



Our Polish ANCESTORS



THE QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF GREATER CLEVELAND

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“Tarzan Was Polish (or so I thought)”

By John F. Szuch

Growing up on the south east side of Cleveland, Ohio in the Corlett area in the 1940's, one thing that I looked forward to on week days was the delivery of the WIADOMOSCI CODZIENNE Polish Daily News. Growing up, I lived with my grandparents who were both from Poland. Although they both spoke English well, they usually spoke Polish in the house, and I answered in English, which I regret to this day. I doubt that either could read English, but reading Polish they could!



Tarzan comic strip in Polish Daily News, 1954

Although our neighborhood was a mixed one with Italians, Poles, Czechs, etc. we did have a paperboy whose name, I believe, was Joe. He home delivered the Polish paper till some time in the late 1940's at which time my grandmother would send me up to Svec's Drug Store on E. 116th and Corlett, across the street from John Adams High School, to buy the newspaper..

I couldn't read Polish then, nor can I now, but the big attraction with the paper for me was the one and only comic strip it carried, TARZAN OF THE APES. Although I couldn't read the comic strip, I could understand it as my grandmother read it to me in Polish. Needless to say, since I heard Tarzan speaking in Polish through my grandmother, you can understand why I thought the Ape Man was Polish!

Thanks to that introduction by my grandmother, I went on to be an avid collector of Tarzan comic books, novels, movie memorabilia etc. pertaining not only to the Tarzan character, but all the characters created by Edgar Rice Burroughs such as John Carter of Mars.

After graduating from John Carroll University in June, 1959 and getting married, I took my Tarzan interest with me into the Army. I had several Tarzan displays in some of the Post libraries where I was stationed, including Ft. Knox, KY. It was while I was stationed at Ft. Knox as a helicopter pilot that an idea occurred to me. I knew that John Celardo, who was drawing and writing the Tarzan newspaper strip at the time, had used the names of some of the prominent ERB collectors of the day in his Tarzan comic strips. I boldly wrote him a fan letter and asked him if he could possibly use me as a helicopter pilot in one of the strips, as I knew he frequently pictured helicopters in his strips. I even went so far as to send him a small JCU graduation photo of myself.

I never heard back from the artist and kind of forgot about my bold request. It wasn't until about 1 1/2 years after my discharge that I received a letter from an ERB collector friend of mine in Pittsburgh congratulating me for appearing in the Tarzan daily comic strip. I checked the Polish Daily News and found out that they currently ran the strip approximately 2 years

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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

I have always been proud of my Polish heritage, but maybe never as much as I was on Sunday April 27, 2014, the day Pope John Paul II and Pope John XXIII were canonized as Saints. First off, in the case of Saint John Paul II, it took me back to October 16, 1978. I remember that day as if it were yesterday! My Mother telephoned me and said "quick, put the television on, they just elected a Polish Pope!" I didn't question her any further, but put the TV on and awaited the new Pope to come out and address the crowd. I have to be honest with you, I was expecting the new Pope to be Cardinal Stefan Wyszynski. Much to my surprise, the former Cardinal Karol Wojtyła stepped out on the balcony as the new Pope. I said to myself, who is this man? But, when he opened his mouth and greeted the crowd in Italian, I knew he was a smart man and a winner! He certainly went on to prove me right as he went on to become the most famous Pole in history.

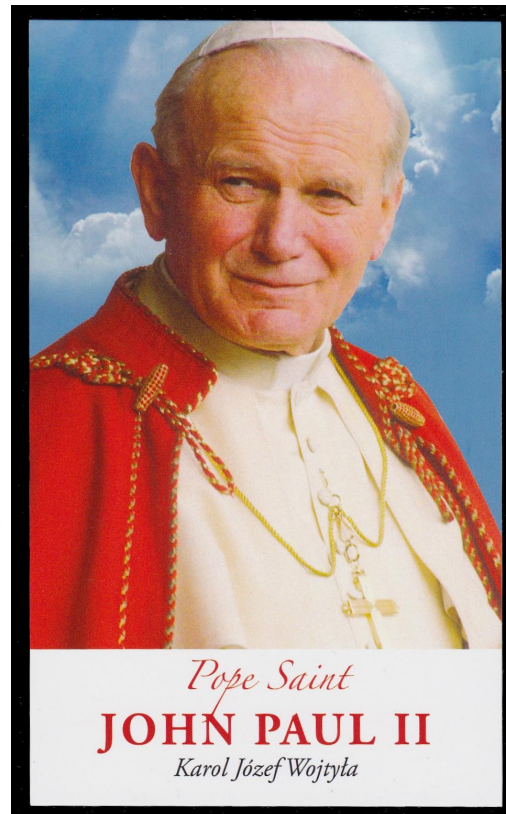
I celebrated the canonization by attending Sunday Mass with my wife and friends, the LaSochas at my Grandparents' and Mother's old parish, St. Casimir. I felt as I lit a candle for my Mother after Mass, that she was there with me, and I thanked her for making this special day possible for us. I sort of feel that now we have our own special Saint in John Paul II.

In regards to the other half of the Canonization, my best friend Cirino Scavone and I were talking one day some years ago, and he mentioned that Pope John XXIII was his favorite Pope. How fitting that my Italian friend and I should have our favorite Popes canonized on the same day!

Don't forget, we'll be going on our summer break (no meetings in July & August), so take advantage of the warmer weather and get out there and do some genealogy work. It should be a nice time to do some cemetery tombstone photographing, visiting old family parishes, or visiting relatives and discussing your genealogical research. Hopefully, you'll have some good stories to share with us in the fall.

Have a safe and wonderful summer.

John F. Szuch, President



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The "Most Cosmopolitan School" in Cleveland: South High School

By Trina Goss Galauner

In October of 1970, South High School celebrated its 75th anniversary. At this time, it was the oldest high school in Cleveland that was still in operation. Located at 7415 Broadway Avenue in the heart of Slavic Village, the school has graduated students of multiple nationalities as well as produced several students of stature.

Plans for South High School came about as a result of the overcrowding of the Central High School. In 1890, board of education member Anson W. Beman, made a proposal for the purchase of land from Mrs. Julia F. Brown in order to build a two story brick and stone building to house the South High School. The proposal was approved later that year and construction began. The final cost for construction would be about \$45,000.



Postcard of the original South High School building

Some were in opposition to the establishment of an additional high school and tax increases to pay for it. It was said that tax money was "being thrown to the dogs" on the south side. Newburg citizens appealed publicly to the necessity of the high school arguing that nearly 70,000 people (1/5 of the city) resided in Cleveland's south side where the "most important manufacturers of the city" are operating.

Students reported to the first day of school at South High on September 10, 1894. Professor Gustav A. Reutink formerly of the West High school would be South High's first principal. School officials expected only about 150 students but were shocked when 248 showed up on the first day. Furthermore, several

students mistakenly went to Central High on the first day so they would be adding to the enrollment which would reach over 300 pupils and necessitate the hiring of more teachers.

The original building of 13 classrooms which served 4 grades was expanded in 1904 and included an enlarged auditorium to seat 1,000 persons and a 10 room annex with a lower level gymnasium. With the expansions, the school would now accommodate grades 7 through 12. In November 1916, the auditorium was used by the Polish National Defense Committee (K.O.R.) for a demonstration in celebration of the reestablishment of the Kingdom of Poland. The State Good Government Club protested the demonstration however it went on as planned. In 1921 more improvements were made which included a cafeteria and cooking and sewing rooms.

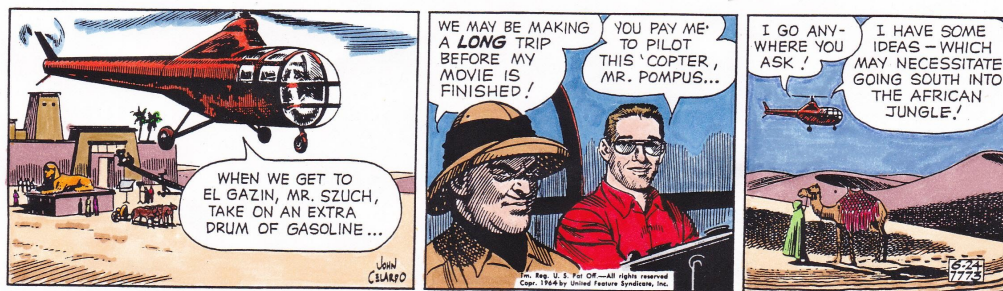
South High commencement on June 18, 1930 boasted 135 graduates representing 14 nationalities. The Cleveland Plain Dealer called the school the "most cosmopolitan school in the city". The class included Poles, Bohemians, Italians, Croatians, Yugoslavians, Hungarians, Germans, Lithuanians, Ukrainians and several English speaking nationalities. Polish names included Bednarski, Demboski, Domagajski, Golembiewski, Gortatowski, Goslinski, Graybowicz, Gutkowski, Jablonski, Jablonowski, Klonowski, Krajewski, Laskowski, Lodzieski, Malawski, Mroczko, Nowowiejski, Orlikowski, Osinski, Szczepanski, Szupa, Tylicki, Walkowiak, Wendzicki, Wilczenski and Wojdke.

Increasing enrollment made even the enlarged and improved school overcrowded. The American Polish Chamber of Industry

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Tarzan Was Polish (or so I thought) continued from page 1.....



TARZAN daily strip #7773 (6-24-64) as it appeared in American newspapers (but in color)

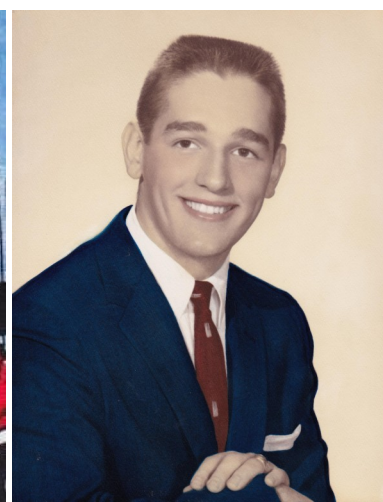
after it appeared in the English papers. Unfortunately the Polish Daily News went out of business before I would have appeared in it. It would have been a fitting tribute to my grandmother if she would have been able to have seen it. I was however able to get a copy of that specific strip, #7773 dated 6-24-64 and also that original art!

Over the years I had sold off most of my collection, keeping basically the Tarzan novels. Then in the 1990's, while on the road in sales, I telephoned my friend in Pittsburgh and set up a visit. I knew that he had collected all the Tarzan daily and Sunday comic strips, so I asked him if he could dig out the one that I appeared in? He couldn't put his finger on it, but did have the strip reprinted in an Italian book. As I looked through the book for it, I discovered that not only had my name and image appeared in that one strip, but my name and character appeared many times throughout the story! Thus began my second collecting of the works of Edgar Rice Burroughs.

The real credit though goes to my Polish grandmother, Bronislawa Malicka, who took the time to read me the Tarzan daily comic in Polish!



Close up of Tarzan comic strip character as illustrated by John Celardo



John F. Szuch's graduation photo from John Carroll University that the artist used for his character's likeness

Oczepiny (The Unveiling of the Bride)

By Trina Galauner

This custom is one of the oldest Polish wedding customs and has been practiced for centuries. The unveiling and replacement of the veil with a cap (or *oczepiec*) is said to signify the bride officially becoming a married woman. Most times the cap is a gift to the bride from her godmother. *Oczepiny* takes place towards the end of the wedding celebration, usually around midnight. There are many different ways it can be done. In ancient Poland, the best man would begin the ceremony by placing a bench or chair in the middle of the room at the wedding celebration. The veil may have been removed and replaced by her mother, godmother, or wedding attendants. The "*oczepiec*" that the bride received would be worn at church and special occasions and upon her death, used for her burial.

An account in the Cleveland Plain Dealer of a Polish wedding in Berea in 1885 tells one story of the *Oczepiny*. "All Polish weddings are conducted in two houses, one for dancing and the other for feasting."....."On this occasion the bride fled and was followed by a bevy of boys and girls, young and old, all shouting and making as much noise as possible. She was met by married women at the second house and after warmly embracing her she was escorted to a room where her bridal veil was removed. This ceremony was associated with a weird chant, during which time an old ladies' cap was made and placed upon the bride's head. None but women were allowed at the removal of the veil and the placing of the cap. A signal was then given and the husband entered and received the married women [sic], his prize and jewel, no longer a maiden, but his legal wife."



Using Digitized Records To Advance Your Research

By Ben Kman

As a result of a posting I had made on the Polish_Genius, a member, Jan Cesarczyk, directed me to the Metryki.GenBaza.pl website when I mentioned that I was going to visit the Mława archives on an upcoming trip to Poland. Most of the records in that archive have been digitized and made available on the website. For anyone doing research in the Warszawa, Kielce, Koszalin and Lodz archives, this is an absolute treasure trove of information. This article provides instructions for accessing these records and assumes the readers know how to use Polish church record books to conduct genealogical research. You will need to setup an account on an associated website first: <http://genpol.com/module-Users-register.html>.

Once you have an account, go to <http://metryki.genbaza.pl> (Bookmark this page!!!) Please use FireFox or Google Chrome to access this site. It does not seem to work with older versions of Internet Explorer.



Click on "Logowanie" and login using your email address and the password you just created. After logging in you can begin browsing for records...

Witamy w nowej lepszej GenBazie

Bardzo miło nam otworzyć dzisiaj nową lepszą wersję serwisu Metryki.GenBaza.PL.

[Czytaj więcej \(rozwiń\)...](#) *admin*

Nowości w GenBazie

Nowa strona GenBaza.pl w końcu ruszyła

[Czytaj więcej \(rozwiń\)...](#)

2012-09-24 23:18, Tomasz Nitsch (admin)

Click: "Wyloguj" to log out of the site

ROOT

- [AD_Kielce](#)
- [AP_Kielce](#)
- [AP_Koszalin](#)
- [AP_Warszawa](#)
- [AP_Łódź](#)

Select the archive in which your parish is located.

Warsaw has 4 regional archives. Click on the archive and/or regional archive to view the available parishes. Using AP_Mława under AP_Warszawa as an example:

AP_WARSZAWA

- [AP_Grodzisk](#)
- [AP_Mława](#)
- [AP_Pułtusk](#)
- [AP_Łowicz](#)

AP_MŁAWA

- [Baboszewo](#)
- [Baboszewo_gm](#)
- [Biezuń](#)
- [Biezuń_gm](#)
- [Bogurzyn](#)
- [Bogurzyn_gm](#)
- [Bryńsk](#)
- [Burkat](#)
- [Chamsk](#)
- [Chamsk om](#)

When you click on parish name, a list of years will appear that represent scanned record books from the parish.

BOGURZYN

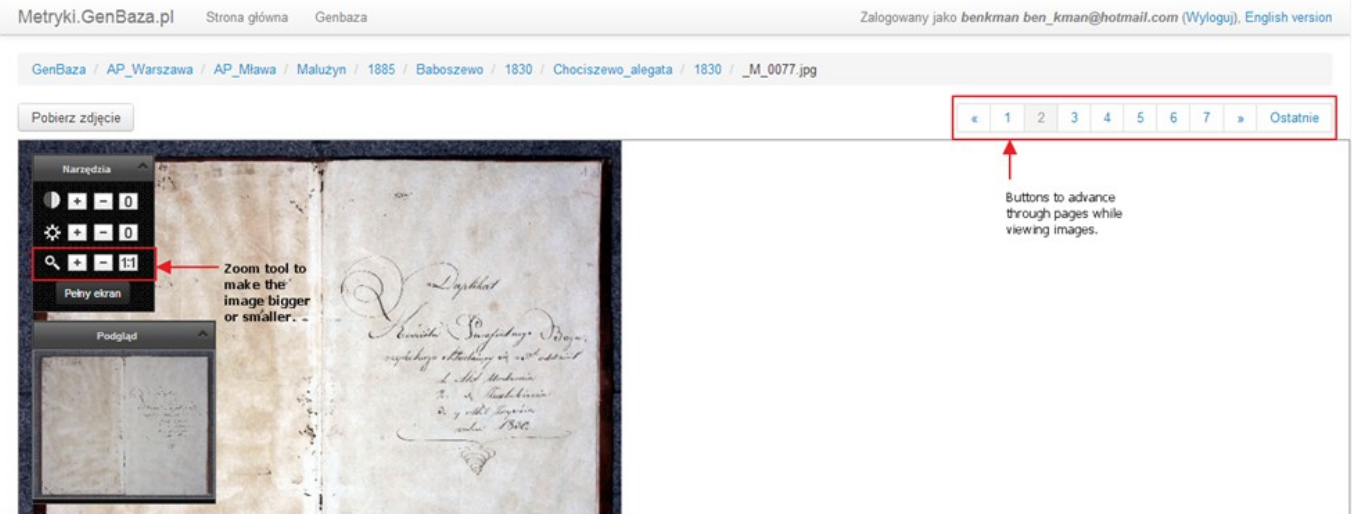
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- [1837](#)
- [1838](#)



Clicking on a year brings up a list of image files.



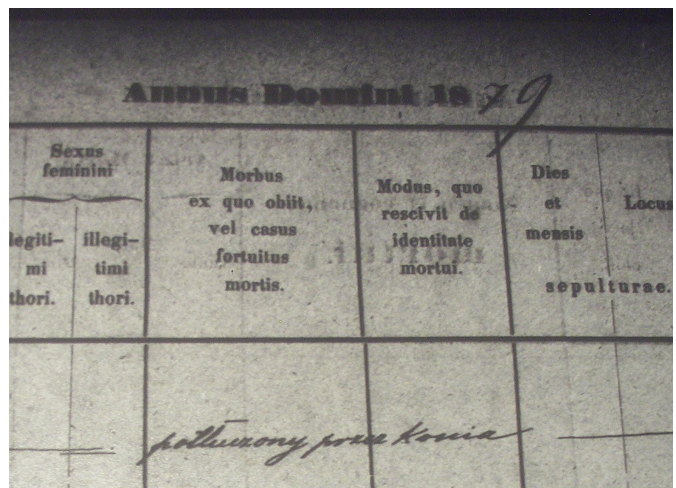
The first image file is the book’s cover (In this example *_M_0076.jpg*). As you click on succeeding images, you progress through the pages of the book for that year. Each book is typically divided up into three sections: Births, Marriages and Deaths. 99% of the time this is the order in which the information is presented within the book. You should be aware that there are instances when the order is changed. To make navigating through the images easier, the website has buttons you can use to move through the pages while viewing the images. “1” refers to the first image, “2” to the second one and so on.



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Cause of Death Terms

When researching Polish death records one may find the cause of death handwritten in Latin or in Polish. One cause of death I found for my great great great grandfather back in Poland was termed “potluczony przez konia” what translates to “crushed by a horse”.





Using Digitized Records to Advance Your Research continued from page 7.....

At the end of each section is an index of the names of the births, marriages and deaths. This is incredibly helpful and speeds up the research process. Occasionally, an index is missing and you may need to scan each record for you surname.

Here is an example of a birth index:



The rest of the index is on the following page of the record book.

One technique I have found useful to locate the indices quickly is to start with the last image in the list and work backwards until you find the Death Index. You can then review the people who died in that year for your surname. You will also know how many deaths there were. Typically there are 4 births per image (2 per page with 2 pages per image), 2 marriages per image and 4 deaths per image. If 40 people died in one year that would account for 10 images (40/4 = 10). If the death index is on image 34, the first death record should be on image 24 which means the marriage index should be on image 23. This will get you close and save you from having to scroll through each image trying to locate the indices. You can then use the same method to find the birth index.

Please be aware that records starting in 1868 and going forward are all in Russian. This complicates your research but there are good guides available to help you glean out the important information. Records from 1867 and back tend to be in Polish.

Hopefully this information is being indexed and added to Geneszu-kac.Genealodzy.pl along with the scanned images. This will make it very easy to sift through all of this information, to pick up on lost family lines and to find collateral family data.

The "Most Cosmopolitan School" in Cleveland continued from page 3.....

implored the Board of Education to purchase more land and expand the school. F. A. Pawlowski, secretary of the organization said "At the present time 2400 children are cramped into a building built for 1400." In 1932, a new school building was erected a few blocks away at 3901 E. 74th Street. This building would house 1,350 students in grades 9 through 12. The old building would become Albert Bushnell Hart Junior High School for the younger grades. The cost of the new building would be about \$696,000. The new school also offered laboratory and shop facilities.

In 1968, the original South High School building at 7415 Broadway was razed and a new modern building was built on its site at a cost of \$6.5 million. The 1932 building now became the Albert Bushnell Hart Junior High. The modern high school was equipped with a "gymnasium capable of seating 2,200 persons, a 1,250-seat auditorium, two cafeterias and a library of 15,000 books" as reported by the Cleveland Plain Dealer.

In June 2010, South High held its final commencement before closing its doors. The Cleveland Public School System had enacted the 2010 Academic Transformation Plan which closed several schools due to declining enrollment in a cost cutting measure. Graduates of Polish descent to come out of South High included Olympic track star, Stella Walsh, Cleveland Indians catcher, Hank Ruszkowski, Cleveland commissioner of Municipal Welfare Institutions, Edmund P. Lewandowski, and President of United Savings Association, Charles Orlikowski. South High School had served the Polish community of Cleveland for over 100 years.



PGSGC Family Tree

By John F. Szuch

The big news this issue is the passing of ED MENDYKA. As most of you probably know, Eddie was the founder of the Polish Genealogical Society of Greater Cleveland back in the Fall of 1991. Ed had set up a display in the Polish Heritage Room for the weekend of the St. John Cantius Polish Festival in September, 1991. He had a sign up sheet for those who would be interested in the forming of a Polish genealogical group in the greater Cleveland area. A month later he called the interested parties for a meeting to be held at St. John Cantius.

Ed was elected President for 1992, but decided not to run



Founder, Ed Mendyka and President, John F. Szuch
5th Anniversary party, October 1, 1996

for re-election in 1993 and nominated yours truly to replace him. I was elected and have held the position ever since. Even though he wasn't an officer any more, Ed became editor of the organization's bulletin, "Our Polish Ancestors", and also established and maintained our group's library. Ill health in later years forced him to relinquish both jobs.

A native Clevelander from the Tremont area, Ed attended St. John Cantius Elementary School, Lincoln High School, and Adelbert College of Western Reserve University. He was a 4-year Army veteran and served during the Korean War. He was active in various organizations including the Polish Legion of American Veterans. Ed was retired from the General Motors Transmission Plant. He passed away on February 21, 2014 at the age of 83, but his legacy lives on!

With news for future bulletins, please email Trina or myself.



Founder Ed Mendyka clowning with his sister Wanda Slusarski in the kitchen during the PGSGC Christmas Party in 1997

Schedule of Speakers for Upcoming Meetings

- September: David Bernatowicz, Associate Professor: History - Cuyahoga Community College
Ethnic and Industrial History of Cleveland
- October: John F. Szuch, Member, *Famous Poles in History with a focus on Polish-Americans*
- November: TENTATIVE: Fr. Eric Orzech, Pastor of St. Stanislaus and St. Casimir, topic to be determined
- December: Christmas Party



Cleveland's Polonia: Krakowa

Considered a satellite community of Warszawa, the neighborhood of "Krakowa" emerged as a result of the formation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus parish in 1889. This area, south of Harvard Avenue along Marcelline (E. 71st Street) to Grant Avenue, was first settled by Poles in the late 1870s. These early Polish settlers farmed small plots of land or worked in the rolling and woolen mills. Many of the residents kept poultry and the area acquired the nickname "Goosetown" due to the large number of geese that would roam freely in the neighborhood. Today this neighborhood is part of what is known as Slavic Village.

KRAKOWA

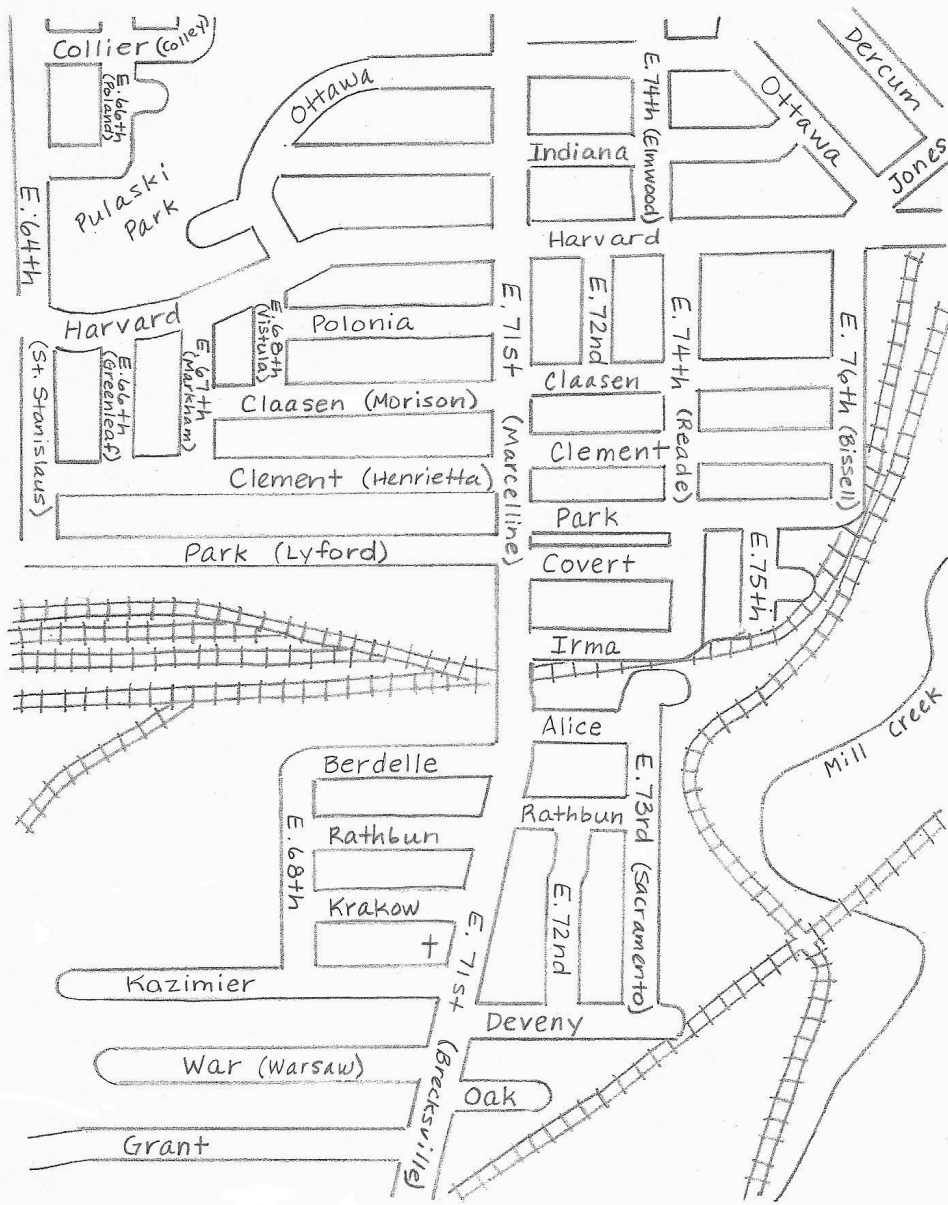


Illustration by Trina Galauner

Sacred Heart of Jesus Church

Though the parish was not officially listed until 1891, Sacred Heart was founded in 1889. A property on East 71st Street between Kazimier Avenue and Krakow Avenue was purchased from Oliver Stafford and the deed recorded on September 14, 1889.

The founding members of Sacred Heart Parish included Makowski, Kalas, Maciejewski, Swiatkowski, Gadomski, Ordzinski, Czajkowski, Lain, Wojciechowski, Krygier, Ostrowski, Koperski, Kaniecki, Killian, Polcyn, Mrozinski, Mysza, Jakowiak, Urbaniak, Kalupa, Kosicki, Swiderski, Teper, Tomczyk, Jaroszewski, Surma, Szturma, Janowski, Zarowski, Haas, Pelka, Zmudzinski, Spychalski, Pacholski, Szelminski, Zgrabik, Kesy, Laskowski, Kruszewski, Repinski, Pytel, Kolasinski and Pianowski.

*** Facebook users may want to visit the Facebook Groups entitled "Raised in Goosetown" and "Sacred Heart of Jesus Polish Church and School"



Sacred Heart of Jesus Polish School Report Card from 1935-36

The below scan was submitted by our member, Carole Zanath. It is a portion of the report card of her sister, Aurelia "Arlene" Mrozinska, who was in first grade in 1935.

"In God We Trust"	"W Bogu Ufność Nasza"
Szkoła Najśw. Serca Jezusowego	
SACRED HEART OF JESUS SCHOOL CLEVELAND, OHIO	
Świadectwo sześć tygodniowe-Six Weeks' Report	
Imię i Nazwisko <i>Aurelia Mrozinska</i>	
Klasa	Rok
Grade <i>1</i>	<i>1935-36</i>
UWAGA!	
Świadectwo niniejsze jest dowodem postępów dziecka w nauce. Stopnie wysokie wskazują, że dziecko uczy się pilnie; stopnie niskie — że się źle uczy, albo się nie uczy wcale. Rodzice przeto co miesiąc zbadać powinni, czy dziecko w nauce postępuje — czy nie — jeżeli zdradza opieszałość — bez zwłoki nakłonić je do większej pracy nad książką w domu.	
Przejrzawszy zaś świadectwo, rodzice zechcą podpisać je co sześć tygodni w odpowiedniej rubryce na ostatniej stronie. Opłatę na pokrycie kosztów przyborów szkolnych uiszczają należy zaraz przy zapisie i w początku drugiego półroczu.	
<i>So. M. Dabrowski</i> Nauczycielka.	
PODPIS RODZICÓW	
Wrzesień
Październik
Listopad
Grudzień
Styczeń	<i>Sophia Mrozinska</i>
Luty	<i>Sophia Mrozinska</i>
Marzec
Kwiecień	<i>Sophia Mrozinska</i>
Maj
Czerwiec

Images of Our Past



Carole Zanath's sister, Arlene Therese Mrozinska taken about 1935. Little Arlene died of a bone infection in March 1937.

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning: a cause of death yesterday and today

In the summer of 1932, Stanley Betlejewski, age 15, finished his dinner and went upstairs to the bathroom to take a bath. Later that evening, his father, Walter, noticed the boy had been gone for some time and went upstairs to check on him. Stanley was found unconscious in the bathtub, a victim of carbon monoxide gas poisoning from a faulty gas water heater.

Carbon monoxide poisoning was somewhat common in the early part of the 20th century. Since the late 1800s, modern heating systems were slowly being added to existing homes and in the 1920s, many homes were being equipped with indoor plumbing and natural gas heating systems. The East Ohio Gas Company regularly advertised its gas water heaters.

The Betlejewski home on Aetna Road was built in 1920 and was fortunate to have a 2nd floor bathroom. But well into the 1930s, natural gas did not contain an odor. It wasn't until after a fatal school explosion in 1937 in New London, Texas, that a chemical called Mercaptan was added to natural gas to produce an odor, warning potential victims of a carbon monoxide leak. In addition to carbon monoxide poisoning deaths from gas water heaters, CO was also responsible for many deaths in garages when people would leave their automobiles running with the garage door shut and poor ventilation and the exhaust fumes would overcome them.

Today, we recognize the pungent rotten egg smell when a burner is on with no fire present or in rare cases when a gas pipe may have a leak. Despite efforts to reduce casualties, carbon monoxide poisoning is still the leading cause of all poisoning deaths today.

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**Polish Genealogical Society of
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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.