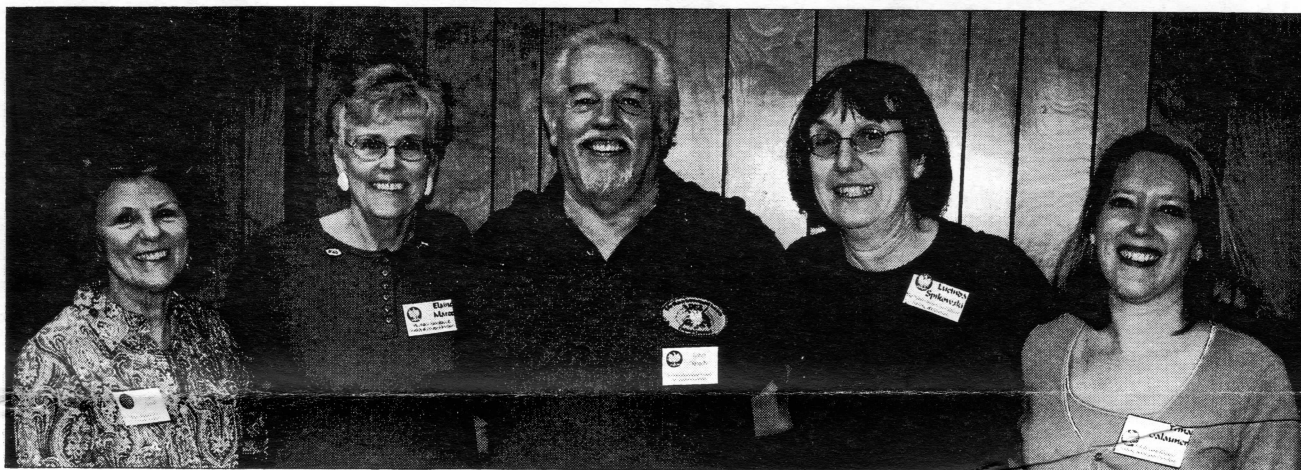


Our Polish
ANCESTORS

THE QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF GREATER CLEVELAND
 JULY / SEPT. 2008 VOL. 17 No. 3

Letter from President John Szuch

I'm sure most of you remember the 1976-1981 TV series CHARLIE'S ANGELS. Charlie had three Angels on TV but I, John F. Szuch, President of the Polish Genealogical Society of Greater Cleveland have four! Pictured here with me are the ladies (Angels) that make my job as President easy:



Left to right: Georgene Jasinski (books speakers for the meetings), Elaine Marec (hostess in charge of refreshments), Cindy Spikowski (librarian and bulletin editor), and Trina Galauner (in charge of web site).

My hat's off to these ladies who make our organization a pleasure to belong to. When you see them at a meeting, please give them a pat on the back for the fine job they are doing. For you out of town members who can't make it to a meeting, why not drop an email or a note in the mail to Cindy or Trina to thank them for the fine job that they do on the bulletin and web site respectively. If you have any article, information, or suggestions to the latter two ladies, please feel free to pass them along.

I hope you folks all had a good summer off from our meetings and I look forward to seeing you ALL back at our meetings when they start up in September. Hopefully, some of you will have had some genealogical success during the break, and can report it to us?

Welcome--New Members--Witamy

Donald & Patricia Kozlowski

SZELMINSKI, FERJUTZ, KULLA, PIOTROWSKI,
 GRAMS, DRENSKI, SLIVINSKI, SROCZYNSKI,
 SPRINGEL (SZPRINGEL)

Mick Panek

SALATA, BOCZEK, WISZNEWSKI

Joseph & Donna Plonski

PLONSKI, OLEJNICZAK, RYCHEL,
 CHWALINSKA, GRUCHACZ

ITALIAN OR POLISH?

by Norman Braun

A booklet in Latin and English is available in the library of the Polish Genealogical Society of Greater Cleveland concerning the Vitellini - Ciołek family. This name has both a religious and a genealogical significance to Poles in greater Cleveland.

In July, 1980 an article appeared in the *Cleveland Press*, which has been out of print since 1985, with the heading "Research Your Name". The author, Edmund M. Ciołek, Sr., is pictured holding a copy of the above-mentioned booklet. Edmund Ciołek was the son of Theodor Ciołek, who came to the U. S. from Poland in 1906. Theodor was the father of 11 children. Three were priests, and one was a nun.

The Latin-English book deals with the Ciołek family history back to the year 971 A.D. It begins with the Vitellini family who originated in Italy. When they moved to Poland, they took on the name Ciołek because both Vitellini and Ciołek are names related to "bull" or "calf".

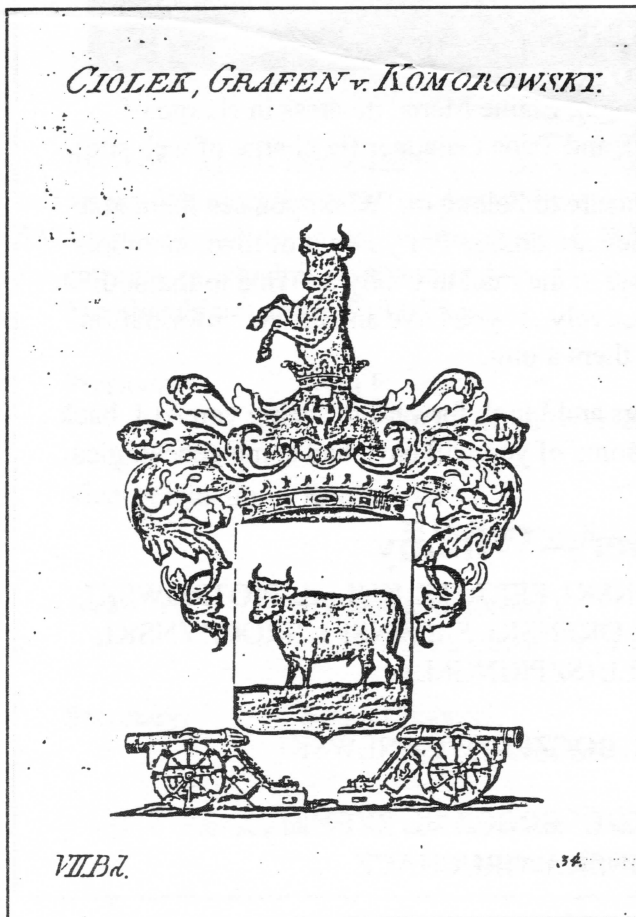
Accompanying this article are the following illustrations:

Page 3 - Cleveland Press article of July 23, 1980.

Page 4 - Baptismal certificate of Teodor Ciołek

Page 5 left - Early family lineage

Page 5 right - Feb. 9, 2008 obituary of the Rev. Canon Joseph F. Ciołek



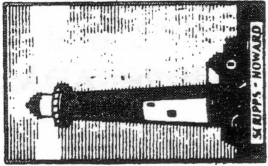
Readers who would like to learn more information on this outstanding Polish-American family of Cleveland, Ohio should read the text in the four illustrations. For a really detailed account they should borrow the Latin-English book from the Polish Genealogical Society of Greater Cleveland library.

Left: Front page of the Vitellini - Ciołek book.

The Cleveland Press

Community Weekly

Southeast



Research your name, senior citizen says

By ELEANOR PRECH

Edmund M. Ciolek Sr. has some advice for senior citizens who would like a worthwhile project.

"Get interested in your name," he advises. "You will be surprised at what you can discover and how interesting it is to delve into such a study."

"And do this before you travel to the old country because then the trip will have more meaning for you."

Ciolek, 69, speaks from experience because he made a trip to Poland two years ago without information he now has and feels sorry that things worked out that way.

"On my return, I went to the Cleveland Public Library and was able to examine three reference books which had much

material in them about the Ciolek name," he said.

"One of the books was in 16th century Latin and it took a while before I successfully found an expert at John Carroll University who could translate it for me."

In his research, Ciolek found that his name means bull or a calf and that the coat of arms is a bull or a calf of reddish color on a white field.

He learned that his origin was from the family of the Vitellini in Italy. In 971 A.D., during the reign of Miecislav (Mieszko), they were brought into the kingdom of Poland by the Rev. Lord Robert, Archbishop of Gnesen (Gniezno.)

His maternal brother Paul propagated his own family in this kingdom.

"These Ciolekowie or Vitellini in Poland later assumed different last names. Thus, those from Maciełowice were called Maciełowicz; those from Drzewice, Drzewicz; those from Zelechowo, Zelechowskij; and so on."

Ciolek deducts from notes that the family was a religious one which worked with royalty.

"What is interesting," he said, "is that the family has remained religious and

strong in the educational field throughout the years. "Ciolek's father Theodore came to America from Poland in 1806 and was married here in 1808. Eleven children were born here. Three sons became priests and a daughter became a nun."

The eldest son was Rev. Stanislaw Ciolek, who died in 1970. He had served in the Polish parishes of St. Hyacinth, Sacred Heart and St. Josaphat.

Seven of the remaining sons and daughters are Msgr. Casimer Ciolek of St. Peter and Paul Church in Garfield Heights, Father Joe Ciolek of the Holy Family Cancer home, Edmund, Ton., Agnes Mistruck, Mary Blanda of Berea and Jane Budzick.

In his studies, Ciolek received much help from the Mormon Library in Mesa, Ariz. He said there is free access to tapes of names from all over the world. He also received pedigree charts to trace family lineage.

Ciolek urges people to "write down everything you remember about your parents and family" for future generations. He and his wife Angela live at 1769 E. 32nd St. They are parents of five sons, among them Councilman Edmund Michael Jr. of Ward 31.



STUDIED HIS NAME — Edmund M. Ciolek Sr. is happy with a two-year-project of the study of the Ciolek name which he has carefully recorded in a book.

Edmund Ciolek gives a background of the Vitellini - Ciolek family history as well as his private experience with genealogy. Used with permission of Special Collections, Cleveland State University Library.

Diecezja łomżyńska

Kościół parafialny

Przytuł

Dioecesis łomzensis

Ecclesia paroecialis

Przytuł

ŚWIADECTWO CHRZTU

(Testimonium baptismi)

św.

Przytuł

s

Przytuł

w

1. Rok i numer księgi chrztów

1882 w. akt. 31

(Annus et numerus libri baptisatorum)

2. Imię i nazwisko

Władysław Karłowicz

(Nomen, cognomen)

3. Imię ojca

Henriko

wyznanie

ryms. kat.

(Nomen patris)

4. Imię matki

Jasłifa

z domu

Cudroona

wyznanie

(Nomen matris)

5. Miejsce i dzień urodzenia

Smieski - 6 lutego 1882

(Locus natalitatis et dies natalitatis)

6. Data i miejsce chrztu

14 lutego 1882 - Przytuł

(Dies et locus baptismi)

7. Uwagi w księdze chrztów - kan. 470 § 2, 1988

(Adnotationes in libro bapt.)



Przytuł

dnia

29

1978

(a)

W zgodności z księgą chrztów stwierdzam

(Concordat cum libro baptisatorum)

Prebyszcz - Parochus

Ks. OPZEBURK - FRANCISZEK

OSTOJA - MIKŁASZEWSKI

ZG Łomża zam. 530 n. 5.000 A-5 F-7

Diecezja łomżyńska

Kościół parafialny

Przytuł - Katolicki

do celów kościelnych

Dioecesis łomzensis

Ecclesia paroecialis

ŚWIADECTWO CHRZTU

(Testimonium baptismi)

św.

Wojciechu

s

w

Przytuł

in

1. Rok i numer księgi chrztów

1882 w. Nr. akt. 55

(Annus et numerus libri baptisatorum)

2. Imię i nazwisko

Teodor Ciotek

(Nomen, cognomen)

3. Imię ojca

Adam

wyznanie

Rzym. kat

(Nomen patris)

4. Imię matki

Małgorzata

z domu

Myślewska

wyznanie

Rzym. Kat

(Nomen matris)

5. Miejsce i dzień urodzenia

Smieski 8 kwietnia 1882 w.

(Locus natalitatis et dies natalitatis)

6. Data i miejsce chrztu

8 kwietnia 1882 w. Przytuł

(Dies et locus baptismi)

7. Uwagi w księdze chrztów - kan. 470 § 2, 1988

(Adnotationes in libro bapt.)

Teodor Ciotek zawarł ślub

matrimonialny z Władysławą w dniu 21 lutego 1909

Zgodność z księgą chrztów stwierdzam (Concordat cum libro baptisatorum)

A copy of the baptismal record of his father TEODOR listing Edmund's grandfather ADAM and his grandmother MAŁGORZATA shown as Teodor's parents.

(9) LINEAGE OF THE FAMILY OF THE VITELLINI

A) Robert, Archbishop of Gniezno. 971 A.D. an Italian.
Paul, brother of the Archbishop. 971 A.D.
Seislaus, Archbishop of Gniezno 1188.
Paul, a man of very many honors, 1199.
Zbigniew Ciolek, Chancellor, 1260.

Erasmus, Palatine of Mazovia, waged wars with his dukes. 1388.
John Ciolek, poisoned to death by an enemy, mighty in war.
Stanislaus, John's brother, physically powerful, unrooted tress
from the ground. He was killed in war by pagans.
Andrew, Bishop of Plock. 1258. He was spirited in attacking and
driving off injustices to the Church.

Andrew Ciolek, Stanislaus' brother, left four sons: Andrew, Bishop
of Posnan, a poet and important man of letters, Chan-
cellor of Vladislav Jagiello, very keen destroyer of
heretics; Visiganthus, Castellon of Czerwien (?), whose
sons, from their inheritance are called the Powsinskijs,
the Ostroleckjs, the Guthowskijs, the Pileckijs, the
Dobrzynieskijs.

Andrew, son of Visiganthus, Palatine of Mazovia, left Sigismund,
Alexander, and Christopher.

John, who gave in marriage his daughter Eva to Sobkoni, Cantain
(Governor) of Warsaw. Eva gave birth to Anna Radzivi-
lowa, Poolil. (?) of Litnania.

John, the son of Alexander, who left Stanislaus, who died childless.
Alexius, son of Christopher, left Peter, from whom there are
Andrew, Francis, Christopher, and Jerome.

B) The Maciejowski family who are true Ciolkowie!

Bernard from the Macierowice was the Castellon of Lublin and the
Captain (Governor) of Zawichost. He left John who was
a famous soldier in foreign lands and died in Vuraria.
Samuel, son of Bernard, Bishop of Cracow. About him Christonher
Kantcki said:

Let others extol the many deeds of Samuel to the heights,
I lead needs through which he shone brightly for his native
land.

You, his devoted band, will boast of his love,
his interest in you, and his generous hand.

The harvests rise for Christ through these harvesters,
Let him who is concerned with piety be concerned
with these.

Stanislaus, a German Bishop, who, as the story goes, was born
prematurely and sustained for four weeks on the soft fat
of a boar. He grew to be a good-sized man. Castellon
of Sandomir. Marshal of the Court. He left Stanislaus,
Cantain (Governor) of Zawichost and Gasnar, Cantain
(Governor) of Spisz (?). Gaspar saw the cultures and
cities of many men; he was liberal, refined, Catholic,
and an excellent soldier, as well as very devoted to his
daughter Catharina, a noblewoman.

Nicolaus, the son of Gaspar, Palatine of Lublin, always ready against
the enemies of his country. On his entitash at Cracow is
"a man noted for his piety to God and his love for his
country."

The Ciolek family beginning in the 10th century.

Rev. Joseph Ciolek, 85, served area as chaplain

ALANA BARANICK
Plain Dealer Reporter

PARMA — The Rev. Canon Joseph F. Ciolek, who was a chaplain for most of his priesthood, died Thursday at the Holy Family Cancer Home in Parma, where he served as chaplain from 1971 until retiring in 2003.



The 85-year-old Catholic priest was a past president of the National Association of Catholic Chaplains and a past trustee of the Greater Cleveland Hospital Association. He also served as delegate for health affairs to Bishops James A. Hickey and Anthony M. Pilla.

Ciolek, a Cleveland native, was the seventh of 11 children born to Polish immigrant parents. Three of the brothers became priests; one sister became a nun.

"My mother was very religious," said his sister Mary Blanda. "For her, church and God came first. She always instilled that in us."

Her mother worked as a charwoman at an office building at East 46th Street and Euclid Avenue. Ciolek was 11 when his father was killed in an industrial accident at a steel mill in 1933.

Ciolek studied at Cathedral Latin School, John Carroll University and St. Mary Seminary. After he was ordained to the priesthood in 1947, he and his family visited his father's grave. As they left the cemetery, Ciolek noticed a woman at another gravesite.

"She was crying," Blanda said. "Father Joe stopped the car and consoled her. I was so impressed with his compassion."

From the late 1940s until 1960, Ciolek assisted at six parishes: St. Michael in Independence, Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Lorain, St. Casimir and Transfiguration, both in Cleveland, St.

The Rev. Joseph F. Ciolek
1922 — 2008

Survivors: Sisters, Mary Blanda of Berea and Jane Budzick of Cleveland
Services: 11 a.m. Tuesday, St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church, 6750 State Road, Parma

Arrangements: Rybicki and Son Funeral Home, Garfield Heights

Adalbert in Berea and SS. Peter and Paul in Garfield Heights.

He was chaplain at Marymount Hospital in Garfield Heights for 11 years. In 1971, he served briefly as chaplain for the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Third Order of St. Francis in Garfield Heights. His sister, Sister Leonia, was a member of that order.

His brother, the Rev. Stanislaus, at one time served as pastor at St. Joseph, a Polish parish where their parents were founding members.

Ciolek participated in Polish-American affairs and served as chaplain of the Polish-American Congress' Ohio Division. His service to Polish Catholics at home and in Poland led to his receiving the honorary title of Canon of the Cathedral Chapter of the Diocese of Lomza in 2000.

The canon and another brother, Monsignor Casimir, who headed Catholic Charities, joked about which of their respective honorary titles had more clout. Their sisters always called them by their religious titles.

"We asked the Monsignor, 'What are we going to call Father Joe now?'" Blanda said. "The Monsignor said, 'Boom boom.'"

To reach this Plain Dealer reporter:
abaranicck@plained.com, 216-999-4828

© [2008] The Plain Dealer. All Rights Reserved. Reprinted with permission. February 9, 2008 obituary of Rev. Canon Joseph F. Ciolek who served the Catholic Church as a parish priest, as a chaplain and who served as an active participant in many Polish-American affairs.

Jaite

by Cindy Spikowski

The Cleveland area is fortunate to have a national park to enjoy in all seasons. The Cuyahoga Valley National Park, which honors the Ohio and Erie Canal corridor, is rich in natural beauty and history. The canal attracted settlers from various nationalities, but of particular interest are the Polish settlers who came to that area of northeastern Ohio and worked at the Jaite Paper Mill.

In 1905, Charles, Robert and Roy Jaite and their brother-in-law, Julius Greckel opened the Jaite Paper Mill in Northfield Township, just north of Peninsula, Ohio. The Jaite family was of German heritage and had always worked in paper mills - Charles began working at the Standard Bag and Paper Company on East 37th Street in Cleveland when he was twelve years old. They purchased an old farm located near the Cuyahoga River, the Ohio and Erie Canal, and the Cleveland Terminal and Valley Railroad. With the help of nearby farmers, they built their own mill and dug artesian wells. They laid their own tracks and switches to connect the mill to the nearby railroad. The early employees were local farmers and their sons.

By 1910, however, the census indicates that there were many Polish workers at the paper mill, and many lived in company housing. There were five double homes on Riverview Road and six bungalows on Vaughn Road. Rent in these company homes was seven dollars a month for upper rooms and eight dollars a month for lower rooms. Some workers (often eighty at a time) slept in shifts at the company store, which also housed the grocery store and the post office. When one visits the Cuyahoga Valley National Park today, the headquarters for the park are located in the buildings that were once the Jaite company town.

Fortunately, although the mill is gone, destroyed by a fire on October 2, 1992, the mill and its workers have not been forgotten. The park rangers in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park tell visitors about the Jaite Paper Mill, and the park service has a brochure available about Jaite Mill. The Peninsula Library has files of information about the paper mill as well as pictures of people who worked there. A 2004 publication by the Cuyahoga Valley Historical Museum and the Cuyahoga Valley National Park System, entitled *Cuyahoga Valley*, has collected the history of the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, including the Jaite Paper Mill. Some of the Polish workers, like Ben and Barney Lahoski who worked at the mill, are pictured in the book, and Julia and Chester Zielenski, who managed the Boston General Store, are also mentioned.

The Lahoskis and the Zielenskis and many other Polish mill workers and farmers contributed to the growth and history of the area. Today, the park visitors enjoy bicycling, hiking, skiing, and bird watching. Hopefully, they also remember the Polish workers employed at Jaite Paper Mill.

REGISTRATION CARD—(Men born on or after April 28, 1877 and on or before February 16, 1897)

SERIAL NUMBER 01783 1. NAME (Print) JOHN — LAHOSKI ORDER NUMBER

2. PLACE OF RESIDENCE (Print) BOSTON SUMMIT OHIO

3. MAILING ADDRESS same

4. TELEPHONE 5. AGE IN YEARS 53 6. PLACE OF BIRTH Bostawi

DATE BIRTH Jan 9 1889 (Town or county)

7. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PERSON WHO WILL ALWAYS KNOW YOUR ADDRESS Josephine Lahoski - wife

EMPLOYER'S NAME AND ADDRESS The Jante Co

8. PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS Jante Summit Ohio

I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE.

D. S. S. Form 1 (Revised 4-1-42) (over) 16-21630-2

John Lahoski (Registrant's signature)

REGISTRAR'S REPORT

RACE		HEIGHT (Approx.)	WEIGHT (Approx.)	COMPLEXION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> White		5-6	156	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sallow	
<input type="checkbox"/> Negro				<input type="checkbox"/> Light	
<input type="checkbox"/> Oriental				<input type="checkbox"/> Ruddy	
<input type="checkbox"/> Indian				<input type="checkbox"/> Dark	
<input type="checkbox"/> Filipino				<input type="checkbox"/> Freckled	
				<input type="checkbox"/> Light brown	
				<input type="checkbox"/> Dark brown	
				<input type="checkbox"/> Black	

Other obvious physical characteristics that will aid in identification.....

I certify that my answers are true; that the person registered has read or has had read to him his own answers; that I have witnessed his signature or mark and that all of his answers of which I have knowledge are true, except as follows:

Registrar for Local Board 13 *Mare L. M. DeJett* (City or county) (Number) (Date)

Date of registration *Apr 26 1942* (City or county) (Date)

SELECTIVE SERVICE LOCAL BOARD NO. 13 CP SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO -533 First-Central Tower (STAMP BYRON SUMMIT OHIO)

(The stamp of the Local Board having jurisdiction of the registrant shall be placed in the above space.)

16-21630-1

World War II Draft Card for John Lahoski, father of Ben and Barney Lahoski, mentioned in the book *Cuyahoga Valley*

BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR JAITE PAPER MILL

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- Hardtner, Beverliann. "The Jaite Company". A term paper written by a member of the Jaite family January 6, 1948.
- National Park Service, U. S. Department of the Interior. "Jaite Mill". A brochure distributed by the Cuyahoga Valley National Park.
- Wiegand, Virginia. "Old Jaite Paper Mill Starts New Life". *Akron Beacon Journal*. September 25, 1982.

THE JASTRZEBSKI FAMILY VISITS THE GREAT LAKES EXPOSITION

In the April/June 2008 issue of *Our Polish Ancestors* there was an article entitled "Polish Participation in the Great Lakes Exposition". A member of our genealogical society, Richard Szczepinski, shared an article from the *Cleveland News* about how his grandmother, great-aunts, great-uncles and his great-grandmother Rose Jastrzebski, were all treated to a day at the Great Lakes Exposition on June 17, 1937. The Jastrzebski family won a contest sponsored by the News for being the biggest Polish family in greater Cleveland. Rose and her 15 children, ranging in age from 15 to 40 enjoyed the day at the exposition. Rose's husband, Frank, was unable to attend, as he had to work that day. The entire article may be read on microfilm at the Cleveland Public Library:

Mihal, John. "Papa Couldn't Go, but the Jastrzebskis - All 16 of Them - Had One Swell Time as Contest Prizewinners." *Cleveland News*, June 18, 1937.

IN MEMORY

With sadness, we report the death of James J. Dworzniak, brother of Paul Dworzniak, a long-standing member of our genealogical society. The Obituary appeared in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, May 26, 2008.

We also remember Sister Mary Rosette Rospotynski, Sister of St. Joseph, third Order of St. Francis who died on June 10, 2008 at age 98. Sister Mary Rosette was one of the founding members of our group.

With a heavy heart we report the passing of Michael Lipkowski. He died July 7, 2008 at the age of 55. He was the son of Eugenia Lipowski, brother of Christina Laliberte, James Lipowski, Karen Herak, and Blaze Lipowski, nephew of Wanda Slusarski, Clementine Zakarowsky, Ed Mendyka and Bernice Konopka. All are members of the PGSGC. We shall miss him very much. God rest his soul.

Irena Sendler, who was 98 and credited with saving 2,500 Jewish children from the Nazi Holocaust, died May 12 in Warsaw, Poland.

PGSGC Library

To celebrate the 400th anniversary of the founding of Jamestown, *New Perspectives on Jamestown*, a production of the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities has been donated to our library by member, Sonia Chapnick. The fifth CD of the set, entitled "Global Jamestown and the Poles" discusses the contribution of Poles. The five CD set is available in our library.

Roseanne Ewazen shares a new article by Robert Strybel, Polish Affairs Writer entitled "Poles in Borderless Europe." It concerns the Schengen Project, which began in 1985 to allow passport-free travel between France, Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. It has now been expanded to include Poland, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Slovenia and Slovakia. Borderless Europe now extends from the Baltic Sea to the Adriatic. the Schengen System will affect the cost of visas (the Schengen visas being more expensive) and many have concerns about transnational crime. Copies of this article are available in our library.

Concert at the Shrine Church of Saint Stanislaus

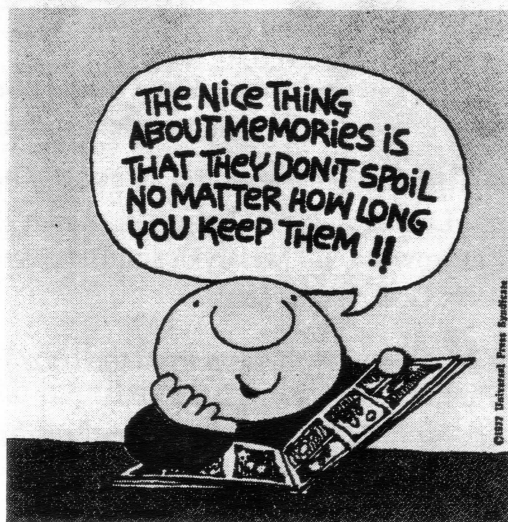
See the beautiful Shrine Church of Saint Stanislaus while enjoying a concert performed by City Music Cleveland on Saturday, September 27, 2008 at 7:30 PM. Selections from Richard Strauss, Franz Joseph Haydn, and Johannes Brahms will be enjoyed in this beautiful, historic church. The Shrine is located at 3649 East 65th Street in Cleveland's Slavic Village. Free will offering.

World Vital Records

World Vital Records is the newest genealogical database available through the Cuyahoga County Public Library. **World Vitals Records** contains more than 3,000 databases with more than half a billion names and records. It is one of the fastest growing genealogical databases with new content being added daily. Some of the records available through **World Vital Records** are: *Everton's Genealogical Helper*, World War II Army Enlistment Records, historic small town newspapers, and the United Kingdom Censuses and Birth, Marriage and Death Records. To search **World Vital Records** and the other genealogy databases available through the Cuyahoga County Public Library; click on Premium Genealogy Online Resources from the Cuyahoga County Public Library's Genealogy Page. You can search from any branch of the Cuyahoga County Public Library system or from the comfort of your own home!

JONI MIHELICH
Subject Specialist - Genealogy
Cuyahoga County Public Library
Fairview Park Branch

ZIGGY | TOM WILSON



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What's Happening

Schedule of Speakers for Upcoming Meetings--

Sept: Norman Braun, Member of PGSGC: *Sources*.

October: Polish Heritage Month – John Szuch, President and Members

November: Ben Kman, Member: Subject - TBA

December: Christmas Party (members)

At our June meeting, we had the pleasure of a presentation (along with a display) by Bernadette Zubel. Bernadette is a long time activist in Polish cultural doings in the Cleveland area. Currently she is the Director of Region "F" of the PNA. She also teaches classes on Polish language, dances, Easter egg decorating, and cooks on some Sundays at the Polish Cultural Center on 65th and Lansing. Those interested in any of her classes can contact her at: 6zubel@yahoo.com, or by phone at (440) 759-2925. Be sure to mention to her that you were referred by the PGSGC.



Bernadette Zubel President John F. Szuch in 1959 visiting plaque honoring the "First Poles" in America

1608-2008 by John F. Szuch

On October 1, 2008, Poles all over the United States will celebrate probably the most important date in Polish-American history. On that date we Poles will celebrate the 400th anniversary of the landing at Jamestown, Virginia of the first Poles in America. That handful of Poles paved the way for the millions of Poles, including our ancestors, who would later immigrate to the United States.

Those first Poles came by invitation from Captain John Smith, not because they were fleeing their homeland. Smith had invited them because of their trade skills, and the Poles promptly rewarded him the following year when two of them saved him from drowning at the hands of an Indian chief. Besides their trade skills in making glass, soap, pitch (the super glue of it's day), and all sorts of lumber products, they also brought their work ethic much like our ancestors did. The English noblemen apparently weren't accustomed to manual labor whereas the Poles were.

Shortly after arriving in America the Poles set up the first industry in America, glass making. Among other firsts the Poles are credited with are the introduction of "bat ball," which was an early form of what became known as baseball! Also, in 1619 the Poles are credited with the first strike in America. Unlike today's strikes which are usually for more wages or better working conditions, their strike was a work stoppage for equal voting rights with the Englishmen. Because of their importance to the colony, they won! For a painting by Arthur Szyk (1894-1951) see <http://www.polancon.org/jamestown/postcard.htm>.

What I find interesting about those first Polish immigrants is that the last names of two of them were Stefanski, and Mata, which happens to be the surnames of three of our members! Who knows, maybe someday those members will be able to trace their ancestry back to those first Polish settlers? Other surnames of those original settlers were: Bogdan, Lowicki, Zrenica, and Sandowski.

We, as Polish-Americans, have a lot to be proud of because of our Polish heritage which now spans 400 years in what is now the United States. Not many nationalities can claim that longevity in the US!

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

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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 \$20.00 a year.

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