

Our Polish ANCESTORS

THE QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF GREATER CLEVELAND

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Warszawa's Michael P. Kniola and the Family Tree

By Michael Sobczak

Around 1969 we were in Ray's Florida room out of earshot of a long call he was on. He later explained something about saving records from the old travel agency. It took twenty years for me to realize that was the start of a project by Dr. John Grabowski from the Western Reserve Historical Society (WRHS). Those documents are now archived in the WRHS Research Library, records for thousands of Poles who emigrated to Cleveland through the Kniola Travel Bureau before World War I. The proprietor, Michael P. Kniola, was a person with political savvy and connections at a time when immigrants needed respected voices. Previously published articles in the PGSGC's *Our Polish Ancestors* about MP Kniola outline the breadth of his story. This is about Michael and his son as ancestors and the discovery of his family.

Michael Kniola's life was rich in public service to his new and his old country, the church and community. He and Mary, his wife, raised their five sons and two daughters two short blocks from the front doors of St. Stanislaus Church. I knew him through artifacts, photos and odd pieces of Victorian furniture in our house on Francis Avenue in the 1960s, but ancestral stories were thin. Their photo on a dresser meant nothing to me as a kid, hence the start of research in 2016 with Ancestry.com and again in 2023.



Michael P. and Mary Kniola
50th Wedding Anniversary, 1930.
Michael is wearing a Medal of Appreciation
from the Polish government.
Private collection.

Kniola is a toponymical name of the German Knole or Knoll. The family cites Samostrzel, Poland as their origin, a rural village at the western edge of the Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodeship in northwest Poland. The Kniola's arrived in New York in May 1875 and lived in Sayerstown, New Jersey a few years before moving to Cleveland. Using the savings and experience he gained working in the rolling mills, MP Kniola opened a grocery on

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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

This my last message as I exit the position of President. I have been honored to serve the PGSGC. I owe much to my predecessors, John Szuch, Ron Kraine, and Anthonette Baciak and the support of my fellow officers, Richard Szczepinski, Don Demor, and Ben Kman. In recent years our club has seen an upgrade to our website, growth in membership and newly formed cooperation with fellow Polish genealogy societies. Ben Kman continues to bring new knowledge with his programming. Thank you, Ben. Many new members are stepping up to take volunteer positions and bring their enthusiasm to renew us. I see a bright future.



I owe the PGSGC much in my search for Polish ancestors. I idolized my grandfather as a youth and even more as I learned about his journey to America. I was able to add much knowledge about my grandmother and her journey with her mother to the United States as a 9-year-old child. They and their ancestors came alive as I learned more about life in Poland in the Russian partition and more importantly the traditions and culture my ancestors held dear. All this came with the simple cost of a membership. As the famous credit card commercial states, "priceless". Along the way, I made some new friends who offered so much help. They educated and entertained me with wonderful stories of their searches. Who could ask for more?

We are now approaching the winter months with sparse Ohio sunshine. This is the time when our genealogical itch really needs scratching. What better way to pass the time when the wind howls and the snow flies? Bring out those old pictures and documents to scan. Give that little "hurrah" when you find the link to that missing aunt who remained hidden from your family tree. Most of all find a way to share those stories with your children, grandchildren or great grandchildren. The history of Poland and its partitioning, and suffering during World War I and World War II seem to be lost to history for today's generation. The newest generation should come to understand the challenges past generations faced and use that knowledge as they face the challenges of their future.

Michael E. Speare, President

Polish Genealogical Society of Greater Cleveland

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

<https://pgsgc.org>
www.facebook.com/groups/pgsgc

The Polish Genealogical Society



Officers:

President:	Michael Speare	(330) 634-6673	president@pgsgc.org
V. President:	Richard Szczepinski	(330) 274-2064	vicepresident@pgsgc.org
Treasurer:	Ben Kman	(216) 469-9670	treasurer@pgsgc.org
Secretary:	Don Demor	(330) 437-5937	secretary@pgsgc.org



Trip to Poland 2023....Part I

By Ben Kman

The following is the story (offered in quarterly installments) of Ben Kman's eleventh trip to his ancestral villages in Poland in fall 2023.

Day I September 6

On September 6, 2023, I left for Poland. This was my eleventh trip there. It was a whirlwind morning trying to wrap up a bunch of loose ends. My financial institution was acquired by Charles Schwab and they decided to migrate my accounts to Schwab over Labor Day weekend, the weekend before I left on my trip. Tuesday the 5th was the first day I would have access to my new accounts and I was leaving the next day. I did a bunch of testing to confirm that I could withdraw cash from an ATM with my new bank card and that I could pay all my bills that would come due during the three weeks I was travelling. Good news! Everything was ready to go!

I was 90% packed so I finished that up, watered some plants, and walked around my yard for one last inspection before I left. My mom stopped over on her way to a hair appointment to say goodbye. My brother texted me early in the morning to wish me well on the trip. Around 11:00 am I sat down for lunch. My dad came over around 11:30 am to pick me up and take me to the airport. As usual, I was nervous and anxious. There was small talk on the way to the airport. My dad dropped me off and gave me a big hug then I went in to check my bag and check in for my flight. For whatever reason, United wouldn't allow me to check in for the domestic portion of my flight online and their website stated that I needed to check in separately for the international segment on LOT's site. What a mess! Once my bag was checked, I walked to the gate to confirm that there was no gate change then went on my airport exploration stroll to kill time and stretch my legs. The flight boarded on time but once we were on the plane, they announced that there were lightning strikes within three miles of the plane so they had to stop loading the food service items until the threat passed. This set us back by thirty minutes which affected 30% of the travelers on the flight. As we were descending into O'Hare airport, the flight crew asked the people on board to allow seven passengers, who were most critically affected by the delay, to get off the plane first. Of course, this turned into a free for all since everyone felt that they were going to miss their next flight because of the delay. Oddly, the travelers that were most impacted had flights to Milwaukee and Green Bay. They could have rented a car and driven an hour home if worse came to worse. I had two hours to kill so I could have cared less. Eventually, we all got off the plane and a group of us had to take the shuttle bus to terminal 5. The signage to get from our gate to the bus transfer stop was horrible and very confusing. The ride to terminal 5 felt like we were going to Green Bay. Everyone was asking "how far is this terminal?"

After we got there, I found my next gate and started exploring the terminal. Of course I forgot that I needed to check in at the gate so the flight crew could scan my passport. Just before boarding, I approached the front desk and didn't get my passport scanned and my boarding passes re-issued until they started boarding the flight. Mea Culpa!!! Fortunately, the attendant let me "cut" in line. I was flying business class. Finally, I'm starting to use up the frequent flyer miles I've stockpiled while I was working. I found a really good deal on a business class flight for 50% of the points that it normally costs. In addition, it was a one-stop flight., Cleveland to Chicago, then Chicago to Warsaw. On the way home, it was Cracow to Chicago, then Chicago to Cleveland. The only bad part of the trip was that there would be a 5-hour layover in Chicago on the way home. They had a dog sniffing everyone's carry-on's. I wasn't sure if they were looking for drugs or explosives but it was an extremely friendly German Shepherd. After boarding, I settled into seat 2A and started fidgeting with the seat recline controls. A flight



attendant came over and asked for my boarding pass. Evidently, they changed my seat assignment when I went to confirm my flight information with the flight crew. I was changed to 2C. No big deal.

While we were waiting for the rest of the plane to board, the flight attendants brought around menus with options for appetizers, main meal and desserts. I put my slippers on and started reading a book during takeoff. We took off on time and once we reached cruising altitude, the food service started. I chose a shrimp and scallop appetizer and my main dish was grilled chicken thigh. I had a nice glass (or 2) of Gnarly Head 1924 to accompany it. After food service, we settled in for the long haul. I read for a while. I honestly had no idea what time I decided to try to sleep but I put in a good "night".

Day 1 September 7

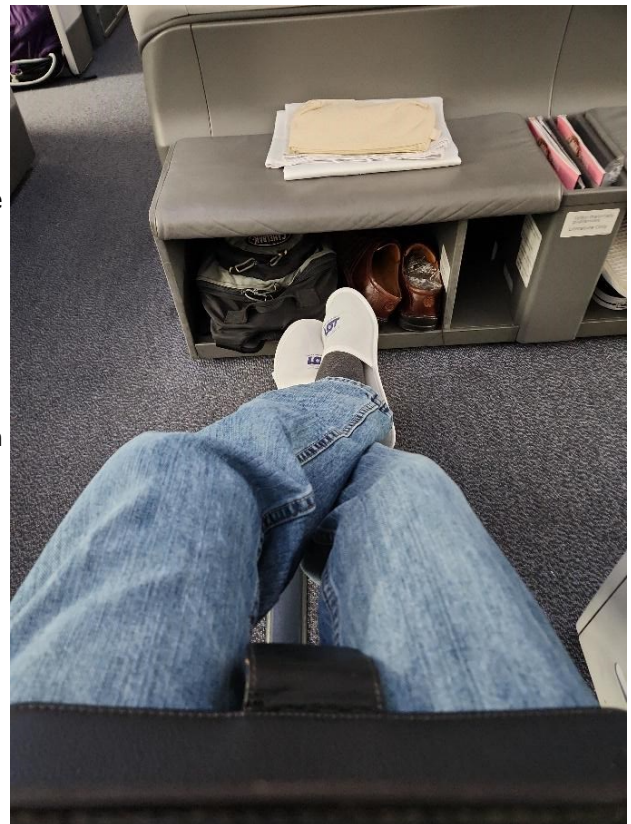
I woke up quite refreshed. My lie flat "bed" was quite comfortable and my pillow was nice and soft and squishy. I might have slept better than I do in my own bed! The flight attendants brought out coffee/tea to everyone. The lady to my left was still sleeping and the flight attendant accidentally dumped a mug of HOT coffee on her. She woke up in a hurry. The attendant couldn't apologize enough. The lady took it in stride and only asked for some napkins and a bag of ice to put on her leg. We had fruit salad, some cold cooked vegetables, yogurt with granola and a tomato quiche for breakfast. The quiche was not very good.

Once breakfast service wound up, we settled in for the rest of the flight. We ended up landing an hour ahead of schedule. Everyone was shocked. It only took us eight hours to fly from O'Hare airport in Chicago to Warsaw. Passport control was a joke. I picked the line in which the agent prioritized eating his candy bar over processing travelers' passports. Eventually, we all were processed and allowed to get our bags at baggage claim and leave the airport. My bag arrived in one piece. That's always a good start.

I sat down in the lobby at the airport and tried to get my data only e-sim on my phone to work but gave up and decided it would be easier to do at the hotel. I caught a taxi from the taxi stand outside of the terminal. Once the taxi driver figured out I was of Polish descent and could speak Polish, I got the full guided tour on the way to my hotel. He pointed out all the new and old things in Warsaw as we passed them. We had a great conversation. It was one of my more enjoyable taxi rides. My driver dropped me at Plac Zamkowy (Castle Square) and pointed out the entrance to my hotel. First shock, I was able to pay for the taxi with my credit card. After paying the cab driver, I walked over to the hotel and checked in but my room wouldn't be ready for about thirty minutes. I was staying at the Dom Literatary Guest Rooms. So I sat down in the "lobby" and continued working on getting my phone set up. My room was ready sooner than expected. The desk clerk assisted me getting to the room. We used the elevator. When I read the reviews of the hotel before booking my reservation, the elevator was a point of discussion. Even the hotel staff joked about it. This was truly THE SLOWEST ELEVATOR ON EARTH.

The cleaning lady was just finishing mopping the floor. Once I was settled in my room, I finished setting up my phone. Unfortunately, I couldn't get wifi calling or SMS texting to work but I did get the data portion working

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Remember When: The East 79th Street Public Library

By John Prokop

The other day I was in our local library when I started to think about the library I used to go to for so many years on East 79th Street. I tried to remember back as far as I could and my earliest recollection was the story book time. My memory wasn't very clear and I only remembered sitting on the floor listening to the librarian read a story and show pictures. I also remembered how hard it was for me to sit still and be quiet.



My next memory was trying to get a library card and my mother saying she would not sign for one and I would have to wait until I was old enough to get one myself. She didn't want to be responsible for library books in the house with so many brothers and sisters who might lose them, color in them, spill liquids on them, or drop them in the bathtub, or toilet. So, I waited until I could get my own library card. There was something very grown-up about getting your own library card. It suddenly felt powerful and prestigious to finally have one to and have the ability to take books out which were entrusted to my care. Getting the books back on time was not so easy and a rather hard lesson for me to learn.

The library always seemed rather large to me as it was twice as long as it was wide and had no parking lot. It was opened in 1916 and was one of the fifteen Carnegie Branch libraries built in Cleveland. It looked like a bank and office building combined. It was divided into three sections; Children, Young Adults and Adults. Each section had distinct furniture and decorations to accommodate that particular age group. When I first started going there, I was confined to the Children and Young Adult sections. There was always adult supervision in those sections.

The Adult section was the larger half of the library and the rooms were cloistered off which hinted they were off limits if you were under 16. It was always very quiet in there and the only time you could pass through there was if you had to use the restroom. There was a fireplace on one of the walls but I never saw it used. I imagined it could have been useful in the wintertime since it was always so cold during those months.

When I was in high school, the library was the perfect place to do homework. It was quiet, well lit, always a comfortable temperature, and you couldn't be bothered by younger, annoying, brothers or sisters. It was also a place to meet up with friends or meet new girls (especially during middle and high school years). Since it was a safe place to visit and never suspect for shenanigans, parents always allowed their children to go there. After all, what could possibly go wrong at the library? You might be asked to speak quieter, if you were too loud, or asked to leave, if too many of you got together at one table and created a ruckus.

The librarians at our branch were always older ladies. They seemed very "Victorian", they were always educated, and they always corrected bad grammar or manners when you displayed them (almost like having another



mother or teacher in your life.) However, there was one librarian I remember who always stood out. I was in college when they hired Miss Frances Goldstein. To my surprise she was very young, easy to talk to, and she was interested in bringing our neighborhood library into the new and modern changing world. She came at a time when the neighborhood was in transition, and she not only wanted to be a part of it, but she wanted to keep the library thriving and alive with the changing demographics of the time. It was a challenge that she took seriously and worked on until the day the library closed in 1989. I remember how she took a personal interest in the younger people who visited the library and always made herself available for help.

Whenever I go to visit the old neighborhood, I still drive past the East 79th Street Public Library and smile. Although it is no longer a library, like so many of the other places that are no longer present, it still holds special memories that I treasure and keep close to my heart.



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.

Warszawa's Michael P. Kniolacontinued from page 1

Tod Street (E. 65th) in 1886 that within a few years would include travel and related services. Two photos of the MP Kniola Travel Bureau building when overlaid (1890's and 1970's) look like part of the original structure was added onto the left (south) side. Heaven knows they needed the room. The neighborhood was filling up with the extended Kniola clan. The house next door to the south was owned by Michael's brother John Kniola (1864-1916) and his wife Pauline nee Skarupski (1867-1945), Mary's sister. On the north side was his nephew Leo Kniola (1894-1982) and directly behind him on E. 63rd was Michael's other brother, Stanley, (1862-1937) and his wife Pauline nee Szczechowski (1867-1945).

Highlighted in the 1890s photo is most likely his wife, Mary (Skarupski), at the front door. My tongue-in-cheek rationale confirms this because if he was anything like my father, he would probably not take staged pictures of strangers in front of his store. For that matter, why would anyone else? Advertising? Michael was quoted that Mary ran the grocery in the early years, so it's most likely Mary in the picture. If taken in 1897, her eldest daughter Caroline was twelve years old, son John was five and son Raymond was two, likely accounting for the others in the photo.

Pics behind Kniola Travel in 1924 include Michael (age 65), Mary (age 59), daughter Caroline (age 37) and a few kids, the smallest my father (age 4). There is also a caged parrot, perhaps a remembrance of a journey they or his son Raymond took to Florida in 1920s. Ray's wife Birdie had a cockatiel at home in Cleveland and later in Florida. He once had joked about some talkative parrot they used to have.



3690 E65th Street - Facade Comparison Overlay 1890s – 1970s
Photos from WRHS. Kniola Travel Bureau
Courtesy of the Western Reserve Historical Society
Not to be reproduced without permission.

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which was the primary functionality I wanted. After some testing, I was ready to head out and re-visit Warszawa. Before leaving, I started messaging and emailing people both back home and in Poland letting them know I arrived safe and sound.

On my last trip to Poland five years ago, I had a bad experience with the sim card that I bought for my phone. I couldn't get most of the functionality to work. For this trip, I decided to start with a data only eSim that would allow me to use all the functionality of my phone with the exception of phone calls and SMS texting. I wouldn't be able to call anyone in Poland directly using their local phone number with my phone over the Polish phone network. However, I could use other apps like WhatsApp, Viber or Skype to message people and make voice or video calls through the app. This worked quite well considering almost everyone had a cell phone. A few days later, I figured out that when I was in a hotel or someone's house and could connect to a wifi network, I could put my phone into airplane mode, switch back to my phone's original sim card then send text messages or make phone calls back to the U.S. using wifi texting and calling. This let me do 98% of everything I needed to do with my cell phone.

I wandered around the Old Town of Warsaw for a couple of hours re-familiarizing myself with the city. I used Google Maps to show me walking routes to different places and to confirm my location. That was all working well. At 1:00 pm, I was scheduled to meet a new found cousin for a coffee. We discovered each other through the magic of the internet. I found an online newsletter for the gmina of Bircza in southeast Poland several years ago. My Nachman and Socha ancestors came from this area. There was a discussion about the glass makers there and I posted some information. A girl named Joanna Nachman replied to that post and asked what I knew of the Nachman family. I sent her a bunch of family stuff and I never heard back from her. Several years later, I got a message on *My Heritage* from a guy named Karol Bijos. After reading through his message, I realized that we were related. He was a cousin of Joanna. She gave him the information I gave her. We shared the same great great grandfather, Antoni Nachman. However, his branch of the family was from Antoni's second wife. Since then, we stayed in touch. When I knew I was going to be coming to Poland, I asked if he would like to get together. Happily, he accepted. We met at a nice, non-touristy café for a coffee and probably talked for close to two hours. He actually brought me pieces of glass that he found near the now non-existent glass foundry in Borownica.

After our meeting, I continued to wander around the historical area of Warsaw. I spent the afternoon taking pictures that I could use in articles and presentations. I like to try to revisit places I remember from my original trip





to Poland in 1990. It's interesting to see if and how they changed over the years. There were still some tour groups walking around the city but it seemed pretty clear that the tourism season was winding down.

Around 4:30 pm, I sat down at the café associated with the hotel in which I was staying. I ordered a beer and a plate of meat pierogi. It cost roughly \$18 USD including a 10% gratuity. After grabbing something to eat, I headed south and visited the tomb of the unknown soldier, walked around the neighboring park then headed back to Old Town. I sat outside and people-watched for a while and contacted my cousins in Paslek to confirm plans for a visit. They sent me a picture of a grill overloaded with sausages. Finally, I headed back to my room. I picked up a beer from a store next door then sat down in my room to start writing my daily journal. The beauty and curse of the room I am staying in was that it overlooked Plac Zamkowy. The view was nice. However, the sounds of the wandering crowds, the street musicians, and the outdoor cafes carried through my window into my room. As if these were the biggest problems I faced...





Warszawa's Michael P. Kniola continued from page 6.....

As his business and civic commitments grew, Michael's third son Raymond (1895-1976) took over Kniola Travel in the 1920s. He was the person I knew as Uncle Ray (my father's uncle) and my siblings referred to the building as "our old place on 65th". Richard Raymond Sobczak (1920-2010) was the youngest child of MP Kniola's oldest daughter, Caroline. He grew up above Kniola Travel and it's the address on his World War II dog tag. He was a Merrill's Marauder army veteran.

I'm the youngest of his four children and have never walked by the house, much less been in the house, but my siblings lived above and behind Kniola Travel in the early 1950s among the Kniola, Skarupski, Toronski, Kaszubkiewicz, and Waligorski surnames in those few blocks. Ray Kniola retired with his wife Bernice Kemski (1896-1978) to Hollywood, Florida in 1967. They had no children. My father and I moved to Hollywood in 1968 and I got to know the crusty old guy with the big, bellowing voice. Quick-witted, loved to socialize, kinda loud, and stopped smoking cigars and drinking in Florida...mostly. He probably sounded like his father, he certainly resembled him.

The below 10" x 26" panoramic photo is of the Kniola-Skarupski Family Reunion in 1929 at Rybaks Grove in Garfield Heights near Rybak Avenue off Turney Road. There are three guys on the left and the same guys on the right. If you ran fast and beat the camera sweep you could be in the picture twice. My nine-year-old Dad was not fast enough. This photo is coincidentally in a photo from a 1976 Plain Dealer article regarding the archival work of Dr. Grabowski.



Mary (Skarupski) Kniola (age 59) and Michael P. Kniola (age 65) with parrot,



Caroline Kniola (age 37) 1924



Richard Sobczak (age 4) and three others unidentified, 1924



"Kniola-Skarupski Family Reunion, 1929, Held at Rybaks Grove, Garfield Heights. Photo by John E. Ertler & Co. 510 National, Bldg. Cleveland, Ohio". Private collection.

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The Significance of Polish Genealogy

By Richard Szczepinski

The enjoyment of Polish genealogy, like genealogy in general, is rooted in a deep fascination with history, identity, and personal connections. Polish genealogy specifically offers a unique and rich experience due to Poland's complex history, diverse cultural heritage, and the importance of family in Polish culture. Here are some aspects that contribute to the enjoyment of Polish genealogy:

Historical Significance: Poland has a long and intricate history, marked by periods of independence and foreign rule, border changes, and cultural shifts. Tracing your Polish roots allows you to uncover connections to various historical events and understand how your ancestors navigated through these changes.

Cultural Exploration: Polish culture is known for its traditions, customs, and vibrant folk art. Exploring your Polish genealogy can give you insights into your family's cultural heritage, including language, cuisine, music, and religious practices. Learning about these aspects can deepen your connection to your ancestry.

Family Bonds: Family holds a special place in Polish culture, and genealogy provides an avenue to strengthen your understanding of your family's origins. Discovering and connecting with distant relatives can be incredibly rewarding, as it helps you build a broader sense of kinship.

Personal Identity: Unraveling your Polish ancestry can contribute to your own sense of identity. It provides a context for understanding where you come from and how your family's journey has shaped your own life.

Research and Puzzle Solving: Genealogy often involves detective work, as you piece together 5 historical records, documents, photographs, and oral histories. The process of researching and assembling this puzzle can be intellectually stimulating and gratifying.

Preservation of History: By delving into your family's past, you're essentially becoming a steward of history. You're uncovering stories that might otherwise be lost, and you're contributing to the preservation of a broader narrative.

Travel and Exploration: Polish genealogy can lead you to explore various regions of Poland where your ancestors lived. This might involve visiting ancestral towns, cemeteries, and cultural sites, allowing you to connect with the places your family once called home.

Collaboration and Community: Engaging in Polish genealogy often brings you into contact with other researchers and enthusiasts who share similar interests. Online forums, social media groups, and genealogy societies provide opportunities for collaboration, knowledge sharing, and mutual support.

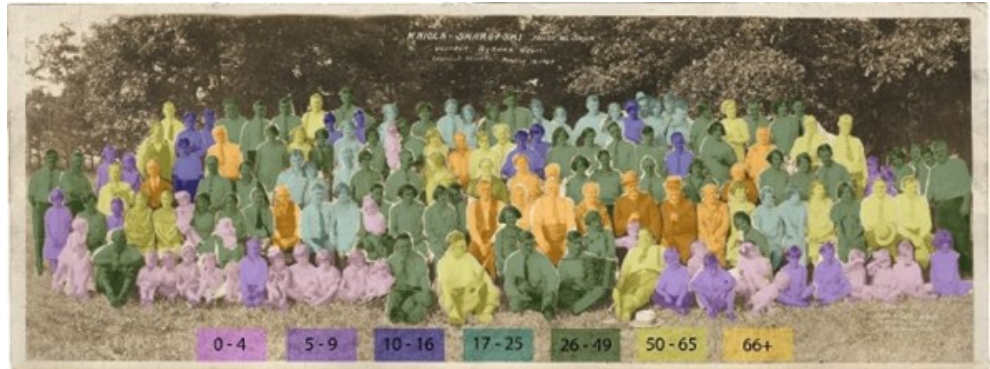
Emotional Connection: Uncovering stories of your ancestors' struggles, achievements, and relationships can evoke strong emotional responses. Learning about their challenges and triumphs can help you feel more connected to your roots.

Sense of Accomplishment: Successfully tracing your Polish lineage and constructing a family tree is a notable achievement. It requires dedication, patience, and skill, and the sense of accomplishment when you overcome challenges can be deeply satisfying.

In summary, the enjoyment of Polish genealogy comes from the combination of historical exploration, cultural discovery, personal connection, and the thrill of unraveling the past. It's a journey that can provide a deeper understanding of who you are and where you come from while connecting you to a larger tapestry of human history.



My father was unable to identify people in the photo before passing in 2010 so it's a quest to find ways to share with relatives. Using the family tree possible names are being tabulated. I can identify maybe eight in the photo, the rest are calculated conjecture. I'm open to suggestions for how best to disseminate it.



Estimated age brackets of reunion attendees

This was the beginning of an overdue look at family that started with the discerning eyes and efforts of others. Thank you to the good people at the Western Reserve Historical Society Research Library, Dr. Grabowski, and the authors whose thoughtful research and conservation efforts. My family and I are the lucky and grateful beneficiaries.

- Western Reserve Historical Society, Research Library, Kniola Travel Archives: Cat # 3678, 3868
- The Encyclopedia of Cleveland History, David D. Tassel, Senior Editor, John J. Grabowski, Managing Editor. Indiana University Press, In association with Case Western Reserve University, 1987 ISBN 0-253-31303-1
- Michael Kniola, Polish Godfather of Cleveland. Trina Goss Galauner, *Our Polish Ancestors*, Quarterly Publication of The Polish Genealogical Society of Greater Cleveland, Jan / Mar 2017, vol 26, #1

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

Jan: **Polish Genealogy 101**
Ben Kman

Feb: **Allen County Library: Researching Your Polish Ancestors**
Kate McKenzie

Mar: **Cleveland's Polish Roots: Their Neighborhoods and Their Origins**
Trina Galauner

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

President: Michael Speare
E-mail: pgsgc@yahoo.com

Newsletter Editor: Trina Galauner
E-mail: galauner@yahoo.com



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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.