

Our Polish ANCESTORS

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Madame Curie

By Michael Speare

Marie Skłodowska became better known to the world as Madame Curie because of her marriage to Pierre Curie who was her collaborator in scientific discoveries. Marie won a joint Nobel Prize with Pierre and, after his death, won a sole Nobel Prize. She was the first person to win two Nobels and the first of two people to win this prestigious award in two different fields (Linus Pauling was the other). Marie and Pierre's marriage accounted for the awarding of five Nobel Prizes to four individuals in what became known as the Curie legacy. Her discoveries paved the way for the use of radioactive materials in medicine and research into the very makeup of the atom.



Maria Skłodowska-Curie
Circa 1920s

Marie was born in Warsaw on 7 November 1867. At the time, Warsaw was part of Congress Poland in the Russian Empire. She was the youngest of five children born to Władysław Skłodowski and Bronisława Boguska who were both well-respected teachers. The Skłodowski family had been a prominent land-holding family but lost property and status because of their involvement in the Polish Uprisings of 1863-1865. Władysław was a teacher of mathematics and physics and was director of two secondary schools. The Russian government forced closure of laboratory studies at his schools. This led him to bring the laboratory equipment to his home to use in instructing his children, which surely inspired Marie. His activist involvement led to his firing and assignment to much less lower paying posts. Marie's mother operated a boarding school for girls but resigned after the birth of Marie. She died from tuberculosis when Marie was just ten years old. She also lost a sister, Zofia, three years earlier from typhus which was contracted from a boarder. After their deaths, Marie gave up the Catholicism of her mother and joined her father as an agnostic. An agnostic is a person who believes that nothing is known or can be known of the existence or nature of God or of anything beyond material phenomena claiming neither faith nor disbelief in God.

After the death of her mother, Marie began attending a boarding school for girls which she graduated from in 1883 with a gold medal. She then suffered a mental collapse, likely due to depression, and spent a year in the country with her father's

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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





Letter from the President

Christmas in July sales sparked me to think about what the PGSGC achieved since January 1. Our membership has grown substantially with the addition of sixteen new members, bringing our membership to eighty-three. New members bring enthusiasm and a desire for learning which is an inspiration. We can share our own knowledge and learn from the unique story each member brings. Additionally, several new members have offered their special skills to enhance our society's knowledge. We welcome and thank you.

This summer I attended a family reunion of my wife's family. There were nearly fifty attendees from the line of my wife's parents. Most of them were spread across Michigan, so the opportunity to get so many together at once was rare. My wife and her elder sister are the matriarchs of the family and the lone survivors of their generation. How nice it was to see four generations get together and remember fond memories of those living and recently passed. Younger generations established new bonds and heard stories of their shared heritage. It was a reminder of the importance of family. For us genealogists, this is what our hobby is about, learning more than just names and dates. We strive to learn about the lives of the past generations, the ancestors from Poland, and the how and why they came to America. Their difficulties in occupied Poland, the journey to the United States, the difficult jobs in rolling and steel mills, coal mines, or the struggles of the women in childbirth and caring for their families teach us so much about our ancestors. Ultimately, that is what makes genealogy so fascinating. I smiled as I pictured my wife's parents looking down and joyfully viewing the generations of family they created by bonding to each other.

Soon we will move into Fall with the beauty of changing leaves in Northeast Ohio. For many of us, it will also mean hitting the books or databases in our search for "just a little more" information about our ancestors. We resume meetings again in September with some interesting new programs to expand our knowledge in the remainder of 2023. Ben is already planning 2024 presentations. Plan on coming in person to a meeting to learn from these programs and share stories with each other. I gained so much sitting at a meeting table with my fellow members.

Michael E. Speare, President

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family where she recuperated. Marie then returned to be with her father and spent a year as a tutor. She could not enroll in any higher education since she was a female. However, she and her sister, Bronislawa, did attend the Flying University which was a clandestine Polish patriotic institution of higher learning that admitted women students. There she studied at a chemical laboratory run by her cousin, Jozef Boguski, who had once served as an assistant to Dmitry Mendeleev, the inventor of the periodic table which was so valuable to the understanding of chemicals and their properties. For Marie, inspiration was all around.

Bronislawa was given the opportunity to study medicine in Paris. The family agreed that Marie would work to raise funds to support Bronislawa in exchange for similar assistance for Marie after two years. Marie took a position with her father's wealthier relatives, the Zorawski family. While working there she fell in love with their son, Kazimierz Zorawski, a future, well-known mathematician. But, the Zorawski family rejected the union with the penniless Marie. Marie continued working and saving money to join her sister in Paris. Meanwhile, Bronislawa had married Kazimierz Dluski, a Polish physician and independence activist.



Pierre and Marie Curie
Circa 1903

In 1891, Marie finally joined her sister. She enrolled at the University of Paris to study chemistry, physics, and mathematics. There she earned her degree in physics and a second degree in chemistry as the result of a fellowship. Her early studies included the magnetic properties of steel commissioned by the Paris Institute. While at the Paris Institute, a fellow Polish scientist introduced her to Pierre Curie. There, a mutual interest in science brought them together. As love grew, Pierre proposed marriage, but Marie declined as she was set on returning to Poland. He declared that he would follow her there even if it meant he would be reduced to teaching French. Marie did return to Poland but was denied a position since she was a woman. Pierre convinced her to return to Paris to pursue a PhD. He was earning a doctorate of his own and was subsequently promoted to professor. In Pierre, Marie had found a new love, a partner, and a collaborator. A contemporary comment was that Marie was Pierre's greatest discovery. In 1895 they wed.

In this time period, knowledge of chemistry and physics was advancing at breakneck speed. In 1895, Wilhelm Roentgen discovered the existence of X-rays. In 1896, Henri Becquerel discovered that uranium salts emitted rays like X-rays that did not depend on an external source

of energy. The Curies decided to explore these areas as a field of study. Using an earlier development of an electrometer by Pierre and his brother, they theorized that the radiation of uranium compounds was not the result of interaction of molecules but came from the atom itself. This was an important step in disproving the assumption that atoms were indivisible. This idea was a real breakthrough in understanding the building blocks of our universe. Much of this early work was Marie's. In time, Pierre, excited by the discoveries, would join her research. This idea was her own. She later recorded this fact twice in her biography of her husband to ensure there was no chance whatever of any ambiguity. She recognized that for many it would be difficult to believe that a woman could be capable of this original work.

The Curies did not work in a dedicated laboratory but a shed that had been the medical dissecting room of a former medical school. At the time, no one knew the effects of radiation exposure and no protective equipment was used. Marie would later in life pay dearly for its effects. She continued to investigate other compounds and



minerals that emitted radiation. In the world of science, the early publishing of findings was critical to gaining credit for discoveries. Marie was cognizant of this and did lose recognition of her discovery of the radiation of thorium by another earlier published scientist. In 1898, the Curies jointly published a paper announcing their discovery of a new element which they called Polonium, in honor of Marie's beloved homeland which was still a dreamland as it did not exist as an independent country. Only five months later, the Curies announced the discovery of another new element which they called Radium for the Latin word "ray". With these discoveries they coined the word radioactivity.

To validate their discoveries, they worked to isolate polonium and radium in pure form. This was no easy task. These new elements did not normally occur in abundance. To obtain one-tenth of a gram required the processing of one ton of pitchblende. They never succeeded in isolating polonium. Over the next 10 years, the Curies published thirty-two papers including one that revealed that tumor cells were destroyed faster when exposed to radium. Her work earned her an appointment as the first faculty woman at the University of Paris where she earned her doctorate in 1903. A new industry began developing around these discoveries although, since they were not patented, the Curies did not benefit from them financially.

In December 1903, the Nobel Prize in Physics was awarded to Pierre Curie, Marie Curie, and Henri Becquerel "in recognition of the extraordinary services they have rendered by their joint research on the radiation phenomena." At first, the committee had intended to honor only Pierre Curie and Henri Becquerel, but a Swedish mathematician alerted Pierre to the situation and after his complaint, Marie's name was added to the nomination. Marie Curie was the first woman to be awarded a Nobel Prize.

During their marriage the Curies had two daughters, Irene born in 1897, and Eve born in 1904. They were taught Polish and made many trips as youngsters Marie's beloved homeland. On 19 April 1906, Pierre Curie was killed in a road accident. He was struck by a horse-drawn carriage and fell under its wheels. He fractured his skull and was killed instantly. Marie was devastated by her husband's death. The physics department of the University of Paris decided to retain the chair that had been created for her late husband and offered it to Marie. She accepted it, hoping to create a world-class laboratory. She was the first woman to become a professor at the University of Paris.

After an offer to move to better lab facilities at the Pasteur Institute (PI), the University of Paris (UP) responded with improved resources. In later years, Marie headed the Radium Institute, now Curie Institute, a radioactivity laboratory created for her by the PI and the UP.

In 1910, Marie Curie succeeded in isolating radium. She also defined an international standard for radioactive emissions that was eventually named for her and Pierre called the Curie. Despite this, the French Academy of Sciences failed to elect her to membership. Only a half century later, in 1962, the academy elected its first woman to membership. Thus was the world in which Marie Curie lived.

Despite her fame, she was often vilified as a foreigner and atheist along with the false claim she was Jewish. The French antisemitism of the time ran rampant. There was something incongruous about denouncing her as a foreigner and rejoicing in her French citizenship as a Nobel winner.

Scandal did find Marie with the discovery of her yearlong affair with Paul Langevin, a physicist and former student of Pierre's who was estranged from his wife. Overcoming this scandal, the Nobel Prize for Chemistry was awarded to her in 1911 "in recognition of her services to the advancement of chemistry by the discovery of the elements radium and polonium, by the isolation of radium and the study of the nature and compounds of this remarkable element." Some in Sweden wished to refuse her appearance at the award ceremony due to the scandal but she bravely appeared to show that her private life and her scientific life were separate entities.

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Remember When: Summer Days

By John Prokop

My favorite season was summer, of course. I have most of my happiest memories when I think of that season of long days, short nights and days full of adventure, leisure and play. It seemed like I couldn't ask for a greater place to grow up than our neighborhood in the summer. Everything we needed was right within walking distance or not too far of a drive or bus ride away.

Rockefeller Park was one of Cleveland's garden gems. Beautifully kept and manicured were the Cleveland Cultural Gardens, with so many different cultures expressed in stone memorials and lavish botanical landscape displays. There were ornate steps, ledges, statues and decorative stone monuments to allow imagination to run wild as you played in them for hours. Doan Creek was there to enjoy and play in. You could explore the woods like the Indians did in the past. It was a great get away, a place to escape from home, family, or even yourself.

There was no finer evening entertainment then watching the softball leagues play on the Giney Hill Softball Diamond. You could watch the neighborhood aspiring athletes play like baseball stars. You could root for your favorite tavern team (mine was the Lucky Leaf Tavern) and watch great amateur teams play. It was our neighborhood mini professional series where family, friends and neighbors gathered. If you were lucky you could have enough change to buy a Coke and small bag of chips and that made the night even more enjoyable. Baseball, ice cold Coke (in bottles) and a bag of fresh chips, how much better could life get? The games went on until dusk when there was still light enough to make it home safely. There were also baseball games to watch at Gordon Park (under the lights) and also Little League at Grdina Park.

The Cleveland Aquarium was an interesting place to visit. It was supposed to be an educational experience but it was just a great place to visit and imagine what it would be like to live life as a fish. Visiting the aquarium was never a short trip, probably because there was an admission fee, so the stay was long enough to get your money's worth. I never left without spending some time at the gift shop admiring all those fancy gifts (so many gifts, so little funds.)

The neighborhood playgrounds also were great places to play or hang out and Sowinski School had one of the best. It had everything needed and wished for, swings, teeter totters, monkey bars, slides, a basketball court and a baseball diamond. At night it had those glorious "West Side Story" type fire escapes! It was where important adolescent discussions took place and where some tried their first cigarette or saw a Playboy magazine for the first time. It was also a place to mingle with the kids from outside your school who also lived in your neighborhood. It was amazing how quickly we learned that we were all more alike than we were different.

During the summer, the city hired part-time employees called "coaches" or "teachers" who staffed the playgrounds. They were usually college students. They provided daily supervision and guidance during the working city hours. To us they were role models, smarter young adults, who taught us how to improve our skills in sports and socializing. They were also responsible for maintaining discipline, peace-keeping, and preventing misbehavior so we didn't get into trouble.

The city also held some craft and hobby classes inside some of the classrooms and in the basement of the school. Sowinski School had one of the biggest sandboxes in Ohio where we played a card game called "Muggins" and a game with a jack knife that we would flip into the sand off our hands, elbows, or knees. That was living dangerously back then. It was amazing that none of us accidentally stabbed ourselves or one another. I really gave my Boy Scout knife a work out in that sandbox.



Another great past time was collecting baseball cards. Everyone collected them., everyone traded them, and everyone pitched them on front porches. We all sure had our share of cavities from chewing all that bubble gum that we had to buy to get those cards. Someone had to keep all the neighborhood dentists in business.

One of the special events of summer was Fourth of July. It meant barbecues, picnics, swimming, sunburn and fireworks. If we didn't go somewhere to see fireworks, then we made our own. Often we would just watch the neighbors fireworks display and enjoy them right from our front porch. Flares, sparklers and roman candles were the greatest things to watch back then. Later, as we got older, the fireworks got bigger, bolder and louder. Instead of home displays, we went to Edgewater Park to see the "real deal" fireworks shows.

When it came to summer swimming, we had the great Lake Erie beaches, White City Beach, Edgewater Park Wildwood Park, and Mentor Headlands, or you could go to the Petri Pool, which was one of the city's outdoor pools. Petri Pool was quite a walk from E. 79th Street down to E. 33rd and E. 32nd Streets. We mostly rode the bus to get there and stayed the entire afternoon. The pool was outdoor and the water was clean and refreshing on a hot summer day. Swimming made you hungry so if the pangs got too bad, you could spend your bus fare home and buy pop, chips, candy, or other junk food to satisfy your hunger. Afterward was the long walk home.

Summer evenings were surely for sitting on front porches, catching lightening bugs, playing "hide and seek", or waiting to hear the music of the Mr. Softee Ice Cream Truck! When that music played everyone knew he would be on your street in just a matter of minutes. The begging for money from our parents began at the first hearing of that distinctive, chiming music. A frozen whipped ice cream concoction made for a perfect evening while sitting on your front porch with family, neighbors and friends. Life was simple, uncomplicated, and it didn't take much to make me happy. I wish sometimes I could go back and savor those days all over again.

The end of summer was marked by the "Showwagon" at Rockefeller Park. It was like watching live auditions for "The Gene Carroll Amateur Hour." Everybody went and brought their lawn chairs or blankets to sit on. The show maybe lasted an hour or a little longer but it was music, singing, and dancing that entertained us. We also took advantage of the many vendors/food trucks who sold ice cream, candy, sodas, and chips. When the "Showwagon" was over we knew Labor Day was soon to follow and that meant getting ready to go back to school. Nonetheless, it was a happy and memorable summer event. The Labor Day Weekend was bittersweet and officially signaled the end of summer leisure, vacations and fun.



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.





Great Grandma's Portrait Hangs at Cracker Barrel

How to keep your genealogical work out of the landfill

By Trina Goss Galauner

Every time I eat at a Cracker Barrel restaurant I browse the walls of antique portraits and wonder who the people are. Were the people local to the area? What were their nationalities? And why did they end up on the wall of a Cracker Barrel? Who are the people that just haphazardly threw away their family history?

Not everyone is interested in their family history. My grandmother never even knew the names of her grandparents back in Poland and when I was able to share that information with her she still didn't seem to really care. As she said to me, "I didn't even know them." I guess for some people if a person was never a part of their life then they don't see the point in knowing anything about them. It's hard to find a connection to a person we never saw, heard or touched in our lives.

For genealogists and family historians, such as us, we can't help to wonder about a photo of our great grandparents' wedding. How old were they? When did they get married? Who are the others in the photo? Are they cousins? Friends? Parents? For those of us more interested we might wonder what church they were married in. And if we have an even deeper interest we might wonder about the style and the cost of the bride's dress, the photography studio the portrait was taken at or what the wedding and reception may have looked like in that time. We have a desire to share all these details with our family but, in reality, some won't find it quite as intriguing as we do.



16x20 framed photograph of my grandmother, Frances Moniak,, 1922
in antique metal decorative frame

So how do we preserve our hard work in researching all of our ancestors? And how do we make it into something that our children and grandchildren will treasure and pass down? How do we make it interesting to the uninterested?

Appealing to any one of a person's five senses touches their emotions in a powerful way that can trigger memories. For example, the smell or taste of a familiar cookie that Grandma would bake will make us interested in finding that recipe. It reminds us of the warmth of our childhood. Feeling an old, crocheted quilt that our great aunt made years ago may remind us of a happy moment or bring back a memory of our great aunt. Discovering old photos in the attic you may come across a baby photo of Grandma and realize just how much your own baby daughter resembles her. All of these can awaken a strong sense of family within us and a desire to connect with the people of the past that are directly responsible for our lives today.

If we put together a book or manuscript of our genealogy, we can't necessarily appeal to smell, taste or touch but



we can appeal visually. When at all possible, include old photos of family members in your family history book or manuscript. The older, the better. Make sure you can identify at least a majority of the people in the photo. At the very least, your family won't throw the book out because it includes pictures of people who are part of their very makeup and they are identified! Next, make sure you keep it simple. As genealogists, we know we want to document every last detail for posterity. If you want your family to keep it and pass it down, make sure your book is entertaining and not just a bunch of facts written down in sentences. This isn't easy and will require thorough historical research and craftwork to illustrate the story of your ancestors. If you can write the story and manage to insert ALL the factual information without anyone realizing it, you are a genius. This book or manuscript needs to be something your family wants to put on a shelf, not file away in a cardboard box in their basement or, worse yet, get thrown away with old bank statements. Consider having it bound professionally and printed on thicker, higher quality paper. The UPS Store offers simple binding of manuscripts. If writing isn't your forte, you may even want to consider hiring a ghostwriter to assist you.

Genealogical research can become overwhelming but it can also provide us with a sense of being. *Psychology Today* described people **without** an evolved sense of being as "more apt to exist in perfunctory lives, going through the motions without personal fulfillment or intimate sharing." I like to think that sharing my research will help provide "sense of being" to my descendants.

We may feel that there isn't enough time to put this all together but start now! Start small, such as writing about the family you know. Write about your mother or father and memories and stories you were told about them. Include photographs and create your masterpiece., because it truly is a masterpiece! Even if you feel your research is incomplete, it will be better to have something small to pass on to future generations than nothing at all.

Don't count on your children to want to continue YOUR family research. Make it easy and enjoyable for your family and future generations to read about their family history. After all, genealogy isn't everyone's hobby.

Darkness of the Skies 1950

By Anthonette Baciak

Recent occurrences of weather alerts regarding smoke in Cleveland's sky had me wondering if this was truly a new phenomenon for the city and whether it was truly attributed to the wildfires in Canada. The thought that smoke could travel across so many miles and affect air quality in so many U.S. states made me wonder if it was "fake news." However, I recalled an entry in my father's journal. My father, John Ustach, wrote about unscheduled darkness on Sunday, 24 September 1950. The following are his entry and observations.

"The weirdest Sunday I have ever seen. Am I the one to speak? I should say so! After all, one that saw Halley's Comet back in 1910. I should have had the experience, yes...no? Anyway, from the early morning there was a foggy light over our territory. The sun was obscured and during our trip to church there was a silver disc in the sky at which one could look comfortably without the aid of smoked glasses.

As the day progressed the darkness did too. It was not the genuine darkness of the night. Rather it was a yellowish gloomy sort of light. At 1:30 pm while driving the family to the movies on the west side, the lights had to be turned on the car.

Reports were that the gloom was due to dust particles from a sandstorm that had floated over the city. Then the radio commented that the effect was created by a smoke cloud from Canada where forest fires were raging. But believe me it looked more like an after effect of an atom bomb explosion. Or another passing through the tail of Halley's Comet. Marnie [John's wife] convinced me to go to church during the evening."

After reading this entry, my curiosity was peaked, and after doing some research, I found that the *Plain Dealer*



newspaper featured the occurrence on the front page of the Monday, 25 September 1950 final edition with the headline "Canadian Forest Fire Smoke Clouds Darken Ohio." The following are excerpts from the article as written and published that day for your reading enjoyment. Now, you and I know the real story!

"Canadian Forest Fire Smoke Clouds Darken Ohio"
Cleveland Plain Dealer, 25 September 1950

"A dense, yellow cloud of smoke wind-borne to the Great Lakes area and beyond from forest fires sweeping hundreds of acres in Northern Alberta, blotted out the sun in Greater Cleveland yesterday afternoon. The high soaring smoke clouds brought almost midnight blackness through the entire state and the lakes area from Chicago to Buffalo. Dusk in the afternoon was reported as far south as Wheeling, W. Va., and Pittsburgh. Skies swept with weird shades of copper, ochre, sandy pinks, blues and gray wrought a fearsome touch to the spectacle and sent thousands here to their telephones to find the cause of the eerie phenomenon. The weakening sun turned blue. Birds went to roost. The stadium lights were turned on for the Cleveland-Detroit afternoon baseball game. Landing lights went on at the Cleveland Airport at 2:15 p.m."

"Blankets of smoke came from more than 30 forest fires which were destroying valuable timber tracts and farms in northern Alberta, some authorities said. More than 700 men have been fighting the flames for a week in that area. J.L. Jansson, chief timber inspector of Alberta Province, said he believed fires in British Columbia, Alaska and the Yukon were contributing their share of smoke."

"In Chicago a weather bureau forecaster said clockwise air currents around a large high-pressure area in the western Great Lakes upper Mississippi area were carrying the smoke. Manitoba weather experts said the strange smoke cloud was sucked such great distances by a natural "wind tunnel" 1,700 miles long and 100 miles wide."

"In Greater Cleveland the darkened streets were illuminated by lights from households and automobiles and neon signs glowed their advertisements when the black-out reached its peak after 1 p.m. Dial tones were missing from telephones throughout the Greater Cleveland area as persons deluged with calls or information all the radio stations, the newspapers, the Weather Bureau, police and fire departments, the Warner & Swasey Observatory of Case Institute of Technology and the seismological laboratory at John Carroll University."

"C. George Andrus meteorologist at the Weather Bureau made several hurried radio broadcasts in explanation of the afternoon darkness and to allay the fears of those who suggested the phenomenon had a military significance or was an act of God about to wreak His vengeance on a sinful embattled world."

"The smoke which brought the midnight gloom was first seen in Cleveland at 8 a.m. and was reported as high, thin, gray clouds. As the morning progressed they turned yellowish and thickened. Temperatures plunged as the growing smoke clouds blanketed the sun shunting away its heat. The earth here returned to nighttime weather conditions and the temperature dropped from a high of 50 at 9:30 a.m. to 44 by 2 p.m. Forecaster Arvid S. Klemetsmo reported."



Madame Curie continued from page 4.....

Marie Curie's service to science and mankind was not yet done. During World War I, she realized that wounded soldiers' survival counted on accurately identifying injuries. She realized that radiological equipment near the front lines would help battlefield surgeons with wound diagnosis. This tool saved many lives and limbs that might otherwise have been amputated. Marie developed transportable X-ray equipment that came to be known as "petites curies". Assisted by a doctor and her then 17-year-old daughter, Irene, twenty of these mobile units and another two-hundred field hospital units were put into service during the first year of the war. In 1915, Marie produced a hollow needle containing a radium compound (radon) to be used for sterilizing infected tissue. Countless soldiers' lives and limbs were saved. Despite this, the French government never formally recognized her efforts. During the war, Marie was also an active member in committees of Polonia in France dedicated to the Polish cause. Poland was never far from her thoughts.

In the 1920s, Madame Curie started to be recognized by France and internationally. She toured the United States and other countries, gathered awards and, more importantly to her, assets for the continuation of research. She and Pierre had often turned down awards and medals. Albert Einstein was said to have stated that she was the only person who could not be corrupted by fame.

Marie Curie visited Poland for the last time a few months before her death 4 July 1934. She died at the age of 66 from aplastic anemia believed to have been contracted from her long-term exposure to radiation. During her work, she often carried test tubes with radioactive material in her pocket or left them nearby in her desk drawer. Added to that was her exposure to rays during her World War I work. She was buried alongside Pierre in Sceaux, France. In 1995, Pierre and Marie's remains were transferred to the Paris Pantheon and sealed in a lead-lined coffin due to their radioactivity. Marie was only the second woman interred at the Pantheon and the first one on her own merits. As a result of her long-time exposure to radioactive materials, all of Marie's papers from the 1890s, even her cookbooks, are now kept in lead-lined boxes and are only available to view wearing protective clothing. In honor of the Curies, the element with atomic weight of 96 was named curium.

Pierre and Marie's contribution to the scientific world was not yet done. Their daughter Irene Joliot-Curie, along with her husband, were awarded the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1935 for the discovery of induced radioactivity which made them only the second married couple (after her parents) to win the Nobel Prize. Irene also served on various scientific boards of the French government. She died at the age of 58 from leukemia conjectured to be caused by her exposure to polonium radiation. Pierre and Marie's second daughter, Eve, was married to Henry Labouisse who as the director of UNICEF accepted the Nobel Prize on its behalf thus bringing a fourth Nobel Prize to this distinguished family.

Marie Skłodowska Curie was well known to students of science for many years. In recent years, several plays, television programs, and books have brought her story to more of the public. Her great scientific work despite the roadblocks she experienced as a woman serves as an inspiration for young women who are anxious to succeed in today's world.



Tomb of Marie and Pierre Curie
Pantheon, Paris, France



Skanoteka <https://skanoteka.genealodzy.pl/>

By Richard Szczepiński

For those who may not yet be aware of it, big changes have recently been announced by the Polskie Towarzystwo Genealogiczne (PTG), the group that brings us Geneteka, Metryki, and their sister websites. The announcement concerns the launch of a new website, Skanoteka, <https://skanoteka.genealodzy.pl/>, database of scans of documents of genealogical value (genealodzy.pl) which will make it easier for users to search for scans, and for the site creators to add new material. Skanoteka currently provides a new search interface for material that was previously available in Metryki (vital records), Meldunkowe (census records), Archiwalia (notarial records and other collections), and Poczekalnia ("Waiting Room"). Poczekalnia has thus far been something of a catch-all site of various archival collections. It contains documents that are planned for a phase out if when they are reviewed, are found to be redundant.

Please note that the PTG relies heavily on donations in order to keep access to their resources free to all. While digitization and indexing are performed by volunteers, there are costs associated with acquiring new equipment for digitization, as well as paying for servers to host all these collections online. If you use these sites, please consider making a donation."

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

Oct: **St. Adalbert's 150th Anniversary**
Presented by Dennis Kushlak

Nov: **TBD**

Dec: **TBD**

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



**Polish Genealogical Society of
Greater Cleveland**

PGSGC
c/o St. Mary's PNC Church
1901 Wexford Ave.
Parma, Ohio 44134

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Visit us on the web at:
<https://pgsgc.org>

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PGSGC Newsletter
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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.