



Our Polish ANCESTORS



THE QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF GREATER CLEVELAND

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And the Bells Came Crashing Down: The Great Windstorm of 1909

By Trina Goss Galauner

Wednesday, April 21, 1909 began as any other day in Cleveland. Families woke up to light rain with moderate winds at a temperature of 46 degrees. Fathers went to work and children walked to school. It had been a rough winter that year with spring peaking out early in February. Two weeks earlier Cleveland was hit with a wind storm which started in the Midwest and wrecked havoc all the way to the east coast and into Ontario. Wind movement in April was considered "unusually great".

During the light rain, winds increased steadily and by 8:00am the temperature began to rise rapidly. Around 10:00am a mild spring thunderstorm erupted which was over in 5 minutes. The winds, which were from the southeast, died down and a few brief minutes of sunshine were experienced as the temperature continued to rise. By noon it was 68 degrees. Children were let out of school for their lunch hour. At 12:25pm a threatening cloud developed southwest of the city. In Berea it was observed that two clouds had come together, one from the northwest and one from the southwest. Now it was one rolling, tumbling cloud from the west barreling down on central Cleveland.

The sky rapidly darkened. Mr. Noraviki, the janitor of St. Stanislaus school, went to ring the bell to usher in the students after their lunch break. Seven year old Arthur Niedbalski was playing tag with other

children in the school yard. At that very moment, a wind gust from the west of 66 miles per hour tore the bell rope from Mr. Noraviki's hands. The six large church bells of St. Stanislaus came crashing through the roof of the church and the steeples toppled raining bricks down on the children in the school yard. Little Arthur Niedbalski was running through the school yard when he was hit in the head with a brick knocking him unconscious. The gale wind increased to 72 miles per hour in one

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St. Stanislaus after the storm, Cleveland Historical, "The 1909 Tornado", photo by Glen Sobola

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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

Summer is almost upon us which means that we will be taking a 2 month break from meetings (NO meetings in July & August). I hope that you will take advantage of the good weather and do some genealogy work. Fortunately, with so much material available on line, you can accomplish a lot from the comfort of your home. What you can also do is go out and mingle with family members at weddings, birthday parties, graduations, picnics and, unfortunately, funerals.

My suggestion to you is to take some time to sit down and make up a sheet (or half sheet) of facts about your families' genealogy to wet your relatives appetite about their family.

You can work in some questions as to how your family members are related to them or what memories do they have of your ancestors. You might also ask if they have any old photos of weddings, etc. that you could copy.

You don't know what kind of response you'll get but any good one is one more than you had before you started!

Enjoy your summer break and "see you in September" as the line in the old, early 60's Bobby Vee song went.

John



Remembering Judge Raymond L. Pianka who passed away earlier this year, here is Judge Pianka and I at a Pulaski banquet where he was the guest of honor.

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Remember When: My Front Porch

by John A. Prokop

Now that the weather is getting nicer and summer is drawing near, I think about all the times I spent on my front porch during late spring to early fall. When I was growing up, everyone in my neighborhood had a front porch. Some were made out of wood, and others were made from stone or brick. Many duplexes and some large apartment buildings had front porches on their second or third floors. The front porches were roomy and sometimes they stretched across the entire front of the house.

The size of the porches made it possible to have nice pieces of furniture to sit on, and small tables and stools for storage. Some people had steel

gliders that could rock or glide back and forth and some had wooden porch swings that hung from chains screwed into the ceiling. Others simply had aluminum lawn chairs or brought chairs out from the kitchen or dining room. When nice weather arrived, the front porch was *the* place to be.



The porch provided shade and a cooler environment when the sun beat down mercilessly, and when it rained, it provided shelter, yet still gave the feeling of being outdoors. Many quick naps were caught on the porch. The season of warm weather was short-lived, so every opportunity to be outdoors was welcomed.

The porch was a special gathering place for family, neighbors and friends. From dawn to dusk, it was quite busy. In the morning, the paper boy delivered the morning newspaper, followed by the milkman, and then the mailman. People looked forward to seeing those daily deliverers visiting via the front porch. Amazingly, they knew their customers' names, and the customers knew theirs. They were a part of the daily routine and clocks could accurately be set or checked by their arrivals.

Many times people would eat their breakfast or read the paper on the front porch in the morning since it was cooler and more comfortable. Those up even earlier could watch all the deliverymen doing their jobs, and also watch the daily parade of neighbors following their daily routines. The churchgoers passed by on their way to church, as would the workers walking to the bus stop. Neighbors walked to the store for their daily staples. No megastores or shopping malls back then, so daily trips to the store were often common. Not many people could afford a car back then. Walking or taking the bus to work was the standard method of transportation.

As kids, we loved our front porches. With a few supplies from the house and basement (clothes pins, blankets, towels and sheets), porches were easily converted into forts, tents, shelters and refuges. There, we could use these imaginative places for games, special meetings, or just privacy. When it rained and we couldn't go to the park or school yard, we had the front porch. It was where we played board or card games, pitched cards or built things from blocks, clothespins or logs. Sometimes we had to share these places or games with brothers or sisters, which resulted in small bickering or arguments over territory or squatter rights. Truces were mediated by parents.

In the evening when the street lights came on, we had to either come inside or sit on the front porch. It was the

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Poland 2014: A Journey.....Part 6

by Ben Kman

The following is the story (offered in quarterly installments) of member Ben Kman's 16 day journey to his ancestral villages in Poland in September 2014.

Day 10 Sunday September 14

Breakfast today had omelets, eggs to order, fresh baked apple, raspberry and cheese danishes and really good coffee in addition to the standard buffet. We grabbed our bags after eating and checked out. After packing the car, we took a longer impromptu walk around Lublin during daylight. It's hard to fathom that this was the city where the Union of Lublin was signed which formed the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth. The old town square is quite nice, very compact and has a looming town hall in the center. There are several tourist trails around the city and I picked the historic/architectural one to follow. We eventually ended up walking down a road leading through the old town, down a hill, through the city gates and toward the castle. The castle is an imposing building up on a hill outside of the old town but it looked relatively modern. Shortly outside of the gates, we decided to turn around and head back to the car so we could continue on. Lublin is a definite sleeper city. I expected a "ho hum" place that wouldn't be worth a second glance but ended up being very pleasantly surprised at how beautiful it is.



The parking lot guard verified that we were leaving on time and didn't owe any more money. Back on the road, we headed south to our first stop in Zamosc. The countryside was becoming noticeably hilly. On the way, I got to thinking about our plan for the day. We just toured Lublin, were going to tour Zamosc and according to the plan, next would be Sandomierz before ending up just north of Przemysl. We just spent a whole day on the road yesterday and a little "old town" fatigue was setting in. Zamosc wasn't far from another ancestral village that I had never visited before and would probably get us to the hotel earlier than planned that day. This might be a good alternative to another long day of driving and touring "another" old town. When I proposed it to my parents, they were all for the idea especially since many of my planned genealogical excursions fell through (more on this tomorrow). They wanted me to get something out of this trip as well but for me being able to take a trip like this with my parents was all I really wanted.

That decided, we pulled into Zamosc and found a parking lot just outside of the old town with free parking. It was Sunday and parking happened to be free. We didn't go to church that day but my parents continued to be fascinated by the number of masses available as well as the overflow capacity of churches. Poland is changing and people are becoming less devout but it is still predominantly 90% Catholic. There are a couple of the things I forgot to prep my parents on when going to church in Poland. First, if you have to stand or if your pew doesn't have kneelers, you kneel on the marble/stone/tile floor. That typically catches people off guard the first time they experience it and serves as a very good form of penance. Kneelers are sometimes just a plank of wood, none of that cushy padding. I always think about this when I go to church back home and see people who don't kneel properly and the kneeler is thickly padded. If an 80-year-old can kneel on a stone floor in Poland, you can get your butt off the pew while kneeling in the U.S. The other interesting thing is that communion is organized chaos. If you want to go to communion, you go to the communion rail and wait your turn. There is no row by row orderly procession. You just go up front and wait for an opening. This does vary from church to church



though. I always read that Zamosc was one of the pearls of the Renaissance. It was a city I always wanted to visit but it is a good way off the normal tourist routes. So now we were here and as we walked into the old town, we stopped into the tourist office and picked up a city map with a walking tour that took in the highlights. The rynek (town square) was huge with a massive town hall towards one end. Zamosc is laid out in a very orderly, grid like fashion. Unlike many medieval cities that have narrow lanes that twist and turn, this city was very structured. We followed the tourist route and took in churches, the ramparts (Zamosc was an old fortified military city), one of the old city gates and the rynek. It was a nice overview and you could see how much work was done towards renovating the city. One interesting note, I noticed a lot of U.S. tour groups roaming around the city and marching through churches. Usually this far east, there is little tourism. Groups tend to stick to the major areas of Warsaw, Krakow and Gdansk. This brings me to one of my pet peeves. I understand that people on tours are on a strict timeline. When you are visiting religious buildings of any faith, show some respect. Don't stand in a huge crowd in front of the altar/central prayer area snapping pictures while people are trying to pray. It's just common sense and respect for others' spirituality. As they say, karma sucks.



With our tour of Zamosc complete, we continued south to Dzikow Stary. Sandomierz got crossed off the list. From here until we made our turn west in Sanok, we would be skirting the Ukrainian border. Dzikow Stary is the parish church for the former village of Milkow. This village is where some of my Filipowicz and Nachman family lived. They worked in the glass factory there. Milkow has since been destroyed. We made an attempt at locating the village ruins after visiting the church in Dzikow Stary but had no luck. The directions that the locals provided were a bit vague. "Continue on this road until you enter the forest then turn left at the first road. It will start paved and turn to dirt. 2 kilometers after that you will come to an intersection...." Needless to say, we made it to the forest and quickly came to the conclusion that we weren't going to find the ruins of the village in any reasonable amount of time.

After backtracking out of the woods to Dzikow Stary, we turned the car south again and headed to Radymno. For some reason, the GPS didn't like to take specific addresses which made it difficult sometimes to get to places like hotels. When we got to Radymno, I ended up driving into the center of the town, finding the road the hotel was on, then watching the addresses until we arrived. Interestingly enough, the hotel was located at the crossroads of the road going to Przemysl and the road headed to the border crossing into the Ukraine. We actually drove right past it when we went to the center of Radymno and didn't even realize it.



Our hotel, Dwor Kresowy, was a sprawling complex consisting of hotel buildings, a spa with a pool and a workout facility and a restaurant. The whole facility had an Eastern Borderlands motif. Parking was plentiful and free. Check in was painless and my room was next to my parents' room. They went into their room and when I tried to badge into my room with



my electronic key, it didn't work. I left my bag in my parents' room and headed back down to the front desk. The clerk (who spoke great English but obliged me when I spoke Polish) tried to re-program my key card. Returning to my room, I found out that it still didn't work. She then proposed moving me to another room but it was at a different rate and I had already paid for the rooms so that wasn't going to work either. She then gave me a physical key and tried programming a new key card as well. That key card worked and I could finally settle into my room.

Once we were all settled, we decided to try the hotel restaurant for dinner. It was a beautiful evening and we asked to sit outside. They took us to our table which overlooked a "dancing waters" fountain with lights and music. The choreography of the lights, music and water took a bit of imagination but it was a nice feature. There were a bunch of kids running around the wet ledge surrounding the fountain and we were waiting to see who was going to fall in first.

When we were seated, the hostess gave us what looked like an oversized garage door opener and told us to press the button when we were ready to order. The menu was quite extensive and had many game dishes, standard Polish fare, regional specialties and Eastern Borderland offerings. Needless to say, we had questions so we pressed the button. After a short while, no one came so we pressed the button again. Eventually, a very unhappy waitress came out poised to take our orders and was none too happy about answering our questions. But we did order drinks. As we continued deciding on our meals, our drinks still hadn't arrived, so we pushed the button again. A different, not so happy, waitress came out and we inquired about our drinks. After re-taking our drink order, she went in to check on them. Our original waitress came back with our drinks and took our order. Despite the service, we enjoyed the setting very much and sat and chatted about the trip so far remembering different things that had happened. Our food came and we ordered another round of drinks then never saw a waitress again until we had to press the button to have someone come out to give us our bill. The food was very good. The dishes we had consisted of an appetizer of pierogi, mushroom soup, sauerkraut with ribs, fried trout, grilled chicken breast with apple, a side of fried mushrooms and another side of chicken livers. Throw in two large beers each for my father and I and two glasses of wine for my mom and you have a feast. The total cost of the meal was US\$50. Unbelievable!

One thing to keep in mind while visiting Poland (and other Eastern European countries bordering the West like Hungary, Slovenia and Czech Republic) is that the western parts of the country that were more exposed to tourists and information from the west were more developed. As you move east, the standard of living decreases, service becomes poorer and the general infrastructure is worse. This is slowly changing but is still very tangible in all of these countries.

We called it an early night after dinner and went back to our rooms to relax.

Dwor Kresowy, Radymno

- a. This is a sprawling, hotel/spa/restaurant complex located just off of the main road to Przemyśl. It has a "dancing waters" fountain, a swimming pool and a spa as well as conference facilities and party rooms. It is located 20km (12 miles) from the Ukrainian border. There is an Eastern Borderland type theme.
- b. There is an elevator.
- c. Free parking is available at the hotel.
- d. Rooms are large and spacious with all the amenities including a private toilet/bathroom. (In many hotel rooms, you need to insert your key card into a slot in the wall inside the room to activate the electricity and leave it there while you are in the room. When the key card is removed from the slot, the power goes out throughout the room.)
- e. Price US\$80 per night per room
- f. A breakfast buffet was included in the cost of the room. I believe the food was left over from wedding the previous night. It primarily consisted of large trays of unique finger sandwiches which reminded me of a baptism I went to at a Ukrainian restaurant in Cleveland. In addition, the usual items were available including some wonderful bread and rolls. (The bread and rolls in Poland are to die for, I think this is the fourth time I've mentioned this. I love bread and feel like I am in heaven every time I go to Poland.)
- g. We ate dinner at the restaurant and had a good meal. The service was poor at best and reminded me of Poland 20 years ago.



Day 11 Monday September 15

There was a unique twist to breakfast today with the addition of small finger sandwiches made with smoked salmon and other items. These and some other food items reminded me of a baptism I attended at a local Ukrainian hall here in Cleveland. I think they were left over from a wedding which is kind of appropriate since breakfast is in a room that looks like it serves as a wedding hall. Breakfast is followed by the usual routine of packing our bags and the car.

Today, I was supposed to spend about five hours at the Archdiocesan Archives in Przemysl researching my Nachman and Socha ancestors. As it turns out, the day before we left on our trip, I received an email from the archives in response to an email I sent a month prior telling me that the archives would be closed on the day that I wanted to visit and that I had to pick a different day. This was not the news I needed on the day before leaving and, second of all, it was unprofessional to wait until the last minute to respond to an email with that information knowing that someone is traveling from overseas. If I had gotten that news sooner, I could possibly have changed my itinerary. So I had a friend of mine in Poland call Fr. Borcz and talk to him about the situation and Father explained that he was going to a symposium and that I should call him myself to discuss the matter. A couple of days after arriving in Poland, I did call to better understand what was going on. After talking with Father, it was clear that I would not be able to visit the archives on the day I planned and if I couldn't change my date then Father recommended hiring a local researcher to help me. To put it politely, that sucked.

I know that a lot of researchers have been challenged with getting information from these archives and that Father is very protective of his books. On his behalf, after visiting the archives at least three times, Father really is a nice guy and I have had some good conversations with him. Once he warms up to you he is quite helpful but he is overwhelmed with the task at hand and is understaffed. Remember the comment I made about development from west to east in Poland? You can't get much farther east than Przemysl. In some ways, I think Father is impacted by that as well. I'm sure church politics and funding play a role too. All that said, I am as frustrated as anyone with the situation. On any trip there is give and take along with last minute adjustments. This one was no exception for my traveling companions and me.

We set off again and my reformulated plan for the day was to visit the villages first, then the skansen in Sanok, and then finishing at the relatives in Korczyna. The terrain as we approached Przemysl was changing from hilly to mountainous. It's not like the Rocky Mountains or the Himalayas but more than just foothills. As we drove past Przemysl, I sighed and we continued on. The farms had changed into ones with which I was more familiar in Poland, long strips of individual plots planted with various crops. Unlike the vast, never ending fields of northern Poland, you had a sense of medieval feudalism as people tended their patchwork plots of land here in the former Galicia. The further south we went, the higher and steeper the mountains became. On the road from Przemysl to Bircza there are several switchbacks and some very nice overlooks for taking in the mountain scenery. The road from Bircza to Sanok is equally twisty but we wouldn't be traveling on that stretch of road on this trip.

After arriving in Bircza, we needed to start heading east through the now desolate land sometimes referred to as "Za Sanem" or "beyond the San River." It's quite hard to imagine this area teeming with people and industry back when my great grandparents lived here. But WWII and the conflict with the UPA changed all of that and the region was systematically depopulated and destroyed. It quickly became apparent (and we were given a heads up by the Sochas in Paslek) that the EU funds reached even this remote corner of the country. Many roads were freshly paved and some that weren't paved before now are. I remember driving around potholes as big as a car. We were headed to Borownica (the village of my father's paternal grandmother) and to Jawornik Ruski (the village of my father's maternal grandfather). The two villages neighbor one another and I still believe even though these great grandparents were on different sides of my father's family that they knew each other from "the old country". This had to play a part in forming the family.

Our first stop was in Jawornik Ruski. There is little, if anything, remaining here, just a few scattered houses and a



wooden Orthodox church slowly gathering cobwebs and falling into disrepair. We walked around the church since there wasn't much else to see there and took our "evidence" photos. A couple of kilometers away was Borownica, down in the valley. There is a smattering of houses along with a catholic church that dates from sometime after the war. The original Catholic parish for these villages was in Dylagowa not far as the crow flies or as the forest path leads but very circuitous to get to with current roads. There used to be a glass factory here as well as in several other neighboring villages. That's what brought the Nachmans here since they were glassmakers from Bavaria. This region of Poland was a true melting pot. There were Poles, Germans, Rusins, Ukrainians, Lemks and Bojks all living together. A healthy Jewish population existed here along with Catholics, Greek Catholics and Orthodox faiths. There is an old family story that my great grandfather could speak five languages from growing up in this region.

One of the things I have probably downplayed a little bit is the experience of setting foot in your ancestor's village for the first time, especially if you personally knew them. You have a life's worth of context and experience with that person as well as preconceptions of their behavior based on your being brought up in a culture very different from the one they were raised in. When you visit Poland for the first time and more so the village in which they were born and lived, there is an otherworldly experience that occurs and so many "ah ha" moments follow. You find yourself saying "So that's why..." or "That makes sense now." All the while your head is spinning trying to comprehend that you are walking on a road or in a building where one of your ancestors whom you knew could have been a hundred years prior. It is humbling and gratifying.

The road leading out of Borownica still turned to dirt and gravel at the edge of town. When I first came here in 1994 the entire church and the hillside the church was on was covered with trees. You could barely see the church and there was no parking lot. In 2001, all of the trees around the church and on the surrounding hills were cut down so the church was clearly visible. Now there is a dirt parking lot next to the church with a dirt road leading up a steep hill to it. The road heading out of the village was heavily forested with trees growing right up to the side of the road. It was like driving through a green tunnel. There was a small shrine on the other side of a creek alongside the road with a basic log bridge leading to it. It was like a small forest cathedral surrounding the shrine along with a thick carpet of moss. Now the entire area along side the road has been deforested and the small shrine looks totally out of place. Soon enough, this road will be paved too.

The last of the "must see" places in this area was the church in Dylagowa. The GPS got us half way there then turned us up a road that just didn't seem right. My memory had provided some good direction throughout the trip and there was a nagging feeling we were going the wrong way. When the road turned into a rutted, dirt single lane "road" I knew that this was probably not the best way to go. A large mud pit made me turn around, much to my parents' happiness. We did stop to take some pictures so people could see what some roads are like in Poland though. Fortunately, the car didn't bottom out and we didn't get stuck.

Back on the main road, I used some intuition and the GPS's map to finally guide us to the church in Dylagowa. At first, I drove past it not recognizing it. I stopped at the bottom of the hill where the old cemetery is located. The three of us got out and did a quick surname check in the cemetery. It was more cared for now than I remember it. I asked some locals where the church was in Dylagowa and they pointed me back up the hill which confused me. So we went back. Sure enough, Sw. Zofia, it was the church. It seemed so different then I realized that all the trees were gone and the church was freshly painted with a brand new parking lot and a nice gathering area outside of the church covered with paving stones. Then I read the placard with the historical information about the church and realized that this wasn't the original church that my ancestors



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PGSGC Family Tree

By John F. Szuch

As we ready ourselves for our summer break, we do so minus two members who have passed away since our last installment. Any loss is a big one, but in some cases they hit closer to home than others.

Such is the case with member Ralph Lysyk who died on March 6, 2017. Ralph was an original member and one of the co-founders of the PGSGC. He was the original Vice President in the groups' first year. After that first year, Founder and first President, Ed Mendyka, decided not to continue as President. He approached Ralph to see if he would be interested in seeking the post. He wasn't interested, so Ed approached me about the position. I was interested and, thanks to Ralph, I'm finishing up my 25th (and last) year in that position! Thanks Ralph!

Also, member Stanley J. Witkowski Jr. passed away. Stan left us on April 21, 2017 at age of 94! Although I didn't have much contact with Stan, I do know that he was a relative of Ron Kramer, our current Vice President.

Please keep all of our deceased members, as well as our deceased relatives, in your prayers.

On the bright side, our newsletter editor's son, Adam Galauner, has graduated from Brecksville Broadview Heights High School this spring. He will attend the Rochester Institute of Technology in the fall and has been accepted into their Computational Mathematics program. He also landed a summer internship with Roblox Corporation in San Mateo, CA where he will design computer games all summer which his parents say is his dream come true! Congrats and best wishes go out to Adam!

If you have any wonderful news regarding your families, please let me know so we can share it with our PGSGC family. Have a safe and enjoyable summer!

John



In Loving Memory Of
RALPH LYSYK
Born
June 8, 1925
Entered Into Rest
March 6, 2017
Final Resting Place
**Ohio Western Reserve
National Cemetery**

There is an appointed time for everything, and a time for every thing under the heavens. A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to uproot the plant. A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to tear down, and a time to build. A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance. A time to scatter stones, and a time to gather them; a time to embrace, and a time to be far from embraces. A time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away. A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to be silent, and a time to speak. A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.
Ecclesiastes 3:1-1

Hopko Funeral Home

In Loving Memory Of
STANLEY J. WITKOWSKI, Jr.
Born
July 15, 1922
Entered Into Rest
April 21, 2017
Final Resting Place
**All Saints Cemetery
Section 17, Lot 5043, Grave 2**

God grant me the
SERENITY
To accept the things
I cannot change,
COURAGE
To change the things
I can and
WISDOM
To know the difference.
—Amen.

ST. JOHN FUNERAL HOME
923 Broadway • Bedford, Ohio

WEeping WILLOW

MADE IN ITALY

Schedule of Presentations for Upcoming Meetings

Sep: **Wearing The Letter P: Polish Women as Forced laborers in Nazi Germany 1939-1945** - Join us for a presentation by our Fall Keynote speaker, Sophie Hodorowicz Knab, well know author on Polonia and it customs and traditions.

Oct: **TBD**

Nov: **Annual Party** - Come join us for our annual pot luck dinner. It's a feast of homemade Polish cooking. No one goes away hungry and you have a great opportunity to try other families' long kept secret recipes.

Dec: **TBD**



Poland 2014: A Journey continued from page 8.....

would have attended. This church was built in 1911 and my families came to the area in the 1830s. Later research revealed that there used to be a wooden church here that was moved to another village then torn down in the 70's.

We left Dylagowa and headed south through Siedliska Nad Sanem. I pointed out the bar/grocery store with rooms for rent that I stayed in during my trip to Poland in 2001. For the first time I could say that something hadn't changed. My parents were VERY glad I didn't reserve rooms there for this trip. The cemetery that we saw in the videos during our stay with the Sochas was located here and we easily found it. After trudging around for a few minutes (and giving my parents a quick grammar lesson so they would look for Socha and Sochowie), we found the group grave of the Sochas that we saw in the video. We took some pictures, paid our respects and continued on.

Instead of turning back towards Jawornik Ruski, we continued straight along the river heading towards Ulucz and Mrzyglod. A cousin of mine did some collateral research and found out that the Nachman family was living in Ulucz in the early 1900s. On our way to Sanok, we stopped at the cemetery in Mrzyglod to look around but didn't find any ancestral surnames. There used to be multiple ferry services on the San River. Now those are mostly defunct and replaced with bridges. I had the opportunity to use one of those ferries in 1994 and that was the last time.

A short distance from Mrzyglod was Sanok and the skansen. A skansen is an outdoor architectural museum. There are skansens all across Europe but they seem more prevalent in the former Communist bloc. The premise is to preserve old houses, churches, barns and other rural architecture and features in specific regions. I really enjoy visiting them and think it gives a great view back in time. The museum in Sanok is supposed to be one of the best in Poland.



We bought our tickets and I picked up an English language guide book with a map to help us with a walking tour. As it turns out, many of the buildings were closed since it was a Monday on the offseason. Still, it gave my parents an opportunity to see some of the old architecture that is extremely hard to find anymore outside of these museums. It also provided a perspective on how our families lived and the conditions with which they dealt. It's hard to comprehend a family with 10 children living in a two room house. Most of the museum was more or less unchanged from my last visit and could be seen by following a loop trail through most of the exhibits representing the various regions in the former Przemysl wojwodstwo. I like seeing the few houses and manors from the specific villages from which my ancestors came.

The new main attraction is a re-constructed town square. There was a lot of time and money invested in building this and I personally find it to be distracting from the rest of the museum especially since it is all brand new and not dismantled and moved to site like all of the other buildings. Everyone was tired from the walk since it is mostly dirt trails and tends to be hilly so it was time to leave the skansen and make our way to the next family visit.

The GPS got us to and through Krosno from Sanok then I remembered the way once we got to Korczyna. This is the village of my namesakes, the Kmons. I've been able to trace my family back to 1755 in this town and neighboring villages. When we pulled in the drive, it didn't look like anyone was home but as we got out of the car, Jozef came out to greet us. Again, hugs and kisses all around. We were ushered in with our luggage and showed our sleeping rooms. The obligatory klapki (slippers) were at the door and we all accepted a pair. It's good to note here that you typically don't wear shoes in people's houses in Poland. At the entrance, you take your shoes off and are offered a pair of slippers to wear around the house. Sometimes they are too big and sometimes too small. It's generally considered not good form to not wear slippers. If you have issues about wearing someone else's slippers, you might want to consider packing a pair of your own when you travel to Poland.



Typically, this family enjoys sitting around talking and watching TV and I let my parents know ahead of time that I was going to propose going to see some things of interest in the area. Once we were settled in our rooms, we all re-grouped in the main room of the house for something to eat. Jozef's wife used to be a head cook and she can prepare some great food. Their daughter, Natalia, was living at home and she had a good job with an American company at their office in Krosno. She worked in Scotland for a year and spoke very good English. That gave me a break from having to translate three conversations at once and gave my parents someone with whom they could talk freely. The whole evening was spent in conversation and laying plans for the next day. Each family we visited was fascinated by the fact that we still maintained Polish traditions in our family. I pick mushrooms, we observe Wigilia, and we take a basket of food to church on Holy Saturday for blessing and have a traditional Easter dinner. We were told "You are Poles just living in a different place!" Our game plan for the next day came into place and we went to bed with a full day of activities ahead of us.

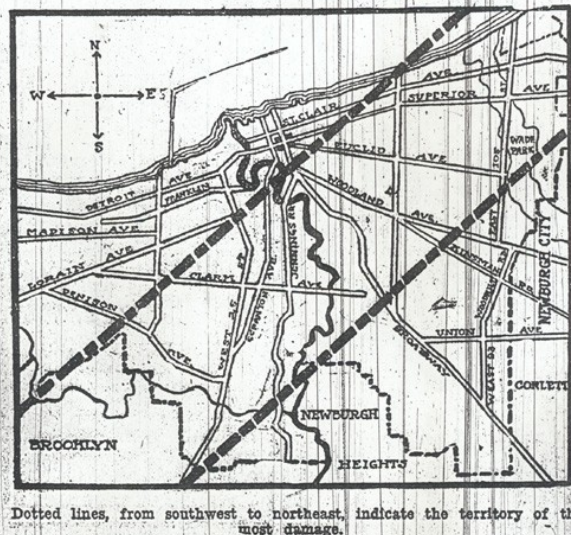
To be continued in the next issue

And the Bells Came Crashing Down: The Great Windstorm of 1909 continued from page 1.....

minute and then 84 miles per hour in the next minute. Sister Nozoriri of the school noticed the injured boy and attempted to save him from the shower of debri and was cut with shards of stained glass from the tumbling church structure. A down-pour of rain and hail began. The gale winds lasted for 10 minutes and within 20 minutes the worst was over and the temperature now stood at 46 degrees where it had started in the morning.

The rain continued until 2:14pm and the temperature started to increase. By the time the 5:00pm work bell rang, the temperature was 66 degrees and the sun was shining. In the aftermath, 7 Clevelanders lost their lives in the storm and 12 churches, 17 schools and countless businesses and homes were severely damaged within that 10 minute span of time. While the storm was characteristic of a tornado, no confirmed funnel cloud was noted. It was considered the "most destructive storm in the history of the city" at that time.

MAP SHOWING PATH OF THE STORM



Cleveland Historical, "The 1909 Tornado" photo by Glen Sobola

Remember When: My Front Porch continued from page 3.....

best place to enjoy an ice cream soda, Popsicle, or other frozen treat. Everyone sat on their front porch in the evening. Neighbors and friends would often come over to visit and spend time catching up on family news or neighborhood gossip. It was where we strengthened our relationships with family, friends and neighbors. Front porches were where we watched, witnessed and celebrated so many happy and memorable life events. We watched family, friends and neighbors celebrate christenings, first communions, confirmations, graduations and birthday parties, then watched first dates, homecoming dates, prom dates, and eventually weddings. These precious "Kodak" moments were captured on our front porch, one of the best places on earth to celebrate and remember them.



John A. Prokop is a freelance writer and has published articles about growing up on Cleveland's East Side Polish neighborhood (Poznan,) in the 1950s and 1960s. He attended St. Casimir Grade School (Class of 1962) and then Cathedral Latin High School (Class of 1966). He is also the Prokop Family Historian and Genealogist and has studied Genealogy for about 5 years. John tries to capture and record his feelings of the times, culture, food, religion, people and relationships, as he perceived and lived them. He also chronicles personal information about his family genealogy, which is often rarely recorded or documented. John currently is retired and lives in St. Petersburg, Florida with his wife, Laura, and their two married daughters, Holly and Jennifer.

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c/o the return address above**

About Us

Meetings are held the first Tuesday of the month (March, April, May, June, September, October, November and December) at St. Mary's PNC Church parish hall, 5375 Broadview Rd., Parma, Ohio. We have Winter break in January and February and Summer break in July and August. 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 10:00 PM. There is ample parking in the parish parking lot. The entrance is on Marietta Ave. Membership dues are \$24.00 per calendar 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.