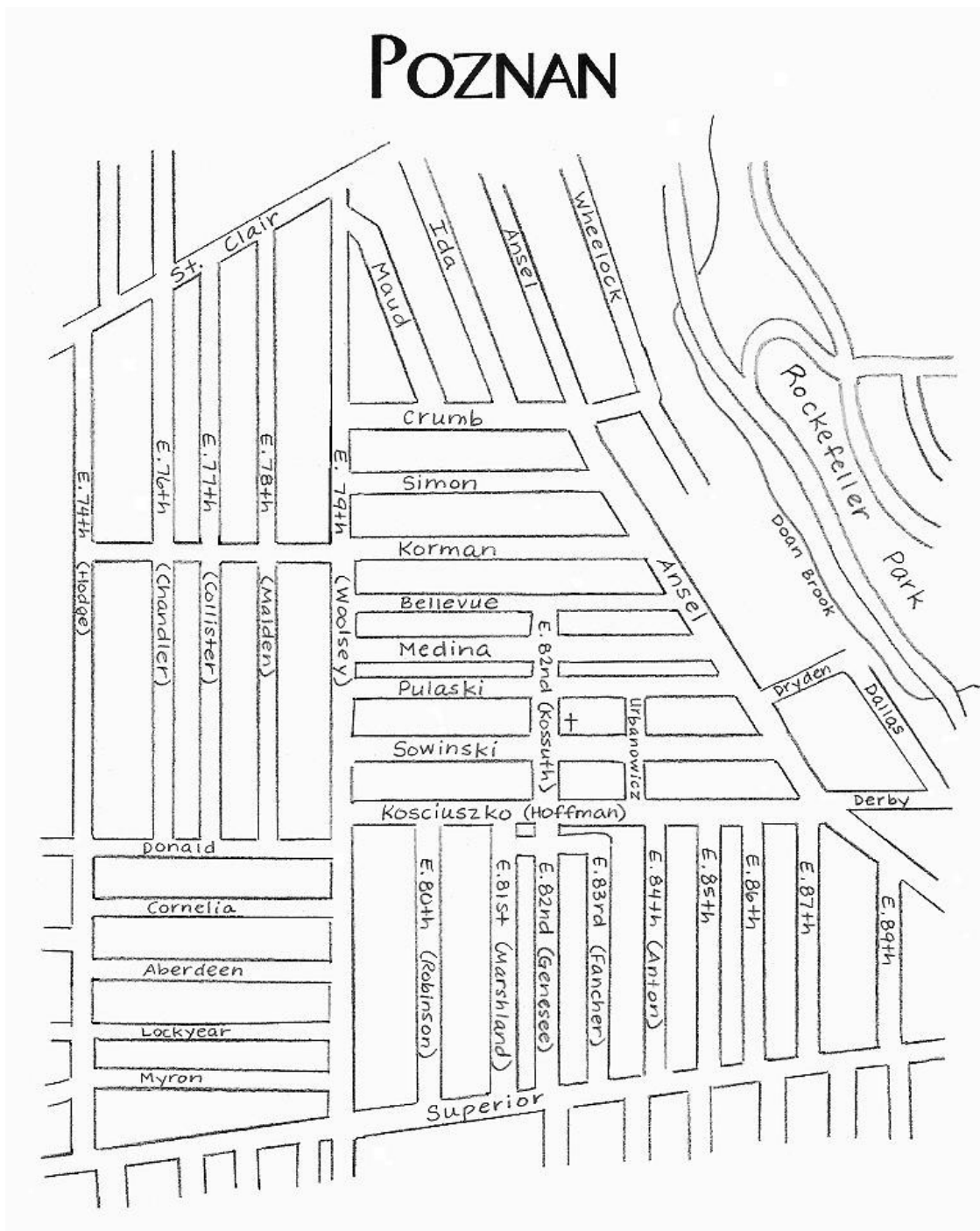


Illustration by Trina Galauner



The First Polish American Olympic Ice Hockey Player

By Trina Goss Galauner

The very first Olympic ice hockey game played was in 1920 at the Summer Olympics in Antwerp, Belgium. After that, ice hockey was moved to the Winter Olympic schedule. At that time, a Polish American named Tadeusz Adamowski was attending Harvard University and playing on the Harvard ice hockey team. Adamowski was the son of musicians, Joseph Adamowski and Antoinette Szumska who had immigrated to the U.S. in the 1890s.

Tadeusz was actually born in Switzerland as his mother wanted to avoid publicity over her pregnancy. He grew up in Brookline, Massachusetts but the musical family travelled frequently to Europe. Joseph, Antoinette and Joseph's brother, Tymoteusz, were called the Adamowski Trio and they performed for the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Since Tadeusz was born in Switzerland and his parents were still citizens of Russian Poland, even though their residence was in the U.S., Tadeusz was a Russian Polish citizen.

Tadeusz graduated from Harvard with a degree in economics and began working for General Motors. In 1925, GM sent him to Warsaw and there he met Polish hockey players from the club AZS Warszawa. He told them he had played at Harvard and they convinced him to join their team. With Adamowski, the team won Polish championships five times in a row.

When Poland entered a team in the 1928 Olympics, Adamowski competed with them. They came in 9th place at the Olympics but thereafter continued to win world championships. He coached from 1927 until 1932 and promoted the Canadian hockey strategy of team play versus individual efforts.

Tadeusz fought for the Polish army during World War 2 and was imprisoned at Oflag H-C. After the war he returned to the U.S. and worked for UNICEF, an organization founded by his silent film actress sister, Helenka Adamowska-Pantaleoni. He filed his U.S. Petition for Naturalization on May 26, 1952 and finally became a citizen of the United States. He died in 1994.

Message from our Librarian, Betty Joy

The following are some new donations we received that are available to our members to borrow:

"The Spirit of Poland" by Roger Jan Radlowski and John J. Kirvan. Winston Press, 1980. Donated by Pat Bakaitis

"A Question of Honor. The Kosciuszko Squadron: Forgotten Heroes of World War II" by Lynne Olson and Stanley Cloud. Alfred A. Knopf, 2004. Donated by Georgene Jasinski.

Images of Our Past



President Szuch's daughter, Valerie Ann being Baptized by Fr. Ralph Bodziony at Our Lady of Czestochowa Church in Cleveland, OH Spring 1963

Other Polish American Olympians

Bob Gutowski, pole vaulter and silver medalist 1956

Janet Lynn (Nowicki), figure skater and bronze medalist 1972

Elaine Zayak, figure skater, 1984 Olympics

Mark Gorski, track cyclist and gold medalist 1984

Jeffrey Klepacki, rower, 1992, 1996, and 2000 Olympics

Christopher Liwski, rower, 2004 and 2008 Olympics

Jenn Suhr (nee Stuczynski), pole vaulter, silver medalist 2008

Maria Mitchta, race walker, 2012 Olympics

The Polish Genealogical
Society of Greater Cleveland
c/o St. Mary's PNC Church
1901 Wexford Ave.
Parma, Ohio 44134



**Polish Genealogical Society of
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PGSGC
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Visit us on the web at:
www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~ohpgsgc/

**Please submit all correspondence to:
PGSGC Newsletter
c/o the return address above**

About Us

Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month from September through June. They are held in the parish hall of St. Mary's PNC Church. St. Mary's is located on the corner of Broadview Rd. and Wexford Ave. in Parma, Ohio. Meetings begin at 7:30 PM and are usually over before 9:30 PM. There is ample parking in the parish parking lot. The entrance is on Marietta Ave. Membership dues are \$2.00 per month through January, then \$24.00 per year.

At many of our meetings, we have guest speakers who address the group on subjects in which we have an interest. The subjects may include genealogical matters, Polish history, heritage and traditions. When we do not have a guest speaker, we have "**Show and Tell**" nights when fellow members discuss their genealogical problems, ask for advice from anyone with a similar problem, tell us of their discoveries, or let us know what they've learned about their ancestors.

Our group maintains a library which is a popular resource our members enjoy. It contains various books, maps, pamphlets and newsletters from other genealogical groups. Materials can be borrowed from the library for a period of one month. We employ the honor system with regard to borrowing of books and other related materials.

We also keep a surname research list. This list includes the surnames of our ancestors which our active members are researching. In the past, members have discovered that they were investigating names that other members were also researching.

We publish a quarterly twelve page newsletter entitled, *Our Polish Ancestors*. Articles for the newsletter are selected that are of interest to our membership. Many are based on materials gathered from the many fine research facilities in and around the Greater Cleveland area, such as: The Cleveland Public Library, The Western Reserve Historical Society, The Cuyahoga County Archives, The Family History Centers and the many Polish-American churches in this part of northern Ohio. Articles written by our membership are always welcome.