

The following article on pages 1 & 2 appeared in The Neighborhood News, The Garfield Heights Tribune on Wednesday, December 15, 2010. It is reprinted with permission of Managing Editor and author Ellen Psenicka.

Polish president charms crowd in Slavic Village, honors Stefanski



Shown above is local Polish-American civic leader Ben S. Stefanski II (at left), after receiving the Knights Cross of Merit of the Republic of Poland from President Bronislaw Komorowski (at right) last Thursday at the Polish American Cultural Center on Lansing Avenue. The award is the highest a non-citizen of Poland can receive for supporting Polish ideals and culture outside the country. *Photo by Michael Psenicka*

By Ellen Psenicka

It was a great day to be Polish in Cleveland last Thursday, as the president of the Republic of Poland, Bronislaw Komorowski, spent the day here, including a stop in Slavic Village. It was the first time ever a Polish president had visited the city.

The festivities at the Polish American Cultural Center on Lansing Ave. began about 3 p.m., with scores of leaders in Cleveland's Polish-American community on hand for a veritable feast of Polish cuisine, with china gleaming, candles glowing and wine flowing.

President Komorowski arrived shortly after 4 p.m., accompanied by Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson, Ben S. Stefanski II and Cultural Center Executive Director Eugene Bak, both co-chairs of the local event.

Across the street from the Center, at E. 65th and Lansing Ave., a group of about 75 people stood outside waving small red and white Polish flags as Komorowski emerged from his limousine. He crossed the street and shook hands with many in the crowd, all smiles and good humor.

"He took the time to do that," Stefanski later said. "That really impressed me."

Before anyone in the banquet room even knew the president had arrived, Bak gave him and his entourage a tour of the Polish museum, where Alina Stepien, representing the Center, welcomed Komorowski with a dozen long-stemmed red roses.

A few minutes later the crowd was up on its feet serenading the Polish leader as he entered the banquet hall.

Komorowski, who had made

an official visit to President Barack Obama in Washington, D. C. the day before and met with Polish and Polish-American doctors at the Cleveland Clinic Thursday morning, told those at the Polish American Cultural Center, "This is one of the nicest places I've been on my trip to America, a nice place to rest in a Polish home."

He talked of his visit to the Cleveland Clinic, which he called "the pride of the city, partially because of Polish pride and Polish ingenuity," referring to the first successful face transplant performed at the Clinic by Polish surgeon Maria Siemionow.

"Poland has achieved a tremendous success in the last 20 years," Komorowski continued.

"Today we are a free, independent country," he said. "The economies of nations all around the globe are in crisis, but there is no economic crisis in Poland!"

He said his wish for people of Polish origin here and everywhere is that they can all share in the Polish luck, happiness and success.

Mayor Jackson presented Komorowski with some souvenirs of his Cleveland visit, including CDs of the Cleveland Orchestra and a key to the city, and Ward 12 Councilman Tony Brancatelli gave him a proclamation from Cleveland City Council.

But the highlight of the afternoon was when President Komorowski bestowed Stefanski with the Knights Cross of Merit of the Republic of Poland, given in recognition of his "outstanding contribution to the Polish culture and promotion of its values."

Stefanski told the cheering crowd that, "This award is for all of you sitting here, all of you who have

supported Polonia and the Center over the past 10 years and made this neighborhood a better place."

He told the president that his visit was the most exciting thing that's ever happened here.

"Everyone's just crazy with happiness that you have come here," he said.

Komorowski left the Center shortly after 5 p.m. for a reception at The Union Club downtown, where he was greeted by another Komorowski, the president of the Cleveland Cavaliers, Len Komoroski. He shares the same name as the Polish president, with the spelling of the last name altered by an official at Ellis Island when his people emigrated here from Poland.

Also on hand at the Union Club was Piotr Cichocki, president of Polsteam USA, Inc., a Polish shipping company that has been active in transporting steel on the Great Lakes since the 1970s. One of its ships, the "Nogat," was docked in the Port of Cleveland on the very day of the Polish president's visit.

When Cichocki heard that President Komorowski would be visiting Cleveland, he wrote Stefanski for permission to fly in from London, England, to meet him at The Union Club.

Permission was granted, and Cichocki, along with the captain and chief engineer of the "Nogat," got to shake their president's hand as well as meet with William D. Friedman, president and CEO of the Port of Cleveland.

While at The Union Club, Cichocki presented President Komorowski with an engraved ship's clock, as the beaming "Nogat" captain and engineer looked on.

Passport to Polish Records

by Ken Spikowski

It was the perfect gift - especially for a genealogist. Last December, my first cousin Richard Davis called to say that he was bringing some pictures and memorabilia that he found in a box in an old wardrobe in his basement. The furniture had once been used by our Polish grandfather, Jan Spikowski. Rick arrived with a bag of items, mostly pictures, and together we examined the treasure trove. Many of the pictures were quite old - the clothing worn by the subjects were styles of bygone years.

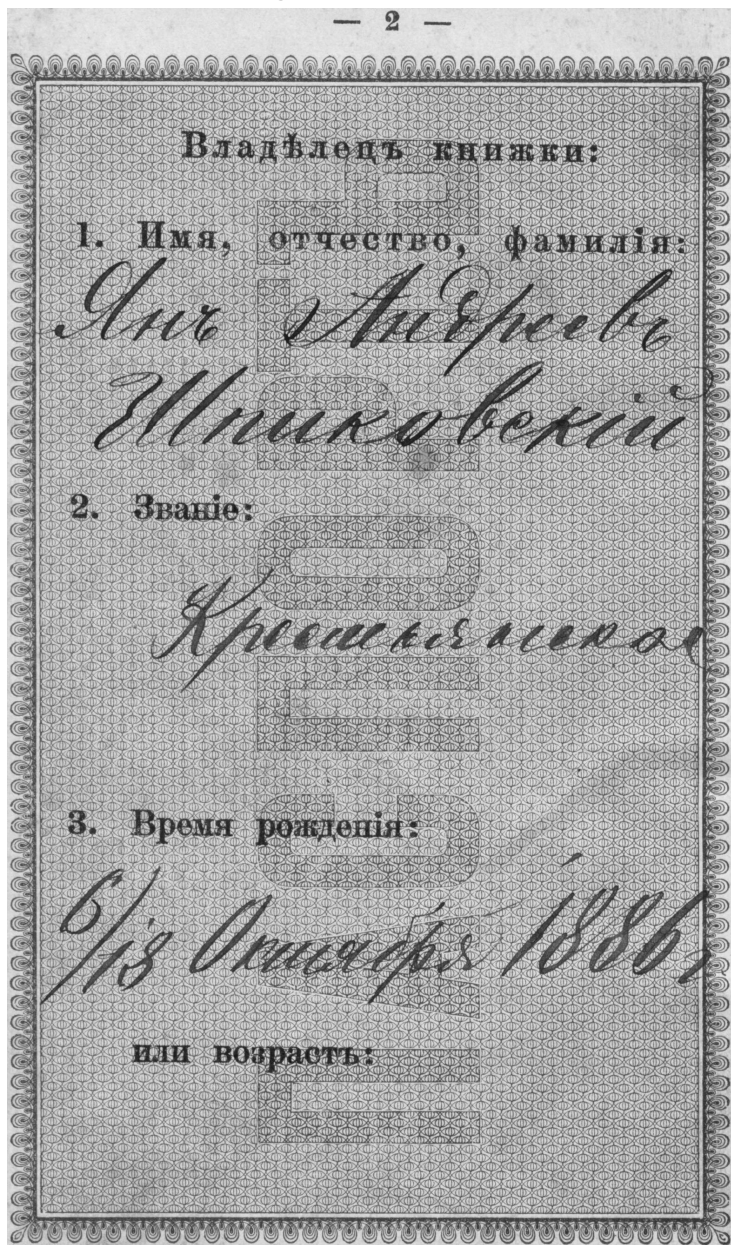
Some pictures had inscriptions written on the back - written in Polish script, including my grandfather in 1912 and one marked "Andrzej Śpikowski 1842", in agreement with "Andrew Spikowski", the name of his father as stated on his 1938 Social Security application. I suspected that this date preceded the development of photography, but in 1841 British botanist Henry Fox Talbot perfected his process that produced multiple prints from a single negative, which he called calotype (Greek for beautiful picture). My aunt Eleanor said that Jan's mother was at least 50 when he was born, but if Andrzej was only 20 when that picture was taken (assuming his mustache was bleached or powdered rather than gray), he would have been about 64 by 1886 when Jan was born. If the man in the picture were much older, he may have been Jan's grandfather instead of his father.



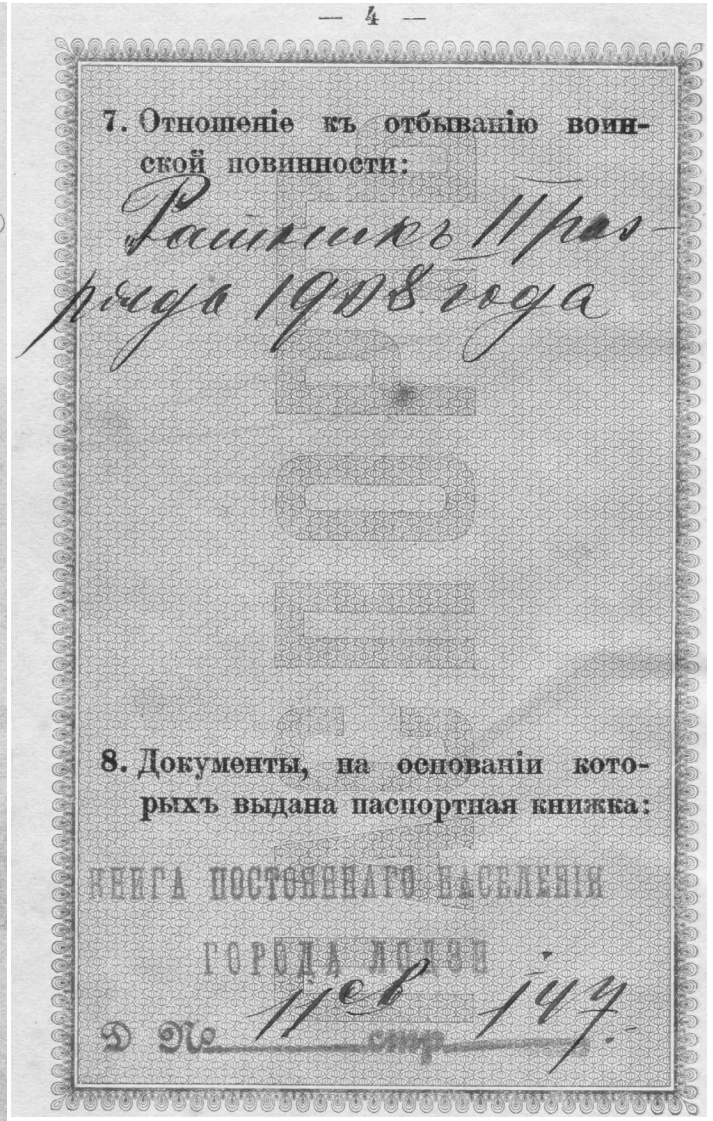
There was the U.S. passport that Grandpa used for a visit to Poland in 1965 at age 78, enclosed in a plastic folder from Kniola travel agency, and a receipt from his pride and joy - his 1961 Ford Falcon. There was an address book of his friends and family, and several letters written in Polish.

Best of all, however, was an old battered passport written in Cyrillic Script - Jan Spikowski's Russian passport that he used for his voyage to America in 1912. Records in the Russian partition of Poland were kept in Russian as punishment for an insurrection in 1863. In *Our Words --- A Genealogist's Guide to Polish, German, Latin, and Russian Documents --- Volume II: Russian* by Jonathan D. Shea & William F. Hoffman on p. 1 lists the phonetics and spelling of the Cyrillic alphabet. On pp. 342-345 it shows the translation of the printed headings and script from an example passport using the same form.

The first page showed that it was termless, issued by the city of Łódź 4 November 1908 (spelled thousand nine hundred eight). With translation help from member Norman Braun and his daughter-in-law, numbered items starting on page 2 were translated as:



1. His name was listed as *Янъ Андреев Шпиковскій*, a Russian transliteration of Jan Andrew Śpikowski with the surname like the back of his father's picture. (Italics are used for some Russian words because they look similar to the Cyrillic script.) Andrew is not his middle name but отчество (patronymic). The diacritical mark, which makes the S sound like Sh, was not used in his Polish signature in item 9. below or anything on this side of the Atlantic. Several years ago I spent a lot of time and money at the Westlake LDS Family History Library looking for his 1886 birth certificate on microfilms for many parishes in and around the large city of Łódź using the spelling *Спиковскій*, and may have missed it by not checking the indexes for the alternate spelling.
2. Class: Peasant
3. Date of birth: 6/18 October 1886 (Orthodox/Western calendar dates)



- 4. Religion: Catholic
- 5. Place of permanent residence: city Łódź
- 6. Is he or has he been married: Married
- 7. Relationship to fulfillment of military duty: Soldier 2nd class 1908 year
- 8. Documents, on the basis of which the passport booklet was issued:
REGISTER PERMANENT POPULATION CITY OF ŁÓDŹ
D No. 11 page 147

If the permanent population registers of Łódź still exist, they would contain the first and maiden names of the my great grandmother, which did not appear on my grandmother Franciszka Hetmanek’s death certificate or Ellis Island passenger list.

Although this passport led me to the alternative spelling of my grandfather’s surname in Russian records, if you are looking for an ancestor in such records I highly recommend careful study of section “D. RUSSIAN FORMS OF PROPER NAMES” starting on page 10 in the Shea and Hoffman book cited earlier, which is available as a genealogy reference at the Fairview Park banch of Cuyahoga County Public Library. It provides more alternative spellings than the one mentioned on the previous page.

9. Подпись владельца книжки:

Spikowski
Spikowski

Если владелец книжки неграмотен,
то его приметы:

Ростъ:

Цвѣтъ волосъ:

Особья примѣты:

10. Лица, внесенныя въ паспортную
книжку, на основаніи ст. 9
и 10 положенія о видахъ на
жительство:

Явленъ въ Брусскомъ Гминномъ Управленіи *август*
1911 мѣсяца *31* дня 19*11* года и записанъ въ
книгу непостояннаго народонаселенія подъ № *165*
на стр. *761* Проживаетъ въ дер. *Висиче Вушков*
село, въ домѣ *Михаила Шумца*, подъ № *3*

вѣрно:

Писарь гмины Бруссы *В. Пабрисинъ*

Явленъ въ *поллицейск.* уч.
гор. Лодзи в. 23 марта
1911 г. по уч. *Стефане Рокна*
це № *9*. *д. о. м. о. в. л.*

A. Kammerling

Заявленъ *22 июня* 1901 г.
въ домѣ под № *2* по улицѣ
Молобей въ районѣ
б полицейскаго уч. г. Лодзи
домовл. *С. Русинъ*
управл. домономъ

9. Signature of booklet owner: Spikowski

Subsequent pages listed five changes of address, three to Брусскомъ гминномъ (Bruss gmina) and the last two (one handwritten and the last on a faint stamped form) in гор:Лодзи or г:Лодзи (city of Łódź). The last move occurred one month before the birth of their daughter Helen, and was signed by “управл домономъ J. Русин” (house manager J. Rusin), my grandfather’s brother-in-law. If the permanent population registers do not exist, I know where in Łódź my aunt Helen was born on July 21, 1911. Since that record will soon be 100 years old, it may offer another opportunity to learn the name of my maternal paternal great grandmother.

Two years later Franciszka and Helen joined my grandfather in Braddock, PA at the house of Jozef Rusin, who arrived in New York for at least the fourth time on December 4, 1911 on his way to Braddock, where he was listed in the 1920 Census. He later returned to his wife Eleanora (my grandfather’s older sister) and his children in Poland.

Cyrillic support in Windows XP with phonetic Russian keyboard

The preparation of the preceding article was facilitated by a transliterated keyboard layout in which the usual English keys generate the Russian characters that are phonetically equivalent. This is much easier to use than the standard Russian keyboard layout provided by Microsoft. For details see www.auburn.edu/~mitrege/russian/cyrillic-setup/cyrillic.html.

More on “Searching for Cuyahoga County Property Records”

by Ken Spikowski

In response to my article in the previous issue, members noticed that the selling price of the property was often omitted from the deed. When questioned, Deneen Kassouf supplied a table showing that before 1968, deeds have federal tax “D” stamps with denominations of \$1.00 per \$1,000 sale price “(Less 10%) CONSIDERATION” in all multiples of \$500 up to \$26,500 but more sparse at higher values, up to \$543.40 for \$494,000. To convert a stamp value to a sale price, multiply by 10000 and divide by 11. Starting 1968, federal stamps were not used, but rates were \$1.00 per \$1000, or after 7-Nov-1985 \$4.00 per \$1000.

In the last paragraph on the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, my instruction to click “Edit” confuses users of Internet Explorer on recent versions of Windows, which by default omit the menu bar that contains “Edit”. To enable it, click “Tools”, “Toolbars”, and check “Menu Bar”.

Polish Roman Catholic Union Insurance Records

by Pat Bakaitis

I found a new site – found it listed in the Toledo Polish Gen Newsletter. It is now online. I belong, as several of the family settled there and I do collateral research. It is on the PGSA site and it is the insurance records for the Polish Roman Catholic Union. The records are only available for persons who died after 1916 as the ones prior to that time are in a ledger book and have not been copied or transcribed. On www.pgsa.org/PRCUA/prcu.php, search the PRCUA Insurance Claim File Index for your ancestors. If you want the records, click “photocopies” and follow the directions for sending in a form to have the papers looked up and sent to you. There is a fee to have this done. Allow about 6 weeks for your answer.

SUE’S BEANS (Susan Bakaitis)

1/2 lb. bacon, raw, cut in bite size chunks	2 Tbsp. prepared mustard
1 c. brown sugar (1.2 lb.)	1 chopped onion
	1 large jar (3 lbs.) navy beans (42 oz.)

Combine all ingredients into casserole and bake in 350° oven for 3 hours. Taste juice after 1/2 hour.

Pat’s Microwave Version

Fry bacon, remove from pan. Pour off all but 1 Tbs. fat. Brown onion in fat. Drain off bean juice. Combine all in 2 Qt. microwave pot. Cover. Cook on high for 12-15 min. Stir once during cooking. Let sit 5 mins.

Pat Bakaitis

Grandma Wisniewski's Legacy

by Georgene Jasinski

My grandparents, Jan and Veronica, were born in Poland - she from Gniezno and he from Stepow. They met in Cleveland and were married on May 14, 1888 at St. Stanislaus Church. I always heard stories about my grandmother's baking skills. Of their 10 children, seven owned or worked in bakeries – Julia, Sallie, Stephanie, William, Regina, Joseph and Emily.

My story begins with Julia, the second oldest daughter. She and her husband, Felix, owned Parkview Bakery near Miles Avenue until 1947 when they moved to California. Felix and Julia continued to bake and sell pastries until they retired.

Sallie married Vincent, and Stephanie married Marion. The men were co-owners of the Akron Rye Bread Company in Akron, Ohio. Years later, Vincent and Sallie's son carried on the family business.

The oldest son, William, was a baker for the Laub Baking Company.

Regina and her husband, Leo, owned Cleveland Bakery, located at Broadway and Marble Avenues. When Leo passed away leaving her with two young children, Regina continued to operate the bakery for many years. Her son and daughter worked beside her.

In 1947, Joe and his wife, Mary, became the owners of Wade Park Bakery, 8905 Wade Park Avenue. They relocated and opened Lakeshore Bakery at Lakeshore Boulevard near Euclid Beach Amusement Park in 1956. Their four sons learned to bake bread and pastries alongside their father and mother. Their wedding cakes were delicious! I know because they baked and decorated our wedding cake.

While she was in high school and until she was married, my mother, Emily, worked for her sister, Regina. My dad also worked for Regina and later was employed at Ward Baking Company, the makers of Tip Top bread.

Our family has many excellent bakers including several great-grandchildren and a great, great grandson who, at 13, began baking cheesecakes. I believe it is in our genes. Thanks, Grandma!

GRANDMA'S POLISH SWEET BREAD

1/2 cup scalded milk	4 Tbls. lukewarm water
1/2 lb. butter or marg.	6 eggs
1 1/2 cups sugar	1 1/2 tsp. salt
1 cup golden raisins	1 tsp. vanilla
Small amt. lukewarm water	3/4 tsp. nutmeg
2 oz. cake of yeast	6 or 7 cups flour
1/2 tsp. sugar	Cinnamon & sugar

Scald 1/2 cup milk. Melt butter or margarine in scalded milk and add 1 1/2 cups sugar. Stir until sugar is dissolved. Cool. Soak 1 cup of golden raisins in lukewarm water for 5 minutes; then squeeze out water. Crumble yeast into cup and mix in 1/2 tsp. sugar and 4 Tbls. lukewarm water. Let stand until bubbly. In a large bowl, beat eggs until foamy. Stir cooled milk mixture into eggs. Add salt, vanilla and nutmeg. Sift flour slowly into this mixture. Add yeast mixture and stir until blended. Let dough rise until double in size. Punch down. Add raisins and mix into dough. Divide dough evenly into three, greased loaf pans. Combine cinnamon and sugar and top each loaf. Let rise again. Bake at 350 degrees for 1/2 hour or until golden brown.

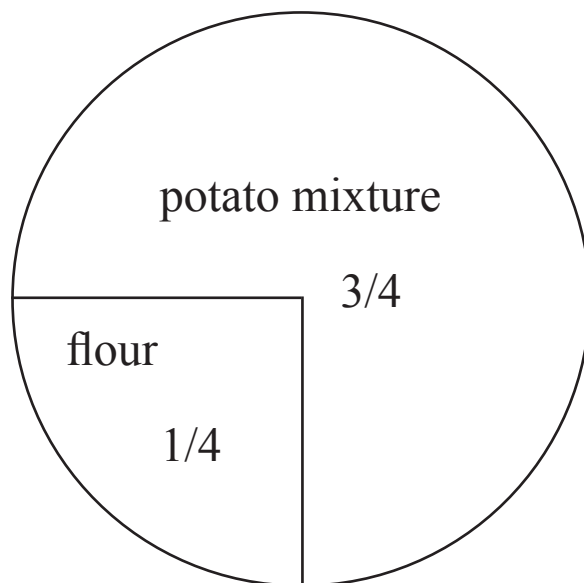
Georgene Jasinski

DUMPLINGS ALA ŚLĄSK

This is a recipe I got from my cousin Marie who lives in Kielce when I visited Poland in 1999. It is called "Klusci Śląskie" or "Dumplings ala Śląsk". I translated the recipe and worked out the following amounts of ingredients:

9 large Idaho Potatoes
Ener-G Potato Starch Flour (Purchased at The Bin in Lakewood, Ohio)
3 egg yolks
salt to taste

After the potatoes are boiled, mash them well, add the egg yolks and salt. Before you add the flour, push the potato mixture against the bowl and leave a quarter of the bowl empty. Fill that hole with the flour and mix together. Form the dough into walnut-sized rounds and then gently make an indentation in the center of the round. Boil them in salted boiling water for about 5 to 7 minutes. Serve as a side with gravy or onions sautéed in butter. This amount yields about 60 dumplings.



Richarda Jambrozy

JELLIED PIG'S FEET

6 Feet + 6 Pork Hocks
2½ T salt (more or less)
6 Bay leaves
4 medium-sized cloves of garlic

Put feet + hocks in pot with enough water to cover the meat. Bring to boil (skim the top). Turn heat to simmer + add salt, peppercorns + bay leaves. Cook for 3 hrs. Take meat out. Put 4 cloves of garlic into liquid thru a garlic press. Let sit while boning the meat, & cut into chunks. Put a layer of meat (covering the bottom) in baking dish, strain liquid & pour over meat. For this recipe you need 2 or 3 baking dishes, 8" x 12" baking dishes 2 inches high. After it slightly hardens put in refrigerator. Before cutting scrape fat off top.

Lucia Dominak

In Memory

PGSGC member Paul J. Dworzniak, age 70. Retired employee of IBM and Parker-Hannifin. Beloved husband of Barbara J. (nee Sztul) for 41 years. His obituary is available online at <http://obits.cleveland.com/obituaries/cleveland/obituary.aspx?n=paul-j-dworznic&pid=146729599>. It was in the Plain Dealer on November 20-21.

Genealogy Classes

Join Cuyahoga County Public Library's Genealogy Specialist, Joni Mihelich for a series of genealogy classes designed to help you get started, get back to basics, or learn about the free genealogy resources available at Cuyahoga County Public Library. These classes will be offered each month beginning in March 2011 at the Fairview Park Branch. Registration required as class sizes are limited. Register by calling the library at 440-333-4700 or online at <http://cuyahogalibrary.org/EventFinder.aspx?TodaysEvents=true>.

Genealogy Workshop – Session 1: Beginning Genealogy Class / Registration required.

Gain the knowledge to make your research a success in a beginner's genealogy class with Cuyahoga County Public Library's Genealogy Specialist, Joni Mihelich. Followed by a Q & A.

Genealogy Workshop – Session 2: Genealogy Databases / Registration required.

Turn up the volume on your family history research with hands-on help to learn how to search effectively some of the most popular Genealogy websites including Ancestry Library Edition, Footnote and Heritage Quest! Must be comfortable using a computer.

Genealogy Workshop – Session 3: Census Research / Registration required.

Learn the basics of census research and then receive hands-on help to search and analyze your findings. Must be comfortable using a computer.

Joni Mihelich

**Subject Specialist - Genealogy
Cuyahoga County Public Library**

TO MY ANCESTOR

Your tombstone stands among the rest;
neglected and alone.

The name and date are chiseled out on polished,
marbled stone.

It reaches out to all who care; it is too late to mourn.
You did not know that I exist. You died, and I was born.
Yet each of us are cells of you in flesh, in blood, in bone.
Our blood contracts and beats a pulse entirely not our own.
Dear Ancestor, the place you filled one hundred years ago
spreads out among the ones you left who loved you so.
I wonder if you lived and loved; I wonder if you knew
that someday I would find this spot and come to visit you.

Author Unknown

Submitted by Georgene Jasinski



Pictured above is one of forty favors made for the 2010 Christmas party by retiring refreshment hostess Elaine Marec.

Schedule of Speakers for Upcoming Meetings

Mar. - Jane Gramlich, Genealogy Specialist, Akron Summit County Library

“Resources and Services in Special Collections at the Akron Summit County Library”

Apr. - Rose Marie Macek Jisa

“Who are the Rusyns?”

May - Eileen Sotak, Chairperson, Tremont History Project

“Tremont History Project, Beginnings of the Project to the Present”

Welcome--New Members--Witamy

Marilyn Krasnodemski

BUDZIK, CIESLIK, WOLOS, WOLOSZ

Edith Orszycki

GRABSKI PESTKA PIOTRKOWSKI

Edith was listed in the previous issue with her surname misspelled.

Letter from the President

by John F. Szuch

Hopefully, by the time you read this we will be over our winter snows. I canceled the February 1st meeting because of the winter storm that was to continue that evening with freezing rain. Our December 7th meeting/Christmas party was touch and go due to bad weather that day, but we held it and had a nice turn out with great food once again! I would like to thank all who helped that evening by preparing food and helping with the set up and tear down. Because the weather almost caused the party to be canceled, I suggested at the January meeting that we move the annual party to October to avoid snow and celebrate Polish American Heritage Month and our organization's 20th anniversary, but those of you who grew up in Cleveland know that anything is possible here when it comes to weather! The idea was briefly discussed and voted on and it passed. We will still have a little something in December with oplatki and desserts.

2011 marks the first year in a long time that I won't have Ron Marec as Vice President, and his sister Elaine Marec as our meeting refreshments hostess. Both have decided that after many years of service to the PGSGC, it's now time to sit back and enjoy the meetings as regular members. A BIG thank you to both of them for their many years of loyalty to our organization.

On a personal note, I would like to thank the members for re-electing me to my 19th term as president. Thanks also to Ed Mendyka for founding this organization on October 1, 1991, and for recommending that I replace him as president in 1993. Who would have thought that it would have lasted this long?



Annually at our Christmas Party I have two of our ladies whom I like to refer to as my “Christmas Angels”. They are the ones responsible for getting our food heated and set up for our annual party, and then cleaning the kitchen afterwards. They are Charlotte Welch on the left and Shirley Lazar on the right.

THE POLISH GENEALOGICAL
SOCIETY OF GREATER CLEVELAND
C/O ST. MARY'S PNC CHURCH
1901 WEXFORD AVE.
PARMA, OHIO 44134

VISIT US ON THE WEB AT: <http://www.freewebs.com/pgsgc>

FIRST CLASS MAIL

OUR POLISH ANCESTORS
is published by
THE POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
OF GREATER CLEVELAND



Everyone who is interested in Genealogy, and more specifically Polish Genealogy, is welcome to join our group. We meet the first Tuesday of the month from September thru June at St. Mary's PNC Church; 5375 Broadview Rd. (corner of Broadview & Wexford); Parma, Ohio. Parking is available in the parish lot, the entrance of which is on Marietta Ave. Meetings begin at 7:30 PM and usually end at 9:30-10:00 PM. Membership dues are \$25.00 a year.

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