



Our Polish ANCESTORS



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Polish Immigrants of Grit - The Quarry Families of Middleburgh and Berea

By Trina Goss Galauner

When John Baldwin established his Lyceum community in Berea in the early 1830s he would have never dreamed he was building his educational institution upon a valuable asset that would become a world famous commodity and bring a wide variety of immigrants to the small settlement.

John Baldwin discovered a piece of sandstone on his property around 1833. Noticing that it's hardness could sharpen a knife to perfection, he realized the profit that could be made. He leased out his land for mining of the stone and other landowners in the area followed suit. This led to the establishment of many small quarry outfits along the Rocky River. Berea sandstone, or "Berea grit" as it was called, made an ideal grinding stone and a valuable building material which eventually became world renown.



Balbina (Mikolajczyk) & Jozef Wisniewski with daughter, Weronika, in 1876, Berea, Ohio
Courtesy of Berni (Sak) O'Malley

As the quarrying business in Berea grew, it attracted immigrant laborers from Ireland, Scotland and England who were needed to quarry the sandstone. Eventually, German and then Polish immigrants moved into the area. The first Pole to settle in Berea was Heromin (Herman or Jerome) Mucha from Drawsko, Czarnków, Poland. He arrived on the Ship Herzogin von Brabant on August 15, 1865. Drawsko (in German, Dratzig) was a small village in the province of Poznan. Heromin probably sent news back to Drawsko and the surrounding villages about the need for workers in the Berea quarries. The following spring, Herman's 24 year old brother, Stanislaw Mucha, arrived with several more Polish men and families from the villages of Drawsko, Kamiennik and Pęckowo. They arrived on the Steamer Saxonia on May 26, 1866.

Franciszek Helwich, a 42 year old farmer from Kamiennik brought his wife, Mary (nee Wyrwa) and four small children to Middleburgh Township. Initially, Frank worked as a quarryman but opened a grocery by 1880. Wojciech (George) Jerzy, the son of Franciszek Jerzy & Maryanna (nee Piątek) of Drawsko, was only 23 years old when he arrived as a single man on the Saxonia. Franciszek Marks also came from Kamiennik

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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 Anthonette Baciak at arbaciak@aol.com for more information.





Letter from the President

Our recent meetings have been very active and informative with member reports on recent trips back to the Polish homeland and Ben's program on "Planning Your Trip to Poland". These programs have proven to be very informative and enjoyable, offering a wealth of knowledge about how to plan your trip to Poland and what to expect when getting there.

In order to promote our club, the PGSGC set up a table at the Polish Constitution Day parade celebration in Parma a few weeks ago. We met a lot of folks and made our club more known in the area. We hope to gain new members. It was great time with nice weather and we hope to return next year. THANK YOU LUCIA for your hard work setting this up.

There is a small correction from the last newsletter. The correct phone number for Anthonette Baciak, our Vice President, is 440-235-1218. Please make a note of it.

On a personal note, "[FACEBOOK](#)" has provided me with new connections for both sides of my family. The absolute best one was finding my living relatives in Poland who are still living in the same village in the birth home of my great-great grandparents. I would never have expected to find, or be able to converse (albeit by e-mail), with my 46-year-old cousin, [Andrzej Krajczynski](#). We have our 2x great grandparents, [Szczepan](#) and [Jadwiga Krajczynski](#), in common. Andrzej's brother is a Catholic priest living in [Plonsk](#). I have been truly blessed to reach this point in my search and await further ongoing conversation. I have to confess, I was not a total believer in "[Facebook](#)" or DNA. But, I have become a believer in both! Sometimes an old dog can learn new tricks!

Each year at this time we break for the summer giving our members a chance to rest and enjoy the fruits of their labor. You might want to host a family get-together that could provide a chance to gather more knowledge of your family history....GOOD LUCK! We will meet again on Tuesday, September 3rd. Have a great summer!

President,
Ron Kraine



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Taking Care of Your Ancestors' Headstones

By Trina Goss Galauner

As the weather gets nicer our thoughts may turn to visiting our dearly departed relatives' burial places. Certainly, there will be a need to trim overgrown grass around the gravestone and wipe away dirt and grime from the face of the stone. If we are visiting the final resting place of ancestors much further back than our grandparents, this chore may be much more time consuming if they haven't been visited in many years. In some cases, the stone may be so overgrown with vegetation that it can barely be found. Either way, there are some very important things to remember when tidying up a headstone at the cemetery.

It is important that you make sure you have permission from immediate family members to clean a headstone. Living relatives may be very protective of their family member's burial site.

Cemetery headstones can deteriorate in three different ways. First, biological growth such as algae, moss, ivy, grass, mold and fungi can work to destroy a gravestone marker. This vegetation can eat away the stone and cause it to crack. Second, soiling from dirt, mud, and other pollutants can, over time, cause irreparable damage to a stone. Third, staining from tree sap which can attract insects, berries from bushes and animal waste often in the form of bird droppings make a stone unsightly and can lead to damage of the marker.

Gravestones have been made with various materials over time. Wooden markers are long since gone and decomposed. Sandstone and slate tablets were single pieces cut from stone. With many sandstone quarries in the Cleveland area, it is no doubt many headstones were cut from local sandstone. Marble headstones became more

popular in the 1800s but their inability to resist acids in the environment have left many inscriptions faded and worn away. Granite markers became more common in the 1900s for their durability. Nabresina limestone, which has a beige hue, and Portland limestone, a stone known for its discoloring over time, were other types of stones used that were less durable than marble or granite.

Bring the following items to the cemetery when you plan to do maintenance on your ancestors' headstones:

- Water
- Spray bottle/bucket
- Soft sponge
- Soft plastic scraper
- Soft bristle brush
- Wooden pick
- Scissors/hand sheers



Limestone headstone
St. Mary's Cemetery
East 71st Street, Newburgh Heights



White marble headstone
St. Mary's Cemetery
East 71st Street, Newburgh Heights

First, trim around the stone using scissors or hand sheers then brush away



the debris with the soft bristle brush. Next, assess the dirt and damage to the stone. If there is any flaking of the stone, do not proceed as you may damage the stone further. If the stone seems sound, spray it with water and, as you clean, keep the stone wet using a spray bottle. DO NOT use household cleaners, acids, or bleach to clean the stone. Also, DO NOT scrape or sand the stone with any hard materials or wire brushes. A soft plastic scraper and wooden pick may be used to gently clean indentations and the debris swept away with the soft bristle brush.

There is a biological cleaning solution that is safe for use on headstones called D/2. This solution will kill biological growth and is especially helpful in cleaning the small pores of the stone.

With tender loving care, centuries old headstones can be cleaned up to look like new. And imagine how much easier it will be for others to read the etched names, dates and prayers that were so carefully carved into these timeless stones to honor our deceased relatives.

Polish Immigrants of Grit continued from page 1.....

to work in the stone quarries. He married Pelagia (Paulina) Tymke, who also arrived on the Saxonia in 1866. More accustomed to farming, he left the quarries and bought farmland in Strongsville Township by 1880.

Several other Tymkes also arrived on the Saxonia including August, Joseph, Michael and Martin. Martin Tymke was married to Katarzyna Graś and they both came from Kamiennik. Twenty five year old Peter Graś was also aboard the Saxonia and may have been Katarzyna's younger brother.

Jacob Trafisz and Elizabeth Trafisz arrived in 1866 on the Saxonia. Both from Kamiennik, they were most likely siblings. August Janke came from Kamiennik in 1866 as a single man but soon after he arrived he married Agnes Zydor who had also traveled on the same ship. Agnes was from Peckowo, only 4 km from Drawsko. They had at least 13 children, all born in Middleburgh Township.

A few weeks later a few more emigrants from Drawsko arrived in Middleburgh. Franciszek Mazur, son of Stanislaw and Faustina (nee Kijek) and Jan Piątek, son of Wincenty and Regina (nee Kijek), were probably cousins and traveled together aboard the SS Teutonia arriving on June 14, 1866. Also with them was Rosalie Trafisz, also from the same village. She was probably the sister of Jacob and Elizabeth Trafisz who were already living in Middleburgh.

A few days later, John Cichy from Wrzeszczyn, a village near Drawsko, arrived aboard the Steamer Borussia on June 18, 1866. He married Anna Klein who was born in Ohio. Originally, John worked in the quarries but acquired land in Columbia Township by 1880 and became a farmer.

All of these families were from small farming villages in Poland. Many came to Berea to work in the quarries in order to save money to purchase their own farms in Ohio. Some never left the quarries and some died of stone cutter's consumption before they had a chance to establish their own farms.

In late 1866, a cholera pandemic swept over Europe and the province of Poznan was hit especially hard. This, in addition to forced Germanization, likely encouraged more residents to emigrate.

NAMES.	AGE	SEX.	OCCUPATION.	The Country to which they usually belong.	The Country of which they intend to become inhabitants.
	YEARS				
M. Adamczewski	25	M		Germany	USA
Chm.	19	M			
Chm.	23	M			
Chm.	6	F			
Chm.	24	M			
Chm.	21	M			
Chm.	26	M			
Chm.	27	M	farmer		
Chm.	26	M			
Chm.	8	F			
Chm.	21	M			
Chm.	21	M			
Chm.	20	M			
Chm.	22	M			
Chm.	24	M			
Chm.	28	M	farmer		
Chm.	19	M			
Chm.	20	M			
Chm.	8	F			
Chm.	17	F			
Chm.	6	F			
Chm.	8	F			
Chm.	28	M			
Chm.	28	M			
Chm.	32	M			
Chm.	24	M	farmer		
Chm.	23	M			
Chm.	27	M			
Chm.	22	M			
Chm.	22	M			
Chm.	22	M			
Chm.	16	M			
Chm.	26	M			
Chm.	42	M			
Chm.	27	M			
Chm.	7	M			
Chm.	6	F			
Chm.	4	F			
Chm.	10	M			
Chm.	28	M			
Chm.	32	M			
Chm.	61	M	farmer		
Chm.	18	M			

Page from the passenger ship's manifest of the Saxonia that arrived in New York on May 26, 1866



Wojciech (George) Tadych was the first of his family to come to Middleburgh. He was from the village of Mrozowo, just over 100 km east of Drawsko and Kamiennik in the county of Wyrzysk. The son of Michal and Katarzyna (nee Winiiecki), he arrived on the SS Deutschland in November of 1867. He later married Lucya Szejka who came in 1870 from the village of Dębowo, only a short distance from Mrozowo. Lucya's parents, Pawel and Katarzyna, came to Berea later, in 1882.

Wojciech Tadych traveled back to Mrozowo and returned with some of his siblings and their families on the Bark Dorette in May of 1868. His brother, Franciszek, and wife, Antonina (nee Bas) had married back in Mrozowo just 6 weeks after the death of Franciszek's first wife, Franciszka, who died in 1866 probably during the cholera epidemic.

Also arriving on the Bark Dorette was Wojciech and Franciszek's sister, Maryanna, who was the eldest child of Michal and Katarzyna Tadych. She was married to Bartolomej Mikołajczyk back in Mrozowo in 1856. The couple had three children who died in Mrozowo prior to their journey in 1868. They embarked with their five children, Balbina, Stanislaw, Franciszka, Wojciech and Wincenty, who was under a year old. Maryanna was also several months pregnant with their 9th child while on the voyage. Sadly, both their youngest son, Wincenty, and their baby boy born aboard the ship, died en route to the United States. Bartolomej and Maryanna settled in Middleburgh Township but Bartolomej died in 1879 of an unknown cause leaving Maryanna with seven children.

Jan Polcyn and his wife, Jozefa, also arrived on the Bark Dorette in 1868. Their family was also affected by illness and death as Jozefa's first husband, August Bohn, and daughter, Antonina Bohn, had died in October of 1866 of typhus. Jan traveled with his wife, newborn twins, Jozefa and Jan, and his stepson Pawel Bohn.

John Westfall came on the Steamer Westphalia in November of 1868 to work in the stone quarries of Berea. He married Jozefa Tadych, another daughter of Michal and Katarzyna of Mrozowo. The couple had six children until John's death in 1890. Jozefa never remarried and died in 1923 in Berea.

Three young girls from Drawsko arrived on the SS Main in April of 1869. One was Amelia Białys, the daughter of Jakob and Elzbieta (nee Kijek). That same month, Amelia's future husband, Lorenz Wyrwa, arrived in Berea. Though a marriage record cannot be found, the two married and had four children. After the 1880 census no record can be found of Lorenz or Amelia. It is presumed that they both died. Their only living son was Walenty (William) Wyrwa who ended up being raised by August and Agnes Yanke. Agnes Yanke's mother was Agnes Zydor (nee Wyrwa) so Walenty was likely being raised by relative.

Lorenz Mikołajczyk lived in the village of Mrozowo with his wife, Maryanna (nee Szewc). The couple lost three young children to cholera in the span of 6 weeks. Lorenz Wisniewski married Maryanna (nee Zawadzka) the widow of Simon Głus who had succumbed to cholera in September of 1866. Both of these men boarded the Bark Mozart in April of 1869, with what remained of their families, and set out to Middleburgh for a better life. Unfortunately, Mary Mikołajczyk's better life was short lived as she died in May of 1873.

More men and families continued to stream into Middleburgh from Poznan including:

Jakob Szweda and his wife, Aniela (nee Skorcz), with their daughters Pelagia and Konstancya from Sadki near Mrozowo. Aniela's mother, Maryanna (nee Januzik) came shortly after.

Katarzyna Tadych (nee Winiiecki), the mother of the Tadych men of Middleburgh along with her other children, Louis (Leo), Martin, and Jozefa.

Michael Rewolinski from Backowo (Wyrzysk), not far from Mrozowo, and his wife, Mary Zydor, who was probably Agnes Zydor-Janke's cousin because her mother was Rosalia Wyrwa from Peckowo.

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A Patriotic Romance – Addinsell’s *Warsaw Concerto*

By Trina Goss Galauner

Years ago, my father told me I needed to watch the movie “Dangerous Moonlight”. He was a big fan of war movies and classical music, especially movie soundtracks. He liked to listen to a classical piece called *Warsaw Concerto* which just happened to be the musical score from “Dangerous Moonlight”.

Warsaw Concerto is a sweepingly tragic and romantic piece that would seem to be the classical work of Rachmaninoff. But, interestingly, the music was written by a more contemporary composer named Richard Addinsell. The story of how this musical piece became a concert hall favorite mirrors the fictional narrative of the movie itself.

Early in World War II, allied governments realized that the motion picture could be a powerful asset to the war effort. War films glorified brave soldiers and inspired patriotism. It was realized that artists and musicians were more useful to the war effort in their trained discipline than as conscripted soldiers. Composers were encouraged to produce pieces that stimulated patriotic fervor.

Rachmaninoff was originally offered the job of creating the musical score for “Dangerous Moonlight” but declined, so Richard Addinsell was hired to create the masterpiece. Borrowing heavily from Rachmaninoff’s musical style in the spirit of Chopin’s *Polonaise*, Addinsell created a powerful, unforgettable melody that has become more memorable than the movie it was written for.

“Dangerous Moonlight” was a British film released in 1941 and later released in the United States under the title “Suicide Squadron”. It is the story of a fictional character named Stefan Radecki (spelled “Radetzky” in the film), a



Anton Walbrook, as Stefan Radecki, composes the *Warsaw Concerto* inspired by the beauty of Carol (Sally Gray) against the backdrop of war torn Warsaw in the movie “Dangerous Moonlight” aka “Suicide Squadron”



concert pianist and composer, whose Polish homeland has been invaded by the Germans. A former fighter pilot, his patriotism beckons him to his duty. But the military sees a greater calling for Radecki and refuses to send him to the skies. While composing his masterpiece, there is an air raid in Warsaw interrupting his work. American reporter Carol Peters discovers him playing piano in a bombed-out apartment. Romance ensues and Radecki’s heartfelt devotion to his country combined with his love for Carol inspires him to complete his *Warsaw Concerto*, propose marriage and embark on a musical tour in the United States. But something is missing. Radecki can’t resist the romantic nationalism he feels for his motherland. This struggle between romantic love and patriotic love is played out through the musical composition of the *Warsaw Concerto* throughout the film. Radecki leaves Carol and his concert tour to join the Polish squadron in the Royal Air Force as they prepare



for the Battle of Britain. I won't give away the rest of the movie but there is a happy ending.

The Battle of Britain was won just six months before the release of "Dangerous Moonlight" in large part thanks to the Polish squadron fighter pilots that were part of the Royal defense of the British Isles. The No. 303 Kosciuszko Squadron was one of 16 Polish squadrons formed from pilots who had fled Poland after the invasion of their homeland by Nazi Germany. After the Battle of Britain, the Polish Air Force continued to serve alongside the Royal Air Force until the last day of the war. Over 1,900 of these Polish airmen lost their lives.



The 303 Polish *Kosciuszko* Squadron which recorded the highest number of victories (125) during the Battle of Britain.
Royal Air Force Museum

"Dangerous Moonlight" was a box office success and served as a "thank you" to those Polish service men. The Polish government-in-exile awarded Addinsell the Silver Cross of Merit for "outstanding service to Poland in the field of music". And the "Warsaw Concerto" would forever be associated with Polish romantic nationalism. Maybe this is why my father liked it so much.

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Jozef Komorowski with his wife and daughters on the Bark Freihandel in June of 1870.

Antoni Mikołajczyk and his wife, Anna (nee Zawacki) with their children, Jozef, Leon, Wojciech (George) and Bronislawa (Bertha) on the SS Minnesota in March of 1872. Jozef married Mary Komorowski and Leon married her sister, Konstancja Komorowski.

Franciszek, Wojciech (George), and Jozef Wisniewski who came in July of 1872 and married in Berea. Jozef married Balbina Mikołajczyk, the daughter of Bartolomej and Maryanna in January of 1875 at St. Adalbert's.

These Polish immigrant stone cutters and their families helped organize their own Catholic church in Berea which was called St. Adalbert's (Sw Wojciecha). The founding Polish families included Mucha, Tadych, Helwich, Piatek, Cichy, Marks, Gras, Janke, Trafisz, Tymke and Zydor. August and Agnes Janke, Joseph and Martin Tymke and Frances Helwich purchased imported stained glass windows for the church. The pulpit was purchased by Frank Helwich, the Eternal light by Elizabeth Helwich and the statue of the Madonna and the church linens by Mary Helwich, the wife of Frank. The first baptism at St. Adalbert's was of Pelagja Szweda, the daughter of Jakob and Aniela, on December 8, 1873. And four daughters of August and Agnes Janke became Felician Sisters.

It is interesting to note that these early Polish immigrant stone cutter's of Berea and Middleburgh and their families came from only a handful of small villages in a very specific area in the province of Poznan. Their surnames intermingled through marriages in Poland and even in Berea. As time passed, Polish immigrants to Berea came from other areas of Poland as well.

Decreasing demand for sandstone and the Great Depression closed the remaining stone quarries of Berea in the mid 1930s but the Polish immigrant stone cutters and their families had established themselves as permanent residents of Middleburgh and Berea with some of them branching into Strongsville and Olmstead Township. John Baldwin never would have guessed.



Polish by Heart - My Father's Stories

Return to Poland

By Walter Urbanek

By Christmas 1920 they finally reached the small village of Sporne, to the land once farmed by Jan's father, Franciszek. With the money saved from America, Jan immediately took to building a new and larger house and a barn within a few feet of his birthplace.

They lived in his family's old house, at first, because it was winter. Jan bought a horse and hired help in order to gather large logs from the forest. Forests were privately owned so he had to buy the trees. The horses hauled the logs through the snow by sled. When spring came, they hewed the logs into square shapes with large axes. Dove-tailed corners were fashioned and the logs were set on a foundation wall made of stones. He topped the new dwelling with a tin roof, the first such in a village of thatched roofs. The new house was completed by salvaging what they could from the old.

It had three bedrooms and goats inhabited one end of the house. The outhouse was attached to the rear of the house. Kitchens often had a big oven whose plastered brick top on a cold winter's night was called "babcia's bed", because it was the warmest place to sleep in the house. The family moved in for good in 1921. Dad remembers that it took years to use up all the wood chips left over from that building project.



The house that Jan built from Polish by Heart by Walter Urbanek

Jan soon built a stand-alone barn where they kept horses and cows along with pigs, ducks, geese, chickens, a rooster and in the spring, young chicks. The family grew big white rabbits for their meat.

During construction, Monika was pregnant again and had her hands full with their four young children. Jan began *working* hard in the fields and Monika just as hard kept bearing more children: Helena (Korona) (b.1921), Antonina (Marcinkowski) (b.1922), the twins Władysław and Antoni (b.1924), and Janina (Wielgosz) (b.1928).

Jan had inherited 5 *morga* of land in two close but separate plots. A *morga* is a now obsolete Polish measurement of land area: 1 *morga* = .6 hectare (metric measurement) = 1.5 acres. So his inherited farm was 7.5 acres in area. As his family grew, Jan purchased another 4 *morga* (or 6 acres). These were in two more plots about 20 minutes walking distance towards the next village, Odrzykon. (See map, Figure 2.) This land was not as fertile as the original farm, but as the family grew they needed more food crops to support themselves.

Cows as well as hobbled horses were kept in the Sporne village common pasture area. For a small fee the cows could be tended and milked. A small stream conveniently ran through this pasture. This grazing land was courtesy of "The General". The nobility owned a lot of the land in Poland. They rented it out for farming and sold wood



from its forests. The General had land and prestige and in a time of war, leadership. In their parish church, Korczynna's General reserved for his family fancy seats up near the altar. Monika had a war-time saying, "Work three days for the General, and three days for yourself." (See section, *The General*.)

Fire was always a threat in the Polish village. The only light or heat was from fireplaces, candles or kerosene lamps. Straw was kept in the loft above the house. It was typical to carry a kerosene lamp up to the attic to cut straw for the cows. Stanley never remembers his parents cautioning about being careful not to start a fire. The gravity of the consequences was understood by all. Jan and a group of his neighbors believed that the 52 homes in the village should protect themselves and their homes and farms from fire. They met regularly and two years after Jan's arrival, started a Volunteer Fire Department (VFD). Jan became the fire department's fund raiser and first treasurer.



Stanley went to school, in the Polish language of course, for six years until he was 12 years old. The older brothers and sister walked together to Korczynna six days a week to schools run by the state but greatly influenced by the Catholic Church. "They ran the schools; they ran the county." The girls went to one school and the boys to another. They studied arithmetic, Polish language and history and of course religion. The classes lasted about an hour each. There were about four or five teachers in the school. It was only after the First World War that Jewish children began attending public school. These children were excused from daily catechism which was taught by local parish priests. "The Polish people were a friendly helpful people who did not plan for war." Their parish had three priests but no nuns.



In Krosno, which had a population of about 6,000 people and was much larger than Korczynna, there were three churches, one of which was the Church of the Holy Trinity founded in 1402 by the Capuchins and another, the Church of the Holy Cross by the Franciscans in the 15th century. Both these parishes were run by monks. The family went to the church in Korczynna but when they were young teenagers the older children preferred the Franciscan church as it had more for their age. Because of the war there was a scarcity of young people of Stanley's age. The only other boy of Dad's age in Sporne was had by a village woman and a Russian soldier during the war. There were more young people a little older like his brother Joseph being born before the war. Krosno was a far bigger place with more people and possibilities. Krosno even had a motion picture house.

On Sunday mornings, Stanley liked to go to an older friend's house first where the young men would iron their pants and get "all shieked-up". They liked to parade around the Rynek after 11:30 Mass looking at the girls and being admired themselves. The Rynek was encircled by merchant-shops, with their second floors overhanging the shop entrances, and thus providing a protected year-round promenade.

Sunday evenings the teenagers of his village would walk an hour to another village on the other side of Krosno for the chance to dance. They crossed by the suspended footbridge across the Wisłok. (It sometimes was washed away by floods.) Stanley and his friend, Stanley Gonet paired themselves with two girls, Jean and her older sister Ludwika. The two girls lived with their grandmother in half a house. The girls' father kept his new wife with new family in the other half of the house. The wild and shieked-up Stanley's were never invited into that half.

The oldest, Mary, turned 21 in 1929. Jan and Monika agreed there were no prospects in Poland for young people wanting to make a life of their own. Monika consented to the idea that Mary would go to America, provided that Mary would not go alone. So Monika and Jan decided to send their second oldest, Frank with Mary to America to live with Monika's uncle, Stanley Pelczarski. Uncle Stanley had immigrated to Philadelphia because he knew some friends from Korczynna there. He lived in Bridesburg, Philadelphia which had a Polish church and a thriving Polish community. Uncle Stanley owned a four-tenant building and a little grocery store in Bridesburg. He loaned the young people the money for the trip. He often sent money home to his wife and two children who were still in Poland.



The last picture of the family together taken in 1929
Monika and Jan are seated with the twins Władysław and Antoni standing between them.
Little Jania sits on her father's knee.

The girls, Helena and Tosia, dressed alike are their bookends.
Standing behind them all are the American born, Stanley, Joseph, Mary and Frank.

Frank had once studied for the priesthood, but he couldn't keep up with the studies in the Gymnasium, a name given to high schools preparing students for a university education. So Frank was available to accompany Mary to America, where he found a job painting, polishing and making finishing touches on caskets. Uncle Frank never married. Years later, Monika believed it was her mistake not to encourage Frank to become a monk.

In America, Mary roomed with another girl from Korczyn. She was much older than Mary and later this girl became a nun working in a convent kitchen. Casimir Prajzner had just moved to Philadelphia from his family's farm in Western Massachusetts. He worked at a dye works during the week and on weekends at a bar that Uncle Stanley frequented. Uncle Stanley told Casimir, the new bartender that he should meet his young niece, Mary Urbanek who was newly arrived from Poland. So Mary was introduced to Casimir Prajzner.

Mary and Frank stayed in close touch with the family back in Poland. Frank mailed the Sunday comics from America every week. Young Stanley looked forward to his favorite "Tarzan of the Jungle".

The second son, Joseph was sent for three years to learn the trade of wood-working and cabinet making. Cabinet making was considered a higher skill than carpentry (rough work) and joinery (the use of planes for more precise work.) He went to school 40 miles away and paid room and board, coming home only for vacations and holidays. After graduation he returned to Sporne and made a wardrobe for his parents' bedroom. Stanley remembers going to buy the wood with his brother. Joseph used oak and the piece of furniture was so big and heavy it to be left in the house when it was sold years later.

The Krosno region was at the foot of the Beskid Niski Mountains, a part of the Polish Carpathians. Skiing was popular. Joseph made a pair of skis for himself by soaking the wood in boiling water to fashion the curved end of the skis. He is pictured with his handiwork. Stanley didn't see the point. For him, there seemed to be little advantage in skiing downhill only to have to walk back up.

My father, Stanley often talks about growing up in Poland with its customs and the fond remembrances of his youth. He tells of walking to and playing around the ruins of a castle. The castle reportedly had secret passages where a mounted horseman could escape undetected from a siege. I took this as embellishment of the old country until I visited the same area in the early 2000's and saw the castle for myself.

The preceding excerpts are from "Polish by Heart - My Father's Stories" by Walter Urbanek reprinted with his permission. His full manuscript is available to read on the Polish Origins forum at <https://forum.polishorigins.com/viewtopic.php?p=18367>.



Welcome — New Member — Witamy

Laura & Mark Karendal	2716 Stable Hill Tr., Kernersville, NC 27284	Karendal
Michael E. & Sandra L. Speare	mespeare@mindspring.com	Speare, Lichota, Tyminska(y), Puhacz, Pugacz, Sadowska, Wengreikow, Sedlecka, Bazelowna
Corina & Matthew Mesenger	15357 Drake Rd., Strongsville, OH 44136 Corina.mesenger@gmail.com	Ciesinski, Szymanski, Pluciniczak, Urbanski, Laskowska, Michalowska, Dalka, Juszcak, Robak, Somolczek
Carla Barbula	17126 Village 17, Camarillo, CA 93012 backtoeve@verizon.net	Barbula, Bobula, Babula, Kuzara
Cathi & Leo Salmi	238 East 330th St., Willowick, OH 44095-3221 salmi@att.net	Salmi, Baranski, Pular, Pavlak, Green, Bedford, Deckand, Drentkiewicz
Elizabeth & Matt Whitson	mwhitson@zoominternet.net	Niedzwiecki, Nowakowski, Zapisek, Reczko, Fronczyk, Wołczyński, Kryszman/Christmann
Judy A. Kelly	259 South Main St., Hudson, OH 44236 keljudy@windstream.net	Kelly, Krawcewicz, Zagorska, Tomaszewski, Koprowska, Nowakowska, Bartnikiewicz
Maryann Kasperczyk	mkasper6@yahoo.com	Kasperczyk, Wisniewski, Bankowski, Kwiecien
Kim & Don Demor	7571 Diamondback Ave., NW, Canal Fulton, OH 44614 kimdemor@gmail.com	Gaukan/Gakan, Szulc/Schultz, Mucha, Kalita, Szukalski, Prokop, Stencel
Patti & Timothy Gabb	patgmip@gmail.com	Komorowski, Krajewski, Sayewski, Doptowicz
Emily Kowalski Schroeder Tony Schroeder	5245 Harper Rd., Solon, OH 44139 emilyschroeder313@gmail.com	Kowalski, Bodziony, Krupa, Gacki, Golonka, Kolodziej, Bawolek
Beverly Kuch	bkuchsmail@gmail.com	Biel, Grzybowski, Cydzik, Kostkowski, Borkowski, Panciewicz, Szczepanek/ski, Mozdien, Kowalski, Klimczyk, Kamien
Pamela A. & Andy Kelly		Belko, Kelly, Rerko, Heider
Email correction from previous publication:		
Karen & Dave Trout	ktroutrn@aol.com	Wiencik

Schedule of Presentations for Upcoming Meetings

Sep: Guidelines To Finding Polish Records

Live presentation by Amy Wachs

Oct: Researching Your Ancestors From The Kresy

Learn about what the Kresy is and some resources for doing research in that region

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

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



**Polish Genealogical Society of
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PGSGC
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c/o the return address above

About Us

Meetings are held the first Tuesday of the month (except July and August) at St. Mary's PNC Church parish hall, 5375 Broadview Rd., Parma, Ohio. We have 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 7:00 PM and are usually over by 9:00 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.