CONTENTS

Preparing Polish-Style Christmas
Letters to the Editor
+ Sabina Logisz, 1916-2010 +
A World Traveler and World Champion
Donald Pienkos Receives Award
Composer Henryk Górecki Dies at the Age of 76
Help with Place Name Representation
Help with Births, Marriages, and Deaths in Poland
A Good Experience with the Hrodna, Belarus Archives
Upcoming Events
More Useful Web Addresses
You May Reprint Articles...

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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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*** PREPARING POLISH-STYLE CHRISTMAS ***

by Rob Strybel

Editor—Jim “Kuba” Przedzienkowski posted a note to the Polish Genius mailing list, and I suspect our readers who didn’t see it there would like to read it. It contained the text of a note posted to the Mniam Polish Cooking e-mail List <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/mniam/> by Rob Strybel, a highly regarded Polish-American author who often contributes to the Polish American Journal. I felt sure you would enjoy reading it as much as I did.

If you are among the growing number of Polish Americans who believe Christmas has become far too commercialized, your Polish heritage may be worth exploring for meaningful alternatives. It is more Nativity-minded and family-centered and focused more on the spiritual and traditional rather than the commercial. On the other hand, some of the customs may have to be creatively adapted if they are to make the proper impression. Usually that involves displaying or re-enacting them in early or mid-December rather than on or after Christmas Eve.

It’s All in the Mind! — It requires personal resolve and determination to enable our Polish Christmas heritage to enrich the Yuletide celebrations of our families, Pol-Am clubs, lodges, parishes or local communities. It requires courage to go against the grain and not get swept up in the “shop till you drop” propaganda constantly bombarding us in the media and on the net. That includes convincing our impressionable youngsters that all the grinning Santas they see are not “men of good cheer,” but sales agents out only after their parents’ credit cards.

Tradition Requires Knowledge — It is next to impossible to introduce, cultivate or pass on traditions one is unfamiliar with. One good online place to find out more about them is <http://www.polishtraditions.com>. Those who still prefer traditional hard-copy books would do well to consider the Polanie Club’s classic Treasured Polish Christmas Customs & Traditions, Father Czesław Krysa’s A Polish Christmas Eve, and Sophie Hodorowicz-Knab’s Polish Customs, Traditions & Folklore. They are available at Polish Art Center: <http://www.polartcenter.com>.

Advent (Adwent): This is a roughly four-week period of spiritual preparation for Christmas and a good time to remind our youngsters that the Christmas spirit is more than getting presents from Santa. It should also be a time to share our time, effort and abundance with those less fortunate: the poor, homeless, lonely, elderly and housebound. The media will be working overtime to convince people that this is mainly the time for house-cleaning, shopping, decorating and partying, so keep telling yourself and those around you not to forget to do good deeds (see next entry).

Christmas Crib (źłóbek): A good way to back your words with deeds is not to clutter the house with tacky, plastic Santa, reindeer and snowman-type decorations and make the Christmas crib the main focus. Traditionally the nativity set is not displayed until Christmas Eve, but in America setting it up together with the Christmas tree would make sense if the tree goes up before Christmas Eve.

Good deeds (dobre uczynki): That idea can be instilled in preschoolers through “the hay of good
deeds” (sianko dobrych uczynków). The child receives a handful of hay (or dried grass clippings). He or she is told to place one strand of hay into an empty manger each time he or she performs a good deed: helps someone, shares something, helps around the house, etc. The more good deeds, the softer the bed Baby Jesus will have on Christmas Eve. Older youngsters can help prepare food baskets for the needy or pay visits to elderly neighbors who live alone or in nursing homes.

St. Nicholas (Święty Mikołaj): Unlike the high-powered shopping and present-getting hysteria symbolized by Santa Claus, introducing Święty Mikołaj to your family and community is a good way to teach children the deeper meaning of the season: spirituality and charity. At a St. Nick celebration on or around his feast day (Dec. 6) the kindly old bishop quizzes youngsters on their prayers, good deeds and behavior and rewards them with treats. Why promote the already grossly overpromoted Santa, the patron of greedy sales promoters and spoiled brats, when our own heritage has a far better alternative?

Adapting to American Surroundings: If we are interested in sharing our beautiful Polish customs with fellow Polish-Americans and non-Polish Americans as well, some of them may have to be creatively adapted. Usually that involves displaying or re-enacting them in early or mid-December rather than on or after Christmas Eve the traditional Old Country way. For instance, traditionally, house-to-house carolers would not begin making their rounds until Dec. 26 (St. Stephen’s Day), but by then many people in America are sick of carols and have already taken down their Christmas decorations.

Polish Caroling (kolędowanie): Consider getting together a Polish caroling party. This can be the parish choir or a group of amateurs, in street dress, choir gowns or the old Polish-style disguises. These may include a star-bearer, angel, devil, King Herod, the Three Kings (Wise men), Grim Reaper, peasant couple, Jewish merchant, soldier, priest and Gypsy. such performances can be staged at your parish, club, fraternal lodge, community center or shopping mall. And don’t overlook paying a visit to a nursing home or two.

Live Nativity (żywa szopka): Increasingly popular in Poland are living Christmas cribs usually set up on parish grounds. Volunteers, usually young married couples and their baby, play the Holy Family, and cattle, a donkey and sheep in a stable-like setting recreate the ambience of that first Christmas. The crib opens after Midnight Mass and stays open at least until Jan. 6. Combining the Nativity story with a petting zoo makes this a favorite of youngsters and entire families.

Polish Christmas Greetings (życzenia świąteczne): The standard greeting is: Wesołych Świąt Bożego Narodzenia i Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku! (Merry Christmas and Happy New Year).” An expanded version might go: Radosnych Świąt Bożego Narodzenia oraz wszelkiej pomyślności w nadchodzący 2011 Roku życzymy wam wszyskim! A more religious-flavored version could go: Obfitych łask Bożego Dzieciątka z okazji Świąt i Nowego Roku życzymy całej Waszej Rodzinie!

Polish Holiday Bazaar (kiermasz świąteczny): One reason some Pol-Ams drift away from their heritage is the local unavailability of the necessary “fixings.” A Polish holiday fair, Christmas bazaar, bake sale, etc. is a good way to inject some Polishes into the local Christmas landscape. Such an event could offer oplatek, hay (for placing under the table-cloth), Wigilia foods, baked
goods, imported delicacies, books, DVDs, CDs, greeting cards, moldy music notes and recordings, Christmas cribs, assorted folk crafts and Polish-flavored gift items. For Polish Christmas goods visit <www.polartcenter.com>.

Community Wigilia (zbiorowa wigilia): Often referred to in Polonia as an “Opłatek Dinner”, this can be little more than but a simple meal (fried fish, sauerkraut and mushrooms, pierogi, poppy seed cake) or may be a full multi-course supper. Usually it is held before Christmas, some time during December. In places where people have drifted away from the Wigilia tradition or many live alone with no-one to prepare things for, holding the event on Christmas Eve itself should be considered. A parish hall would be the ideal venue for such a supper, followed by community caroling and finally attendance at Midnight Mass.

Christmas Extravaganza (impreza gwiazdkowa): This an expanded version of the community Wigilia (above). In addition to the opłatek-sharing and Christmas Eve supper, it may include a variety of side events such as a Polish Christmas food and bake sale, a craft and gift bazaar, a cooking demonstration showing how to prepare Polish Christmas treats, community caroling, a kolędy choir concert, Nativity play, and even a visit by the real Święty Mikołaj (St. Nicholas).

Evergreen Bough (podłaźnik, podłaźniczka, sad): Our Polish ancestors would suspend an evergreen branch or the peak-side-down top of a fir, spruce, or pine from the ceiling or rafters, often over the dining-room table. It was decorated with fruits, nuts, sweets in shimmering foil and home-made ornaments. This simple, natural and interesting decoration fills the room with an evergreen scent and is worth promoting in Polonia. It is great for small apartments because it does not take up even an inch of floor or table space.

Christmas Tree (choinka, drzewko): Whether your Christmas tree is real or fake, decorated with home-made or store-bought ornaments, be sure not to put it up too early. Ideally it should be set up and trimmed on Christmas Eve itself and not lighted until the Wigilia supper begins. If you have small children saying their friends have their trees up since Thanksgiving, you can always reply: “Yes, but they will dump them out the day after Christmas, while we get to enjoy ours until Three Kings.”

Polish Christmas Workshop (warsztaty gwiazdkowe): Depending on available human resources (qualified instructors, publicity chairmen, volunteers, premises) and local interest, such a project could focus on one or more aspects of our Polish Christmas heritage. It might include lectures coupled with videos, slides and practical demonstrations pertaining to folk crafts (Kraków cribs, home-made tree ornaments, wycinanki, mobiles, caroling costumes and artifacts), customs, food preparation and/or choir carol practice. This is a good occasion to stress the importance of the Wigilia heritage to Polish Christmas celebrations (see next entry).

Christmas Eve (Wigilia): To Polish people everywhere, this is the single most important day of the year. Steeped in religious belief, tradition and folklore, it is usually shared with one’s nearest of kin. How you are on Wigilia (good, bad, happy, sad, peaceful or upset) resentful) is how you will be all year long – is a common belief. It is a festive meal of once-a-year treats and unique customs such as hay under the table-cloth and an empty place-setting at table. Rather than being allowed
to dissolve in the Anglo-commercial meting pot, shouldn’t these beautiful old customs be passed on to the next generation at home and actively cultivated by our Pol-Am parishes, PNA lodges, schools, clubs and wherever?

**Family Participation:** This should not be an occasion where one person does all the work and everybody else comes as an invited guest. All members of the household should pitch in and make a contribution. It is especially important to involve the kids in the shopping, house cleaning, food preparation, setting the table, trimming the tree, etc. Traditionally a young child is kept from getting in the way by being asked to stand in a window and watch for the evening’s first star, the sign for the festivities to begin.

**Christmas Eve Supper (wieczerza wigilijna),** Poland’s single most important family gathering, is rife with beautiful symbolism and age-old customs. Hay is scattered on the table beneath the tablecloth, and the meal begins when the evening’s first star appears in the sky. It comprises (depending on local tradition) either a dozen or an odd number of meatless dishes.

The meal begins when the evening’s first star appears in the sky with the sharing of **opłatek**. After the meal, **kolędy** are sung and gifts are exchanged, after which the family attends **Pasterka** (Midnight mass).

**Christmas Wafer (opłatek)** is a white unleavened wafer imprinted with nativity motifs and sometimes referred to as “angel bread” (chleb anielski). It is the single most important artifact of Polish-style Christmas, without which the celebration would be unthinkable. Traditionally bits of the wafer are shared amid an exchange of best wishes with all present as a sign of love, forgiveness, and reconciliation. **Opłatek** is usually available at Polish parishes or you can order it from: Christmas Wafers Bakery, PO Box 99, Lewiston, NY 14092-0099; phone: 716-283-8911; <info@christmaswafersbakery.com>.

**Opłatek Gathering (spotkanie opłatkowe):** This is a Christmas get-together which involves breaking and sharing **opłatek** at church, work, school, your Pol-Am lodge, veterans’ post, club or community center. Often carols are sung and light refreshments may be served, but usually not a full meal.

**Christmas Eve Food (potrawy wigilijne)** is 100% meatless. Typical dishes include: herring (pickled, creamed, in oil, in salads); soups (clear beet with mushroom-filled dumplings, clear mushroom with noodles, mushroom-rye-meal soup, fish chowder), fried, baked, poached and/or jellied fish, sauerkraut dishes, pierogi (filled with sauerkraut, cabbage, mushrooms, cheese and potatoes); sweet dishes (poppy seed noodles, wheat pudding [kutia], dried-fruit compote, etc,) and Christmas cakes.

**Christmas Eve Lore (wierzenia wigilijne)** includes various folk beliefs, many having to do with the matrimonial prospects of the family’s eligible girls. They would draw strands of hay from under the table-cloth: a yellow one meant marriage by spring, a green one predicted a longer wait, and a withered one foretold spinsterhood. A barking dog in the distance meant that a suitor would come from that direction. It was also said that farm animals spoke with human voices at midnight.
and the water in wells turned to wine. But only those who had never sinned could taste it.

**Potluck Wigilia (wigilia “każdy coś przynosi”):** This a good way for families and clubs to reintroduce the Wigilia tradition from which they have drifted away. Rather than one family member or hired cooks preparing the entire costly spread, you can Xerox typical Wigilia recipes (from Polish Holiday Cookery or other cookbooks) and allow participants to draw them out of a hat. Everyone prepares and donates the dish they drew. For larger crowds, there may be doubles or even triples of each recipe in the hat.

**Progressive Wigilia (wigilia krocząca):** This is a take-off on the American custom of the “progressive dinner,” where different courses at served at successive homes. In the Wigilia version, the first stop could include the opłatek-sharing and soup; the next home would serve herring and boiled potatoes; the hot fish dish and possibly also a sauerkraut dish would be prepared by the next home down the lane, followed by pierogi and/or other pasta (e.g., cabbage and noodles), finishing up with dessert (e.g., compote and poppy seed noodles) at the final stop.

**Christmas Day, December 25th (Boże Narodzenie/Pierwszy Dzień Świąt):** Christmas Day is somewhat anti-climactic in Polish tradition, because everything of importance has already taken place on Christmas Eve. Opłatek has been shared, once-a-year dishes enjoyed and Midnight Mass attended. And there is no need for a mad dash down to the Christmas tree on Christmas morning, because presents have already been exchanged after the Wigilia supper. Following morning Mass (Poles who attend Pasterka usually go to Mass again on Christmas morning), Christmas Day is a day of feasting and visiting with relatives and close friends.

**St. Stephen’s Day, December 26th (Świętego Szczepana/Drugi Dzień Świąt) commuterates the first Christian martyr, who was stoned to death. Polish parishioners in the countryside symbolically mark that event by throwing oats at one another and at the priest in church. Later in the day, it is customary to invite or visit good friends for Christmas refreshments and fellowship. The Second Day of Christmas is a public holiday in Poland.

**St. John’s Day, December 27th (Świętego Jana/Trzeci Dzień Świąt)—**The Third Day of Christmas is celebrated with morning Mass by the most devout Catholics, who bring wine to church to be blessed. It commemorates the time St. John was served poisoned wine but blessed it and drank it with no ill effects. Perhaps a Christmas party with a wine-tasting theme could be held by your Pol-Am club or parish.

**Polish Nativity Play (jasełka)** is usually staged by children at church, school or a community hall during the Christmas season, even as late as Jan.6. The play invariably tells the story of shepherds going to Bethlehem to honor the new-born Savior. Often the youngest shepherd has no gift to give so he sings or plays a musical instrument for Baby Jesus instead. A both easy and attractive way of holding it is to have the kids act out the scenes described in the kolędy being sung by a choir. That way they won’t forget their lines or get tongue-tied.

**King Herod Skit (Herody)** is a short, humorous Christmas presentation which shows the Grim Reaper and Devil arguing over the wicked King Herod’s soul, as they tug at him with shouts of
“He’s mine!” – “No, he’s mine!” and chase after him when he tries to run away. This skit is usually too boisterous to present in church and is better suited to a club, school, or community hall.

**New Year’s Eve, December 31st (Sylwestra)**, ushers in the new year at balls, banquets, dinner-dances and house parties, where dancing begins with the traditional Polonaise. (This can be pre-rehearsed with those ball-goers not familiar with this elegant processional dance.) At the stroke of midnight, champagne corks pop and merry-makers kiss, hug and wish each other “Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku” as the orchestra strikes up “Jak szybko mijają chwile.” Food drink and merriment is in abundance and the festivities often last till the crack of dawn.

**Three Kings Cavalcade (Orszak Trzech Króli):** This custom was introduced in Warsaw two years ago and has become an annual affair and a family favorite. A colorful cavalcade of the Three Kings astride horses and a camel plus costumed courtiers, angels, devils, shepherds with sheep and donkey and jugglers) wends its way through the streets of Old Town to the New Town Square where a Christmas crib is set up. Paper crowns are passed out to those attending and outdoor community caroling rounds out the event attended by some 10,000 participants.

*** LETTERS TO THE EDITOR ***

Subject: Correction regarding data in the last issue

*Editor—I received this note from one of our readers, Bronwyn Klimach. She had read the article by Dr. Paul S. Valasek on genealogy and epidemiology and contributed a follow-up note, then read the similar notes from Julie Crawford, Sharon Haskin Galitz, and C. Michael Eliasz.

I was interested in comparing the figures given for Biechów by Michael Eliasz when I noticed they looked very similar to the ones around Suwałki—indeed, they were the Suwałki table. I don’t know if it is too late to make any kind of correction, but I would like to know the Biechów figures!

*Editor—I looked, and sure enough, I somehow pasted the Suwalki data in twice, and skipped the Biechów data entirely! I thanked Bronwyn for pointing this out to me, and I want to apologize to C. Michael Eliasz and all our readers. I will now reprint Michael’s note and the real data he submitted:

*   *   *

I, too, was stunned one year by this phenomena of an extraordinary number of deaths. I had done surveys of the parish (birth counts, death counts, marriage counts). Now one year was off the charts. It was 1831! I know the disease was cholera because it was noted in the parish records. Half of ALL deaths that year were cholera (probably would have been more if they were all properly categorized).

Do you know that one of my ancestors (not direct line) had died and they did not even know the
date when he had died. It was an end of year notation. Now I was perusing again the wonderful beginners’ genealogy guide, *Polish Roots*, by the Toledo genealogist Rosemary Chorzempa. Do you know she had a chart of the various pandemics in there and 1831 was the first Asiatic Cholera? I could only see the data in Biechów, because LDS did not have microfilm for Pacanów before 1875.

My ancestors came from Biechów and Pacanów (old wój. Kielce, presently Świętokrzyskie) which are just north of the Vistula (the dividing line between Russian-Poland and Austria-Poland) and were Russian Poles.

I once undertook a survey of house numbers and who lived there in Biechów (hence my detailed understanding of the village).


I have a spreadsheet that shows the counts by year and how they were out of proportion to the other years.

This data was extracted from LDS Microfilm #0936664 (which contained only death registers for 1812-1860, with many missing years). You are very welcome to publish this in *Gen Dobry!*

Most years, the number of dead roughly equals the number born, with births usually a bit larger (i.e., slow growth). In 1831, there were only 46 births recorded. So the 232 deaths seems out of all proportion. In 1831, there were two final deaths recorded after the parish priest had closed the books for the year. One of these was my ancestor; neither of these “late adds” had a death date.

Now this is odd because in other years, if a late birth or marriage or death were found, a date was still recorded for the event. It would seem to me that they did not know when these two died (both of which had died from cholera).

The 1812, 1814, 1815 deaths seem a bit high, but no indication of disease. It would appear these might be soldiers dying in war for/against Napoleon. Later years (>= 1850) the data seems to be sporadically missing within the year, so these numbers should not be used for population/demographics.

Here is my survey on Biechów parish (*powiat* Stopnica, part of Kraków Department before 1830, then Kielce woj. afterwards).

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Subject: Mary Queen of Angels Church

Editor—In the last issue, Debbie Greenlee’s item “Teach Yourself Polish” mentioned that “St. Mary of the Angels school in Chicago recently stopped their Polish language classes for the students (mostly a Hispanic school now).” One of our readers commented as follows.

I assume that Debbie Greenlee was talking about Mary Queen of Angels Church in Chicago when she told of discontinuing Polish language classes at that school.

If that is the church then I have to ask, what would my great-grandfather have to say about that?. He was involved in building the church and served for many years on the finance committee of the church.

Ed Price/Przybylski

Editor—I am afraid your great-grandfather would have been very upset. It’s happening all too often: churches established by Poles, built by Poles, and paid for by Poles, are being closed, or their Polish character is being lost as people of other ethnic identities come to dominate their neighborhoods. It is a shame, no question.
I guess it shows every triumph is a mixed blessing. Our immigrant ancestors came over in hopes of making a better life for themselves and their descendants. Many of them succeeded, spectacularly! But as time passed, their descendants became more and more Americanized, and lost much of their Polish heritage. You have to think those immigrants would be delighted to know their families have enjoyed material success here, but it would grieve them deeply to know their families have moved away from Polish neighborhoods and forgotten the history and language of their ancestors.

 Polonia has just lost a major resource with the passing of Sabina Logisz. She started working at the Polish Museum in 1936, just a year after its inception, alongside founder, curator, and major historian, Mieczysław Haiman. She worked diligently in the Museum as well as the Library, where she continued working until phased out by a younger generation in 2002.

 I knew Sabina well and in reality, from the very first day I walked into the Polish museum as a young child, she was already there. She knew material by heart and could sit for hours telling stories of Polonia and its members, both good and bad. Many times I would see her think for a moment, head off in a direction down one of the stacks, pause, select a book, page through it, and come up with the answer to a myriad of questions. She had that knowledge of the material she was entrusted to care for and preserve for future generations.

 I started volunteering at the PMA in the early 90s and would dedicate at least one day per week for the following 10 years, almost always sharing time with Sabina on every occasion. Her work was her life, so days off and vacations were few and far in between. We would spend time talking about days gone by, her from memory of living through the moments, mine from stories I had heard from my grandparents and parents. The point was, we had full mutual respect for each other’s knowledge and dedication for promoting Polonia, even though there was a 40-year age difference.

 When I served as President of the Polish Genealogical Society of America, she often complimented me on how I handled genealogy patrons in the library and how often I was able to help them. Of course, if I was stuck on a particular puzzle, she often offered suggestions that usually came through with an answer. After the researcher would leave, she sat there and smiled, pleased with our success in helping out another patron.

 As she worked at the PRCUA for decades and the PMA for additional years, she knew all of the officers of both institutions, and would often share stories of their successes and failures. She had her favorites, that was for sure; but she also saw those who did not measure up to her standards. Standards which were easily missed by many, as she would not, nor could not tolerate sloppiness, laziness, and indifference. If she saw any of those shortcomings, she would stand up

 *** + SABINA LOGISZ, 1916-2010 + ***

 by Dr. Paul S. Valasek <paval56@aol.com>
and point it out to many of the individuals connected with teaching Polonia about itself.

During my terms as a Director of the Polish Museum, Sabina and I would often object to what was superficially presented as business, and often find and point out the need for some serious thoughts before acting quickly and without consideration of any consequences. We often commented how each of us seemed to be on the same track when others were riding another rail.

I will personally miss Sabina Logisz as she was one of my mentors and advisors, but most of all, a lady who often complimented me on my work, suggested extra projects and ideas which I failed to see, and showed what could be done in a professional and dedicated service of teaching the story of Polonia.

Editor—You can see more on Sabina Logisz here:


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*** A WORLD TRAVELER AND WORLD CHAMPION ***

by Raymond Rolak

DETROIT—He was world-famous. He bragged about Detroit. He was a champion and much more. He even bowled at Lodge Lanes in Belleville. Eddie Lubanski, the family man, passed recently. He was 81 and so very proud to be Polish.

Lubanski was also a ballplayer, an accomplished pitcher. “We loved it when we got to play on Diamond # 1 at Northwestern Field in Detroit. That was the pinnacle. The infield was manicured like a pool table,” he had said. Lubanski signed as a pitcher with the old St. Louis Browns and had immediate success. “I got my perseverance from my father, Edward. I went to DeLaSalle High School on the East Side. I signed after American Legion baseball and got to the Wisconsin State League. I went 23-5, for Wausau in my second year, but decided that I had a better future in bowling. It wasn’t a good life for Betty.”

Before he passed, I got to spend some quality time with the humble champion. “I remember the days at Willow Run before Detroit Metro was in use,” he told me. “We have Billy Rogell to thank for Metro Airport; he made it happen when he was a Detroit Councilman. I would tell him about good Polish cooking. I was fortunate to hang with some of the Tiger players at Briggs Stadium. My favorite Rogell story went like this.”

Rogell and the Dizzy Dean Incident

Lubanski remembered the story with the enthusiasm of a schoolboy. “Spud Davis drove in a run with a single to right in the fourth inning of game four of the World Series. He was replaced by
Dizzy Dean as a pinch runner at first base. He was a Hall of Famer as a pitcher, why he was running I do not know. Pepper Martin then stepped in and hit a ground ball to Gehringer at second. Gehringer was automatic at the double play. He turned and threw to Rogell who forced out Dean at second, who then fired the ball squarely into Dean’s forehead on the relay throw to first. The ball ricocheted off Dean’s head and landed over a hundred feet away in the outfield. Dean, always known for his quick wit, remarked after a visit to the hospital, “The doctors X-rayed my head and found nothing,” Rogell told me that story years later and always with a smile. “If I’d have known his head was there, I would have thrown the ball harder.”

Buck Jerzy, a long time bowling publicist, put it in perspective.

Jerzy got to travel and talk with Lubanski extensively during the Detroit All-Star Classic days in the 60s. Jerzy said, “Eddie was class, he was a gentlemen’s gentleman. Classy and humble, he would focus and help the younger guys. I was a new writer and he helped me, we would talk bowling and college hockey. He always gave me a new angle for a new story.”

Bowling success brought Lubanski international notoriety. Besides all the travel, he was very popular in the Detroit area. “I worked at the shoe rental counter at the Mayflower Lanes in Plymouth,” said Barbara Bushta of Livonia. “Mr. Lubanski came there in 1964. Everyone knew him and he was so gracious with autographs. He was a reluctant celebrity. He carried himself in such a fine way and very polite. There was a lot of gambling going on and he tipped well.”

His television matches on ABC-TV with Johnny King were legendary. King would sport giant Churchill cigars, much bigger than Eddie’s. During the pro-ladder matches Lubanski would use body-English to coax his pin roll. It was pure theater. King was known to jump over the ball returns after a double strike. King would trash talk and play to the crowds. Eddie was more reserved and ever so watchful. It was the equivalent of Muhammad Ali versus Joe Frazier. The King-Lubanski matches always got the largest ratings, they were the heavyweight performers. Don Carter and Dick Weber were other notable and popular television foes.
Lubanski’s two-finger, five-step delivery began to show great results along his bowling tournament travels. He won the World’s Invitational Championship in Chicago in 1958, and then followed that with an amazing four titles in the 1959 at the American Bowling Congress tournament in St. Louis. He was voted Bowler of the Year in 1959 and named to the All-American Bowling Teams in 1958 and 1959. He won numerous BPAA titles.

“I loved the feel and control the two-fingered ball gave me and most especially the revolutions I was able to manufacture,” said Lubanski. “Up until the early 1940s, the two-fingered grip was common, but by the end of the decade, nearly everyone had switched to the three-hole method because it was supposed to be more comfortable and effective,” he added. “But my fingers are short and thick and the primitive position gave me better control, slowed my roll and grabbed the lane sooner, giving me greater pin action.”

Lubanski related, “Detroit Recreation Center on Lafayette and Shelby. It had six floors of lanes and billiard tables, and a lot of ‘sharpies’. It was a bowler’s palace,” he said. “Eighty-eight lanes and the best cigar stand in the city. I won a lot of money there. People came there just to see the place, so much action. That was Detroit when it was glowing.”

He is noted in the Guinness Book of Records for carrying a 204 average for 25 years. “The fifties and sixties were so alive and exciting in Detroit,” he added.

Also, in 1959, Lubanski got to icon status when he bowled a 300 game on television. He had the “Great Double 300” in Florida at Miami’s Bowling Palace. “I was in a zone that you only find a few times in a career,” he told me about that night in 1959. “It was easily my proudest moment as an athlete. Don’t think bowlers aren’t athletes. Most times we would bowl six games and that took a toll. I advocated bowling to become a varsity sport in the NCAA.”

Lubanski has been inducted to five separate Halls of Fame. Most recently along with writers Kevin Allen and Del Reddy he was promoting his autobiography, King of the Pins. He was forthcoming about a past drinking problem and his new passion was for mentoring in Alcoholics Anonymous. “I owe my life to Betty,” he said. “I can afford to give back.”

In all, Lubanski posted 11 sanctioned 300 games. He captained the Detroit Thunderbirds in the team pro team National Bowling League in 1961 and 1962. They won the championship.

Bob Strampe remembered how after the National Bowling League failed, they put together a squad from Detroit and won the Bowling Proprietors Association of America five-man Team Title in Birmingham, Alabama. “We had Eddie, Billy Golembieski, Bob Kwolek, Pat Stone and Bob Ulrich. Lake Pointe Chrysler sponsored us,” said Strampe.

“Eddie was a fine gentleman and a great family man. He was a tough competitor and an even better teammate,” he added. “This was before the Professional Bowlers Association tour was in existence.” Strampe had bowled for the Minneapolis-St. Paul, Twin City Skippers. “We were disillusioned after the pro league failed. Eddie really picked us up at the five-man BPAA tournament.”
Those were the years of the Brewery sponsored team bowling wars, Stroh’s, Pfeiffer and Goebel’s all sponsored powerhouse squads along with Budweiser in St. Louis. Everyone wanted Eddie Lubanski on their team.

Son Paul said, “My father was a hero, a true hero and he inspired. He defeated his alcoholism and he anonymously helped save the lives of others. When we were young, dad travelled a lot, but he made time for us. He was so proud of his grandchildren. He loved watching Brett play hockey.”

Lubanski is survived by Betty, his wife of 62 years. Children, Janis, Edward, Paul, and Robert also survive their father. A daughter, Denise, predeceased him and he will be cremated and interred with her.

(Raymond Rolak is a well-travelled sports broadcaster and native Detroiter also.)

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*** DONALD PIENKOS RECEIVES AWARD ***

Editor—Dr. Paul S. Valasek forwarded this note to me, and I agreed that our readers should hear of the award given to Professor Pienkos.

Professor Donald Pienkos was awarded “Krzyż Oficerski Orderu Zasługi RP” issued by President of Poland Bronisław Komorowski. The medal is one of the most prestigious awarded to foreigners for their service to Poland. The medal was presented by Consul General Zygmunt Matynia at the Polish American Congress—Independence Day Award Luncheon Sunday, November 7, at the Polish Center of Wisconsin. A little bit about the medal: The Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland is bestowed on foreigners and Polish citizens permanently living abroad, who by their activities have made outstanding contributions to international cooperation and to bonds between the Republic of Poland and other nations and countries.

Waldemar Biniecki
President of Polish American Congress
Wisconsin

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*** COMPOSER HENRYK GÓRECKI DIES AT THE AGE OF 76 ***

submitted by Bronwyn Klimach

Editor—As is true of many items we print, this has nothing to do with genealogy. But it has a lot to do with Polish culture. This was posted by Bronwyn Klimach to the Polish Genius list.
12 Nov 2010

“This is a large blow not only for our orchestra but for the whole of Polish culture,” Joanna Wnuk-Nazarowa, director of the National Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra in Katowice, musicians who the composer was closely associated with, told the PAP news agency.

“This is a great loss,” agrees Antoni Wit, director of Poland’s National Philharmonic. “Many times when I travel abroad I am asked to include one of his works in the programme.”

He would be aged 77 in three weeks’ time. The announcement was made at 11.30 by Polish Radio 2, which interrupted its regular programming and continued with the Third Symphony of Sorrowful Songs, the work which made Górecki world famous in the early 1990s.

Last month, Górecki received the Order of the White Eagle, Poland’s highest state distinction.

Born in the village of Czernica near Rydułtowy in Silesia in 1933, he started studying music at the age of 19. Three years later he enrolled at the State Higher School of Music in Katowice to study composition with Boleslaw Szabelski.

In the mid-1950s—at the time of the post-Stalinist cultural thaw—he found himself at the forefront of the Polish avant-garde.

He also explored the folk music traditions in such works as *Three Pieces in Old Style* (1963) and *Old Polish Music* (1967-69).

His early pieces show a development from the folk-influenced worlds of Szymanowski and Bartok to more modernist techniques. The simple yet monumental style for which he came to be renowned became fully established in the 1970s, with such works as *Symphony No. 2 ‘Copernican’* (1972), *Symphony No. 3* (1976) and the Psalm setting *Beatus vir* (performed in Kraków to mark Pope John Paul II’s visit to Poland in 1979).

In the early 1980s, following the imposition of martial law in Poland, Górecki withdrew from public life and concentrated on choral settings, sacred music and chamber works.

**International best-seller**

In the 1990s, the recording of his *Third Symphony*, written twenty years earlier, achieved unprecedented international success, becoming the most popular recording of a work by a contemporary composer (thanks to a Nonesuch CD by the London Sinfonietta under David Zinman, with Dawn Upshaw as soloist).

Twenty-five years ago, Górecki’s music attracted new performers and audiences in the West. This led to the composition of three strong quartets, *Already it is Dusk* (1988), *Quasi una fantasia*
Gen Dobry!, Vol. XI, No. 11, November 2010 — 16

(1991) and Songs are Sung (2005), all of them commissioned and premiered by the Kronos Quartet from San Francisco.

Górecki pursued a teaching career for many years, as a faculty member of the Music Academy in Katowice n 1968-1979, and its Rector in 1975-79. He received numerous honorary doctorates, including those from the Academy of Catholic Theology in Warsaw, Warsaw University, the Music Academy in Kraków, the Catholic University in Washington, the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Victoria University in Victoria, Canada, and the University of British Columbia in Montreal.

Henryk Mikołaj Górecki used to spend much time in his beloved Tatra foothills.

He is survived by his wife, Jadwiga, a pianist, and two children: the daughter Anna who has developed a successful career as a pianist and the son, Mikołaj, who is also a composer. (mk/pg)

Editor—I’m not much of a fan of the classical music written in the last 50 years. But Górecki’s Third Symphony moved me profoundly the first time I heard it, and I have often listened to it over the years, whenever I felt strong enough to deal with the emotions it evokes. All I can say is, if you think “classical music” no longer has the power to speak to us, try listening to the Symfonia pieśni żałosnych (Symphony of Sorrowful Songs)!

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*** HELP WITH PLACE NAME REPRESENTATION ***

by Al Muth

Editor—On the Posen mailing list, there was recently a very interesting discussion of how to represent place names in the “place” field of genealogical software. This is a genuine problem, in view of how borders and administrative set-ups keep changing, especially when dealing with Germany and Poland. Here are a couple of posts from one gentleman that I thought were particularly valuable.

In view of the recent discussion on how to represent our ancestors’ place-names in the place field of our genealogical software, I thought a few of you might be interested in readings covering various aspects to keep in mind. My families are ethnic German Lutherans moving from Prussia to what became Russian Poland, so you will see greater emphasis on that vantage.


5. Per <https://wiki.familysearch.org/en/Germany_Gazetteers>, “German place-names used in the Place Search of the Family History Library Catalog are based on the German Empire as it existed in 1871.”

6. From the point of view of Germans from Russia, understand how the LDS catalogs place names in their Family History Library Catalog: <https://wiki.familysearch.org/en/Germans_from_Russia_Historical_Geography>


8. How to render place names for residents of areas further to the East, in the Pale of Settlement areas is even more complicated (see map at <http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Archivo:Map_showing_the_percentage_of_Jews_in_the_Pale_of_Settlement_and_Congress_Poland,_The_Jewish_Encyclopedia_(1905).jpg> [or <http://goo.gl/jMd9c>]. These are provinces that were historically part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, under Russian rule in the 19th century, and currently divided into new countries, which use place name spellings in Ukrainian and Belarusian. My language abilities are not up to the task of using modern spellings in these languages. Far less capable is the genealogical software for doing so. Transliteration is an option (see definition at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transliteration>), but remember, a transliteration is from one source language to another target language, e.g., Russian to English, or Russian to German. And, there is more than one system of transliteration out there.

Ultimately, I think it comes down to using the jurisdictions corresponding to how you will most easily find records about your ancestors. If one relies on microfilms from the LDS FHL catalog to do research, then it is easiest to set up the naming of place names according to the usage of the gazetteer designated by LDS catalogers as official for that country. The benefit of using LDS designations is that I can expect to find records for my ancestors at each and every level; you lose this by adopting the most recent jurisdictions and boundaries.

[Follow-up note]

Understanding what a jurisdiction is underlies the choice you make about place-name representation.

Not addressed in the suggested readings were the pros and cons of matching PNR (I’m tired of typing it) to the time period. Personally, I think you can drive yourself silly by following this precept too exactly. If one is born in one jurisdiction, married in another, died in yet another, without changing street address, then you have a MESS. With 100 names in your database, this may be feasible. With 10,000, also, should you want to.
Different kinds of jurisdictions overlap, and change and remorph at different paces. If you limit yourself to church records filmed by LDS, then you should at least attempt to understand how and why they chose to use the designated gazetteer (each country has one, and many European ones do not correspond to up-to-the-minute jurisdictions). A reminder, take another good look at Adalbert Goertz’s FAQ for Posen at <http://www.mennonitegenealogy.com/faq/faqposen.htm>

Easy on-line places that I use to check for jurisdictions are:

1. For USA (town, county, state), at <http://resources.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/townco.cgi>

2. For 1871 (actually, 1900 in this case) at <http://www.gemeindeverzeichnis.de/gem1900/gem1900.htm?gem1900_2.htm>. Look for Adobe PDF icons mid-page, you can download the second one, it’s an alphabetical list of places (smallest jurisdiction to greatest). You can also use the same URL, bottom of screen, to work from the highest level down to smallest (should you wish to see a list of villages in the same Kreis, for example).

3. Also take a look at <http://www.verwaltungsgeschichte.de/laender.html>.

4. For the Austrian Empire (including Bohemia/Böhmen and Galicia/Galizien), see <http://www.austriahungary.info/en/gazetteer1900>

These are good references for genealogists to use since they are based on references that LDS uses for its library catalog.

If one wishes to use a gazetteer to identify a specific parish to look in for one of these villages, then one must use the standard BOOKS that provide some of this information. Most are on microfiche or microfilm at your local FHC. Many are digitized and online, to be read directly online or downloaded either as a PDF or DjVu file.

Availability of these sources for digitalization depends on international copyright law, and who holds digitizing rights.

Al Muth, Michigan, USA

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*** HELP WITH BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, AND DEATHS IN POLAND ***

by Tina Ellis

Editor—Along similar lines, Tina Ellis posted a nice summary of info on the PBS list, recommending sites that will help new members.

I thought I would give a few sites in Poland for our new members, which contain indexes of births, marriages and deaths in Poland.
Nationwide index of marriages for all of Poland:


Index of marriages performed in the old Prussian/German province of Posen, which is Poznań in Polish:

<http://bindweed.man.poznan.pl/posen/search.php>

Baptisms, marriages, deaths and graves in the province of Pomorskie:


Geneteka covers births, marriages and deaths for all of Poland, Belarus, Lithuania, Russia and Ukraine:

<http://www.geneteka.genealodzy.pl/index.php>

I was able to find records for one of our list members as this site several months ago. Last week I found several records for one of my cousin’s family members, the side not related to me.

If you do not understand Polish, try using <http://translate.google.com/> to translate the sites, if they do not have an English translation.

Happy hunting everyone.

Tina

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*** A GOOD EXPERIENCE WITH THE HRODNA, BELARUS ARCHIVES ***

Editor—Brooke Schreier Ganz posted this note on the JewishGen newsgroup. I’ve heard other tales of researchers having good luck with the Belarus State Archives, which ran contrary to my expectations. I guess it just shows how much I know! In any case, I thought this was worth reprinting in case any of our readers might need some pointers along these lines.

I wanted to report back on a recent good experience I had getting information out of the National Historical Archives of Belarus in Grodno (Hrodna). The entire process took several months of back-and-forth contact over e-mail, but it yielded much more information than I was expecting, it didn’t cost terribly much, and I didn’t have to use a professional researcher or translator at any stage. I have heard reports that it is often quite difficult for people doing Jewish genealogy in Belarus to get information out from the country, but in this case they actually went above and
beyond the call of duty in providing me with helpful information on family members. So I hope this message will inspire people to at least try using them as a resource, based on what I did and what worked for me.

My husband’s paternal grandmother’s ancestors came from the city of Białystok and a nearby little town called Goniądz. Both of these are located in far northeastern Poland today (near the modern border with Belarus), but they used to be located in the Grodno Gubernia (province) of the Russian Empire. As a result, most of the area’s 19th Century vital records wound up stored in the Grodno (Hrodna) archives in Belarus, rather than in Poland. The Grodno archives actually have a very nice Website, with an English version: <http://archives.gov.by/eng/index.php?id=377130>

On March 28th of this year I sent an e-mail to the Grodno archives with the following query:

“I am seeking a copy of the 1874 census for Jews, for Białystok uezd in Grodno province. Resources on the Internet say that it is stored in Fond 24, Opis 7, Dyelo 213 at your archive. How much would it cost to get a full copy of all the pages of this document? Please reply and let me know. (I hope my Russian is not too bad -- I am using automatic translation software from Google Translate. Please excuse any errors.)”

As you can tell, I actually sent this e-mail to them in two languages, first in Russian text, which I translated and cut-and-pasted from the free and invaluable Google Translate service online (http://translate.google.com), and then with my original English text pasted below it, in the same e-mail. I continued this bilingual e-mail exchange while writing back and forth to the archives over the following months, and it was a big help to both them and to me, as they do not write correspondence in English and I am doubtful if they would have answered my e-mails if I had not included Russian text. Actually, for most of my later e-mails, I stopped using Russian and switched to Belorussian, which I noticed Google can now translate to and from, thinking that this would be better (and carry fewer unintentional political overtones for an ex-Soviet country). I took care to write in overly simple sentence structures to avoid potential translation problems, and I also often re-ran my Russian or Belorussian text back through Google Translate into English to see if it would still be readable and semi-grammatical, before sending it out.

Back to my request... I had asked for a copy of the entire 1874 (Russian Empire) census for Jews, and the archives replied back a few days later that I would need to provide the surnames of the people I was researching, as they could not make a copy of the entire 1874 census. So I sent back an e-mail with the eight surnames from my husband’s family that I am researching, made sure to note that I am looking for spelling variants of those names too, and added the small nearby town of Trzcianne, Poland to my search list too.

The archives then sent an e-mail saying that I would need to provide a notarized document from my husband stating that I was “allowed” to search these surnames on his behalf (?!). Okay, if that’s what was needed to pacify the bureaucracy, so be it. So I drew up a one page document that said I was researching such-and-such surnames from such-and-such towns and that my husband gave me permission to conduct this search, and we both trotted off to the local UPS
Store to sign it and have it witnessed by a notary public. I then scanned the document and e-mailed it to the archives. Of course, since it was written in English, goodness knows if they could read it; but whatever, it got the job done.

Then, silence from the archives for several weeks. I e-mailed back asking if everything was okay, and they replied, saying that an invoice would be sent to me shortly. Finally, about three months later, a preliminary invoice was sent to me requesting payment (in Belorussian funds), which I arranged through an international wire at my local bank, and then a month or two later a request for the remaining payment. It was unfortunate that I wasn’t able to get an estimated total of the cost of the research in advance, but luckily it turned out to not be a terribly large amount.

Finally, this fall, I received in the mail (postal, not e-mail) my completed research packet from the archives. And they did a terrific job! It turns out that they didn’t just research the 1874 census of the Jews, as I had originally asked, but they basically searched through *all* of their holdings for the eight surnames I had requested! This included the 1834 Russian Empire revision list (males only), the 1850 revision list (males only), a book about Jews born in the city of Bialystok in 1852, an alphabetical census of the city of Bialystok in 1853 (comparing people in that census to their official listings in the eighth and ninth revision lists from 1834 and 1850), an alphabetical census of the town of Goniądz in 1853 (ditto), the name lists of Jewish landowners from the town Trzcianne from February 22, 1857, a list of Goniądz’s Jews for 1874, Bialystok Jews who had acquired “receipts” for military duty in 1874, “In testimony on the postscript of the Jews” for 1875, and the Bialystok city census for 1897. In total, there were 18 single-spaced typewritten pages in the report they sent me -- hundreds of names!

(Two of the surnames I was researching were Cohen, a.k.a. Kagan in Cyrillic, and Levine, so as you can imagine, there were a lot of “hits” for those particular surnames.)

However, the research they sent me contained the data extracts typed entirely in Russian Cyrillic. Now, I could have hired somebody to translate it all for me, but I found a better way to handle it. I scanned each of the 18 pages and saved the output as 18 high-resolution TIF files. I then ran each .TIF file through this free OCR (optical character recognition) Website -- <www.newocr.com> -- making sure to choose “Russian” as the source language from the drop-down menu each time. The site would give me back the Russian words from the document in text that I could copy-and-paste. It had problems recognizing what to do with columns of data and dates, but it was still readable -- and still in Cyrillic. I opened the Google Translate site in a different tab of my web browser and pasted the Cyrillic text of each page into it and had it translate the page’s text into English. Presto change-o, I had changed the archives’ typewritten Russian text into English text that I could cut and paste into a word processing document. Google Translate did choke a little bit on some of the first names, particularly “Leib” and “Chaskel”, but I knew enough about common Hebrew/Yiddish names in the area and remembered enough of the Cyrillic alphabet from my seventh grade language class to fix up problems as I saw them.

So, if you don’t mind working entirely over e-mail, translating all your messages into Russian or Belorussian, not knowing exactly how much your research will cost ahead of time, not always hearing updates for weeks or months at a time, waiting about eight months from start to finish,
and receiving your results in Russian -- then you, too, can use the Grodno archives to help you with your genealogical research! :-) But seriously, they did a very nice job, did far more than I asked of them, and I thought they deserved a good mention and thanks for their work.

Finally, if you are researching any of the following surnames in the towns of Białystok, Goniądz, or Trzcinan (all now in Poland), please let me know and I would be happy to share both the scans of the original report and my translated document with you:

1) The LEWIN or LEVIN or LEVINE family
2) The KOROCHINSKY or KERECHINSKY or KOSCHINSKY family
3) The GREENSPAN family
4) The FARBER family
5) The FORMAN or FURMAN family
6) The COHEN or COHN family (a.k.a. KAGAN in the Russian records)
7) The KRAVITZ or KRAVETZ or KRAWIEC family
8) The FISH family

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*** UPCOMING EVENTS ***

Tuesday, December 14, 2010

NEXT MEETING OF THE TORONTO UKRAINIAN GENEALOGY GROUP - (TUGG)

Sonia Tkachuk van Heerden will speak on “Genealogy Sources in Europe for East European Research” followed by a Christmas Party - 7:30 - 9:30

From 7:30 – 9:30 p.m.

St. Vladimir Institute
620 Spadina Avenue
Toronto.

Contact: (905)-841-6707

[From a note posted to various sites by Jim Onyschuk]

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Thursday, December 16, 2010
NEXT EEGS MEETING

Time: Dinner 5:30-0700 (dinner Adults - $14.50, Children under 12 - $6.75 per plate)
Pre-registration required, e-mail <wmkuz@shaw.ca> by Dec. 2 (pay at the dinner)
Location: German Society of Winnipeg, 121 Charles Street Winnipeg, Manitoba. Dinner & meeting in the Jaeerklausre room (2nd floor)

Title: FAMILY HISTORY “SHOW & TELL” by EEGS members

Description: German smorg (pre-registered) followed by social evening

[From an e-mail sent out by Bill Kuz]
*** MORE USEFUL WEB ADDRESSES ***

<http://polmap.republika.pl/polska1.htm>
The 14 November 2010 issue of the free e-zine Nu? What’s New? <http://www.avotaynu.com/nu/V11N21.htm> mentioned the online map of Poland free at the above URL. It helps researchers deal with Poland’s many boundary changes throughout the centuries, and the long period (1795–1918) when it did not exist as an independent country. “Start with the 10th–11th century map (shown as X-XI) and click the Next button to see how Poland’s geography changed at different time periods.”

<http://www.familypedia.wikia.com>
The 15 November 2010 issue of Eastman’s Online Genealogy Newsletter [EOGN] called Familypedia “the biggest genealogy site you probably never heard of.” EOGN described it as “a Website with 84,983 online articles about deceased individuals plus another 106,312 genealogy-related pages.” You can read more about this service at <http://blog.eogn.com/eastmans_online_genealogy/2010/11/familypedia-the-biggest-genealogy-site-you-probably-never-heard-of.html>. Or just go to <http://blog.eogn.com/> and search for “Familypedia.”

<http://goo.gl>
The 22 November issue of EOGN -- had an article on Goo.gl, explaining that this is a URL shortening service. URLs are often ponderous and lengthy, impossible to remember and not much easier to key in. Many of us have used <http://www.TinyURL.com>, but Eastman feels Goo.gl offers better online security than other URL shorteners. Take a look, or read Eastman’s article <http://blog.eogn.com/eastmans_online_genealogy/2010/11/what-are-those-goozl-links.html> -- or Goo.gl link <http://goo.gl/ibhpz>. Note that some of the comments posted, and Eastman’s replies, go into the whole question of the security of these “short” links, in case you’d like to be better informed about that aspect of such services.

Dr. Paul S. Valasek pointed this site out to me. Seeking Michigan offers death certificates free on-line from 1897-1920.
Maureen Mroczek Morris sent me a welcome reminder that the newest edition of *Cosmopolitan Review* is available free at its Website. Thanks, Maureen!

On the Polish Genius list, Debbie Greenlee mentioned a note sent her by Andrzej Olejarz, a Polish Genius member, with a link to this Website. There are a number of different resources on this site. While it is aimed at those with German roots in Galicia, I suspect some of these resources will prove valuable to anyone with any roots in Galicia.

Andrew Zuba posted a note on the Polish Genius list, saying “This group is also trying to get the media’s attention regarding various Polish related matters. They are recruiting members and I feel that this is a wonderful group with which to be associated.” Andrew’s note came in the context of a discussion on efforts to get journalists and historians to quit using abominably inaccurate terms such as “Polish concentration camps.” As if the Poles had any say in the existence of those camps—if they had, they would have closed them instantly....

On the Lithuanian Genealogy list, Virginia Siskavich posted a note with this link to a free PDF of the 101 best Genealogy-related Websites according to *Family Tree Magazine*.

On the Poland-Roots list, Ceil Jensen posted this note. “Each Friday and Saturday the Polonica Americana Research Institute (PARI) on the campus of Orchard Lake, MI hosts genealogists, both seasoned researchers and newbies. This week was no different. Our ‘Polish Genealogy’ sign attracts people who want to see what we have to offer in the Wotta Building. A visitor asked about her ancestral village, Łazy Dębowieckie, a village in southern Poland. Small world! It is part of the same parish my grandmother Zdziebko hails from and we were there in September. Another researcher wanted to know about a surname which has the root word *ryba* (fish). His ancestral village is located near a lake, Jezioro Pakoskie. It made me think of this painting by Leon Wyczółkowski.” The above link shows you the painting, which I found really interesting.

On the Posen list, Reiner Kerp posted this URL, which features his attempt to translate the Polish Genealogical Word List into German. Under some circumstances, a list that gives German and Polish term equivalents could prove valuable, even if you don’t really speak either language. If so, bookmark this site!
On the Poland-Roots list, Debbie Greenlee gave this link to a recent visit to Poland by world travelers Tom Draeger and Shirley Ragsdale. Debbie said, “The report is short but you might enjoy it. You might want to make note of their guides for future reference.”

This is an interesting article I just saw, claiming Columbus was Polish, and the son of a king! I don’t know that I’m swallowing all this just yet, but it will be interesting to see if anything comes of it.