

Our Polish ANCESTORS

THE QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF GREATER CLEVELAND

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Bertha Deranek, Warszawa's Midwife

By Trina Goss Galauner

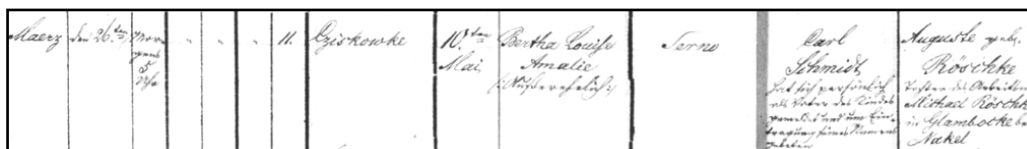
During the 19th century, midwifery was common, and in the immigrant neighborhoods of Cleveland, it was the standard. Not only did the midwife assist with the delivery, she also was responsible for filing a "Return of a Birth" with the City of Cleveland Board of Health. A birth return consisted of the date of birth, gender of the child, race, name of the parents and their nativities, ages and races, the place of the birth (not necessarily the residence of the family), and the name of the midwife, or doctor, and their residence. Bertha Deranek lived in the Warszawa neighborhood in Cleveland and was a practicing midwife as early as 1884.



Bertha Deranek (sitting) with daughters, Helene, Josefa, and Martha
Photo courtesy of Jim Piechorowski
Derenek Families at Rootsweb.com

For a woman who was a midwife and reported the births of children in Cleveland's Polish neighborhood of Warszawa, Bertha Deranek's own birth name and parentage was not recorded accurately in her own vital records. Her Ohio death certificate gave her birth date as 26 March 1848 and her parents as Kazimir Raszkowski and Anna Smigel. This was found to be only partially true.

Bertha Louise Amalie Rösckhe (Roeschke/Reschke) was born 26 March 1846 in Czyżkówko, a neighborhood in Bromberg, Grand Duchy of Posen in the Kingdom of Prussia (Polish: Bydgoszcz, Poznań, Prussia). She was the daughter of Auguste Rösckhe, the unmarried daughter of Michael Rösckhe, a laborer from Glambocke/Glemboczeck (Polish: Głęboctek) near Nakel. Bertha was the result of an



Lutheran baptismal record for Bertha Reschke born 26 March 1846 in Czyżkówko, Bromberg

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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.

The Polish Genealogical Society



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Letter from the President

Witam i zapraszam:

We get the name of the month of January from the Roman god Janus who had a head with faces looking forward and back. As humans, and as a genealogical society, we can benefit from doing the same. We should take time to count our blessings and learn from our mistakes and use those lessons to plan for 2023.

First, I'd like to recognize the loss of long-time members, Louis Jurkiewicz and Ken Green, whose contributions we still enjoy. Also, I want to thank our officers, Richard, Ben, and Don for their extra effort in filling in for me during my surgeries this past year.

A goal for 2022 was to make the public aware of the PGSGC, especially the Eastern European community we spotlight. To that end, we engaged in post-Covid booths at several ethnic festivals. One of them was less successful, but more memorable, as we picked one of the windiest days of the summer and were forced to put up and take down our booth from two flights up a remote parking deck with no elevator. Our promised center stage presentation was instead a remote booth with three chairs. Our hats off to Richard Szcepinski for his patience. It was a memorable and learning experience. While this one experience was less than encouraging, our efforts to spread the knowledge of our presence in the community continues being led by Bernadette Berger with new ideas and enthusiasm. We are exploring ways of collaborating with other genealogical societies. You will be hearing more about this as the year progresses.

Still, our primary goal is to serve the needs of our members. A recent survey clearly indicated that our members are most interested in research assistance for domestic sources and for Polish databases and archives. Other interests include learning about Polish history and culture. The planned programming for 2023 addresses many of those needs.

I would like to remind members that this society truly belongs to its members. It will only be as strong and vibrant with the input of each of you. Consider offering your talents to the PGSGC. With your help we will be able to look back next year and say 2023 was one of the best years of our club.

Michael E. Speare, President

Polish Genealogical Society of Greater Cleveland

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The Polish Genealogical Society



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This is a series of articles highlighting Polish individuals who made significant contributions to the arts, science, politics, sports and other areas. They also gave pride to their fellow Poles who shared their heritage often in times of special needs for Poland.

Józef Bem

By Michael Speare

This is the story of Józef Zachariasz Bem, a relatively unknown military man of the 19th century whose exploits played a significant role in the history of Eastern Europe. Józef was known as an engineer, a general and Ottoman Pasha who became a national hero in Poland and Hungary. He was involved with independence movements in Poland and other European countries, wherever his skills were needed.

Bem was born 14 March 1794 in Tarnów, Poland, at that time part of Galicia in the Austrian Empire. After the creation of the Duchy of Warsaw in 1807, which was established by Napoleon as a client state, he moved with his parents to Kraków. There he attended military school, and distinguished himself in military affairs and mathematics. Józef joined the military as a 15-year-old cadet in a Polish artillery regiment serving in the service of the French during the Napoleonic wars. He participated in the invasion of Russia. This was a total disaster for Napoleon, but Józef proved himself in the defense of Danzig (Polish: Gdansk) for which he received the highest military award of the French, the Knights Cross of Legion of Honor. He was only nineteen at the time.



Józef Bem
Public Domain

After the defeat of Napoleon at the battle of Waterloo, the Duchy of Warsaw was transformed into the Congress Kingdom of Poland, a dependent territory of the Russian Empire. Bem became a teacher at a military college and researcher of rocket-like missiles. He published his research with extensive illustrations. Józef became involved in a conspiracy that promoted an independent Poland for which he was demoted and sentenced to one year imprisonment which was suspended. He resigned his military position and moved back to Galicia to resume teaching and research.

In 1830/1831, Poles revolted against Tsarist rule during the November Uprising and Bem once again joined the cause for independence. He earned Poland's highest military honors, Virturu Militari, in the process. While the Polish rebels won many battles, they eventually lost the war. Bem escaped to Paris where he taught mathematics. The Russians put a price on his head and Józef barely escaped an assassination attempt while in Portugal.

In 1848, Józef Bem offered his service to Lajos Kossuth to fight against the Austrians for Hungarian independence. He valiantly defended Vienna, which eventually capitulated, and fought elsewhere, winning many battles while often outnumbered and under resourced compared to the Austrian attackers. These battles brought the Austrian Empire near collapse, forcing the Austrian emperor to call on Russia for reinforcements to attack Bem in Transylvania. Bem's army was decimated at the Battle of Segesvar (current Sighisoara, Romania). Józef only survived by faking death and eventually led his remaining troops to the final defeat of the Hungarians at Temesvar. For all his efforts, he was recognized as a hero in Hungary.

Again wounded, Bem crossed the border into the Ottoman Empire, accompanied with other Polish officers who



had served alongside him in Hungary. Russia and Austria demanded his return, but extradition did not apply to individuals who converted to the Muslim faith and assumed Turkish citizenship. Other Polish officers took this step, along with General Bem, and adopted the Turkish name Murat Pasha. Pasha was the highest title for a military officer in the Ottoman Empire. Stationed in Aleppo, Bem served as the governor of the city of Aleppo, today in Syria. In 1850, as the head of Turkish troops, he suppressed an Arab uprising against Christians in Aleppo. This action saved the Christian population from certain massacre and brought him fame in Turkey. Józef Bem died of malaria 10 December 1850 and was buried at a Muslim cemetery in Aleppo. In 1929, his remains were transferred to his birthplace of Tarnów.

Since Józef Bem had converted to Islam, he couldn't be buried in a Roman Catholic cemetery so his remains were placed on a pedestal on an island in the middle of a pond at Strzelecki Park in Tarnów. The city has become a pilgrimage site for both Poles and Hungarians. Józef Bem's remains lie in a grand mausoleum with inscriptions in Polish, Hungarian and Ottoman Turkish. A special Józef Bem Trail can be followed in Tarnów, which includes stops at the mausoleum and the house where he was born near the town square named in his honor. Additionally, items from his life were collected and placed on display at Tarnów's *Galeria Panorama*.



Mausoleum, General Józef Bem, Tarnów, Poland
Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 began 23 October 1956 with a protest at the foot of the Bem Statue in Budapest as Hungarians rallied in support of the Poznan, Poland demonstrations.

Of interest, Kevin Bem, son of PGSGC member Susan Bem, is a direct descendent of Józef Bem. Kevin has a keen interest in his ancestor who impacted so much of European history. While visiting Poland during a recent trip, he and Susan were able to visit many of the statues and memorials to this famous relative.

Polish Constitution Day Celebration in Parma

The PGSGC will be participating in Parma's Constitution Day Festival. Details are not yet available but we will be needing volunteers to represent the PGSGC at our booth. It is a fun event and an opportunity to present ourselves to the ethnic community. Bernadette Berger is our coordinator. Please contact her at 440-552-0452 if you can help. Look for more information in future e-mails.

Constitution Day in Poland is May 3rd in recognition of the country's first constitution adoption in 1791. It was the first constitution adopted in Europe and second only to America's in 1789. The constitution applied to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and its implementation led to the "War of the Defense of the Constitution" between the Commonwealth and conservative nobility backed by the Russian Empire. This led to the annulment of the constitution just nineteen months later, but the 3rd of May constitution is still regarded as a key event in the history of Poland. After Poland gained independence in 1918, this day became a holiday, but like many national holidays it was not celebrated during the time of the Communist government. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the holiday was restored, and the first celebration took place in Warsaw's Castle Square 3 May 1990 in the presence of President Wojciech Jaruzelski.



Remember When: Barbershop

By John Prokop

The barbershop was another enjoyable and interesting boyhood place. Although I wasn't fond of getting haircuts when I was younger, they were necessary evils that had to be gotten so I wouldn't look shoddy. A buzz-cut was what every boy wore, from kindergarten until the 5th or 6th grade, especially during the summer. No boy wanted to have to spend any more time on grooming than was absolutely necessary. This was true up until middle school, when puberty hit and suddenly boys began to care about how they looked. A haircut became much more important and noticeable to the opposite sex. A fresh haircut suddenly became part of one's personality and appearance to the girls.



There were several retired barbers who cut hair down in their basements in the neighborhood. They usually had an old retired barbershop chair that they still used and had a sink installed close by. Some did a pretty decent job fixing up the basement with chairs, mirrors and reading materials (old magazines.) They always smelled like basements though, no matter what they did to make them smell, or look, better.

Because I was so small, I had to sit on a board that was tilted across the chair seat. This also raised me up so the barber could reach me without having to bend down or over to cut my hair. The barber rarely talked while he cut my hair and never asked what kind of haircut I wanted. My mom always gave me the correct amount of money to pay, which included a tip. Home haircut rates were reduced because the barber was retired and didn't have to pay the expenses for having his own shop.

I don't think I started going to a real barbershop until middle school...about the 6th grade. I guess by that time some of the retired barbers had passed on and those still around didn't want to give kids haircuts. I thought barbers eventually stopped cutting hair because they got arthritis, in their hands from using clippers and scissors, and in their knees from standing around so much.

Once I became a teenager things changed. My appearance was a way to express my personality and character. The way I looked bolstered my self-esteem. Suddenly, clothes, hairstyles and personal grooming became important accessories. Fashion was also important to me and my peer group and the way I fit in with everyone else. The media (magazines, TV, radio, films and movie stars,) offered new role models to imitate. Boys wanted to be hip and cool and look like the idols and heroes of the times. Television shows and specials like *American Bandstand* and *Hit Parade* gave ideas on what debonair and handsome was supposed to look like. Musicians, singers and band members showed how to look, dress, behave, and style hair.

During that time period a haircut suddenly became a hairstyle. That meant using a styling cream or gel and having a current and hip haircut would make a boy stand out and be noticed. I started going to real neighborhood barbershops where young barbers could work their magic with their scissors and clippers.

Almost all the barbershops were independent or family-owned, which were run by fathers, sons, and/or brothers. They were masculine and authentic places where you could feel at home and comfortable in the presence of other men while you got your grooming needs taken care of. The barber knew you and you knew him. The barbershop was a part of the service and hospitality industry. It was a great place where men and boys could



go to relax and socialize. A good deal of time was spent in the shop, especially on a Saturday, the busiest day of the week for barbers.

Upon entering a barbershop, it was a safe-haven, a place to be a man and interact with other men, and no topic was off limits. Back then it was called “shop talk.” Innermost thoughts and ideas could be expressed. Discussion about sports, politics, neighborhood and city conflicts, could be enjoyed and, of course, hearing and learning about the mysteries of the opposite sex. The reading materials were first class covering sports, movies and entertainment magazines, and all the local neighborhood news publications.



Some young men’s haircut styles included a neck-and-behind-the-ear-shave, to accentuate a haircut and give a manicured professional look. Some men would get a barber shave as part of their haircut routine. Complimentary cologne and/or talc after a haircut, gave self-esteem a boost, as one got up from the chair to leave the place. Not only did a man look good, but smelled and felt good to. Back then, like now, a “good haircut” is one of man’s simple life’s pleasures. Every major event in life, i.e. First Holy Communion, Confirmation, Graduation, Prom, Weddings, etc....included getting a hair cut before the event. It was a guarantee you would look and feel your best on that special day. And you would have memorable pictures to prove it.



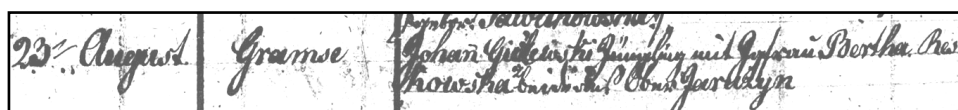
John A. Prokop is a freelance writer and has published articles about growing up on Cleveland’s East Side Polish neighborhood (Poznan) in the 1950s and 1960s. He attended St. Casimir Grade School (Class of 1962) and then Cathedral Latin High School (Class of 1966). He is also the Prokop Family Historian and Genealogist and has studied Genealogy for about 5 years. John tries to capture and record his feelings of the times, culture, food, religion, people and relationships, as he perceived and lived them. He also chronicles personal information about his family genealogy, which is often rarely recorded or documented. John currently is retired and lives in St. Petersburg, Florida with his wife, Laura, and their two married daughters, Holly and her husband, Hamlet, and Jennifer and her husband, Robert. John and Laura are also the proud grandparents of Jennifer and Robert’s son, Robby.

Bertha Deranek, Warszawa’s Midwife continued from page 1.....

ausserehelich (extramarital) union. Her birth father was Carl Schmidt, a married laborer, and he personally reported the birth and agreed to the paternity. Bertha was baptized 10 May 1846 at the Lutheran Church in Bromberg.

Bertha’s birth surname was spelled many different ways in vital records. It evolved from Röschke to Reschke or Räsckke and was also noted as Reszkowska or Raszkowska and even Rutkowska. Her upbringing was in question. Her mother, Auguste, was a maid servant and had another illegitimate child, Louise Adelheide, 6 November 1850 who died at two months old. No records could be found that Auguste ever married and she may have died young.

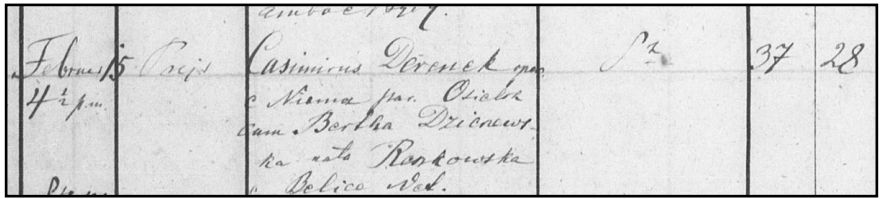
Bertha Reszkowska was living in Ober Jaruschin (Polish: Ober Jaruszyn) in 1869 when she married Johann Dzierzewski (also spelled Gieszewski) 23 August 1869 at the Roman Catholic Church in Fordon. They had two children born in Jaruschin, Jan Franciszek, born 27 March 1870, who died as an infant, and Helena, born 22 May 1871. Bertha was pregnant with their third child when Jan died 22 July 1873 of illness in Beelitz (Polish: Bielice), a hamlet of the city of Bromberg. Maryanna was born 6 February 1874 in Osielsk outside the city of Bromberg near Jaruschin.



1869 Marriage Record of Johann Dzierzewski and Bertha Reszkowska



A week after Maryanna's birth, Bertha Reszkowska Dzierzewska married Casimir Derenek, a widower from Nimtsch (Polish: Niemcz) near Osielsk. They married 15 February 1874 at św. Marcina i Mikołaja (St. Martin and Nicholas) Roman Catholic Church in Bromberg. This parish, established in the 14th century, was the only Roman Catholic church in the city of Bromberg during the partition period (1772-1920). It was a hub of Polish nationalism in the city, especially during the Kulturkampf from 1872-1878 when Prussian laws were enacted to allow state control of educational and clerical appointments.



1874 Marriage Record of Casimir Derenek and Bertha Reszkowska Dzierzewska

Casimir Derenek was a servant and likely worked at various manor homes around Bromberg based on where his children were born. He had six children from his previous marriage but only one, Jozef, born 11 October 1863 had survived infancy. Together, Casimir and Bertha had two more daughters, Josefa, born 12 July 1876 in Brahnau (Polish: Czersk), just east of Bromberg, and Paulina, born 11 January 1879 in Kruschin (Polish: Kruszyn), northwest of Bromberg.

5	Kazimierz Derenek	44	u
6	Bertha	34	f
7	Jozef	17	m
8	Helene	9	f
9	Martha	12	u
10	Josefa	12	u
11	Pauline	0	u

1881 Passenger Manifest for the Derenek family

The blended Derenek family, which included children Josef, Helena, Maryanna/Martha, Josefa, and Pauline, left Bromberg in 1881. The family, whose surname spelling changed to Deranek, boarded the S.S. Habsburg in Bremen bound for New York and arrived 28 June 1881. From there, they journeyed on to Newburgh, Ohio (later the southeast corner of the city of Cleveland) where Casimir's sister, Rosalie Socha, was living with her husband and family on an unnamed street near Harvard Avenue. This area became known as the ethnic neighborhood of Warszawa.

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The Deraneks lived on Tod Street (E. 65th Street) in Cleveland. Casimir worked as a laborer at the Cleveland Rolling Mill Company which later became American Steel & Wire Company. On Tod Street, Bertha gave birth to three more children which she delivered herself without a midwife. Her son, Anton, was born in July 1882. Stanislaw was born 24 September 1884 but died seventeen days later of marasmus (failure to thrive). Her last child, Mary, was born 12 August 1886.

During this time, Bertha began assisting other pregnant women in the neighborhood with the births of their children. Her name was noted as midwife to births as early as 1884 in city birth records. By 1899, she was listed in the Cleveland City Directory under the "midwife" category. She was one of only seventy-three midwives advertised in the city.

Over the years, the Deraneks resided at Third Avenue (Gertrude Avenue), Poland Street (E. 66th Street), and Fullerton Avenue in Cleveland. Casimir Deranek retired from American Steel & Wire Company and Bertha continued midwifery in a charitable capacity. Casimir died 17 October 1923 at the age of eighty-seven of bronchitis due to chronic nephritis. He and Bertha lived at 6916 Ottawa Avenue at this time. Casimir was buried at Heart of Mary's Cemetery, today known as St. Mary's Cemetery.

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Genealogical and Historical Societies

By Kim Demor

Genealogical and Historical societies are a great way to get help in your genealogy research. They have great information to help you in your quest for finding ancestors and more. These societies may also be able to help you find information about your house, the neighborhood, businesses, churches and other information you have not thought of. Many have free programs that are open to the public. They may have an archive, or work with one, which can assist you in your quest.

Genealogical and historical societies may differ in what they offer. Historical societies are great for researching locations and information about the area. If you are looking for family information, historical societies may have some information but more specific information may come from genealogical societies.



All genealogical societies are not the same. Larger ones, like the Ohio Genealogical Society, own a building with a library and collect information about families all over Ohio. Regional and county genealogical societies mostly rely on the local libraries that house information about the area.

Both types of societies often have presentations about different topics, some about the area and others about genealogy. Most of the programs are free and open to the public, however, you should contact the society for information. Most genealogical and historical societies have memberships which offer member-only benefits such as discounted programs and member-only events.

There are also ethnic genealogical and historical societies like the Polish Genealogical Society of Greater Cleveland (PGSGC) which has their meetings in Parma and has their own library. Some groups may not be local to a researcher but may offer virtual meetings. The PGSGC is one of them. Joining a society that operates in the city or neighborhood where your ancestors lived, or joining one based on your ancestors' ethnicity can also assist you with learning about their lives.

Although, there is a lot of information on the internet, not everything is digitized, transcribed, and available to the public. The programs that these societies offer are informative and may help lead you in a different direction. For example, the Stark County Genealogical Society recently had a program on the Sanborn Fire Maps which helped illustrate historical locations.

Telling the story about your family is more interesting than just knowing their names and vital event dates and both types of societies can help. Reach out to the historical societies in the area where your family was from and to the local and county genealogical societies. You can find your family's place in history.

The Polish Genealogical Society



Western Reserve Historical Society





How It All Started

By Ben Kman

Last year at one of our meetings, I asked our members to share how/ why they got started with researching their family histories. The meeting was filled with stories, both simple and complex, and people kept volunteering to talk through the duration of the whole meeting. Since I did not have an opportunity to share my story then, I would like to share it now.

When I was 18, I headed off to college in August of 1987 as a freshman at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. During orientation week, I took time to browse the university bookstore and found a small book called "Teach Yourself Polish". Something moved me to buy it. Until then, my "Polishness" was second nature. Our family celebrated Christmas Eve traditionally, we took baskets of food to church on Holy Saturday to be blessed, and made ethnic specialty foods at the holidays and throughout the year. It didn't really seem much different from what other families did. I knew my great grandmother and her brother who both immigrated to the U.S. We saw them at all the holiday gatherings and family functions. They spoke Polish more than English but only my grandparents could respond in kind. I never really thought much about all of this. Moving away from home for the first time and finding that little book sparked something.



I continued to read that book and to teach myself Polish just like the title said. I found a guy in my dorm whose parents were Polish immigrants and he helped me learn too. In my junior year starting in 1989, I decided to up my game and take a Polish class at the University of Pittsburgh down the street. In the Fall of that year, I was listening to the local polka program on the radio one Sunday morning while I was nursing a hangover and studying. Then a commercial came on stating "Learn the Polish language in Poland at the Jagiellonian University in Cracow for one month in the summer!" Wow. I had to do it. Communism just ended. It would be an experience of a lifetime. After talking it over with my family, I started the application process and was accepted. I would be spending the month of July 1990 in Poland!

Preparing for the trip was a whirlwind once school wrapped up for the year in May. My great grandmother and her brother had already died by then. Something compelled me to try to learn more about where in Poland our families lived. Maybe I could visit someone. I sat down with a ruler and a pencil and started making family trees for each of my grandparents and family charts for all of my relatives to see how everyone was related and to which family they belonged. My whole extended family knew about the trip and I began asking everyone what they knew about their parents and grandparents. Time was short and I couldn't compile much information before leaving.

July came and it was time to leave. The trip was incredible. We studied everyday in the mornings and the afternoons were free for doing homework and exploring Krakow. Every weekend there was a trip scheduled to a place of cultural or touristic significance. One day, I returned to our dormitory and the lady at the front desk told me that I had a package. I had no idea who would be sending me anything or why. When she handed me the overstuffed envelope with the familiar handwriting of my father on it, I wondered what could be so important. The envelope was filled with xerox copies of documents in Polish. I would have had no idea what they were but

.....continued on page 10



“Polish” Pączki Day - Tłusty Czwartek (Fat Thursday)

By Trina Goss Galauner

This year, I avoided the long lines of people at the bakeries on Fat Tuesday by picking up my pączki on Monday. However, I still stood in a line for half an hour. Pączki had been available for purchase since the middle of January, but it didn't seem right to eat them that early. I had no idea that in Poland, Tłusty Czwartek, or Fat Thursday, was the day to indulge in this sweet treat.

Tłusty Czwartek is the Thursday before Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent and fasting in preparation for Easter. It is a day for indulgence and gluttony which dates back to the pagan ritual of celebrating the end of winter. Fatty foods and meats, along with wine or vodka and pączki, are consumed in excess. Today, bakers in Poland sell pączki and faworki (angel wings/bow ties) on Tłusty Czwartek and the lines of patrons are seen all day out the door.

Originally, pączki was a dense, bread-like dough that was fried and stuffed with pork fat, bacon, or meat. It wasn't until the 16th century when pączki were filled with sweetness. Some inserted a small nut or almond in the filling of select pączki. The founder of the nut was believed to have good luck for the whole year. Later, yeast was added to pączki dough which softened the pastry and made it more round.

Polish pączki is similar to a German berliner, an American doughnut, Dutch olibollen, and Italian bombolini. The main similarity is the stuffed yeast fried dough and powdered sugar or glazed topping. On Tłusty Czwartek, each Pole eats, on average, 2.5 pączki. Each stuffed treat weighs about 2 ounces and packs in about 300 calories. Traditional Polish pączki is filled with prune or rosehip jam but today they are filled with just about anything.



A bakery in Bielsko-Biała
Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

Perhaps next year I will celebrate Tłusty Czwartek and buy my pączki the Thursday before Ash Wednesday to avoid the long lines. I'll let you know how that goes this time next year.

How It All Started continued from page 9.....

my Dad included a note saying “my grandmother’s birth certificate and my grandfather’s passport”. I was fascinated but unfortunately couldn’t do anything with those documents at the time.

The trip ended and I returned home but not without falling in love with the country of my ancestors and vowing to visit again. Everybody wanted to hear about the trip. I was one of the first people in my family to return to the old country. After that experience, I was obsessed with learning more about my family and where we originated in Poland.

I still have that little book. It’s dog eared, creased, tattered and worn. It has a special place in my collection of books, VHS tapes, cassette tapes, CD’s and website bookmarks. I look at it from time to time and remember my simple beginnings and reflect on how it impacted my life. And that’s how it all began.



Bertha Deranek, Warszawa's Midwife continued from page 7.....

Sometime after the death of her husband, Bertha retired from midwifery. She died of an intestinal obstruction due to a cancerous tumor 8 October 1933 at the home of her daughter, Mary Rogalski, at 6717 Baxter Avenue.

It is impossible to say how many Polish babies Bertha helped deliver in the Warszawa neighborhood when she lived there but it must be near ten thousand. Two of my own great grandparents were delivered by her. She served a vital role in the Polish immigrant community in Cleveland. Many of you may also find that Bertha Deranek delivered an ancestor or two.

RETURN OF A BIRTH—(To the Board of Health of the City of Cleveland.)

Date of Birth *Nov 24th* 1888 Sex *female* Color *white*

Nativity of Mother *Poland* Age *18* Color *W*

Nativity of Father *Poland* Age *27* Color *W*

Place of Birth (of child) No. *49* *Tarmond* Street.

Full Name of Mother *Antoni Ratajczak*

Full Name of Father *Andrus Ratajczak*

Name of Medical Attendant or Midwife *Bertha Deranek*

Residence of same *Car. Tow and Fleet Str*

Birth Return for Maryanna Ratajczak, 24 November 1888
Bertha Deranek, Midwife

Newsletter Submissions

The due dates for article submission and consideration for *Our Polish Ancestors* are the 15th of the month before newsletter publication. These dates are February 15th, May 15th, August 15, and November 15th.

Articles, with or without images, need to be complete and submitted as MS Word or PDF documents to be considered for publication at the discretion of the PGSGC Newsletter Editor or PGSGC President. An article may be published in the next newsletter, however, due to space constraints and other factors, articles may be held for a future newsletter.



If you have any questions regarding article submission and whether your topic is appropriate for publication in our newsletter, please contact Trina Galauner (galauner@yahoo.com) or Michael Speare (president@pgsgc.org).

Schedule of Presentations for Upcoming Meetings

Apr: **Polish Genealogy Hacks**
Ben Kman

May: **Favorite Genealogy Discoveries**
Audience Participation

Jun: **TBD**

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



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Please submit all correspondence to:
PGSGC Newsletter
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.