

Our Polish ANCESTORS

THE QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF GREATER CLEVELAND

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Kolędowanie, the Season of Christmas Caroling

By Trina Goss Galauner

It was the 19th century in Poland, sometime between Christmas and Candlemas, on a calm, crisp, winter evening. In the distance, the faint sounds of singing were heard. The singing grew louder and louder until there was a knock at the door. There appeared a strange group of costumed characters, a king, shepherds, soldiers, animals, a devil, an angel, and others. These were the *kolędnicy*, Polish Christmas carolers, who came to bid *Wesołych Świąt i Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku*, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, proclaiming the birth of Christ and bringing glad tidings and well wishes to members of the household in the New Year.



Kolędowanie, the period of caroling, took place for forty days, from Christmas until Candlemas (Feast of the Presentation of the Lord). The word, *kolęda*, was a Polish word derived from the Latin word, *calendae* or *kalendae*, which was associated with the ancient Roman custom of gift giving at the beginning of the New Year. In Poland, the ancient custom of annual visits to parishes by priests to compile a parish list was called *kalenda* in church documents. The Roman custom, and these annual parish visits, inspired *kolędowanie*.

There were two types of Polish Christmas carols, *kolędy*, and *pastorałki*. *Kolędy* were religious hymns that celebrated the Nativity and were often heard in church. In the United States, these would be hymns such as *Away in a Manger* or *Silent Night*. *Pastorałki* were folk religious songs, more secular in nature, which celebrated Christmas in a less theological way. They may be equated with songs such as *Auld Lang Syne* or *Carol of the Bells*.

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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 Michael Speare at pgsgc@yahoo.com for more information.





Letter from the President

As another year passes, I am reminded that my two-year term is concluding. As I review those two years, I find myself grateful that we continue as a viable organization despite some challenging moments. Who could have known that when the March 2020 meeting concluded, we would not meet together again until fifteen months later in September 2021?

Even through adversity, the work of PGSGC continued through the use of email, ZOOM, and phone calls. Several tasks were done by the officers such as resolving financial/banking issues, producing a trifold PGSGC handout, major overhauling of our web site, revising the By-Laws and locating a new printer thus reducing newsletter costs by \$25.00 per quarter. Our librarian completed several indexes to facilitate finding research materials more easily. The quarterly informative newsletter continued to be published and produced both electronically and in printed format. Efforts to keep in touch were paramount during those iffy months.

Now it's time for me to extend my sincerest appreciation to my support system, your officers, who give of themselves and their time so generously. Their guidance and assistance were invaluable to me. I learned so much from them. Thank you to those members who have stepped up to volunteer and take ownership of positions to keep the organization viable. It's just that spirit of giving of your time that makes PGSGC such an important resource to so many and will continue to provide the environment for us to exist for many years to come.

Remember our winter weather policy, if the Cleveland Public Schools are closed due to inclement weather the day of our meeting, then our meeting is cancelled. And as always, don't travel for our meeting if you feel the weather is treacherous. We live in Cleveland where the sun is shining on one side of town while there's a white out on the other side of town. Stay safe!

Hopefully in the next year we will be able to operate as "normal" and traditional as we once knew. Please remember that our membership dues need to be paid in January and are still only \$24.00 per year. Perhaps, you can see your way to giving a membership to a friend or family member. I look forward to seeing you at our next meeting in January.

God bless,
Anthonette Baciak, President

Polish Genealogical Society of Greater Cleveland

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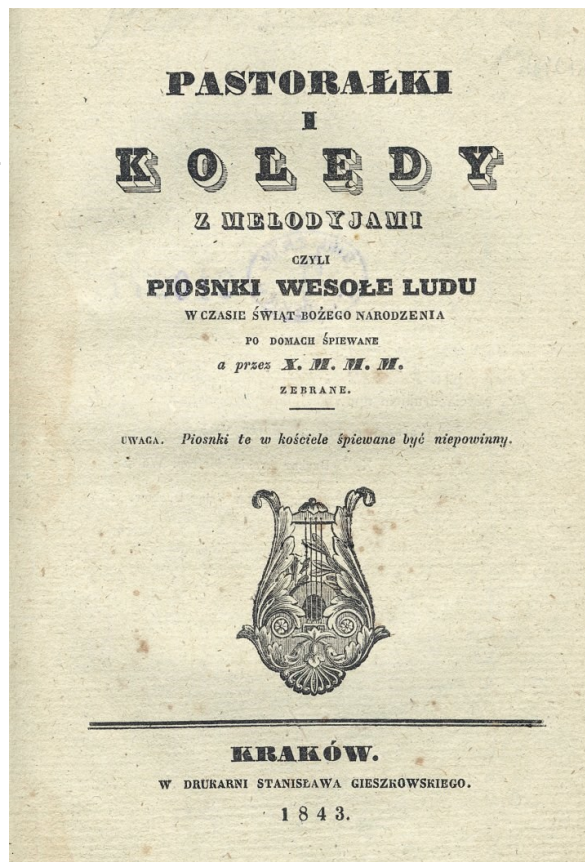
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Father Michał Marcin Mioduszewski collected and compiled the first songbook of Polish Christmas carols. Mioduszewski, a Roman Catholic priest, professor at the theological seminary in Stradom, and advisor to the Bishop of Krakow, began collecting church songs in 1830 in a desire to document and preserve the religious hymns worshipping God, to organize musical worship for priest and seminarians, and to educate parishioners on the words and melodies of the Polish church. In 1838, he published *Śpiewnik kościelny czyli pieśni nabożne z melodyjami* (Church Songbook of Devotional Songs with melodies) which included about 179 songs and hymns relevant to the church. In 1843, Mioduszewski published *Pastorałki Kolędy z Melodyjami* (Pastorałki and Christmas Carols with melodies) in Krakow. Mioduszewski called these Christmas carols "powinszowanie na Boże Narodzenie" (congratulations on Christmas). The original songbook of carols can be viewed under "Pastorałki i kolędy" on *Wikiźródła* (https://pl.wikisource.org/wiki/Pastorałki_i_kolędy).

Caroling in Poland was in the form of *Szopki* or *Herody*. *Szopki* was the re-creation of the manger scene. Churches assembled the manger with mechanical puppets and elaborate mechanisms to illustrate the Nativity. Over time, a less exuberant display of the Nativity scene was adopted and villagers created their own displays made of wood and cut-out characters. *Kolędnicy*

(Christmas carolers) toted a miniature *szopki* and one person, called the *gwiazdory*, carried a large star on a pole as they visited homes and sang religious carols. *Herody* was a more elaborate Christmas performance put on by the *kolędnicy* and involved numerous costumed characters. The performance detailed the evil actions of King Herod during the time of Jesus' birth and his punishment. Characters included Herod, the angel that tried to stop his decision to murder infant boys, the reaper that killed him, and the devil that took his soul.

Kolędnicy were most often boys or young men and their live performances were rewarded by village homeowners with money, treats and/or refreshments. Sometimes, musicians accompanied the performance groups with traditional carols during the traveling show.



Polish historian of Polish literature, Roman Mazurkiewicz, has said that "kolędy are an endless treasure of our best religious, national, artistic and most intimate values and emotions related to childhood, Christmas Eve, the tree, pasterki (Christmas Eve Mass) and singing carols with family and in church." May the *kolędnicy* visit each of you this holiday season and bring you all the best for the New Year!



The Polish Genealogical Society of Greater Cleveland is looking for articles to include in upcoming newsletters. Write your Polish story, suggest tips to help others with their research, create a tribute to a Polish ancestor, share old photographs of your Polish relatives, the possibilities are endless. Put your thoughts and stories on paper and have them published in our newsletter.



We have the following submission guidelines:

- Article content should focus on one or more of the following:
 - (1) Polish Cleveland
 - (2) Polish history and culture
 - (3) Genealogical research (specific to Poland or very general)
- Preferred article length of 2-4 pages of original content with 700-800 words per page. Shorter articles may be considered.
- Pictures pertaining to article content are also encouraged when the author owns the rights to the photograph(s) provided. If images are included, submit in .jpg format only.
- Include an appropriate and informative title for the article.
- We do not publish content related to other countries or cultures, unless it is German, Austrian, or Russian, when it specifically pertains to their involvement with Poland.
- Refrain from content that could be political or biased in nature.

Articles should be written in paragraph form. The editor reserves the right to accept and modify article content as needed. Articles may be refused at the discretion of the editor. Submissions should be emailed to our newsletter editor, Trina Galauner, at galauner@yahoo.com. Thank you for your assistance!

Membership and Renewal Dues

The PGSGC exists as a Society to offer support and resources as an aid in the search for our Polish ancestors and learning more about our cultural heritage. Our new website, soon to be unveiled, is but the start of new and better ways of delivering support information. The following is an additional wish list being addressed and needing your support:



Subscription increases for sustaining services, i.e. new website, printing costs newsletter/pamphlets, rent, advertising.

- Subscription to continue ZOOM meetings
- A tablet tripod and microphone to enhance ZOOM presentations
- Payment for noted speakers/outside resources
- Equipment for library/archival quality materials i.e., purchasing books, laminating, preservation of photo materials

Presently, we are not raising membership rates. In its place, we are asking members to consider an optional voluntary contribution in support of improvements when you renew your membership to PGSGC. An additional line for such donations is included in your renewal application. Again, this only meant as a voluntary option to consider. In any case, thank you for your continued support and membership.



The Polish Genealogical Society

THE POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF GREATER CLEVELAND



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

New Applicant Renewal

Applicant Name: _____

Spouse: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Date: _____ Referred By: _____

MEMBER SURNAME: _____

OTHER SURNAMES YOU ARE RESEARCHING:

Please check which information we can publish for genealogical purposes only:

Email Address Mailing Address

Your completed MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION will be filed upon payment of annual dues (Jan. thru Dec.) of \$24.00. New members joining mid-year are \$2.00 times the number of months remaining in the year.

Make check payable to: *Polish Genealogical Society of Greater Cleveland* and mail to: PGSGC Membership, c/o Michael Speare, 1525 Woodlake Blvd., Stow, OH 44224.

Dues: _____
Optional Donation: _____
Total Paid: _____



What's Polish in the Historical Cleveland Plain Dealer?

“Polish Dolls Will Grace Yule Trees,” Cleveland Plain Dealer, 23 November 1915

“Many of Cleveland’s society children will find Polish rag dolls waiting them under their Christmas trees, Christmas morning. And these will be far from ordinary rag dolls. In fact they are to be real art products, made by refugee Polish artists and sculptors, war stranded in Paris, who are sending dolls to the American Polish relief committee in New York City to be sold at \$5 to \$15 each. A big box of these toys will be sent to Cleveland to be sold at the Polish benefit at Hotel Statler, Dec. 10, through an arrangement made yesterday by Mrs. Ernest Schelling, a member of the New York committee, who stopped off in Cleveland yesterday, with her husband, pianist. These dolls, many of which will be sold at a Polish benefit to be given in New York Dec. 8 by Mrs. Schelling and Mrs. Ignace Paderewski, wife of the noted musician, are dressed in authentic Polish costumes. Some are tinsmiths, some are goose girls with their geese and some are Polish peasant children with names like Jan and Halka. Their faces are beautifully molded and carefully painted cloth and they are all stuffed by a blind Pole whose eyes have been shot away.”



POLISH DOLLS WILL GRACE YULE TREES

Rag Babies by Famed Artists
Will be Sold Here at So-
ciety War Benefit.

Woman Tells How Sing Sing
Convicts Knit for Suffer-
ers of Europe.

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Their faces are beautifully molded and carefully painted cloth and they are all stuffed by a blind Pole whose eyes have been shot away.

Becoming interested in Polish relief work through her friendship with the Paderewskis, whose home is near that of the Schellings in Cilgny, Switzerland, Mrs. Schelling organized knitting classes at Sing Sing prison. At present there are 238 convicts knitting, in their spare time, everything from dainty petticoats to pluck and blue babies' blankets. Another class of about half as many has been organized by this woman in Auburn prison.

According to Mrs. Schelling, knitting has become a fad with prisoners, who carry needles and yarn with them to work, at prison entertainments and even at moving picture shows and concerts. Every variety of stitch, "known and unknown," to quote Mrs. Schelling, has been adopted by them, and in all 2,000 pieces have been turned out by the prison knitters and forwarded to the suffering noncombatants of Poland.

Mr. Schelling, looking quite foreign and, unlike the New Jersey born American he is, has been closely associated with Polish musicians, having given the Chopin program at the centenary of that composer's birth celebrated in 1909 at Lenberg, Poland.

He will make his first Cleveland appearance March 15 as piano soloist with the New York Philharmonic orchestra.



Getting Lost in Poland 2018....Part 10

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 the spring of 2018.

Day 14 Thursday May 10

I slept well last night. The sound of the babbling brook was very soothing. I got up, showered and made myself some coffee. With a steaming cup of coffee in hand, I stepped out on the balcony, took in a lungful of fresh mountain air, and enjoyed my coffee while looking at the stream and woods. I don't know why, but, coffee seems to taste really good outside on a cool morning.

My friend from Krakow was driving down to Zakopane to meet me so we could go hiking in the Tatra mountains. He was scheduled to arrive around 9:00 a.m. While I was waiting, I had another cup of coffee and packed. The reality that my trip was rapidly coming to an end was sinking in. Around 9:00 a.m, I went down to check out then stepped outside to wait for my friend, Wojtek. He texted me to confirm the address and told me he was stuck in traffic. Shortly thereafter, he pulled up in front of the hotel. We loaded my stuff in his car and headed into the town of Zakopane for some breakfast. We parked, paid for parking, and then wandered a bit looking for an acceptable restaurant. We found one with a great buffet and sat down to eat. We needed to get fueled up for a day of mountain trekking. After two platefuls of food, we paid and headed toward the mountains. A short drive later we were in the parking lot used by people visiting Morskie Oko. Seeing Morskie Oko was my original plan since I had never been there before. You have two options to get to the lake from the parking lot, either walk or take a horse-drawn, covered wagon. The trip was about six miles one way. As Wojtek and I started walking, we started talking about other hiking options. He was very familiar with hiking in this area. His proposal was to take a side route that looped around, crested the mountains, then descended on Morskie Oko. It sounded like a great plan to me.

We continued on the road and stopped to see the "thundering" waterfall. Shortly after that, our trail began (about three miles from the parking lot) and we veered off the road and onto a dirt and rock trail. There were LOTS of rocks. Sometimes the trail was almost like cobblestone. Sometimes it was just strewn with rocks. Sometimes the rock formed stairs. We followed the river valley for a while then eventually had to begin our ascent up the mountain. Wojtek and I were talking and getting caught up as we hiked on. Before we knew it, we had climbed high enough to see waterfalls cascading down the mountains on the other side of the valley and the river below us was just a small thread. Upward we continued. Eventually, we reached the top. To my surprise, there was a large mountain hut. It had sleeping quarters, a store and a restaurant. We each bought a beer and some snacks then sat





outside. We had reached Dolina Pieciu Stawow, the Valley of the Five Ponds. We noticed a sign when we were approaching the hut that announced the trail to Oko Morskie was closed due to snow. As we enjoyed a break looking out over the five ponds, we decided to continue on and planned to ask any hikers coming the opposite way what the conditions were like. With breaktime over, we started on the trail again. Somehow, we missed a trail blaze and ended up on a different trail. We tried to correct ourselves by going overland and did get back to our original trail. We didn't see any hikers approaching in the distance (we had a good view of the trail for a long way) and decided to turn back. We made our way back to the hut, down the trail to the river, out to the road and down to the car. We figured that we hiked about 15 miles.

It was early evening and we wanted to stop to get some dinner at one of Wojtek's favorite restaurants just outside of Zakopane. The place was quite eclectic with a hodge podge of clutter. The food was excellent and filling. I had soup and schnitzel, which was much needed after our active day. After dinner, we started the trip back to Krakow. With the traffic, the ride took about 2 hours.

Wojtek dropped me off at my AirBnB and we said our goodbyes. The entrance to the AirBnB was actually a hotel which confused me. The front desk didn't know anything about my room so I used the hotel wireless to get in touch with my host. He clarified which room was mine and where the key was. With that settled, I dropped my things in my large open room and headed over to a grocery store around the corner from the flat. I picked up a couple of beers and relaxed in the room that evening. Tomorrow was my last day in Poland.

Day 15 Friday May 11

I was up and out of the room before 8:00 a.m. I only had a few "must-do" tasks for the day. However, the majority of the time was going to be dedicated to wandering around Krakow. My first must-do was to visit the dormitory I stayed in during my first trip to Poland with the Kosciuszko Foundation in 1990. I hadn't made this walk in almost thirty years. It took about thirty minutes to get to the dorm. Along the way, I stopped in a bakery and picked up a nice breakfast goody. The first thing I noticed was that the street on which the dormitory was situated was now completely developed with buildings. There were no more open fields with cows chained up and grazing. Once I reached the dorm, I found that it was completely surrounded by tall trees. It used to be an open space in front of the building. I had to walk around a bit to get a good angle for a picture of the dorm that wasn't blocked by trees. The parking lot offered the best view. I took a few pictures and then a guy with a briefcase walked up to me and asked what I was doing in a snippy voice. I explained that I was taking pictures because I stayed in the dorm thirty years ago. He then stated that I was only taking pictures for sentimental purposes and I confirmed and said "yes". He made another comment and walked away. That frosted me and I walked away irritated. It was just a building. If it was a secure zone, then it should be fenced with barbed wire, or, at a minimum, had some signage pertaining to that. I went into the building (the front door was wide open) just to see how it had changed. I didn't walk around much but did see the original atrium area was modernized and it was still somewhat recognizable.

After that, I headed back to the Old Town. Just outside of the Old Town by the University of Industry and Mining I bought one of my favorite Krakow treats, obwarzanek! It was a Krakow-style bagel/pretzel. There were carts selling them everywhere and they couldn't be missed.





I headed over to my second “nust-do” while I was in Krakow, the Underground Museum. I eventually found the ticket office which was not the same as the entrance to the museum. They were not open yet so I wandered around and came back to buy my ticket. Surprisingly, the next open time slot to get into the museum was 4:30 p.m. I was shocked! I bought my ticket in disbelief then started wandering around Krakow. I started in the Sukiennice (Cloth Hall) looking at the souvenir stands then walked around the Rynek. I went over to the Ratusz (town hall tower) because I always like to look at the steps going below ground to what used to be the original level of the Rynek in medieval times. The bottom of the steps are about ten to fifteen feet below the current ground level. When I got there, the steps were gone. I assumed they changed that when they built the Underground Museum. That was a bummer. From there, I worked my way over to Castle Hill and went up to Wawel Castle and Cathedral. The lines to get into either of them were incredibly long so I just strolled around the gardens and ruins within the castle walls. Leaving through a different exit point, I headed down to the Wisla River and went to see Smok, the fire breathing dragon. Slowly, I worked my way back around to the main road to the Rynek and detoured off of it to walk down one of the prettiest streets in Old Town Krakow, ul. Kanonicza.



Back in the Rynek, I felt it was time for some ice cream so I scouted out a place Wojtek recommended which was near the Florianska Gate at the north end of the Old Town. He suggested that I try the pistachio but they were out of that flavor so I settled for the chestnut ice cream. It was delicious! Wojtek also recommended a new microbrewery so I made my way there. Unfortunately, they didn't open until 2:00 p.m. Instead, I went back to the Maly Rynek and found a “biergarten” where I could sit and enjoy the weather and relax for a bit. I took to walking aimlessly through different parts of the old town and ended up in a square I hadn't visited in many years. Surprisingly, I noticed a beekeeping shop and stopped in. They had some really unique beekeeping equipment (small entrance reducers) that I've never seen in the U.S. I thought they would be very useful for my hives so I bought several of them. As I continued wandering, I came across a liquor store and bought some bottles to take home (zubrowka and debowa wodka). Moving on, I found a farmer's market and had a look. I checked the time and realized it was after 4:00 p.m.

Quickly, I went back to my room, dropped off my bag and goodies, and then went to the Underground Museum. I was there early but they let me in anyhow. There were a bunch of school groups touring, as well, which made for crowded conditions. Overall, the museum is very interesting but there were too many long videos and interactive displays. I love to read but there was WAY too much to take in.



The original wooden pipes and progressive layers of the Old Town streets were pretty fascinating. After completing the tour and leaving the museum, the British stag/bachelor parties were in full force around the Old Town. It's a cheap trip for groups of guys from England but it really detracts from the city.



My day was pretty much over so I went back to the room to get cleaned up for dinner. I went back to Jarema (the same restaurant I took my parents to four years earlier) hoping to have the crayfish soup again. But, no luck, I had to settle for a Russian fish soup, solianka. It came topped with caviar. My main dish was a stuffed cabbage with mushroom sauce. While I was eating, I noticed a sign that showed Jarema won a Michelin award in 2017. The food was great again but the service was lacking.

On the way back to the room, I stopped at the store to pick up some stuff for breakfast. I also bought a bottle of "maggi" the secret sauce used in a lot of Polish soups. Tomorrow was going to be an early day. My flight home left around 6:30 a.m. I was finally back at the room for good at around 8:00 p.m. I repacked my stuff for the trip home and scheduled an Uber to the airport for the morning. I relaxed a bit then went to bed early. I knew I'd have to get up around 3:00 a.m. I didn't sleep well.

Day 16 Saturday May 12

I slept fitfully the last night and woke up several times before my alarm went off at 3:30 a.m. I had my tea and breakfast treat then washed up my glass. After tidying up the flat a bit, I finished packing and checked the status of my Uber. I double checked the flat to make sure I was leaving things as I found them then sent a message to my AirBnB host thanking him for his hospitality and letting him know everything was in order.

Around twenty minutes to 5:00 a.m., I left the flat with my luggage and backpack to wait for the Uber driver. He showed up on time. He couldn't meet me in front of the flat due to some weird travel bans on that particular street so I had to walk a short block to the nearest cross street to meet him. The driver's name was Andrij and he was from the Ukraine. He was curious what the Americans thought about the Russian and Ukrainian tensions. Our conversation covered that topic and a few others.

We were at the airport in twenty minutes. As usual, I waited in line to check in and made it through with no issues. Once past security, I browsed the duty free and picked up another small bottle of Debowa vodka. There was a café on my way to the gate so I stopped to have a coffee. I way overpaid for it. Everything was smooth boarding the flight and flying to Vienna. I had never been through Vienna airport before and was interested to see what it was like. We disembarked and waited in line for passport control. I noticed the EU gates also had the e-passport symbol on them so I tried to use my passport but had no luck. I got back in the cattle herd and waited my turn to talk to the guard. I made it through passport control with no issues.

I sat in the boarding area for my next flight and fifteen minutes prior to the start of boarding, I went up to an agent to do a pre-boarding check like I saw others do. The agent informed me that I had been flagged for special security screening then sent me over to her colleague at the airline desk. That agent asked me to wait off to the side and, when a group of us were gathered up, we were led into a back room across the hall. We were told to go sit in a particular area. Eventually, I was called up. I had to remove my shoes and take EVERYTHING out of my backpack. Then, they swabbed me down and told me to wait. Eventually, they told me I could reclaim and repack my belongings but they still had my passport. A police officer came out with my passport and asked if I had a shengen visa. I told him no because I didn't need a shengen visa to travel in Europe. Then he told me to wait. By this time, I was alone in the back room. Everyone else had been processed, including subsequent groups, and I was getting very concerned about missing my flight. More police showed up and they kept looking at me and looking at my passport and talking on walkie talkies. Finally, they handed me my passport and told me I could leave. I gathered up all of my stuff and ran out the door, across the hall and to the boarding area. The gate agent was surprised to see me. With a big smile, she said "Oh! Hello! Welcome!" Seriously? You should have known I was missing. They literally closed the doors behind me.

I got to my seat and there was a humongous old guy in the seat next to mine and he couldn't speak a word of English. Could this day get any better? I was already in a foul mood and now I needed to deal with this mess. I went to buckle my seat belt and found out that he was using half of my seatbelt. I tried to explain the situation and he



just grunted at me. It was like sitting next to Jabba the Hut from Star Wars. Eventually, we sorted that out and he dug out his own seat belt from under himself. Once he was situated, I put the arm rest down between us. I wasn't going to be squished for nine hours.

A couple hours passed and I started to calm down. We carried on a rudimentary conversation and I found out that he was Albanian and his son just died in Albania. I kind of felt sorry for this guy. He also said his daughter was on the flight. He made it sound like they were going home to New Jersey. Then I thought, why aren't you sitting next to your daughter so she can translate for you? That's the way the flight went and as we approached our destination the flight attendants passed out the declaration forms. I filled mine out and then a little while later I saw this guy pull out a US Passport. First, I was stunned. As I watched him try to fill out the declaration form, I realized that he barely knew how to write. So I took his passport, got a new form and filled it out for him. I sat there wondering how this guy got citizenship. I also wondered if the Rolex he was wearing was real.

Finally we landed, I was ecstatic to get off of that plane and away from that guy. I later saw him and his daughter in the airport. They were two peas in a pod being rolled around in wheelchairs. I don't think she could speak English either. I went to Global Entry and got flagged for a security screening. I must look like a terrorist. The agents escorted me to a back room where I was questioned by a border control officer to complete my passport control. After that, I made my way to customs declarations. It was an absolute mad house. Since I had to have my boarding pass for my return flight issued in Europe, they did not print "TSA Pre" on the boarding pass. Without that, even though I have Global Entry, I had to stand in the mass of humanity trying to get through customs. This was the trip from hell. We all stood in a crowd with no order and worked our way through the roped off lanes and eventually made it through customs. From here on, the remainder of the trip back to Cleveland was uneventful. I was so glad to be home!

*Wesołych Świąt i
Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku
from the
Polish Genealogical Society
of Greater Cleveland*



Schedule of Presentations for Upcoming Meetings

Jan: TBD

Feb: TBD

Mar: TBD

The Polish Genealogical
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1901 Wexford Ave.
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**Polish Genealogical Society of
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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.