



1991-2006

Happy Anniversary To Us!

P G S G C

15 Years!

—More to Come—

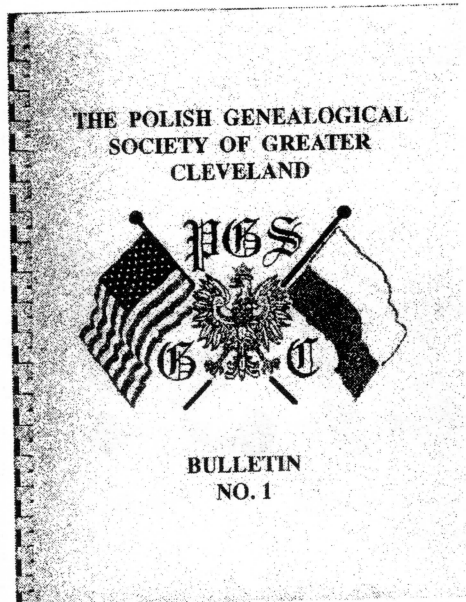
Sto Lat!!!

So---what's the big deal? It's your fifteenth anniversary. So what? It's not like it's a silver (twenty fifth) anniversary or a golden (fiftieth) anniversary. What are you making such a big fuss about?

Hey Dude---we've boughten into the adage about "living life to the fullest", "one day at a time", "live each moment as though it were your last", and all that other good stuff. And fifteen years is a pretty good chunk of time. After all, multiply 15 by 365 days a year and you get a whole lot of days. And add three more days for the leap years days involved there. And let's remember that there were a few members around in that time frame who are no longer with us, God rest their souls. So, be so good as to not rain on our parade. We're going to do a little bragging, a little chest-thumping and a little self-congratulatory good wishes to one another. After all, who would have thought back in 1991 when we started that we'd still be around in 2006.

Flashback No. 1

A number of us members (Norm Braun, Len Pryer, Ralph Lysyk, Ron Marec and myself, Ed Mendyka) are sitting around a table in a restaurant which will be unnamed. (The management of the restaurant was solicited for a donation for our anniversary issue and they chose not to contribute; so I will not name them and give them a free plug---take that, you ungrateful restaurateur. See if you get any more of our business. And yes, I have a long memory and no, I don't believe that I'm more vindictive than the average Polish-American male.) Anyway---in the course of the conversation, Len Pryer mentioned that it might be nice if we did a history of our group. After all, we encourage the Polish-American parishes and other Polonia groups to write their histories at appropriate times in the life of the parish or group. So why not practice what we preach? All were agreed that this was a worthwhile project and so, after giving each other "high-fives" and the "secret handshake", the matter was settled.



At the left is a copy of our first publication which we brought out in 1992. It was quite an elaborate offering complete with a colored front page. The reason I bring it up is that it contains our one-year history of the group. It follows:

Our Beginnings

In 1991, St. John Cantius held its eighth annual Polish Heritage Festival over the Labor Day weekend. The pastor, Father Ralph Bodziony, asked for a volunteer to work in the Heritage Room. The Heritage Room was a new wrinkle to the festival program. The parish has been in existence since 1898 and the Heritage Room was to display parish memorabilia such as communion pictures, graduation pictures, and other items of interest from the past. Having been retired since 1988, I volunteered to man the Heritage Room for the three days of the festival.

I had become interested in genealogy and for about the preceding ten years had devoted some time to this pursuit. In that time, I had attended genealogical meetings in Chicago and Detroit. Being a native Clevelander, it mystified me why Cleveland did not have a genealogical group of its own. After all, Cleveland had a number of Polish parishes, it was the destination point of a great number of Polish immigrants in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and its Polonia was still active and "doing its thing." So, as festival time approached, I asked Father Ralph if I might make up some signs and print up some forms to see if there was any interest in beginning a genealogical society in the Cleveland area. Father Ralph agreed with my proposal.

The festival was very well attended. And at the end of it, twenty five people expressed an interest in genealogy and in forming a group here in the Cleveland area. It was a start---a beginning.

Our first meeting was held on Oct. 1, 1991. Father Ralph gave us permission to use one of the rooms of St. John Cantius school. There were many questions for us to address, such as: how often did we want to meet, at

what time (day of the month---day of the week---time of day) did we want to meet, what did we wish to call ourselves, how were we to govern ourselves etc., etc.. It was decided that we would meet the first Tuesday of the month at 7:30 P.M. at St. John Cantius school. In the course of the next two meetings, we answered some of the basic questions facing us and elected officers at our December Meeting.

With an executive committee, composed of the officers of the group now in place, we took on the problems of by-laws, dues, membership and other problems affecting the group. Our secretary, Joyce Hillson, volunteered to put together a newsletter to keep our members abreast of what was happening. And so, slowly but surely, we are moving forward. As of this date, we have fifty one members and look to the future with confidence.

Edward J. Mendyka

At the festival that year (1991) twenty five people responded that they would be interested in forming a genealogical group here in Cleveland. They were:

| | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Stella Bednarik of Cleveland, Ohio | Judy Boysko of North Royalton, Ohio |
| Antonette Carlton of Solon, Ohio | Joseph Cass of Cleveland, Ohio |
| Anna Doctor of Parma, Ohio | Joe & Sarah Evanko of Lakewood, Ohio |
| Adam Gajowski of Cleveland, Ohio | Donald Gorczyca of Kent, Ohio |
| Joe & Gloria Hadbavny of North Olmsted, Ohio | Armela Hammes of Hudson, Ohio |
| Joyce Hillson of Homerville, Ohio | Flo Jakubiak of Cleveland, Ohio |
| Richarda Jambrozy of Cleveland, Ohio | Ben Kman of Hinckley, Ohio |
| Nettie Lada of Cleveland, Ohio | Rita Lada of Cleveland, Ohio |
| Ralph & Jean Lysyk of Parma, Ohio | Patricia Lenard of Lakewood, Ohio |
| Christine Mata of Euclid, Ohio | Edward J. Mendyka of Cleveland, Ohio |
| Joseph Przeracki of Westlake, Ohio | Phyllis Sroka of Berea, Ohio |
| Genevieve Szuba of North Royalton, Ohio | John Szuch of Medina, Ohio |
| Victor Wyderka of Richfield, Ohio | |

Some of these folks said that they were interested in forming a group here and then we never saw them again. If we were to pass them on the street we wouldn't know who they were. Go figure! But many of the responders did become members and are with us to this day.

Flashback No.2

Early in 1991, I was sitting one morning in the McDonald's Restaurant at the Pleasant Valley & Broadview Road Shopping Center, having coffee with Ms. Jessie Augustine. Jessie was teaching a group of us Seniors the intricacies of the card game of Bridge at the Tri-C Senior Center on Bagley Road in Middleburg Hts. She was retired from GMC as was I. Soon, I discovered that we had more in common than just our former employer. Growing up, she was from the same neighborhood as I and she was of Polish extraction. And I learned that our parents had been close friends for a period of time until her family moved to the Garfield Hts. area. Anyway, she had some old photographs she was going to dispose of and asked if I wished to have them. She couldn't identify the people on the pictures and wanted to give them away to someone who would appreciate them. So this was the purpose of our rendezvous at McDonald's that morning. She brought the photographs and much to my amazement, lo and behold, one was a group wedding picture of my parents. Her mother had been in the bridal party for my Mom & Dad. Talk about coincidence—

Anyway, I was quite excited and we were a little "loud", so to speak. Sitting across from us was a distinguished, elderly couple who could not help but hear what we were saying and what was going on. Soon, they joined the conversation. It turned out that they too were of Polish extraction and interested in genealogy. The man gave me his card which read: RJI Group Inc.—Human Resource Consultants—Ralph Lysyk, President. Well now, here was a "high-powered" prospective member, good for the image of a new foundling group about to come into existence. Ralph came to the festival that year; came to our first meeting; was elected our very first vice-president; and continues to be a stalwart member of our group. A few words about Ralph before we move on.

Ralph and his wife, Jean, have been married for over fifty years. He is a former councilman of Seven Hills.

FOUNDERS



Seated, left to right: Joyce Hillson, Frank Kowalski, Sister Loretta, Sister Rosette, Father Ralph Bodziony, Edward Mendyka, Ralph Lysyk, Christina Mata

Middle row, left to right: Virginia Luty, Gloria Hadbavny, Eleanor Marszal, Roseanne Ewazen, Ed Jambrozy, Dorothy Hudson, Patricia Kuczumski, John Szuch, Stanley Jackowicz, Max Gonet, Joan Uniatowski

Top row, left to right: Joe Hadbavny, Ben Kman, Richarda Jambrozy, Armela Hammes, Wanda Slusarski, Joe Evanko, Sarah Evanko, Lottie Gembus

He did not hesitate to serve our group as an officer. He has been supportive in so many ways. He has donated books and other materials to our library, has referred folks to our group who later have become members and continues to this day, to serve the best interests of our society. Sto Lat to him!

And while we're passing out "kudos" for services rendered, let us not forget all the former officers of our group who have been instrumental in its survival and growth. Some that come to mind are: Ben Kman, the Evankos, the Jambrozys, the Jasinskis, Sonia Chapnick, and last but not least, John Szuch who has been the group president for the past 14 years. It is to them and a faithful group of members that we owe thanks. Without them we would have been unable to survive and persevere.

The first officers of our group were:

Ed Mendyka, President

Ralph Lysyk, Vice-president

Joyce Hillson, Secretary

Frank Kowalski, Treasurer

Christine Mata, Membership Chairperson

And so, we were off and running. Letters were sent out to the Polish Genealogical Societies of America (Chicago) and Texas to find out how they organized themselves in their beginnings. They were helpful and supportive in our undertaking. The Texas response suggested that we call ourselves The Polish Genealogical Society of Ohio. That, we felt, was a little presumptuous since we hadn't even established ourselves in Cleveland. But we wished to be more inclusive in this geographical area, taking in towns like Elyria and Lorain who had sizeable populations of Polish-Americans. We finally determined to refer to ourselves as The Polish Genealogical Society of Greater Cleveland. And now, after fifteen years, no new Polish genealogical societies have cropped up

in Ohio so it might be time to expand our horizons and consider changing our name to include the whole state of Ohio. Something to consider.

At our October meeting in 1992, Virginia Luty suggested that at our December meeting we hold something of a Christmas party. Well, her suggestion was taken to heart and ever since then, at our December meeting, we gorge ourselves with stuffed cabbages, Polish kielbasa, bigos, sledzie (pickled herring), and other goodies. It has become for us a nice, annual, traditional event. We ask members to bring a dish, something that perhaps "Babcia" would have prepared at Christmas, something we would not ordinarily eat except over the Christmas Holidays. At times, Roseanne Ewazen has brought a dish which she calls "kutia." It is a dish whose main ingredients are honey and some kind of a grain product. It is a dish which I have never seen or eaten, either at Christmas time or not. At our earliest Christmas parties, I brought "pensoki" (barley) and "kasha" (buckwheat). Both of these dishes are cereal grain products meant to be eaten with a pat of butter on top. We always had these dishes at our family Wigilia table. But none of our members were daring enough to try these delicacies. Or perhaps they had other, more enticing things to consider eating. In any event, I stopped bringing these dishes. Even without them, there was plenty to eat.

Flashback No. 3

At our first Christmas party which was held in the St. John Cantius cafeteria, I arrived early so that I could acquaint myself with the kitchen and learn where all the buttons and knobs were. Earlier in the day, I had been there to set up the tables. But now, I brought fresh kielbasa which I determined I would bake on site and a host of other stuff needed for our party. At some point, I determined that as the evening progressed I would need to vent the area above the stove and proceeded to look for a button to activate the vent fans. There, on the side of the wall, was a red button which looked like what I needed. And so, I pressed it.

Lo and behold, all hell broke loose. There was noise and foam started to squirt out of nozzles above the stoves. I had inadvertently pushed the fire extinguisher apparatus above the stoves. There was a foamy, white substance all over the stoves, on the floors, everywhere. When I finally got the foam stopped, I spread newspapers on the floor so that someone wouldn't break their necks slipping on the floor. But for that evening, the stoves were useless for me. They had to be cleaned and made fit for use. And so, all of the cooking that night was done in the upstairs kitchen. That meant going up and down three flights of steps each trip. Somehow, the party went off per schedule and the guests, members, didn't even know what had happened. The next day I arrived to help clean up the mess I had made. The maintenance men, Ron and Joe, were very forgiving and claimed that it was time to clean the stoves anyway, so there was really no problem. Ever after, at all the parties we had after that at St. John Cantius, I avoided that red button at all costs.

That may have been the same party when our pierogis turned out to be less than expected. Someone had made pierogis and brought them for the festivities. They had been boiled in hot water and buttered per the recipe. They had not been fried. Anyway, in order to keep them warm, we decided to place them in a roaster under the lowest of temperatures. This way, they would be nice and warm when it came time to serve. Well, the best laid plans of mice and men etc., etc.. What actually happened was that the dough of the pierogis began to stick together, one to the other. Soon, we had one big blob of pierogi dough, sprinkled with patches of potatoes and sauerkraut. We served it anyway and nobody commented on them. We have nice members who do not go out of their way to inflict harmful comments on their fellow members.

Another time, we had prepared a great big skillet of cabbage and noodles for our people. We had prepared it early and set it aside so that we wouldn't be hurried at the last moment. And there it remained until after everyone had eaten. Then, we discovered that we failed to put it out. Talk about Senior Moments!

After all this practice, we have finally got it straight. So, come to our Christmas party and celebrate with us! Smacznego!!!

From the very start of our group, we had a newsletter. At first, Joyce Hillson put out a single sheet, double sided paper which informed the membership of what was going on. Later on, the newsletter became more elaborate when Sarah Evanko took it over. It went from a single sheet of paper to eight pages and then to twelve

POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF GREATER CLEVELAND

WELCOME TO THE POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF GREATER CLEVELAND.

WELCOME TO THE PREMIER ISSUE OF THE POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF GREATER CLEVELAND'S OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER DATED: JANUARY 1992.

THOUGH OUR OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER IS UNNAMED AND ITS SCHEDULE OF PUBLICATION AND FINAL FORMAT UNSET... THE NEED FOR IT IS REAL. THE FOUNDING MEMBERS AND ELECTED OFFICERS IN SETTING UP A NEW ORGANIZATION HAVE A NEED FOR COMMUNICATION AND CONSISTENT RECORDING OF PROGRESS FOR OUR MEMBERS, PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS AND OTHERS INTERESTED IN OUR GOALS.

AS OUR NEW ORGANIZATION SETS UP ITS GUIDELINES FOR OPERATING INCLUDING ADOPTING BY-LAWS, DRAWING UP APPROPRIATE PAPERWORK, DESIGNING LOGOS AND LETTERHEADS THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER WILL HELP THE PROCESS ALONG BY COMMUNICATING PROGRESS TO ITS MEMBERS.

THE NEWLY ELECTED OFFICERS WILL USE THE NEWSLETTER AS A TOOL TO KEEP YOU INFORMED OF IMPORTANT INFORMATION THAT COMES TO US FROM BOTH THE COMMUNITY AND OTHER GENEALOGICAL GROUPS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. THIS IS YOUR NEWSLETTER. YOUR WRITTEN CONTRIBUTIONS ARE WELCOME. TELL US ABOUT YOUR PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENTS AND MILESTONES IN YOUR QUEST TO TRACE YOUR GENEALOGY. OTHERS SEEKING THE SAME WILL ENJOY YOUR LARGE AND SMALL BREAKTHROUGHS. IT MAY EVEN BE THE ENCOURAGEMENT THEY NEED TO CARRY ON THEIR OWN STUDIES.

STATUS REPORT ON THE POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF GREATER CLEVELAND: JANUARY 1992.

OFFICIAL NAME OF ORGANIZATION: POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF GREATER CLEVELAND

MAILING ADDRESS: 906 COLLEGE AVE., CLEVELAND, OH 44113

ANNUAL DUES: NOT YET SET

MEETINGS: FIRST TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH, 7:30 P.M. SAINT JOHN CANTUUS MEETING ROOM 2357 TREMONT ROAD, CLEVELAND, OH

1992 OFFICERS/EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT: EDWARD J. RENDYKA
4921 BROADVIEW RD. APT.#9
CLEVELAND, OH 44109
216-459-0209

VICE-PRESIDENT: RALPH LYSYK
(ACTING) 1675 MAZEPA TRAIL
PARMA, OH 44134
888-2441

SECRETARY: JOYCE HILLSON
7046 CAMP RD.
HOMERVILLE, OH 44235
1-648-2470

TREASURER: FRANK L. KOWALSKI, JR.
P.O. Box 5104
CLEVELAND, OH 44101
771-3209

APPOINTMENT MADE BY PRESIDENT:

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON:
CHRISTINE MATA
26450 FORESTVIEW AVE.
EUCLED, OH 44132
731-2657

PURPOSE: THE PURPOSE OF OUR GROUP SHALL BE THE STUDY OF OUR POLISH ANCESTRY, ITS CULTURE AND OUR HERITAGE.

OBJECTIVES: TO BECOME BETTER AMERICAN CITIZENS, HEIGHTEN OUR AWARENESS OF OUR "POLISHNESS" (NOT TO THE POINT OF BIGOTRY, HOWEVER), ENDEAVOR TO PASS ON TO THE NEXT GENERATION OUR PRIDE IN OUR HERITAGE AND ANCESTRY, AND TO FOSTER FRIENDSHIP AND A SPIRIT OF COMRADERIE AMONG OUR MEMBERS.

NOTE: OUR GROUP IS NOT AFFILIATED WITH ANY POLITICAL ORGANIZATION OR RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION. WE ARE AN INDEPENDENT, SELF-HELP GROUP AND OUR PURPOSE IS EDUCATIONAL IN NATURE.

pages, what it is now. She created the masthead and the format for the newsletter. Under her direction, the newsletter was full of genealogical information which the dedicated genealogist found necessary to pursue his hobby. She and husband, Joe, did an excellent job publishing our group paper. In 1999, they determined that they could no longer devote the necessary time to the newsletter and asked to be relieved of these duties. There was no one to replace them and we were without a newsletter for over a year. This was unfortunate since it resulted in a decrease of membership. Those lost members were never to return and we feel their loss to this day. With the beginning of the new year 2000, we again began publishing.

The advent of the Internet has effected many things in our lives, one of them being how we do our genealogical research. We now can get information more quickly than we ever thought possible before. It seemed right therefore, to change the philosophy of the newsletter and concentrate more on our immediate locale of northern Ohio. We would still give our readership popular Internet sites to visit but we would try to publish the histories and activities of our

Polish-American parishes and Polonia organizations. We would concentrate on our immediate families, parent and grandparents. This was still genealogy but closer to each of us.

Doing Polish genealogical research for a first or second generation American is not an easy task. There is only so much information that one can gather from the Internet and American records. Sooner or later, one must try to get information from "the Old Country." And that, for the most part, is not an easy job. The Mormons have done an excellent work collecting useful information but sometimes their hands are tied. A case in point is the Polish diocese of Przemysl which refuses the Mormons permission to photograph their records. Writing to the parish pastors rarely brings good results, for whatever reasons. An exception to this case was with a Fr. Marek, the pastor of St. Barbara's parish in the village of Golcowa, in southeastern Poland.

When I wrote to him seeking my father's baptismal record I did so with little expectations of hearing from him. Much to my surprise, he answered my letter and told me how proud he was of me to be seeking out information about my Polish ancestry. He did include the records that I sought and sent me a couple of books about the village. Later on, he invited me to come to Poland for a local celebration the following year. What a excellent priest and pastor---everything one could ask for in a man of the cloth. Would that all priests and pastors were so accommodating.

Many of our members have traveled to Poland and talked personally with some pastors and have been frustrated in their endeavors. A lot of the records have been destroyed during WW II but many still remain, only under lock and key and away from the prying eyes of genealogists. We can only hope that with the passage of time many of the restrictions concerning these records will be lifted and they will become available to the genealogical public. With the Internet, many of the parishes in Poland are setting up their own Web sites and perhaps in time, they will be able to influence the release of their parochial records.

The year 2000 was important to us in another instance in that we needed to find another place to meet. Up to this time, we had met at St. John Cantius but due to circumstances beyond our control, we needed to find another acceptable place where we could hold our meetings. Many places were considered: the new Senior Center in Middleburg Hts., the Cuyahoga County Library on Ridge Rd. and St. Barbara's parish hall on

Fifth Anniversary Picture



Seated, left to right: Roseanne Ewazen, Macon Boczek, Helen Boczek, Wanda Slusarski, John Szuch, Ben Kman, Lynn Vizdos, Richarda Jambrozy, Ralph Lysyk
Middle row, left to right: Eugene Slusarski, Gloria Hadbavny, John Talkowski, Sophia Talkowski, Dorothy Hudson, Virginia Luty, Eleanor Marszal, Ed Zelek, Ed Jambrozy, Irene Sepple, Sarah Evanko, Stanley Jackowicz
Top row, left to right: Paul Boczek, Joe Hadbavny, Chet Luty, David Kowalczyk, Armela Hammes, Ed Mendyka, Norman Braun, Walter Fortuna, Joseph Evanko

Denison Ave. Finally, we determined that our best site would be St. Mary's PNC Church on Broadview Rd. And for us, it has proved to be a blessing. The location was great with plenty of parking space and excellent facilities. The pastor of the church at the time was Fr. Jan Davidziuk. He was very supportive of our group and helpful in many respects. Since then, Fr. Jan has become a bishop and now oversees the Western Diocese of the Polish National Catholic Church. We were sorry to see him leave but happy for him with his promotion. President of the church council, Mr. Ralph Zaun, has always been cognizant of our needs and easy to work with. We continue to have a great relationship with the church and hope to be here for many years to come.

So what does the future look like for us? Currently we have a membership of about 120 members and they are scattered all over the USA. Our income is derived mainly from membership dues. Needless to say, our treasury always borders on the state of anemia, but it's not terminal. We continue to survive and after fifteen years that in itself is a big plus. Our core membership is strong and loyal. We have our own Web site at: <http://www.freewebs.com/pgsgc>.

Recently Trina Galauner has volunteered to become the Webmaster of our site. She brings a youthful, enthusiastic, knowledgeable approach to this project and I wish her the best of luck. Trina has already suggested ways to improve the site and we welcome all her creative innovations. Trina would like to put a link on our site containing the surnames that our members are researching. That way, those visiting the site could see what names our membership were interested in.

We have what we consider an adequate library. And here too, we have been blessed lately with one of our

THE MEMBERSHIP ROSTER AS OF 1992 WAS:

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| Pastor: Rev. Ralph Bodziony | Edward & Flo Bourgeois of Conroe, Texas |
| Norman & Edna Braun of Garfield Hts., Ohio | Ruth Brazis of Hinckley, Ohio |
| Stanley Brescoll Jr. of Dearborn, Mi. | Thomas C. Brokos of Parma, Ohio |
| Bernard & Irene Celek of Fremont, Ohio | Richard & Mary Jo Celek of Port Clinton, Ohio |
| Ronald & Sonia Chapnick of Kirtland, Ohio | Ed & Geraldine Chojnicki of Broadview Hts., Ohio |
| Barbara A. Clark of Columbus, Ohio | Paul Dworzniak of Parma, Ohio |
| Joseph & Sarah Evanko of Lakewood, Ohio | Roseanne Ewazen of Cleveland, Ohio |
| Lottie Gembus of Cleveland, Ohio | Joseph & Gloria Hadbavny of North Olmsted, Ohio |
| David & Armela Hammes of Hudson, Ohio | Geraldine A. Hardway of Milan, Ohio |
| Nyle & Joyce Hillson of Homerville, Ohio | Dorothy Hudson of Cleveland, Ohio |
| Stanley Jackowicz of Parma, Ohio | Ed & Richarda Jambrozy of Cleveland, Ohio |
| Veronica Jarzab of Tempe, Arizona | Harold & Barbara Kaiman of Orange Village, Ohio |
| John Kanieski of Medina, Ohio | Ben & Carol Kman of Hinckley, Ohio |
| Frank L. Kowalski of Cleveland, Ohio | James E. Krysiak of N. Ridgeville, Ohio |
| Patricia A. Kuczarski of Seven Hills, Ohio | Virginia Luty of Hinckley, Ohio |
| Ralph & Jean Lysyk of Parma, Ohio | Eleanor Marszal of Cleveland, Ohio |
| Christina Mata of Euclid, Ohio | Edward J. Mendyka of Cleveland, Ohio |
| Dan & Shirley Muszynski of Erie, Michigan | Sister Loretta of Cleveland, Ohio |
| Sister Rosette of Cleveland, Ohio | Eugene & Wanda Slusarski of Willoughby Hills, Ohio |
| Margaret Sondey of Mentor, Ohio | Phyllis E. Sroka of Berea, Ohio |
| Leon Stevens of Cleveland, Ohio | Alexander & Florence Sutowski of Cleveland, Ohio |
| Genevieve Szuba of North Royalton, Ohio | John Szuch of Medina, Ohio |
| Sophia Talkowski of Warren, Ohio | Frank Tavrell of Cleveland, Ohio |
| Jean Tocicki of Youngstown, Ohio | Joseph & Joan Uniatowski of Garfield Hts., Ohio |
| Helen Vaselaney of Broadview Hts., Ohio | Lillie C. Daus of Cleveland, Ohio |
| Betty J. Smith of Brunswick, Ohio | |

members "stepping up to the plate." Cindy Spikowski, a professional librarian, has volunteered to organize the books and other materials that we have. She has assigned numbers to our books in accordance with the Dewey Decimal System so that they are identical with the numbers found in public libraries. That in itself is a time consuming job. Once the library is organized along these lines, it will be easy to lend and track our books. At some point in the not too distant future we hope to put a library link on our Web site which will direct those interested to what we have so that they can better determine if they can use these materials. Cindy is also organizing the other materials that we have; church histories, genealogical booklets, books written by our members, media materials such as audio tapes, video tapes and such, laminated photographs collected over fifteen years and various other sundry "stuff." Once the job is completed people just might comment on how well organized everything is and those comments will be appreciated by Cindy, I'm sure. However, few will realize just how much work went into this project. So on behalf of all our membership, I'd like to thank Cindy and Trina for their good hearts and their willingness to help make our group "the best that it can be."

We recently purchased a used microfiche reader which we hope to incorporate into the scheme of things. We have yet to shop around and see if anyone is selling any records on microfiche and what the prices are but these are projects for the near future. It would be nice for our membership to browse around these microfiche records before meetings and see what they can come up with.

Not too long ago, our president, John F. Szuch, ordered some PGSGC patches and pins which are available to the members. Separately they cost \$3.00; but together, you can buy both for \$5.00. What a deal! Just in time for Christmas for someone who has everything, is hard to buy for, is one of our members and is absent minded enough to forget to buy one for himself/herself.

Twelfth Anniversary Picture



Kneeling, sitting in front row, left to right: Elaine Marec, Frank Kaminski, Juanita Fortuna, Walter Fortuna, Ed Mendyka, Lucia Dominak, Mary Louise Brower

First row, sitting on chairs, left to right: Georgene Jasinski, Richard Jasinski, Richarda Jambrozy, Sonia Chapnick, John Szuch, Dorothy Rollin, Julia Kusek, Dorothy Hudson

Second row, seated, left to right: Berni O'Malley, Joan Chermely, Roseanne Ewazen, Joan Stahlhut, Norman Braun, Lorraine Lipinski, Carol Prusak, Martha Bergman

Standing, left to right: Ron Stelmarski, Christian Chermely, Robert Lynch, Len Pryer, Ron Marec, John Talkowski, Sophia Talkowski, Leroy Kostecki, Ed Jambrozy, Stanley Tatko, Jane Tatko, Joe Hadbavny, Gloria Hadbavny, Rolf Bergman, Ken Green, Joan Green

And finally, we'd like to remember those of our members (and members of their families) who have passed on and are no longer with us. Our hearts and prayers go out to their families and friends. One of the first of our members who died was Thomas Brokos who died as a result of an automobile accident in 1994. He was only 44 years old. Since then, many have died. Some of the more recent ones are; Joan Stahlhut, Dan Ostrowski, Leroy Kostecki and Eugene Slusarski.

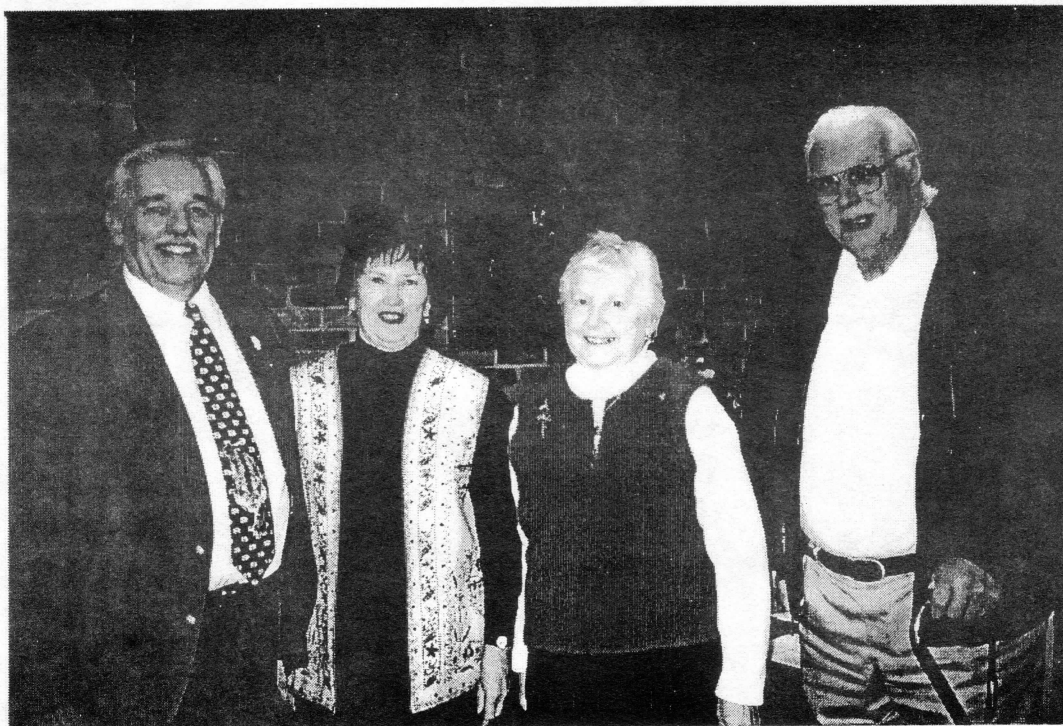
I knew Joan for many years when she worked at the Deaconess Hospital cafeteria. There were a group of us seniors who would go there to eat our dinner during the week. The meals were good and the prices were right. Years later, Joan came upon my name on the Internet and came to one of our meetings. After that, she became a member and continued to come to our meetings until sickness prevented her from coming.

Dan Ostrowski was to have gone to Poland this year. He had made arrangements and all was pretty much set.

Leroy Kostecki was a regular at our meetings. He would bring donuts and socialize with other members. Eugene Slusarski died on September 15, 2006 which just happened to be his 82nd birthday.

May they find eternal peace with the Lord. Please say a prayer in their behalf.

Current Group Officers



President John Szuch, Secretary Sonia Chapnick, Treasurer Richarda Jambrozy, Vice-President Ron Marec

Why Genealogy?

The following quote is taken from the preface page of Norman Davies book, *God's Playground, A History of Poland*. It is a quote from a sermon in Cracow by then Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, celebrating **The Third of May Constitution** observance in 1978. It would be the last observance of this kind he would celebrate as Cardinal of Cracow. He would later on that year become Pope John Paul II.

“After all, each one of us possesses a heritage within us---a heritage to which generations and centuries of achievement and calamity, of triumph and failure have contributed: a heritage which somehow takes deeper root and grows new tissues from every one of us. We cannot live without it. It is our soul. It is this heritage, variously labelled the Fatherland or the Nation, by which we live. As Christians we live by this Polish heritage, this Polish Millennium, this Polish Christianity of ours. Such is the law of reality.”

How I Got Interested in Genealogy

by Georgene Jasinski

A cousin phoned me four years ago to tell me he had met one of our cousins. I had probably last seen her when we were both very young. He gave me her telephone number and I quickly called. As we talked, we discovered that both of us were searching for our fathers' ancestors. We set a date to meet at my house. She promised to bring her sister who was also interested in genealogy. That afternoon a close bond developed between Ruth, Carol and me. We shared family photos, genealogical information and names of other family members.

As we parted, we decided to organize a family reunion. At our first reunion, we met more members of the family; many who had not seen each other in years. People shared information and family stories. Another cousin brought a shoebox full of unidentified photos. We were fortunate that an older relative was able to identify most of the people in the photos. What a great time we had! Everyone agreed that we should make the reunion as annual event. We have repeated our reunion picnics twice since that first gathering. The four of us (there is a third sister, Irene) meet monthly for either breakfast or lunch, and have become a family once again. And it all started with genealogy!

This is a special anniversary issue of our newsletter. As such, we have asked certain individuals and commercial enterprises to underwrite the costs for this issue. We thank them for their support and encourage our members to patronize them whenever possible.

Thank You Much!

Anonymous (In memory of Piwinski & Jagodzinski Family)

Linda Jean Ellis

Gabe's Family Restaurant

Golubski Family

Graphic Gallery

Kiedrowski Bakery

Komorowski-Domagalski Funeral Home

Chet & Virginia Luty

James & Berni O'Malley

Edward J. Mendyka

Parma Polish-American League

PLAV Post # 58

Rybicki Funeral Home

State Meats Inc.

John & Sophia Talkowski

Edwin & Clarice Zelek

And finally *Louie C. Catania* was kind enough to make a donation toward our anniversary issue.

Louie is a Bail Bondsman and his motto is: "Don't Stale in Jail--Call Louie for Your Bail." Most of our members walk the straight and narrow and might never have need of Louie's services. But should you find yourself a guest of the state some day, give Louie a call. He'll help you out. The only thing that I might advise you to do is make sure that you show up in court when you are supposed to. Otherwise, Louie will have to come looking for you.

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

Special Anniversary Issue

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FIRST CLASS MAIL

"OUR POLISH ANCESTORS"
is published by
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OF GREATER CLEVELAND



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

Membership dues are \$20.00 a year.

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