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*** WELCOME! ***

to the latest issue of Gen Dobry!, the e-zine of PolishRoots®. If you missed previous issues, you can find them here:

<http://polishroots.org/GenDobry/tabid/60/Default.aspx>

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Growing up in the Back of the Yards in the 1950s was a story of faith, family, the neighborhood and hard work. Perhaps “faith” is not exactly the most precise word, but rather the influence of religious institutions on our lives.

My earliest memory is the birth of my sister Andrea. I recall lying on the linoleum floor in the second floor front apartment at Babcia’s house in the 4700 block of South Marshfield Ave. My mother was ironing her maternity top before she and Daddy left for Mercy Hospital, where Andrea was born in February of 1953. Andrea was baptized at St. Joseph Church at 4800 S. Hermitage. The priest, parents, and godparents were at the baptismal font at the rear of the church, and I was nestled alongside my parents. After the baptismal ceremony I walked to the altar railing at the front of the church so that I could thank Baby Jesus for my little sister. Someone, I think it was Auntie Gertie, wanted to hold my hand and walk with me but “I could do it by myself.” And I did—at the age of two and a half. The importance of prayerful gratitude was an early lesson learned.

We attended church as a family and often attended special novenas or church events at other locations, like the St. Jude Shrine on the southeast side. Daddy wore a suit, topcoat and hat; Mama wore a nice dress, heels, a hat and gloves. My sister and I were smaller versions of my mother.

As elementary school students we were expected to attend the 10 o’clock Sunday Mass with our class. Each class lined up in the area between the school and church and walked into church in an orderly fashion. At the beginning of the Mass, which was celebrated in Latin, the older students would lead the school in the Rosary in both Polish and English.

Prayer and church attendance were themes that permeated every grade level from elementary through high school. Daily Mass attendance was expected and we prayed. We prayed Morning prayers, prayers before and after recess, we prayed the Angelus before Lunch, prayers after lunch, prayers for vocations at 2:00 p.m. and prayers before dismissal. If we didn’t attend Mass, we prayed the Rosary. During Lent we prayed the Stations of the Cross. At home, prayers before bed were in English and Polish. “Aniele Boże, Strózu mój, Ty zawsze przy mnie stój.” (“Angel of God, my Guardian Dear…”)

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*** GROWING UP IN THE BACK OF THE YARDS IN THE 1950s***

by Georgia Piech-Pander

Editor—Paul S. Valasek wrote an article “Chicago Stockyards — Butcher to the World” that appeared in the February 2012 issue of Gen Dobry! He heard from one of our readers, Georgia Piech-Pander, who enjoyed his article and shared some thoughts on her childhood in the Back of the Yards area of Chicago. Paul encouraged her to write them up as an article and submit it to me. I’m delighted he did; I think many of you will enjoy reading this very much! If you wish to contact Georgia, write me at <wfh@langline.com> and I’ll forward your note to her.
School projects included learning the Sacraments, the Stations of the Cross, and the parts of the Mass. Boys of a certain age were eligible to be altar boys, which involved a remarkable wardrobe of cassocks for different church activities.

No discussion of Catholic elementary schools of the time would be complete without a discussion of the Sisters who educated us. A force to be reckoned with, the nuns. They could strike the fear of God in you, make you feel compassion for the missions, guilt for just about anything, convince you that scrubbing floors was an honor, whack you with a yardstick, educate a class of fifty, be sure you had a lunch, and serenely worship at Mass. They were a remarkable group of women. At the time, though, I believed there were three genders: male, female, and the nuns.

We were also involved in missionary work. Of course, we prayed for the missions and we also collected cancelled stamps for the missions. Many of us spent hours precisely trimming the correct border around the cancelled stamp. What the missions needed the cancelled stamps for is still quite beyond my understanding. There was also something about “the pagan babies.”

We didn’t have a regular janitorial staff in the school; we were the janitorial staff. There may have been a maintenance man who made a rare appearance.

We cleaned. Oh boy, did we clean. We cleaned the classrooms once a day and the hallways twice a day. We scrubbed the classroom and hallway floors twice a year. We even brought our own cleaning supplies, including buckets, cleaning solution, scrub brushes, rags, and floor wax. We wore “cleaning clothes” and would be lined up across the hallway to scrub our way to the other end under the watchful eyes of the nuns. If you did a really great job, you were selected to complete another cleaning task: washing the pigeon crap off the nuns’ back porch.

Students at St. Joseph School learned to make a confession during second grade. I can’t imagine the sins a seven-year-old would confess. My sister tells me she would write her sins on a piece of paper and then couldn’t read it in the dark confessional.

We received First Holy Communion in fourth grade. The girls all wore white dresses and veils, the boys wore navy blue suits with a white armband identifying them as First Communicants. The girls carried special purses, and we all purchased special new rosaries and prayer books. Most of us probably still have those treasured items.

Confirmation classes were dependent on the Chicago Archdiocese and could be scheduled from fourth through eighth grade. My sister and I were confirmed on the same day, along with hundreds of classmates. I remember the bishop tapping me on the face and a ceremony that lasted for hours.

During sixth or seventh grade the girls joined the Sodality. We wore school uniforms and short light blue capes, attended special prayer services on certain Sundays, and were devoted to Mary, the Mother of Jesus.
The sisters trained us very well. If a priest entered the classroom, we all rose immediately with the greeting “Praised be Jesus Christ, good morning, Father.” Father would respond with “Good morning, children. You may be seated.” We would wait for that response before anyone would dare take a seat. Any adult was greeted in the same manner.

During the mid-1950s, there were two classrooms of each grade level and about fifty students in each class at St. Joseph Elementary School. When I was in the lower grades, there were no indoor washroom facilities. Twice a day we would line up and walk out to a multipurpose building: half served as the priests’ garage and the other half were the washrooms. In all those years I never availed myself of those facilities. We were, however, required to walk through the building whether we used it or not. I remember a dark, dank, horrible-smelling place.

There were also lots of processions. Parents would purchase special dresses for their daughters, the nuns would pin headbands into our hair, and we would carry flowers as we walked down the street and into the church. Taller girls would carry gladioli and tiny girls would carry baskets of petals. The instructions for the basket carriers were: “Say Jesus, Mary, Joseph. When you say ‘Jesus,’ pick up a petal from the basket; as you say ‘Mary,’ raise your arm above your head; and then Joseph—goes-on-the-floor.” Young boys were dressed as pages in blue satin uniforms. They even wore wigs. Older boys wore different garb. This included ornate cassocks that were trimmed in gold braid and lacy surplices. Processions marked the celebrations of Easter, Forty Hours Devotion, and May Crowning. We practiced for days walking slowly and reverently and pretending we were carrying our flowers.

St. Joseph Church was extraordinarily beautiful and built in the style of European cathedrals. It took your breath away. The statuary, carved altars, and paintings offered comfort and inspiration. The choir loft housed a huge pipe organ, tiered platforms for the choir performances, and pews to use during Mass.

Some of the earliest memories for many of us revolved around the Catholic Church and school.

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*** LETTERS TO THE EDITOR ***

Subject: How They Got from Tarnów to Bremen circa 1900

Are you aware of any articles that have been written on how a person would travel from the area around Tarnów to Bremen to catch a boat headed to the U.S. around 1900?

George Dykas <dog001@comcast.net>

Editor—I told George I’d be glad to share his question with our readers, some of whom may be able to offer specifics (far more useful than anything I can give, which would be, at most, an educated guess). If you can tell him anything, please write George—and I’d be glad if you would CC me so I can pass the info along to others.

Gen Dobry!, Vol. XIII, No. 4, April 2012 — 4
Subject: Debbie Greenlee and Preserving Records

Editor—Ann Poslosky posted this note to the Bukowsko Triangle mailing list, then added a little and posted it to the Polish Genius list. I appreciate the kind words for *Gen Dobry!*, and I love seeing credit going to lots of people who deserve it—especially Debbie Greenlee, but not only her.

C O N G R A T U L A T I O N S ---------- D E B B I E ----------

Congratulations to Debbie for the recognition she received from Fred Hoffman in the latest issue of *Gen Dobry!* Thank you first to Fred for the wonderful article on how one individual has made such an enormous contribution to preserving records from Bukowsko, especially, and surrounding areas where it was possible. Secondly, to Debbie’s husband, Dave, who was with her on all of those adventures; he has also given his time and talent to the project. He is very modest about it, but his contributions are also noteworthy ... He was also involved in the picture-taking projects, but, more importantly was his desire to support his wife and be at her side through thick and thin. Thank you, Dave.

Debbie’s ingenuity and expertise and her explanation of how it all happened, in her own words, is well-written and deserves praise. And, let’s not forget that after all the work was translated, Phil Semanchuck’s Web site became a depository of all of the accomplishments. Thanks to all the translators who worked like beavers trying to decipher letters and words and make sense of it all. For things to work with the progress achieved for the Bukowsko Triangle, it takes a team. Team leader, Debbie, you’re the best!! Kudos to everyone mentioned.

Ann Poslosky

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Subject: More on Preserving Records

Editor—This was a very welcome response from another reader.

I wanted to also let you know that I really enjoyed your article on Debbie, that is, on taking pictures and indexing records in Poland. I have run into similar issues with records in Buffalo, NY. I am currently photographing records and indexing them for St. Adalbert church. And I have a commitment to do St. Stanislaus and St. John Kanty once I am finished with St. Adalbert. Every church I go to, I have to get the buy-in from the priest because they own the records. Then I need to promise to return all the records and data to the church. I am hoping to do the entire Buffalo diocese, but I am starting with the Polish churches. I also have a friend who is taking photos of the cemeteries in Buffalo. I am hoping to match up the grave pictures with the church records.

Nicole Lodyga Pohancsek
Editor—I asked Nicole if I could publish her note, and she said yes, as long as we stress that she and her colleagues are only taking the pictures and indexing them for the church. “We are returning everything back to the church and not keeping anything for ourselves. The indexing part takes the longest, so we hope to have the church records indexed by next year. At that point, researchers can contact St. John Kanty (they are the ones that currently hold the records for St. Adalbert), if they have any questions regarding their ancestors. Also, please include that I am working with Charles Penasack and David Lodyga on this project.” I am very glad for the chance to give Nicole, Charles, and David a little recognition for the fine work they’re doing, and to wish them much success!

Nicole added, “The interesting part is that we found some old pew rental books from the early 1880s, when the church opened. In those records, I found my great-great-grandfather and my great-great-great-grandfather (who I didn’t even know was in the U.S.). It is amazing what these old churches have.” Pew rental records—never in a million years would I have thought to look for those! Thanks, Nicole.

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Subject: Bydgoszcz, Pelplin, Gdańsk Diocesan Records

Editor—This is not actually a Letter to the Editor, but a note posted to the Polish Genius list by, who else, Debbie Greenlee. I felt this is info that should be shared as widely as possible.

A few days ago Karl posted information about Stanley Frymark having CDs of church records available for sale. I did some digging and have more information about this.

Stanley Frymark lives in Poland. The Bishop of Pelplin wanted Poles abroad to have access to all the records of their ancestors, so someone has started photographing the records and they have been placed on CDs. The records are from Bydgoszcz, Pelplin, and Gdańsk. Not all of the records listed (see below) are on CD yet, but you can e-mail Stanley with any questions.

Not all of the parishes in a given diocese have been filmed, but I am under the impression that filming continues. If your parish isn’t on the list yet, check back with Stanley in a few months.

The list of churches is long. I am going to put three separate lists (one for each diocese) in the FILES section of Polish Genius. If you want to buy any CD’s, contact Stanley directly at <stanleyfrymark@yahoo.com>. Please don’t contact me as I know nothing more about this.

May I suggest that anyone purchasing a CD seriously consider transcribing them or at least indexing them and placing that information on Poland Gen Web? <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~polwgw/polandgen.html>

Debbie Greenlee

Editor—Excellent idea. These are the URL’s for the individual Word index files:
Editor—While these events have already occurred, I suspect a number of our readers would like to know about them.

ANN ARBOR – Two special events will be presented on the campus of the University of Michigan as part of the Center of Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies. On Tuesday, April 17, at 4:00 p.m., the former President of Poland, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, and former Czech Prime Minister, Petr Pithart, will be speaking at the Rackham Auditorium. There will also be a panel dialogue and both will be on the dais addressing: “The European Crisis: A View from Warsaw and Prague.”

The special guests because of their insight and wealth of experiences will offer their own unique perspectives on recent events in Europe. Highlighted will be the challenges that become associated with political changes and successes in emerging democracies. The program is part of the continuing education series of the Weiser Center for Emerging Democracies.

On Wednesday, April 18, 12:00 p.m.-1:30 P.M., CREES and the Center for International Studies will have a noontime concert and enrichment presentation on “Jewish Music in the Time of the Holocaust.” The music of Czech-Jewish composer Pavel Haas will be showcased. Haas managed to compose songs while interred at the Terezín concentration camp. Presenters will include: Timothy Cheek, associate professor of voice; Caroline Helton, assistant professor of voice; Kathryn Goodson, piano; and Allen Schrott, bass-baritone. 1636- International Institute/SSWB, 1080 S. University Street, University of Michigan campus.

In an unassociated coincidence of music and politics, 120 years ago, Ignacy Jan Paderewski made his first of six visits to the University of Michigan campus to perform one of his renowned piano concerts. The beloved Polish patriot did a benefit performance for women’s sports on February 18, 1892.

The former Prime Minister of Poland in 1919 always was open to discuss and lobby for a free Poland. He amassed a large fortune through his musical enterprises, most of which he donated to the service of Poland and the benefit of needy musicians and Jewish refugees.
*** NO, FAMILY NAMES WERE NOT CHANGED AT ELLIS ISLAND ***

by Richard W. Eastman

Editor—Ray Marshall sent me a link to this article by Dick Eastman, who has joined the seemingly futile struggle to overcome the myth that will not die... The following article is from Eastman’s Online Genealogy Newsletter and is copyright by Richard W. Eastman. It is re-published here with the permission of the author. Information about the newsletter is available at <http://www.eogn.com>. The article itself is here: <http://blog.eogn.com/eastmans_online_genealogy/2012/04/no-family-names-were-not-changed-at-ellis-island.html>

There is a family myth amongst tens of thousands of American families: “The name was changed at Ellis Island.” The stories claim the immigrant arrived at Ellis Island and was unable to communicate with the officials. A record was then created by someone who assigns the immigrant a descriptive name.

This fairy tale refuses to die. Let’s look at a few simple facts:

1. Passenger lists were not created at Ellis Island. They were created abroad, beginning close to the immigrant’s home, when the immigrant purchased his ticket. In 99% of the cases, the clerk filling out the forms and creating the passenger list in “the old country” knew how to speak, read, and write your ancestor’s language. That clerk filled in the proper name. In the case of Eastern European or Oriental languages, those forms even included the correct non-Roman characters. To be sure, spelling variations were common as the immigrants usually were illiterate and often didn’t know their own alphabets or how to spell their own names. The clerks wrote what they heard, which may or may not be the same spelling used elsewhere. In fact, there might not be a “correct” spelling. However, what was recorded ALWAYS sounded correct, especially when pronounced in the immigrant’s language.

It is unlikely that anyone at the local steamship office in “the old country” was unable to communicate with the immigrant or his/her family. Names were most likely recorded with a high degree of accuracy at that time. Those lists of names were later delivered to immigration officials at Ellis Island.

2. The idea that the immigrant was unable to communicate with officials at Ellis Island is ludicrous. In fact, one third of all immigrant inspectors at Ellis Island in the early twentieth century were themselves foreign-born, and all immigrant inspectors spoke at least three languages. In addition, Ellis Island and other ports of entry also hired an army of interpreters, most of them as part-time employees. These interpreters always (repeat: ALWAYS) could speak, read, and write the languages of other immigrants. If a new immigrant arrived and no interpreter was available for his or her particular language, that immigrant was detained at Ellis Island until a qualified interpreter was located and brought in for the interview. Most immigrants were processed through Ellis Island within a day or two but there were cases where immigrants were detained for several days until an interpreter became available and proper documentation could
be completed. Nobody passed through the process without being interviewed by someone in a suitable language.

3. The passenger lists were always prepared in “the old country” by steamship company officials. If any immigrant arrived at Ellis Island and provided a different name to officials, he or she was always denied entry. If a brief investigation could not clear up the mystery, the immigrant was shipped back to the old country on the steamship’s return trip.

NOTE: Many immigrants were refused entry for a variety of reasons and were returned. Estimates seem to vary from 12% to 18% of all would-be immigrants were denied entry into the United States and instead were sent back to their originating countries. The fates of most of these returnees has not been well documented.

4. Later immigrants had to verify their correct names every year. Starting in July of 1940, the Alien Registration Act required every alien resident in the United States to register at their local Post Office in January. As part of the registration process, the immigrant had to provide ALL names by which he or she had ever been known, including his or her full name as used in “the old country” as well as the name used currently. Alien Registration requirements applied to all aliens over the age of fourteen, regardless of nationality and regardless of immigration status. Despite these facts, the Ellis Island name-change story (or Castle Garden, or earlier versions of the same story) is as American as apple pie. However, there is little to no truth to these stories.

When Did the Names Change?

After processing through Ellis Island and settling within the United States, many immigrants did change their names. In numerous cases, the names were changed for them by public officials, schoolteachers, shopkeepers, and neighbors. Anyone from Eastern Europe, with a name long on consonants and short on vowels, learned that his name often got in the way of a job interview or became the subject of ridicule at his child’s school. Any change that might smooth their way to the American dream was seen as a step in the right direction. In many cases, these later name changes were made without court papers or any other official recognition.

In any case, the records at Ellis Island and other ports of entry always contained the original names, although with frequent spelling variations.

If you enjoyed this article, Tweet it, share it on Facebook or on your preferred social network. Republishing of this article in newsletters, blogs, and elsewhere is allowed and encouraged. Details may be found at <http://goo.gl/hoHH1>.
Vienna, April 2, 2012

**New at GenTeam** <http://www.genteam.at/>

About 2 Million new entries:

1. Auto-complete function for enquiries of the databases.
2. New indices of Catholic matrices from Lower and Upper Austria, Burgenland, Styria and Bohemia
3. New Slovenian database

**In Our Own Interest:**

With today’s new online databases, the users now have more than 6.9 million entries at their disposal. Since January 2010, more than 15,500 users have registered with GenTeam. Approximately 80% of all users turn regularly to the databases and use them several times a month for their research. Because of technical reasons an overall search can need a few seconds – we work to fasten it.

I would like to express here my gratitude to all who have furnished data to GenTeam in the last 26 months or have worked on long-term projects, but I also would like to thank those who have invisibly supported the build-up and the successful functioning of GenTeam.

Also the GenTeam Mailing List is being frequented nationally and internationally by more than 1,000 participants with questions for their personal research. Take advantage of this opportunity and register!

GenTeam is free of charge, a non-profit organization, and not bound on any membership fees. GenTeam is a group of historians and genealogist, who work independently or as a team on databases and who furnish these databases free of charge to hobbyists and other researchers.

1. **Auto-complete Function When Inquiring The Databases**

We all know the problems of phonetically written variants of surnames (and are very familiar with typing mistakes in databases) which are often cumbersome and hard to overcome. GenTeam has installed the Auto-Complete Function which works independently of search keywords like: “is the same”, “begins with” and the standard-function “contains”. If a search contains 3 letters of a surname, a window opens with all names in which the three letters are contained. If you add a fourth letter, the number of names are reduced to the names in which these four letters are contained, and so forth. Therefore, one can recognize and chose easily phonetic-similar names.

This function was also installed for given names as well as for indices of places.

2. **New Indices extracted from Roman Catholic Matrices (Vital Statistics):**

Gen Dobry!, Vol. XIII, No. 4, April 2012 — 10
Entries from Catholic Matrices from Lower and Upper Austria, Burgenland, Styria and Bohemia were added. Therefore, researchers now have more than 1.25 million entries at their disposal.

Indices were added from:

**Lower Austria:**
- Bockfließ, Drasenhofen, Emmersdorf, Gaweinsthal, Geras, Großharras, Hohenberg, Hohenreich, Hohenwarth, Karlstetten, Karlstift, Ladendorf, Niedersulz, Schweiggers, Traunfeld, Ulrichskirchen, Wieselburg, Wolfpassing

**Upper Austria:**
- Maria Neustift, Münzbach, and Saxen

**Bohemia:**
- Graslitz

**Burgenland:**
- Krensdorf

**Styria:**
- Baptismal Index of the important parish Marizell

I would like to express my cordial thanks to Ursula Baldemaier, Mag. Fritz Eichler, Sabine Grünberger, Maria Schmutzer, Martina Schulz, Judith Starke, Franz Spevacek, and Theodora Winkler for their superb collaboration.

I also would like to thank especially the “Heraldische Genealogische Gesellschaft Adler” (Heraldic Genealogical Association Adler), who furnished GenTeam the Josef-Heider-Indices from Upper Austria.

### 3. Slovenia – database of baptisms and marriages

This database, consisting throughout of Catholic entries of baptisms and marriages, was furnished by the Society Slovensko rodoslovno društvo in Laibach. Since the database contains ancestors of specific senders or sources, it contains also living descendants. Questions concerning further data or information of specific names or sources can be found under the following link: &lt;srd@guest.arnes.si&gt;.

Caution: there still exist some errors concerning conversions of family names which will be continually corrected.

At GenTeam, Austria’s largest genealogical database, you will find about seven million entries:

- Marriage Index of Vienna and surroundings between 1542 and 1860
- Civil Marriages of Vienna between 1870 and 1908
- Indices of Protestant marriages of Vienna Augsburger Confession (Augsburger Bekenntnis) and Helvetian Confession (Helvetisches Bekenntnis) between 1783 – 1879
- Indices from the Jewish Cultural Community (Israelische Kultus- Gemeinde) Vienna
between 1826 – 1910
-- Withdrawals from Judaism in Vienna between 1868 -1914
-- Converts in Vienna between 1782 – 1914
-- Forced Baptisms in the Vienna Foundling Home 1816-1868
-- Obituaries from the Neue Freie Presse 1864-1938
-- Obituaries from Pester Lloyd 1870-1910
-- Obituaries from the Prager Tagblatt 1877-1938
-- Obituaries from Tyrolean Daily Newspapers 1815-1919
-- Index Collection from Catholic Church Registries 1590 – 1921
-- Index Collection from Protestant Church Registries 1627-1784
-- Index Collection of Jewish Matrices 1784 – 1925
-- Index Collection of Manorial Records in Lower Austria
-- Index Collection of Catholic Church Registries from Slovenia
-- Owners of parcels in Lower Austria 1817
-- Memorial Cards from both World Wars
-- Medical Practitioners from Vienna
-- Index of the Biographical Works of Wurzbach
-- Registry of all Mills in Cisleithania 1876
-- Index of the Civil Registry of Nuremberg 1810 -1979
-- Index of Converts from the Waldviertel 1652 -1654
-- Membership Index of various Lodges 1783 – 1936
-- Skinners of Central Europe
-- General Index of Siebmacher’s Heraldic Lists
-- Gazetteer of Czech Republic, Austria along with South Tyrol, and Slovenian Republic

I would be delighted if you too could furnish your database to all researchers free of charge, and
I invite you to cooperate with GenTeam. I gladly will be available to you any time at <kontakt@
GenTeam.at> for further information.

I also request that you forward this information to other Genealogical Lists, interested
Individuals or Archives.

Sincerely yours,

Felix Gundacker
Professional Genealogist
Pantzergasse 30/8
A-1190 WIEN
e-mail: <kontakt@GenTeam.at>
Profession: <www.ihff.at>

“Connecting genealogists“

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*** UPCOMING EVENTS ***

Thursday, May 3, 2012

Polish Day at the Capitol is scheduled for Thursday, May 3, 2012 in the State of Connecticut Hall of Flags, State Capitol, Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT. The program begins at 11:00 am. Hope to see many of you there. After the program, lunch can be purchased at the Polish National Home.

[From a note posted by Carol Carter to the Polish Genius mailing list.]

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May 5 – 6, 2012

ST. FLORIAN PARISH STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL
Hamtramck, Michigan


[From a note posted by “Helene” to the Polish Genius mailing list.]

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May 9–12, 2012

NATIONAL GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY 2012 FAMILY HISTORY CONFERENCE
Duke Energy Convention Center
Cincinnati, OH

For more info, including info on accommodations, registration, and the conference program, visit the Web site <http://www.ngsgenealogy.org/cs/conference_info>.

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May 12, 2012

PASSPORT DC EUROPE WEEK

<http://dc.about.com/od/specialevents/a/EuropeWeek.htm>

Embassy Open House, May 12, 10:00 – 4:00, followed by events throughout the week. Poland is participating as a member of the EU.

[From a note posted by Denise Ney to the Polish Genius mailing list.]

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May 18 – 20, 2012

ST. STEPHEN 64TH ANNUAL SPRING POLISH FESTIVAL
New Boston, Michigan

<https://sites.google.com/a/saintstephen.net/home/parish-happenings/parishfestivalmay2012>

[From a note posted by “Helene” to the Polish Genius mailing list.]

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May 20, 2012

MEETING OF THE POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA
Social Hall of the Polish Museum of America, 984 Milwaukee Avenue, Chicago
2:00 p.m.

Cynthia Piech, who has, until recently, been a PGSA board member for a number of years, will
speak about the 1940 census at the May 20 meeting. The presentation will include what is on the
census, how to search the census using Steve Morse’s one-step search tool, and how to volunteer
to index the 1940 census.

Cynthia Piech has been researching her Polish family genealogy for 14 years, both in the U.S.
and in Poland. She has written articles about, and has been a speaker on, Polish genealogy.
She is a long time member and volunteer for the PGSA, and is also a member of the National
Genealogical Society, the Genealogical Speakers Guild, and the Association of Professional
Genealogists.

[From a note sent out by Harry Kurek of PGSA]

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May 23, 2012

POLAND & RUSSIA: THE GEOPOLITICS OF ENERGY
A Benefit Dinner for Polish Studies at the University of Texas-Austin

Time: 6:30 p.m. (cocktails)
Dinner: 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Location: Petroleum Club of Houston, 800 Bell, 43rd Floor, Houston, Texas

Sponsors: The University of Texas at Austin, the Department of Petroleum and Geosystems
Engineering and the Department of Slavic and Eurasian Studies, The Consulate General of the
Republic of Poland in Los Angeles, the Honorary Consul of the Republic of Poland in Houston,
and the Austin Polish Society.
Speakers:
Professor Norman Davies, preeminent historian, teacher, and writer; Ms. Joanna Kozinska-Frybes, Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Los Angeles; Dr. Zbigniew Wojciechowski, Honorary Consul of the Republic of Poland in Houston; and Dr. Tadeusz Patzek, Chairman and Professor, Department of Petroleum and Geosystems Engineering, the University of Texas at Austin.

Topic: POLAND - Culture, History and Business Opportunities in Poland
Cost: Per person: $70; Sponsors :$1,000 per table (tables of 8)
Contact: Mary Neuburger, <burgerm@mail.utexas.edu>

<http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centers/creees/news/4888/>

[Brought to my attention by a note posted by Elliott Nowacky to the Polish Genius mailing list.]

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May 25 – 27, 2012

THE 46TH NATIONAL POLKA FESTIVAL
Memorial Day weekend, Ennis, Texas

Ennis is just south of Dallas. The dances are held in three local participating halls. Yes, there are that many polka enthusiasts!

Friday, May 25... $7.00;
Saturday, May 26... $12.00;
Saturday, May 26: COUNTRY CONCERT, $17.00 Advanced / $20.00 At The Door;
Sunday, May 27... $10.00;

DOWNTOWN ACTIVITIES... FREE

<http://www.nationalpolkafestival.com/>

This festival is really Czech but there are plenty of Poles in attendance. When you attend Polish festivals wear something that indicates your proud Polish heritage.

[Posted by Debbie Greenlee to the Polish Genius mailing list.]

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May 25 – 28, 2012

ST. MARY’S POLISH COUNTRY FAIR
Orchard Lake School, Michigan
<http://www.stmaryspolishcountryfair.com/>

[From a note posted by “Helene” to the Polish Genius mailing list.]

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June 15 – 17, 2012

Polish Fest
Milwaukee, WI

<http://www.polishfest.org/>

[Brought to my attention by a note posted by “Raven Fan” to the Polish Genius mailing list.]

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June 25 – August 17, 2012

INTENSIVE ELEMENTARY POLISH FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES
Loyola University, Chicago

The Polish Studies Program at Loyola University Chicago, through generous support by American Council of Learned Societies, is pleased to announce that it will be offering Intensive Elementary Polish for Research Purposes in Summer 2012. The course is designed for students (graduate and undergraduate) specializing in a host of disciplines in which Poland and/or Polish plays a part. Intensive Elementary Polish is designed to enable students to acquire a functional reading and speaking knowledge of the language while introducing them to Polish Culture.

The course will utilize a host of media catered to the academic interests of the students. Loyola University Chicago is ideally located on the north shore of Lake Michigan and is a very strong presence in Chicago’s large Polish Community.

Tuition for the course is waived for graduate students specializing in Central/ Eastern European Studies. There are no prerequisites for this course. It assumes no prior knowledge of the Polish language. Class size is limited and admission is competitive. Class meets 5 hours per day, Monday through Friday, for total of 90 contact hours. Students will receive 6 credits upon successful completion of the course.

Course dates: June 25th – August 17th

For more information contact Bożena Nowicka McLees at (773) 508-2850 or <bmclees@luc.edu>

[From a posting to the SEELANGS mail list.]
July 6 – 8, 2012

2012 AMERICAN POLISH FESTIVAL & CRAFT SHOW
Sterling Heights, Michigan

The American-Polish Century Club is pleased to announce the American Polish Festival & Craft Show, July 6-8, 2012, on the grounds of The American Polish Century Club, 33204 Maple Lane, Sterling Heights, Mi 48312.

The festival is located in Sterling Heights, Michigan. This is just a few miles from Hamtramck. Poles are the second largest ethnic group in Michigan and are a significant part of the history of Detroit. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Michigan is home to the third largest Polish population after New York and Illinois. The current population of Michigan’s Polish Americans is concentrated in Macomb County. Sterling Heights has become one of the centers of Polonia in Michigan, since their migration from Hamtramck.

Our Festival draws thousands of friends and families from all around Michigan, Ohio, and Illinois. Our spirited festival features live music and dancing. Highlighting our Festival are the biggest names in Polka Music, along with finest Polish Dance Ensembles in Michigan. This is our second year for the Srodek’s Pierogi Eating Challenge. This competition is consuming the most Srodek’s Potato & Cheese Pierogi you can eat in ten minutes. Last years record of 49 pierogi in ten minutes comes close to setting the record. Try our delicious Polish Kitchen, the Polish Pub-n-Grub, and Beer Tent or visit anyone of the many vendors that take part in this event. There will be a Traditional Polish Mass on Sunday at 12:00 Noon. Stroll our Outdoor Craft Show featuring over 50 different crafters displaying their fine works. Admission to the festival is free to the public, although a $5.00 daily parking fee is required.

[From a note posted by “Helene” to the Polish Genius mailing list.]

July 12-14, 2012

FEEFHS 2012 CONFERENCE/WORKSHOP
(The Federation of East European Family History Societies)
Salt Lake City, Utah

Do your ancestors come from Eastern Europe? Do you have records that you cannot read? Are you aware of the vast collection of genealogical records from Eastern Europe on microfilm in the Family History Library, located in Salt Lake City, Utah? Do you know about the images of original church, census, and tax records found on the Internet for countries like the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Estonia, and Latvia?
Our 2012 conference/workshop will be designed to help you do research on your lines. Participants will have a chance to learn from a variety of experts with years of experience in dealing with the records and the institutions that preserve them.

The presentations address the major countries, record types, and languages. During personal consultations each afternoon, speakers will deal with individual questions concerning ancestry in any of the countries between the Alps and the Urals, between the Baltic and the Black seas (Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia).

Our workshop is held in the Salt Lake Plaza Hotel at Temple Square, right beside the Family History Library. It will be possible to spend several hours a day in the library. That makes it possible to attend sessions each morning, and do research in the afternoon and evening.

The Salt Lake Plaza Hotel is offering a rock bottom price of $82 per night during the conference. It is next door to the world-famous Family History Library. This is the best place in the world to do this type of research and the best opportunity you will have to do so with the experts. We have reserved a block of rooms—call the hotel directly if the website shows there is no space available.

See you in Salt Lake City!

For more information: <http://feefhs.org/conferences/2012program.html>

[From the FEEFHS Web site, <http://feefhs.org/>]

July 15-18, 2012

THE 32ND IAJGS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON JEWISH GENEALOGY PARIS, FRANCE
A full Bilingual French & English Conference

The conference will be held at the Marriott Rive Gauche Hotel in Paris. Rather than repeat all the information available on this amazing event, let us direct you to the Conference Web site, <http://www.paris2012.eu>, where you can get the whole story.

August 2 – 5, 2012

38TH ANNUAL BOYNE FALLS POLISH FESTIVAL
Boyne Falls, Michigan

<http://www.boynefallspolishfestival.com/>
[From a note posted by “Helene” to the Polish Genius mailing list.]

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September 2 – 5, 2012

TASTE OF POLONIA
Chicago, IL

<http://tasteofpolonia.copernicusfdn.org/>

[Brought to my attention by a note posted by “Raven Fan” to the Polish Genius mailing list.]

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September 29 – 30, 2012

POLISH FESTIVAL LOS ANGELES
3424 W. Adams Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90018

Live Entertainment, Food, Dancing, Games & More! $5 Admission for adults. $3 for students and seniors. Kids under 16 free!

<http://www.polishfestla.com/>

[From a note posted by Lynda Snider to the Polish Genius Mailing List]

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*** MORE USEFUL WEB ADDRESSES ***

<http://genealogyindexer.org/forum/viewtopic.php?t=3017>

Logan Kleinwaks posted a note to the JewishGen newsgroup explaining that the Kraków Census of 1890 is now viewable online. He has posted instructions at the above URL. In a note to me, he emphasized that the instructions are easier to follow than they might seem at first. Logan also said, “Also, in case you haven’t checked it lately, the list of Polish directories and other sources included in the genealogyindexer.org search engine has grown enormously.” I hadn’t checked this site in a while, but he’s absolutely right. Smart researchers owe it to themselves to take a look at all the resources available at <http://genealogyindexer.org>.

<https://www.familysearch.org/1940census/>

Sandy in CA posted a note to the LithGen mailing list explaining that this site shows progress indexing the 1940 U.S. census. “Just hover your mouse over the state you are interested in, and the status pops up.” Also on LithGen, Steve Danko posted a note as a follow-up to a note

<http://www.legalgenealogist.com/blog/2012/04/04/ssdi-the-art-of-the-possible/>

On the JewishGen newsgroup, Jan Meisels Allen recommend reading this blog entry for an in-depth review of the Records Preservation and Access Committee’s (RPAC) position on access to the Social Security Death Index/Death Master File Access. This is an attempt to come up with an approach that recognizes political realities and preserves access to the file. I think it’s well worth reading.


Also on JewishGen, Tony Kahane wrote a note about the excellent maps available from Archiwum Map Wojskowego Instytutu Geograficznego [WIG] 1919-1939, the “Mapywig” project at <http://english.mapywig.org>. Tony pointed out some maps I didn’t notice: “their set of digital town street plans (with scales ranging between 1:7500 and 1:25000), largely from the period 1900-1945.” They can be accessed at the URL above, and include, among others, plans for the following towns: “Białystok, Bydgoszcz, Czernowitz, Częstochowa, Chisinau/Kishinev, Czortków, Daugavpils, Dąbrowa, Gdańsk, Gdynia, Grodno, Jarosław, Kaliningrad, Katowice, Kielce, Kiev, Kraków, Kaunas, Kharkiv, Kolomyja, Leningrad, Lublin, Lvów (many plans), Łódź, Minsk, Nikolaev, Odessa, Opol, Pinsk, Przemyśl, Radom, Riga, Rzeszów, Sevastopol, Stanisławów/Ivano-Frankivsk, Strýj, Szczecin, Tallinn, Tarnopol, Tarnów, Tartu, Warsaw (a large number), Wieliczka, Vilnius, Wrocław (many) and Zhytomyr.” Tony also praised the maps and urban plans available at the Center for Urban History of East Central Europe, <http://www.lvivcenter.org/en/>.


I discovered this item as I was doing some translating. The English article starts with a painting by Russian artist Ilya Repin that was based on a supposed historical event. In 1676, Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, Mehmed IV, sent a very formal letter to the Zaporozhian Cossacks, demanding that they surrender to his authority. The Cossacks’ reply is hilariously obscene, showing great imagination in telling the Sultan exactly what could do with his authority. The painting shows them laughing as they come up with imaginative insults. The painting and letter are funny in their own right, but I got a particular kick out of reading a scholarly analysis of the Cossacks’ insults <http://slavic.uchicago.edu/archived/papers/Friedman-Zaporozhci.pdf>. The Russian, Polish, and Ukrainian pages on the letter itself, rather than painting, are fascinating reading; sadly, they cast doubt on the letter’s authenticity. I should have known it was too good to be true...
Brother Joseph Martin sent out a note with this URL, providing the Social Security Death Master File. The site says, “Misguided proposals to restrict the Death Master File do not stop publication of existing copies already on the Internet.” The site claims to be here to stay, and explains why. I’d bookmark it, just in case.

Debbie Greenlee posted a note to the Polish Genius mailing list, saying, “Andrzej Olejarz in Wrocław has sent us a list of the genealogical societies in Poland. I will upload the pdf to the FILES section of Polish Genius ... For those seeking researchers in the areas on the list, this may be an answer though I think you should request references from other English-speaking clients before you hire anyone and then ask the Polish Genius list about the researcher.” The file is available at this URL.

The April 1st issue of Gary Mokotoff and Avotaynu’s e-zine Nu? What’s New? included mention of five Web sites with lists of huge numbers of immigrants to the U.S. from 1850 to 1897 who gave their country of origin or nationality as German or Germanic. To access the list for 1850 to 1859, click the URL above. For later decades, replace “1850s” in the URL with “1860s,” “1870s,” “1880s,” or “1890s.” Note that the 1890s only go through 1897.

The April 8th issue mentioned this site, with old maps for a wide variety of places. Gary Mokotoff recommended registering, which gives you some useful options.

The Spring 2012 issue of Cosmopolitan Review is out and available at this URL.

On the LidaRoots list, “RomanS” wanted to tell people researching the parish of Żołudek in the Lida region [now Zhaludok, Belarus] about this new addition to the electronic portal ePaveldas of Lithuanian Archives. “This is a register of births, marriages and deaths from the Roman Catholic parish of Żołudek. Appears to cover years 1739-1748. Most entries written in Latin. Some comments in Polish.” This ePavaldas portal is becoming more and more valuable for folks with roots in Lithuania, including regions of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania.
On the Lithuania mailing list, Diane LeRoy mentioned that Aage Myhre, editor-in-chief of VilNews, <aage.myhre@VilNews.com>, is looking for stories from Lithuanians in Texas. I thought it could do no harm to mention it, in case any of you have something to share.

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<http://www.bagnowka.com>

John Guzlowski posted a note to the Polish American Writers & Editors group on Facebook, saying that “the Bagnówka site with all of its photos Poland in World War II is back up” at this URL. I wasn’t familiar with it, but it looks pretty cool!

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