

PROJECT TO DISCOVER  
 SCHENECTADY **COUNTY'S** EASTERN EUROPEAN ROOTS  
 NEWSLETTER

January 2023 Vol. 10 No. 1  
 Our Tenth Year!

Dear Reader,

We are currently in semi-yearly publication as we continue to discover, document and digitally preserve genealogy, stories and pictures of Schenectady County's Eastern European immigrants. Have we gathered all the family stories, captured all the family pictures, remembered all those who were dear to us, connected our mutual heritages? Probably not. So, rather than discontinue our efforts completely, the editors decided to revert to fewer yearly issues in the hopes that you, Reader, might still want to contribute an article or two.

Please share your family history, help pass on the (electronic) word. Our deadlines are January 1<sup>st</sup> and July 1<sup>st</sup>. To submit your family story, pictures, etc., e-mail Phyllis Zych Budka: [abudka@nycap.rr.com](mailto:abudka@nycap.rr.com). Without your stories, there can be no newsletter. To be added to the newsletter e-mail list, contact Phyllis.

**The Schenectady Digital History Archive** To find our newsletters on-line:  
<http://www.schenectadyhistory.org/resources/eer/>

Thanks to Bernice Izzo, Carole McCarthy and Martin Byster for help in editing this newsletter!

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## Educational Opportunities



**Beginner Class part 1 On Zoom:** Class is twice a week for 5 weeks. Tuesdays and Thursdays 6-7:15 PM ET starting **January 3, 2023**. The 5-week session is \$99

**Beginner Class part 2 On ZOOM:**

Two class times available.  
Class is once a week for 10 weeks.  
Each 10-week session is \$99.

Thursday 6-7:15 PM ET starting **February 16, 2023**  
Wednesday 6-7:15 PM ET starting **February 15, 2023**

**Year two class part 2 On ZOOM:**

Class is once a week for 10 weeks.  
Each 10-week session is \$160.  
Tuesday 6-7:15 PM ET  
starting **January 10, 2023**

**Year three class part 2 On ZOOM:**

Class is once a week for 10 weeks.  
Each 10-week session is \$200.  
Wednesday 5:30-6:45 PM ET  
starting **January 11, 2023.**

**Use What You Learned on ZOOM:**

Join us for our new conversational class.  
Practice what you learned in class.  
Class meets once a week for 5 weeks.

Each 5-week session is \$69.

Level 1 Friday, 5:30-6:45 PM ET.

Starting **November 18, 2022**

Level 2 Monday, 5:30-6:45 PM ET.

Starting **November 28, 2022**

**Year four class part 2 On ZOOM:**

Class is once a week for 10 weeks.  
Each 10-week session is \$200.  
Monday 6:00-7:15 PM ET  
starting **February 13, 2023**

Part 3 classes for beginner, year two and year three will start in mid-March 2023. Schedule to be announced in February 2023.



To register: [www.paf-welcomehome.org](http://www.paf-welcomehome.org)  
For more information contact: [dorenaw@paf-ct.org](mailto:dorenaw@paf-ct.org)  
Polish American Foundation of Connecticut

# FINDING COUSIN HALINA

Phyllis Zych Budka

## **Not the End of the Story**

I'm excited to tell this story to others interested in genealogy, but I've decided to tell it "backwards," with the conclusion first: at long last, I've met an honest to goodness, Polish blood relative on my Father's Zych side, Halina.

Halina's Grandfather Antoni and my Grandfather Józef / Joseph Zych were brothers, so we are second cousins. Born in Nowy Targ, Poland, as were my paternal grandparents, today Halina makes her home in Sweden. This fall, we met for the first time on Zoom; a few weeks later, we had a long phone chat - all in English.

While I knew all the aunts, uncles and cousins who were born and brought up in my home town of Schenectady, New York, it wasn't until the previous generation was gone that I became curious about those in Poland. I've written about my travels and genealogy quest in this newsletter. A list of newsletter issues with Nowy Targ stories is found on the last page. The newsletter can be accessed at:

<https://www.schenectadyhistory.org/resources/eer/index.html>

It was a joy to chat with Halina and ask about family history. On our second chat, she recounted the outlines of a family story she had recently learned from an older brother: while my grandfather Joseph wasn't the oldest son, he was apparently expected to take over the family farm from his father, Grzegorz. Father and son argued, and Joseph left for America. Halina said she'd continue to ask for family information.

## **Nowy Targ, Poland**

I've been to Nowy Targ 3 times on short visits, twice with Polish friend and translator Ania. Nowy Targ (New Market) history extends to the 13<sup>th</sup> century and today the city documents its past both in print and electronically on its website. On my visit in 2010, the modest Muzeum staff in the town square was building a website for old pictures. Thanks to my local cousin Paul Jendzezyk, we contributed several old images.

Zych and Róžański surnames are documented in Nowy Targ back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Thanks to the Church archivist, I have my direct lineage to 1800 on both sides. Today, commercial signs display those names around the town.

I've written about my Father's 1936 trip to Poland with the Harcerstwo, Polish Scouts and the photo album that appeared on my doorstep a few years ago. When the Muzeum again had an outreach for old pictures through their Facebook pages, I scanned most of the trip album pictures and sent the files. Covid hit and for me, a long and impatient wait ensued. Would the Muzeum use my images? My motivation for sending the images was the hope of finding living relatives on the Zych and Róžański (grandmother's maiden name) sides.

Museum Curator Barbara Bełtowska contacted me and said the exhibit of the 1936 trip pictures was scheduled for this past October! The next pages tell this part of the story.

# FINDING COUSIN HALINA

Phyllis Zych Budka

## Temporary exhibition "My Dad's Genealogical Journey, Nowy Targ 1936"

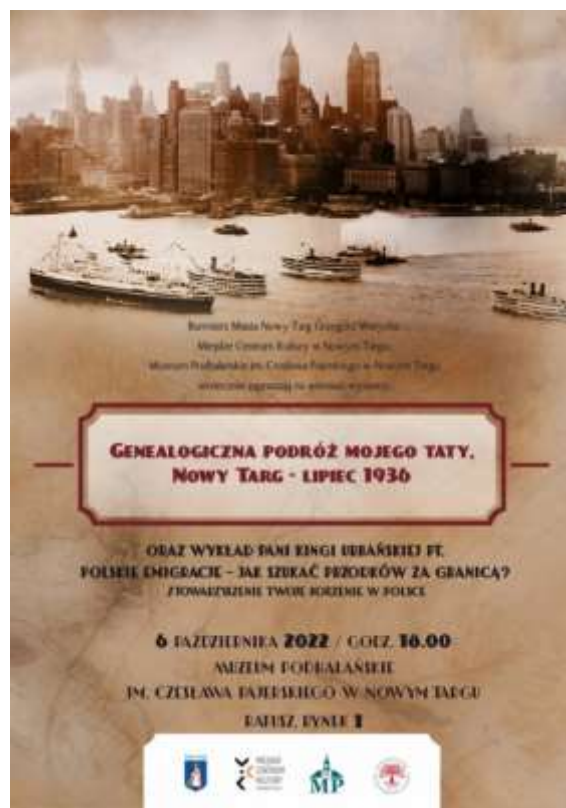


Fig. 1 Poster announcing the exhibit; translation below

**Mayor of the City of Nowy Targ Grzegorz Watycha,  
Municipal Cultural Center in Nowy Targ  
Podhalańskie Museum. Czesław Pajerski in Nowy Targ  
cordially invite you to the Temporary Exhibition: My Dad's Genealogical Journey,  
Nowy Targ 1936**

If you want a future, you must have a past. Podhale Museum. Czesław Pajerski in Nowy Targ, as part of the *Become the creator of the exhibition* project, invites you to the opening of the exhibition: *My dad's genealogical journey, Nowy Targ 1936*. The exhibition will be on display until the end of November 2022. The opening of the exhibition will take place on October 6 and will begin with a lecture by Mrs. Kinga Urbańska, a genealogist and historian, founder and president of Your Roots in Poland and the Association of Your Roots in Poland entitled. *Polish emigration - how to look for ancestors abroad?* During the lecture we will find out why our ancestors emigrated, what were the most common destinations and how to check it. Various types of emigration

# FINDING COUSIN HALINA

Phyllis Zych Budka

documentation will be presented, Internet portals and institutions that will help us obtain information about the fate of our ancestors abroad will be indicated.

The main character of the exhibition is Stanisław Zych, who, together with a group of Polish-American scouts, sailed on the transatlantic "Batory" to Poland. He spent many days with his relatives in Nowy Targ, thus starting the genealogical search for his ancestors, which is continued today by his daughter Phyllis Zych Budka, who has visited our city several times at the special invitation of the city authorities, and whose commitment inspires us today to take up the topic of genealogy.

The exhibition is a kind of journey through time, which tells us the individual history of people, but also allows us, the inhabitants of Nowy Targ, or you, dear tourist, to take a walk through the old streets of the City, see how life was here, but above all, it emphasizes how important our identity is, which we can discover just in the past.

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## Opening Day



Fig. 2 October 6, 2022, Nowy Targ Museum: That's me, on Skype, reading the text below translated into Polish by Polish friend Joanna Socha.

Good Evening. I am Phyllis Zych Budka and I live in Schenectady, New York. My paternal grandparents, Rozalia Różańska Zych and Józef Zych came to Schenectady from Nowy Targ more than 100 years ago.

In the summer of 2008, I was in Krakow for 3 weeks to teach English through the Kosciuszko Foundation. I had recently become interested in my family history. Unfortunately, there was no one left in the older generation to ask my many questions.

## FINDING COUSIN HALINA

Phyllis Zych Budka

I grew up in the same house as Babcia Zych. I vaguely remembered the picture over her sofa: it was long and narrow, showing a town along a river at the base of mountains, with the words at the bottom: Nowy Targ. That was a clue!

During my Krakow stay, a kind man drove me to Nowy Targ one Sunday afternoon. We walked around the cemetery and I saw many familiar surnames on the tombstones: Zych, Róžański – and many others that were the family names in my Schenectady parish community, St. Adalbert's Parish. Their relatives had also come from Nowy Targ to work in the General Electric Company and the American Locomotive Company in Schenectady!

In 1936, the Polish National Alliance organized a trip to Poland for young American Harcerstwo leaders, including my Father, Stanley Zych. Fifty years later, in 1986, the group met in Chicago for a reunion. My Father was disabled and unable to attend but received a Get Well card signed by the group.

On a winter day, about 2 years ago, a package arrived at my home. Inside was the album of trip pictures, some that are in the exhibit today, with a note on the cover: "Return to Sophie Zych," my Mother. I had never seen this album and was totally surprised. The note with the album was from the daughter of Genia Gunther, another trip member. Genia's daughter found this album as she was clearing her deceased Mother's home. My Mother, Sophie, had sent the album to Genia to share with the Reunion long ago in 1986! For the first time, I saw the pictures of Uncle Tony, Cousin Helen. I don't know anything about them. Distance, wars and language have separated us.

I'm so happy to be at this ceremony because I'm quite sure that some of you are my cousins – we just don't know it yet.



Fig. 3 Exhibit space; the framed green image is a reproduction of the album cover; Refreshments on Opening Day

# FINDING COUSIN HALINA

## Phyllis Zych Budka



Fig. 4 How nice to be included in the exhibit!



Fig. 5 1936 era recruitment poster.

## FINDING COUSIN HALINA

Phyllis Zych Budka

**Stanley Zych, my Father**



Fig. 6 Cousin Halina recently helped identify the Nowy Targ people in this picture. My Father Stanley Zych is the young man in a suit. Back row: elderly couple are Halina's grandparents, Antoni and Rozalia Zych; Helena, their daughter, in white dress; young boys in front row, their sons, left to right, Aleksander (youngest), Józef and Stanislaw – tallest – Halina's Father.



# FINDING COUSIN HALINA

Phyllis Zych Budka

**Table 1 Ancestry of Phyllis and Halina**

Ancestor	Name	Date of Birth
Great Great Grandfather	Jan Zych	?
Great Grandfather	Grzegorz Zych	1832
Great Uncle	Marcin	1868
Phyllis's Grandfather	Józef	1874
Halina's Grandfather	Antoni	1876
Great Aunt	Agnieszka	1881
Great Aunt	Katarzyna	1882
Great Uncle	Jan	1890



Fig. 8 A variety of pictures

## Thank You, Barbara!

Nov. 2, 2022 Message from Curator Barbara Beltowska:

Hello Phyllis, I was just in the city hall and I went to Mr. M..., who works there. When I saw him I was sure he was your family because he looks like Uncle Tony in the pictures.

# FINDING COUSIN HALINA

Phyllis Zych Budka

The table below lists “The Project To Discover Eastern European Roots Newsletter” issues with articles I’ve authored or edited about Nowy Targ.

All newsletters are on-line at The Schenectady Digital History Archive:

<https://www.schenectadyhistory.org/resources/eer/index.html>

**Table 2 Newsletter with Articles About Nowy Targ**

Title	Author	Issue
Nowy Targ, Poland: Do YOUR Roots Extend There, Too?	Phyllis Zych Budka	June 2014 Vol 1 No 3
A Small Mystery	Phyllis Zych Budka	April 2018 Vol 5 No 2
More Nowy Targ Connections – More Cousins!	Edited by Phyllis Zych Budka	April 2018 Vol 5 No 2
The 1936 Album	Phyllis Zych Budka	April 2020 Vol 7 N0 2

In the process of publishing the newsletter, several people with Nowy Targ roots or Zych roots have identified themselves. Some of them are listed in the April 2018 Vol 5 No 2 issue.