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

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*** FINALLY, UPBEAT NEWS ABOUT POLISH GENEALOGY: PGSCT-NE SURGING FORWARD ***

by Paul S. Valasek <Hallersarmy@aol.com>

For the past 10 years, Polish genealogy, like all forms of genealogy, has made some great improvements, but has also suffered from the times of our lives. I can’t help comparing it with the late 1990s, when Polish genealogy was surging forward in leaps and bounds. Every week or month, some great event or resource became available, new books were coming out, and conferences were up and running and increasing in attendance every season.

Then 9/11 came and everything genealogical took a backseat to other events. The economy continued in its downward spiral, and many organizations suffered from leadership unable to cope with the trends or convinced that the status quo would continue, even despite failure to promote Polish genealogy actively. To succeed, a group or organization must be flexible, adapt to the changing times, and most of all, allow younger members to assume a prominent role, so that enthusiasm and new ideas continue to come forth and flourish. That is what is needed to fill the needs of the 21st-century Polish researcher.

Well, I’m happy to say that at least one Polish genealogy society has continued to grow and progress and, most importantly, provide its membership with resources, experts, and materials to fulfill the needs of Polish researchers. I am talking about the Polish Genealogical Society of Connecticut and the Northeast (PGSCT-NE). It held its biennial fall conference this past October at the facilities of Central Connecticut State University in New Britain, Connecticut. I had the pleasure of being invited to speak for the first time, and I can honestly say it reminded me of better days, when the number of attendees grew, the list of speakers was impressive, and the camaraderie was present. This year, PGSCT-NE outdrew all other PGS’s in attendance, presentations, and two days of fine enlightenment and entertainment. I applaud Diane Szepanski for her hard efforts and the wonderful group of volunteers, too many to list here. Too many is a good sign, because that is what is needed to pull one of these conferences off. I speak from experience, having chaired the three largest conferences in PGSA’s history in the 90s. One or two people cannot do the job, and that is what a society is about, a group of people banding together for the common good. I applaud PGSCT-NE for their fine job.

For those who have not gone to a Polish genealogical conference, what you need to look for is the following:

1. **Qualified lecturers and enough of them.** PGSCT-NE had nine! The lecture tracks ran two lectures at a time, so if one topic did not interest you, you had a choice of another.

2. **More than one day.** The lectures spanned two days, which meant it was worth the trip for attendees. Who wants to come in for one day of lectures? Of course if you are local, that’s fine; but at this past conference, one attendee flew in from Hawaii!

3. **Private research time.** This involves having a few minutes one-on-one with an “expert” (or at
least someone who knows more than most), for personal questions face-to-face. I had the pleasure of sitting down with a number of researchers, and though I may not have been able to answer their questions 100% definitively, at least I was able to give them ideas and leads where to go next. They were all most appreciative.

4. **A good setting.** This was an easy one, as the facilities at CCSU were quite nice, easy to use, and located all in one area. They do not have sleeping rooms to rent for overnight, but hotels are not that far away. The added bonus is the Polish Collection at the University library, which Andrea and I partook of the day before the conference. What better thing to do than some firsthand research just prior to hearing knowledgeable researchers discuss topics of interest?

5. **Good food and socializing.** The best part was that the Saturday luncheon was *not* a box lunch with hard-boiled eggs. It was a very nice Polish-style buffet, served only a room over from where the lectures took place. The food was tasty, there was plenty to eat, and the site was convenient.

6. **Entertainment.** In this regard, PGSCT-NE may have some limitations due to available performance space at the University. But a Polish dance group, if available, always adds some upbeat entertainment, as well as cultural enlightenment. I had the luxury of being able to pick from several groups in the Chicago area and they were always a huge success for the conference and well enjoyed by the participants.

7. **Vendors and sales.** Here again, there are limitations imposed by the University. It would be very nice to have several vendors selling books, supplies, and Polish material. Hopefully in the future, permission may be given for broader sales. And with increased attendance, vendors will feel the trip is worthwhile and they will attend.

All in all, the conference went well. I heard good reviews from the participants as well as the PGSCT-NE members and workers. Assuming continued expansion of the conference, I strongly recommend the next one, in 2013.

Job well done!

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*** LETTERS TO THE EDITOR ***

Subject: New Records at GenTeam

*Editor*—Not long ago, at the recommendation of eminent researcher Edward David Luft, I registered with GenTeam.at, an organization based in Vienna that provides access to numerous databases valuable for Austro-Hungarian research. As a registered member, I received the following notice, which I felt I should share with you, even though it’s rather long. After all, there is an enormous amount of information here. It costs nothing to register with GenTeam.at, the motto of which is “connecting genealogists.”
Vienna, November 27th, 2011

**New at GenTeam:** more than 300,000 new records.

1. New Indices from Catholic matrices from Lower and Upper Austria, Burgenland, Styria, as well as marriage testimonials from Bayreuth, 1673-1915
2. New Indices from manorial records in Upper Austria and Czech Republic, 1370-1848
3. New: Obituaries of the *Prager Tagblatt* (Prague Daily Newspaper), 1877-1938
4. New: Obituaries from different Tyrolean daily newspapers, 1815-1819
5. Lodges – members of various lodges, 1785-1931
6. New: Index from the city archive Steyr, Upper Austria, 1088-2011 (Sources 1824-2011)
7. New: Index of the book *Who Once Was (Wer einmal war)*—the Jewish Upper Class of Vienna, 1800-1938, by Georg Gaugusch

**On My Own Account:**

Since January 2010, more than 14,000 users have registered at GenTeam, this year alone more than 6,300. There are now more than five million entries with more than 5.4 million [items of] personal information at your disposal. About 80% of all users turn to these databases regularly for their research and utilize them more than once a month. This year alone, GenTeam was able to record more than one million single inquiries. I would like to express my sincere thanks to all who have provided Data to GenTeam.

In addition, GenTeam-L, the multilingual mailing list with more than 950 members, has been used frequently for questions in Austria and abroad. Utilize also this chance and register with GenTeam-L.

GenTeam is **free of charge, non-profit oriented, and not tied to any membership fees.** GenTeam is an association of historians and genealogists, who work, independently or as a team, on databases, and these databases are passed on, free of charge, to all researchers.

1. **New Indices from Catholic Matrices**
   Entries from Catholic matrices from Lower and Upper Austria, Burgenland, Styria, as well as requests of Marriage Testimonials of Bayreuth City were added. Thus, researcher have now more than a 1.1 million entries at their disposal. Indices were added from:

   **Lower Austria:**
   - Aspang, Bad Schönau, Emmersdorf, Großgöttfritz, Großriedenthal, Hohenwarth, Kirchschlag in der Buckligen Welt, Nöchling, Ottenschlag, Pischelsdorf, Spital bei Weitra, Walkenstein.

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

   **Moravia:**
   - Großolkowitz, Leipertitz, Bohemian Grillowitz
Burgenland:
    Kittsee, Illmitz

Styria:
    Marriage Index of the important parish Mariazell (1673 – 1911)

Bayreuth:
    Marriage Testimonials 1875 – 1915

I would like to say a big thank you to Ursula Baldemaier, Martina Gelbmann, Marianne Hofer, Judith Starke, Theodora Winkler, Walter Bartl, Balthasar Bueders, Klaus Dengg, Mag. Fritz Eichler, Mag. Johannes Georg Schwarz, Franz Spevacek, DI FH Ronny Suske, Dr. Armin Watzer, and Werner Zinser for their contributions.

In addition, I especially would like to express my sincere thanks to the “Heraldic Genealogical Association Adler,” who furnished GenTeam the Josef-Heider-Indices from Upper Austria.

2. New Indices from Manorial Records in Lower Austria (1370) and the Czech Republic (1604-1848)
    Indices from diverse Czech Manorial Records (Dobroslawitz, Goldenstein, Gotschendorf, Lehn Sedlnitz, Partschendorf) were furnished by Mr. Jaroslav Vyka. From Lower Austria, Mr. Matthias Hasenzagl reviewed the rent-roll from St. Pölten from the year 1370.

3. New: Obituaries of the Prague Daily Newspaper (Prager Tagblatt)
    Once the death announcements from the Neue Freie Presse as well those of the Pester Lloyd could be found on GenTeam, a team was able to review another important daily newspaper of the Monarchy, the Prager Tagblatt, between 1877 and 1938, and furnished all as a database to GenTeam. I would like to thank Traude Triebel, Georg Gaugusch, Joav Lahad and Freddy Spielmann for their copious contribution.

4. New: Obituaries from Tyrolean Daily Newspapers 1815-1919
    Mr. Hans-Peter Haberditz reviewed death announcements from the Tyrolean daily newspapers, Bote für Tirol, Bozner Nachrichten, Bozner Zeitung, Brixner Chronik, Der Burggräflers, Innsbrucker Nachrichten, Lienzer Zeitung, Maiser Wochenblatt, Meraner Zeitung, Pusterthaler Bote, Südtiroler Volksbote, Der Tiroler, Überetscher, Überetscher Gemeindeblatt for Eppan and Kaltern, and furnished them to GenTeam.

5. Lodges – Members of diverse Lodges 1785-1931
    Members of additional Johannislodges and B’nai B’rith Lodges in Vienna, Prague, Elbersfeld, Coblenz, Neudörfl an der Leitha, Ödenburg, Sagan, Gera and Weida were added. Surnames and first names are listed, as well as, according to Lodge, professions, work and private addresses, date of membership, and date of death of already deceased members.

6. New: Persons Index for Papers and Documents from the City Archives Steyr, Upper Austria
    This database, reviewed and furnished by Mr. Pabinger, contains references to persons...
in many sources of the City Archive Steyr. There are, for example, Council Protocols, the Iron Trail Archive, diverse Calendars and Newspapers, Indices of Persons from Marriage Petitions or Death Announcements, Gazettes, etc. between 1824 – 2011 with data of persons for the years 1088 and 2011.

7. **New: Index of the Book: Wer einmal war (Who once was) by Georg Gaugusch**

This database is a register of names from the book by Georg Gaugusch, *Wer einmal war, the Jewish Upper Class of Vienna 1800-1938*. The first volume, published in November 2011 by the Amalthea-Publisher, includes the letters A-K, contains approximately 1,700 pages, and deals with ca. 250 families. You will find more information under the following web page: <http://www.jewishfamilies.at>.

At GenTeam, Austria’s largest genealogical database, you will now find more than five 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 and 1879
-- Indices from the Jewish Cultural Community (Israelische Kultus-Gemeinde) Vienna between 1826 and 1910
-- Withdrawals from Judaism in Vienna between 1868 and 1914
-- Converts in Vienna between 1782 and 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
-- 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
-- Index of Places in the Czech Republic and Austria along with South Tyrol and Slovenia

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,
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** IMPORTANT NEWS**

by Edward David Luft

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Editor—This article first appeared in the Summer 2011 issue of Rodziny, the Journal of the Polish Genealogical Society of America, and is reprinted with permission.

As search engines become more efficient, genealogists increasingly are able use databases of newspaper articles, advertisements, obituaries, and other documentary resources in the search for information on ancestors. Two Web sites may be particularly useful to researchers of U. S. newspaper sources in this regard, Old Fulton Postcards and Genealogy Bank.

Old Fulton Postcards
The first, Old Fulton Postcards, is a totally free Web site that accepts donations. The site is the most comprehensive of its kind available for New York State, which makes it an essential resource for searching newspapers. Because it offers access to a large number of New York newspaper titles, including many from New York City, its importance is greater than would otherwise be expected for genealogists. Many immigrants to the United States entered via New York City, and often they remained in the city or nearby for a considerable period of time. Furthermore, in the 19th century especially, newspapers tended to reprint articles from other newspapers about events that happened far from the local newspaper’s readership. Such articles sometimes offer insights of value to genealogists and might even identify an ancestor by name.

To use the Web site, use only the left-hand side of the page. Enter the desired search terms and
select from among any limitation options offered. Near the top of the page is “FAQ_HELP_INDEX.” Researchers will definitely wish to read the help section, as it lists some very good ideas, and the site is not especially intuitive. Thus, the FAQs are particularly valuable. Simply click on that option and scroll down until the desired topic appears. Furthermore, at the top of that page is an index of all of the newspapers searchable on the Web site. On the last page of that index is a preview of the newspapers to be added during the next Sunday upload. Moreover, it is possible to download the entire list of newspapers on the site to your computer. That is at least four pages long and grew significantly after December 25, 2010, the date on which more than 1,100,000 additional newspaper pages were added.

To search only a particular newspaper title, go to the index page listing all of the titles online. See the exact wording that the webmaster has used for that newspaper’s name, and in the search box on the main page, enter that exact title plus the rest of your search. It should return hits for all of the instances in which the name or whatever appeared in that newspaper for the period covered by the database.

It is possible to limit searches to a particular set of dates between which you only wish to search initially. If, for example, you wish to search one particular newspaper and limit the search to a range of dates, let’s assume that you know the name of the person but are not sure of a middle initial or initials. Change the search type on the left hand side of the main page to do a Boolean type search, one of the options in the search type drop down box. Then enter the name of the newspaper followed by the date range as “0000~~0000” without the quotation marks and enter the first name of the person and then “w/1” without the quotation marks, followed by the surname of the person. The tilde, “~” is the symbol used to indicate a desire to search date ranges. The FAQ section of the Web site contains a comprehensive guide for Boolean searches; other search formulations are also discussed there. If the person might have two initials, then a search using “w/2” might be a better idea. The search will ignore common punctuation marks, such as comma or period.

If you revisit the site at a subsequent time after having searched previously, you may wish to use the “File Creation Date” function on the left side of the page to limit searches to newly added matter. New matter is added on Sundays, often matter for new time periods for newspapers already available on the Web site. Thus, it pays to revisit and to keep a record of your last visit date so that you will know the date after which you wish to search when revisiting the site.

Unfortunately, attempting to order searches by dates does not always work properly. Thus, it is important to carefully formulate the search to return only what you really want. If necessary, open your page tools on your computer to adjust the size of the page display.

Downloads can be very slow during times of peak usage. The owner of the Web site, Tom Tryniski, has only limited bandwidth, and so it may be best to visit the site in off-hours when fewer people are using it. You must then carefully search the download to find the entry of interest. The webmaster maintains this site entirely on his own as a service to the public. While some problems do exist with this site, it is an essential resource for those wishing to search newspapers for all parts of New York State and is the most comprehensive Web site of its kind.
available for New York State. The webmaster constantly seeks microfilm copies of newspaper pages that he does not already have so that he can upload them. Those microfilms must be confined to newspapers published in New York State.

**GenealogyBankSM**
The other Web site, GenealogyBank, is a commercial site, available in two forms, one for libraries and similar institutions, as America’s Genealogy Bank (for libraries), with about 2600 newspapers in the database, and the other as GenealogyBank, accessed by direct private subscription, with more than 5500 newspapers in the database. This article will discuss each version. The Library of Congress has a subscription to America’s Genealogy Bank. It is not in the regular database of electronic subscriptions at the Library of Congress. Ask the reference librarian in the Newspapers and Current Periodicals Reading Room for access. The Library of Congress did not acquire a subscription to GenealogyBank.

Since April 2008 Newsbank, Inc. has the commercial rights to scan and post online in a subscription database the pages of older issues of many newspapers, including, in this example, those of the *Jersey Journal*, published in Jersey City, NJ, and called the *Evening Journal* in the 19th century. GenealogyBank also has an index of newspaper obituaries for the latter part of the 20th century. You may contact your local reference librarian to see if some library in your area has a subscription to any or all of Newsbank’s subscription services, such as GenealogyBank, and/or America’s Historical Newspapers. Old newspapers in the GenealogyBank Web site come from most states and the District of Columbia at the moment, and more are being added regularly. One caution: The digital copies online were made from microfilms of the newspapers, not from the originals, and consequently might be of impaired quality. In fact, some wrong hits are returned as a result. Very rarely, portions of results are unreadable. Although the GenealogyBank site is not particularly complicated to use and is generally user-friendly, the quality of the images is uneven.

Many of the productions of Newsbank, Inc. are available in research libraries on microfilm under its Readex program, but most of these newspapers are unindexed. Even when a published index does exist, such as for the *New York Tribune*, it only covers the most important news articles and not such things as advertising, which GenealogyBank covers. For that reason, GenealogyBank fills an existing gap in online newspaper indexing and takes the researcher directly to the article of interest. Ask your local reference librarian for help with Newsbank products.

I shall use, as a example, my search for articles in the *Evening Journal* of Jersey City, NJ, to discuss the benefits of a search on GenealogyBank. Unfortunately, older editions of the *Jersey Journal* are not available widely on microfilm or online in a subscription program or otherwise. The Library of Congress does not have a copy of any issue of this newspaper. Thus, researchers should much appreciate Newsbank’s GenealogyBank and its subscription service because it has a large collection of the *Evening Journal* issues as well as more than 5,500 other titles. However, the library subscription service, America’s Genealogy Bank, does not include the *Evening Journal* of Jersey City. For a list of New Jersey newspapers whose recent archives are available online, see <http://www.nj.com/archive/>.
The now-expired trial subscription at the Library of Congress to America’s Genealogy Bank did not include all of the newspapers that Newsbank has, such as the New York Herald and the Jersey Journal, because when offering a subscription database to a library or similar institution, Newsbank generally bundles a package of newspapers in its subscription to include all of the local newspapers that Newsbank has for the library’s geographic area plus a few others, depending upon what the client library wishes to pay for. Thus, a local library with a subscription might well not offer access to newspaper archives for a newspaper printed at a location remote from that library, such as on the other side of the country. The library with the subscription to America’s Genealogy Bank will normally list the newspapers in its subscription on its Web site. For those who can access that site because they have a library card which allows it, they can normally see the list from home and even access the database in most cases. The original America’s Genealogy Bank was a set of three series/modules of data. Because of licensing issues, the “Chicago Tribune Historical Archive” is available on America’s Genealogy Bank but not on GenealogyBank. In all other cases, the individual service, GenealogyBank, offers more databases, including seven series databases plus three named ones, the most relevant to many readers being 20th Century Newspapers. In America’s Genealogy Bank, each subscribing library decides to which modules it wishes to subscribe while in GenealogyBank, coverage is identical everywhere for all subscribers. In both subscriptions, only U. S. sources are included. As of 7 July 2011 America’s Genealogy Bank included 633 million discrete items while GenealogyBank included 886 million discrete items. The selection criteria for GenealogyBank is that the newspaper be published in the United States in any language. The company is adding data on America’s Genealogy Bank only if the newspaper is present in an existing series while in GenealogyBank it is adding any newspaper that the company has if published in the United States.

There are French, German, and Spanish languages holdings in the database, and other languages may also be represented. Addition of foreign newspapers is under consideration but not now available.

Individual subscriptions to GenealogyBank include all 5,500-plus newspapers in Newsbank’s archival holdings. A subscription to GenealogyBank, whether individual or library, includes the databases for its Historical Books (1801-1900), its Historical Documents (1789-1984 and mostly government documents, such as bills considered by a legislative body), its Historical Newspapers (1690-2007), its Newspaper Obituaries (1977-current), and the Social Security Death Index (1937-current). Each category is searchable separately and for all states or only for those states selected. Having selected a state, the researcher may click on it twice. All of the counties in that state will appear. The researcher may then search just selected counties. If the researcher clicks on a county, all of the newspapers published in that county will appear. The researcher may then select which newspapers in that county he or she wishes to search. Of course, if no selection is made, all of the newspapers in that county will be searched. If no county is selected, then all counties in the state will be searched, and if no state is selected, then all states will be searched. The Historical Newspapers database includes advertising as a category that may be searched, and the researcher may limit a search, for example, to retrieve only advertising or even only advertising in a given state or states of the United States.
The index to the GenealogyBank archives allows free access but only for a few initial attempts, at <http://www.genealogybank.com>, and other parts are accessible by subscription only. After a few attempts to access GenealogyBank at its main page, listed in endnote 2, that page will no longer perform searches, requiring a subscription instead. So if you do not have a subscription, go to <http://www.genealogybank.com/gbnk/newspapers/> and perform searches there. Then, at the other pages specific to the databases of interest, perform the same search. All searches may be limited by time and place. Indeed, after performing an initial search on a subscription database, it is possible to limit the search to retrieve only newspapers in a particular state or states. You must first do the search and then limit the information returned in a second search. Subscriptions are offered with a lower individual price on GenealogyBank for one month followed by a higher monthly charge or for a lower annual rate. The onus is on the subscriber to cancel the subscription online or by telephone, or it is automatically billed on the anniversary date.

GenealogyBank does not always have the complete run of every newspaper that it has. For example, it has The New York Times only until 1903 at the moment. However, the company adds pages to about 1,000 newspapers per month. Those additions are listed on GenealogyBank’s Web site, and on its blog, on Facebook, and on Twitter. Updates are usually posted several times a day. It is possible to read or browse through an entire newspaper issue and not just search for an article. The company is currently working to make that process even more user-friendly.

Near the top center on the Historical Newspaper Archive page, it is possible to view a list of all titles held in the database and the dates covered for a given newspaper. Having clicked on the page listing all newspapers viewable on the Web site, the researcher can select the state of interest or scroll down to see each state in alphabetical order with the newspapers for that state that are available on the site, also arranged in alphabetical order, plus the dates covered for each newspaper. The site even shows that Newsbank has data from current editions of certain newspapers. In the Newspaper Obituaries database, even two news wires, the Associated Press and Copley News Service (USA), are included from the late 20th century until the current date but only for obituaries.

One interesting phenomenon was that in searching the GenealogyBank index, which is free, I found seven relevant items in one search without being logged in, but when I activated my personal subscription, the identical search on the identical Web site but while logged in returned 11 relevant items. So a subscription may be worthwhile to find additional materials. The company has been unable to explain this discrepancy, since both pages access the same database.

To illustrate the power of GenealogyBank, consider, for example, that when I wrote about the bankruptcy files that I found with respect to Caroline Marks, I knew of only one notice that had appeared about her in the New York Commercial Advertiser, the one dated January 25, 1868 (It also appeared on the same date in The New York Times), dealing with the appointment of certain persons as assignees of the bankrupt Caroline Marks. As a result of the GenealogyBank search, I discovered six more published notices [one notice was published twice, on two different dates], enabling me to trace the various steps in the process and understand how long the matter took to go from the filing of the voluntary petition until final discharge from all debts. Caroline Marks filed her voluntary petition on December 24, 1867, according to a New York Daily Tribune article.
of the next day (yes, the newspaper published on Christmas Day!), and was finally discharged on May 31, 1869—a lengthy process, indeed. GenealogyBank turned up the Daily Tribune article plus a total of six articles in the New York Commercial Advertiser. The other notices published in the New York Commercial Advertiser, as found via GenealogyBank, were:

1. January 2, 1868 for the initial meeting of the creditors of Caroline Marks on January 16, 1868,
2. February 8, 1868, for the notice of appointment of assignees of Caroline Marks,
3. April 25 and 27, 1868, for the announcement of the public auction of Caroline Mark’s property on May 8, 1868,
4. December 28, 1868, for the hearing on December 30, 1868 to have creditors prove their claims as a step toward discharge of the bankrupt Caroline Marks, and
5. May 12, 1869, for the final meeting on May 31, 1869, for the purpose of finally determining if Caroline Marks should have those of her debts listed in the bankruptcy petition canceled and to discharge her from any obligation to pay those debts.

So now I have a much better idea of how the process worked. I can use the same search methods for court cases or any other situation in which a process is noted by successive articles or advertisements in newspapers. As it happens, I was unable to find out all of these events except by a search on GenealogyBank.

The latest addition to GenealogyBank is the “Ethnic Newspapers Collection,” taken from the holdings of the Balch Collection at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA. Over the next three years 130 newspaper titles in 10 languages, covering Americans of the following ethnicities in 25 of the United States will be uploaded. The ethnic groups include Czechs, French, Germans, Hungarians, Irish, Italians, Japanese, Jews, Lithuanians, Poles, Slovaks, and Welsh.

Endnotes:
2. As of early July 2011, there were 16,600,000 searchable newspaper pages on the Web site.
5. Those microfilms do exist, for example, at the Jersey City Free Library and at the Hoboken Public Library but without an index. Since January 1, 1989, researchers may search the Jersey Journal’s own Web site <http://www.newslibrary.com/sites/stlb> for a free index of articles in the Jersey Journal. Printing the entire article is only for a fee.

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*** BRIDGETT SCHNEIDER OF RANDOM ACTS OF GENEALOGICAL KINDNESS (RAOGK), R.I.P. ***

Gen Dobry!, Vol. XII, No. 11, November 2011 — 12
Editor—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>.

It is with great sadness that I report that Bridgett Schneider, best known as the primary person behind Random Acts Of Genealogical Kindness, passed away today [November 12]. She was 64 years old.

The last message I received from Bridgett was on October 18 when she wrote:

RAOGK has been around with our volunteers helping other genealogists get copies of documents required to prove your lineage back to Adam and Eve (giggle). Pictures of your ancestors’ tombstones were also high on the lists of requests. I hope everyone got as much service as we were able to give.

Our heart is saddened that we will be offline for quite awhile. Between computer problems (hard drive turning to toast) and the health of the administrator very questionable ... RAOGK, after 11 years, will cease to exist for awhile.

Bridgett Schneider
RAOGK Administrator

Bridgett and her husband Doc began Random Acts of Kindness (RAOGK) in 1999 in their Nebraska home. What they began with a handful of volunteer researchers in 1999 grew to over 4,000 people around the world.

Bridgett made many new friends over the years through RAOGK, attending conventions, society meetings, and helping the many researchers via online resources.

Bridgett’s husband Doc has assured the RAOGK volunteers that Random Acts Of Genealogical Kindness will be back online in the future—a promise he has made to Bridgett. For now, some people are helping individuals through the RAOGK Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/groups/33868082803/>. Bridgett has brightened the lives of countless people and will be dearly missed.

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*** NU? WHAT’S NEW? USING NEW LISTSERV PROVIDER ***

The last couple of issues of the e-zine Nu? What’s New? were sent out twice to subscribers, once by way of the old listserv provider it had been using, and again by a new provider. The point of this was to test whether everyone signed up to receive each issue was in fact getting it.

I wanted to mention this here so that anyone who has subscribed to Nu? and has not received an
issue recently will know what’s happening. The editor, Gary Mokotoff, mentioned that only one ISP so far had blocked *Nu?*, and that was Hotmail. Gary hoped that problem had been resolved and no new ones would arise. He also mentioned that some individuals with other ISP’s did not get the issue because it had been labeled as spam and sent to their spam folders.

So if you are a subscriber and have noticed an interruption in delivery, don’t scream or shout. Make sure you’ve checked your spam folder. If that doesn’t help, contact Gary here: <nuwhatsnew@earthlink.net>.

As an editor of an e-zine that sometimes gets blocked as spam, I know how frustrating these problems can be, and I hope they’re temporary.

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*** UPCOMING EVENTS ***

Saturday, December 3, 2011

THE SEATTLE PUBLIC LIBRARY PRESENTS:

“LITHUANIAN EXTRAVAGANZA”

Free admission!

Central Library
1000 Fourth Ave.
Seattle, Washington

Microsoft Auditorium, Level 1

2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Join us for this free-flowing performance filled with great artistry shaped by a millennium of Lithuanian culture, art, and history.

- Watch an enticing show about Lithuania, its people, culture and art.
- Admire unbelievably beautiful art of flower and plant arrangements by Nomeda Lukoseviciene.
- Enjoy the music of a Lithuanian national composer M. K. Ėiurlionis performed by a great Lithuanian pianist, Dainius Vaicekonis.
- Listen to “Vakarai,” a Lithuanian choir sing ancient and contemporary Lithuanian songs.
- Enjoy the lively “Lietutis” and Youth and Children Lithuanian Folk Dance Groups showing off the best of Lithuanian dancing traditions that will whisk you away to Lithuania at 2 o’clock in the afternoon at the…
Central Library  
1000 Fourth Ave., Seattle  
Microsoft Auditorium, Level 1  

2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
Saturday, December 3, 2011  

Free admission; great family entertainment  

Limited parking in the Central Library garage is available for a $6 weekend rate. For more information, contact:  

Leszek Chudzinski 206-684-0849 <leszek.chudzinski@spl.org>  
Maryte Racys 206-684-7547 <maryte.racys@spl.org>  

[Posted by “rayvinckus” to the LithGen mailing list on 25 November 2011.]  

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Saturday, December 3, 2011  

LITHUANIANS IN TEXAS — KŪČIOS  
Oblate Renewal Center  
San Antonio, Texas  
2:00 - 5:00 p.m.  

Yearly Christmas Eve vigil and dinner. Coffee, apple cider, plates, cups, utensils, napkins will be provided. Pot luck: bring soup, herring or fish dish, cabbage, veggies, fruit, salads, bread, potatoes, desserts.  

[Posted to the Lithuanians in Texas - Kūčios page on Facebook, https://www.facebook.com/events/298860636814941/]  

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December 17, 2011  
SF BAY AREA LITHUANIAN COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS EVE FEAST  
5:00 - 9:00 p.m.  
Location: Oakwood Athletic Club, 4000 Mt Diablo Blvd, Lafayette, CA 94549-3498  

Join us at the celebration of Lithuanian Kūčios! Santa will be visiting and we ask parents to bring a small present. This is a potluck and we ask everyone to bring something to share. Lithuanian traditional dishes are always very popular!  

This year we’re going to have a Holiday Faire. If you’re interested in participating as a vendor, e-mail Daiva <dpetrylaite@yahoo.com>. The vendor fee is $15.  

[Posted to this page on Facebook :https://www.facebook.com/events/243629582368328/]
(Why not buy attendance as a Christmas gift for someone you know would love to come?)

INVITATION

You are cordially invited to attend the 2012 Conference of Polish Genealogical Societies, hosted by the Polonica Americana Research Institute. We will meet in Salt Lake City, Utah at the Salt Lake Plaza Hotel, which is next door to the Family History Library (FHL). The library is owned and operated by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. This world-renowned genealogy library holds international books, maps, microfilm and digital databases. The FHL is open to the public and access is free of any charge. We balance the event to allow research in the library as well as time to attend classes with noted Polish genealogists and knowledgeable leaders in the field. The conference includes the lecture series, conference syllabus, hospitality with refreshments, and an evening banquet with a keynote address. Individual consultations will be available.

Coming to the Conference is as easy as 1 - 2 - 3!

1. Online reservations: <www.upgs.eventbrite.com> or complete the registration form and mail to:
UPGS c/o PARI at the Polish Mission, 3535 Indian Trail, Orchard Lake, Michigan 48324

2. Reserve a room at the Salt Lake Plaza Hotel [Phone: 800-366-3684 or 801-521-0130]. Mention the United Polish Genealogical Societies Conference, Group Number 9197 for our reduced rates - $82.00 per night for a single/double. This is a guaranteed rate for reservations made by February 12, 2012. You must call in this reservation; the discount does not apply for online reservations.


Upon arrival, check the Hotel Board to call the Salt Lake Plaza Hotel, or call 801-521-0130 for a free courtesy van pickup from airport or train station to hotel. Courtesy van hours are 6:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Check-in time is 3:00 p.m. Earlier arrivals can leave luggage at the desk to have it stored.
[From an e-mail sent by Ceil Jensen].

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*** MORE USEFUL WEB ADDRESSES ***

<http://www.thenews.pl/1/9/Artykul/58895,Rehabilitation-project-ready-for-WWII-Katyn-victims>

Bronwyn Klimach posted a note about this article, on Russia’s plans to exonerate the victims of the World War II Katyn Crime, in which 22,500 Poles were executed by Soviet Secret Police. When I read something like this, I am tempted to say “Fat lot of good that does!” But I suppose the action of officially rehabilitating the honor and reputation of the murdered Poles has some significance, especially if you consider how rare it is for anybody connected with the Russian government to own up to a “mistake.”

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<http://thenews.pl/1/9/Artykul/58737,Napoleonic-soldiers-remains-found-in-northern-Poland>

Bronwyn shared another item of interest. The story deals with the discovery of the remains of people thought to be soldiers who died after Napoleon’s doomed march on Moscow. The bodies were found during work on a new bypass at Olecko, northeast Poland.

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<https://www.neweuropebooks.com/>

For our budding authors out there, John Guzlowski posted a note on Facebook’s Polish American Writers & Editors group. He said “This small press is looking for non-fiction and fiction about Eastern Europe.” I believe an enterprise of this sort deserves all the attention and publicity it can get.

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<http://www.amazon.com/Jews-Service-Tsar-ebook/dp/B0068OOC74>

On SEELANGS, a mailing list devoted to those who teach Eastern European languages, Paul Richardson posted a note about the publication of Jews in Service to the Tsar, by Lev Berdnikov and translated by Nora Favorov. This book contains 28 biographies covering 500 years of Russian Jewish history. It is available as an e-book for $4.99 from Amazon.com at the above link, and it is available in print here: <http://www.russianlife.com/store/index.cfm/product/206_53/jews-in-service-to-the-tsar.cfm>.

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<http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2011/nov/23/google-doodle-stanislaw-lem-anniversary>

This link takes you to one of many articles about the Google Doodle for November 23,
2011 that marked the 60th anniversary of the publication of Stanisław Lem’s first book. Lem was and is regarded as one of the 20th century’s great science fiction authors. In America, he’s probably best known for writing *Solaris*, which has been made into a film three times, most recently a 2002 version directed by Steven Soderbergh and starring George Clooney. It’s not all that often you hear of a Polish writer recognized the world over as a genius, but Lem was; and it’s good to see he hasn’t been forgotten since his death in 2006. You can see the interactive doodle itself at <http://www.google.com/logos/lem/>.

On the Posen mailing list, “Simone” posted this URL in response to a request for help locating a locality near Wongrowitz, now Wągrowiec. I’m not sure we’ve ever mentioned this site before. It gives you an index to a large number of old 1:25,000 topographical maps covering those areas ruled by Germany during the partition era, including much of what is now Poland and Lithuania. Note that the PDF that comes up has to be enlarged repeatedly before you can read the names of the places, which are all German. Once you find the name you want, click on the box and the appropriate map will appear. This PDF is basically a useful short-cut for using the maps available at <http://greif.uni-greifswald.de/geogreif/?map=overview&coll_id=72>.

Quite a stir arose on various genealogical mailing lists over this blog posting from Megan Smolenyak. It deals with the Social Security Administration’s decision to extend restrictions on Social Security applications to 100 years from the birth of the applicant. The key point is that information on parents is blocked out, which virtually negates their value as genealogical sources. Megan is upset at the decision, making a good argument that it will prove a real hardship to researchers without protecting any living persons. As one researcher put it (Sandy, on the LithGen list), “Since we have been using the applications to GET the parents’ information, this means we will lose all that valuable information for anyone born before 1912 (currently). So, don’t waste your money getting the application.” For more information, read Megan’s comments.

Also, several people noted changes in policy regarding the records to be used as source material for the Death Master File (DMF), from which the Social Security Death Index (SSDI) is created. The Social Security Administration will no longer use state death records to add entries to the DMF. The above link takes you to a blog entry by Stephen Danko that discusses this. Incidentally, I noted in the November 6 issue of *Nu? What’s New?*, Gary Mokotoff was perturbed by this change; but in the November 12 issue, he said it remains to be seen whether this will really amount to a big deal or not. I gather it would be premature to say the sky is falling; but this is something researchers should know about, if only so they can take it into consideration as they plan their research.
A recent posting to JewishGen’s mailing list by Alex Feller mentioned that the Family History Library now has microfilms for towns in Galicia covering 1865-1930. The TinyUrl above should take you to the page in the FHL catalog that summarizes the films. Here’s how the catalog describes their contents: “Military records (registration cards, personnel files, medical tests) from various cities in Galizien, Austria; now in various areas of Poland (mainly Krakow province) and Ukraine (mainly L’viv, Ivano-Frankivs’k, and Ternopil’ provinces). Includes personnel files for military personnel, both officers and enlisted. About 70% of the documents show the name, birth place and year; less than 10% have the full birth date. Filed alphabetically by year. The years are not in order. There are some documents that are out of order, usually found at the end of the file. Text in German, Polish, and Ukrainian.”

On the same list, Ittai Hershman posted a follow-up to Alex Feller’s note, explaining that the National Library of the Czech Republic, which was formerly part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, has digitized many documents of interest to Hungarian genealogists. She found her grandfather’s casualty report from World War I by searching for his surname and the name of his village with the word “Verlustliste” (list of casualties). So this site, too, is worth a look.

The GenealogyBlog mentioned a couple of books that could be a great help to researchers with Catholic ancestry. The above URL discusses U. S. Catholic Sources: A Diocesan Research Guide, which helps you track down the many kinds of records kept by Catholic parishes, schools, hospitals, etc. Also, see for info on Genealogical Use Of Catholic Records In North America & Genealogical Research In Protestant And Catholic Church Records In Ireland, a good companion to the other book. Both are available from Family Roots Publishing and reasonably priced; these URLs have links to help you order them.

This URL was posted on the Poland-Roots list by “L. L. Scott” with the title “Warmia-Mazury GenWeb Update.” I believe the note was posted by Laura Lee Scott, credited as “your host” on the site. If you have roots in province Warmia-Mazury (województwo warmińsko-mazurskie), their site offers a number of links worth investigating.

This article, “How Can I Find Information on Ancestors Born in the 20th Century?,” was mentioned in the 27 November 2011 issue of The Genealogy News, which summarized it thus: “Privacy restrictions can seriously hamper research for ancestors of a more modern time period, but there are alternative resources.” I suspect a number of our readers might want to read it and get some ideas.
This page offers an interesting sketch of Poland’s history and especially its treatment of Jews. It is in English, written by Michael B. Czechowski and published in 1863. Of course, there may be much in this book that is disputed by modern historians. Still, the book is free, comes in numerous formats, and could be useful if only for giving a historical perspective.

As a linguist, I find obscenities fascinating; it’s hard to exaggerate the insight they give you into a culture. The above page is an interesting summary of some Polish obscenities from “The Alternative Polish Dictionary.”

People are always looking for good translators to help them decipher the records they find. Ceil Jensen posted a note to the Poland-Roots list praising Sylwia Chandzel and her new business, PolRus Translation Services. Ceil gave this URL for Sylwia’s home page, which says Sylwia can work on Polish, German, or Russian documents. You can also contact her at polrustrans@gmail.com.