

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

April 2014 Vol. 1 No. 2

Welcome to our second newsletter! The first issue was very well received and we have added many names to our distribution list.

Our objective is to discover, document and digitally preserve genealogy, stories, and pictures of Schenectady County's Eastern European immigrants. We're on our way, but we need each of you to share family history, help pass the (electronic) word and perhaps participate in the Projects listed below.

Three Project Projects!

Project 1

Consider donating hard copy books/booklets of family genealogy, church and fraternal organization anniversary mementos to the Schenectady County Historical Society. To initiate the donation process, contact Melissa Tacke, Librarian/Archivist, who will offer information, answer questions, clarify the procedure, document the gift appropriately, and refer people elsewhere if necessary.

Melissa Tacke, Grems-Doolittle Library, Schenectady County Historical Society
32 Washington Avenue, Schenectady, NY 12305

Phone: 518-374-0263 www.schenectadyhistorical.org

Many thanks to Sandra Chmielinski Dimke, whose excellent book, "A Look Back, A family history / genealogy of the Chmielinski, Rykowski, Gwiazdowski, Purzycki, Smolinski, Grzybowski, Kwiatkowski, and Grudzinski families" inspired this Project.

Project 2

Collect digital photos taken before 1950 of First Communion (such as the photo of Dorothy Finley in Bernice Izzo's story below), Graduation, Wedding or other significant life events from now until December 31st. Include name(s), event, place and date.

Send to Phyllis Budka at

abudka@nycap.rr.com

We will collate and publish them electronically as a group after next January.

Project 3

Barbara Pyzanowski Bentley, a Schenectady native who now lives in Texas, writes: "There is a website www.findagrave.com that has built a huge global database of burial information. It can include gravestone photographs, personal photographs, birth and burial data. The concept is to capture the burial information for genealogy researchers and before nature or vandals destroy the gravestones. So many of our Polish ancestors are buried in St Mary's Cemetery and St. Adalbert's Cemetery. Over 1000 names have been entered into this website for St Mary's Cemetery, but they

are names only with no gravestone photographs. It would be a great contribution if someone would photograph the gravestones in either or both these Polish cemeteries and load them to www.findagrave.com. Since I live in Texas, it's not possible for me to go there and take the gravestone photos. BUT if someone was interested in volunteering to take gravestone photos, they could mail me a disc of photographs and I would gladly volunteer to do the computer work of uploading the pictures to the website. This would also divide the work load, so it would not be too much for one person to take on. It's all about preserving the links to our past."

Enter www.findagrave.com website and, under "Find Graves," click "Search 112 million grave records" to get search form. To see two of Barbara Bentley's entries, enter one of the following in the form name fields: Antoniette Halas Pyzanowski or Anthoni J. Pyzanowski. Barbara Pyzanowski Bentley can be contacted at: bentley4@satx.rr.com

The Maska Dramatic Circle
My Scrapbook Project
Phyllis Zych Budka



Maska's first program cover 1933

The Maska Dramatic Circle existed between 1933 and 1942. The group had more than 150 members and over 450 patrons. They put on 55 plays in Polish, mostly at the PNA Hall on Crane Street.

My parents, Sophie Korycinska Zych and Stanley Zych were very active in the group.

I am capturing the contents of their scrapbook and adding information from newspaper searches from fultonhistory.com. My Polish has improved as I translate the many articles from Dziennik dla Wszystkich and also the pages of the numerous programs and newsletters.

If anyone has any Maska pictures or other artifacts, please let me know. Also, I need a good picture of the PNA Home on Crane Street.

abudka@nycap.rr.com

This is a fascinating picture of our Polish community in the 1930s!

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As I finalize this Newsletter, the latest issue of my favorite *other* newsletter, "Gen Dobry!" has just arrived in my In Box. It's a wealth of information! Take a look at the website Polish Roots - The Polish Genealogy Source and sign up for your own issue at:
<http://www.polishroots.org/GenDobry/tabid/60/Default.aspx>

The information covers far more than today's political boundaries, like our own collective heritage. Editor William F. "Fred" Hoffman was kind enough to tell his readers about our project in the February 28 2014 issue of "Gen Dobry!" Here's this issue's Contents:

Don't Dismiss Facebook Too Quickly!

Letters to the Editor

Support the Poznań Project

The Latest from www.GenTeam.at

More on PolishOrigins' Galicia Tour

In Their Words: Russian Is Back in Print

Upcoming Events

More Useful Web Addresses

You May Reprint Articles...

If you missed previous issues, you can find them at the website. Phyllis Budka

My Mother Dorothy and Life on Paulding Street

Bernice Izzo



Fig. 1 Dorothy Finley – First Communion 1931

The girl in this First Communion picture (Fig. 1) is my mother, Dorothy Finley Izzo. As a child, she lived at 7 Paulding Street. My grandfather, Raymond Finley and my grandmother, Cecila Grubala Finley with my mother Dorothy Finley Izzo and her brother, Thomas Finley moved in with my grandmother's family when they returned from Minnesota in 1930. They lived there until 1935, when the family moved to Saratoga Springs. When you talked to my mother, you knew these were the best years of her childhood.

I guess the question is WHY? I would say because she was surrounded by family,

the Grubalas, a good sized Polish family, and lots of children to play with.



Fig. 2 My mother (first row left), her brother Tom (first row right) and Cousin Annette (second row), taken on Paulding Street.



Fig. 3 Aunt Vicki (back row, right), my mother (front row sitting in the middle), my Uncle Tom (front row sitting on the chair's arm.) The remaining children were the Dobies children. Can you pick out the twins?

My Mother Dorothy and Life on Paulding Street

Bernice Izzo

They lived with my mother's grandfather, Franciszek Grubala. Upstairs, lived her Uncle John Grubala, his wife Anna and their three children, Theresa, Annette and Carl. In the house next door lived my mother's Aunt Vicki Grubala Jaskiewicz, her husband Uncle Jake, and their son Edward. Two blocks away, lived Aunt Anna Grubala Palaski with her husband Gene and their three children. Aunt Vicki was my mother's favorite. She made a lot of my mother's clothes and always made an outfit for my mother's doll. (By the way, my mother did not have a store bought dress until she made her Confirmation.) When life got tough for my mother, she could cry on Aunt Vicki's shoulder and Aunt Vicki would listen and take care of her

The neighborhood was filled with children as you can see in Figure 3. The Dobies lived next door to Aunt Vicki and they had five children, including a set of twins. There was a number of other children on the street. My mother, at the ripe old age of eighty, was able to tell me who lived in each house on Paulding Street when she lived there.

Now what did they do? They played dolls with paper dolls. They would use marshmallow boxes for beds (Remember when campfire marshmallows came in boxes?) and make blankets and pillows for the dolls. This was summer afternoons on the front pouch.

The other game they played was Skelly, which they played with bottle caps . The

Old Dorp (Gazette) actually wrote an article about the game after interviewing my mother's cousin, Carl (Grubala) Gilbert. (Name was changed at the beginning of WWII.) It appeared in the Gazette on Dec. 29, 1981, and again on September 5, 2005. All you needed for this was a cement sidewalk, a bottle top and a pick of chalk to draw the squares. When my mother moved to Saratoga, she had to teach the Saratoga kids how to play that game. So as Old Dorp indicated, I would definitely think it was a game special to Eastern Avenue hill.

Of course, they played hop scotch and jumped rope. But one of their favorite things was roller skating down Colombia Street hill. As you would expect, this activity led to bumps and bruises. One time, my mother slid down the hill on her back side and suffered with a very large sore for a number of weeks.

No matter what the bumps and bruises were, my mother always made living on Paulding St. sound idyllic, even if it was in the middle of the depression and there was no money.

Great Grandpa Walenty Giniecki, a.k.a. William Giniecki

Carole McCarthy

From about the age of 5 to 15 years, my sister and I spent our summers helping our Tys Grandparents on their 50 acre farm on Consaul Rd. in Niskayuna, NY. We would travel from Lynn, MA, to Schenectady, NY, the first week of June, to arrive in time to help pick the bumper crop of strawberries that was always a big money maker for our grandparents. We stayed the entire summer till the end of August helping with black berries, raspberries, tomatoes, corn, beans and haying. You would have thought that after spending all that time on my Tys Grandparents' farm, I would have known that my Great Grandparents, William and Josephine (Bamber) Giniecki lived across the street on their 63 acre farm! It wasn't until I was a young adult that I realized that the parents of my Grandmother, Mary (Giniecki) Tys, and some of her siblings, lived across the street.

To this day, it is still a mystery to me why I didn't know. Was I just not paying attention? Did I just shut the information out for some reason? Was it a secret? My Tys cousins and I often looked through our Tys Grandmother's picture albums that she had in her living room. I think that is how we initially found out about the Giniecki family. Grandma had 4 sisters and 3 brothers They were all born in Schenectady. In later years I do remember my mother telling me a little about the Ginieckis. She told me that my Grandma Tys' parents, my Great Grandparents Giniecki, emigrated from Poland in 1889. At that time, great



Figure 1: 1921 William & Josephine Giniecki on their Consaul Rd. farm

grandma was pregnant and got very sick on the crossing. My mother said they came from the port of NY to Schenectady in a horse drawn wagon. On the way, Josephine gave birth to her first child in the United States, Anna, under a tree, along the side of the road. Around 1908, Anna married Joseph Janowski and between 1920 and 1930, they moved to Chicago, IL. I never met Anna since she died in 1935. I believe I did meet some of my Grandma Tys' sisters, Maggie, b. 1890, and Rosie, b. 1897, while I was there on the farm but we never went across the street to visit. It was probably only at my Tys Grandfather's wake and funeral, in 1964, that I met many of the Giniecki relatives. Little did I know then

Great Grandpa Walenty Giniecki, a.k.a. William Giniecki

Carole McCarthy

that in 2013 I would be traveling to Poland and attend Mass in the same church where my Great Grandparents Walenty Giniecki and Josephine Bamber were married in Ostroróg, Poland on 31 October 1885. Since then, I have discovered that my 2nd great grandparents were married there also, on 25 October 1846.

My genealogy research on my Giniecki branch of the family began in 2008 when I became the sole owner of the remainder of the Tys farm, about 2 acres, including the 60 x 40 foot barn, circa 1910, and the 1932 farmhouse that my Grandfather Tys built. At that time, I started to do research on the Tys farm, since I thought it would be impossible to trace my ancestors, since all my grandparents were born in Poland, except my Grandmother Mary Giniecki-Tys. So after tracing my Tys ancestral farm back to 1738 when it was owned by the Dutch Reformed Church, I started to look for Giniecki in the census. I thought it would be easy because I knew the names of all my grandmother's siblings and most of their vitals since my mother wrote out the family tree when she was in her 80s. However, as we all know, nothing is easy when doing genealogical research, especially when you are dealing with Polish surnames. It took me many years to find the Giniecki family in the census because in the four Federal censuses available, 1900-1930, the family name was never spelled G-I-N-I-E-C-K-I. Here are the surnames listed for William (Walenty) Giniecki for each Federal census:

1900 Kamaski
1910 Kamensky
1920 Finicki
1930 Ginceski

The only way I found the Giniecki family in the 1920 and 1930 census was by perusing the names of streets listed in the town of Niskayuna census until I found Consaul Road and then looking at all the family names to find William and Josephine with Anna b. 1889, Maggie b. 1890, Mary b. 1893, Stanley b. 1895, Rose b. 1897, Francis b. 1900, Edgar b. 1905 and Vincent b. 1908. I was later to learn that there were 3 other boys born that didn't survive, including their first one named Jan, born in Zapust, Kluczewo, Samotuly, Poland. For the 1900 and 1910 Federal census, I was able to find my great grandparents because my mother's memoirs said they lived on Lexington Avenue, which at that time was part of Niskayuna. So again, I had to go page by page to find the right family.

Unfortunately, most of the 1890 Federal census was destroyed by fire, so I decided to find out when my Giniecki Great Grandparents bought the Lexington Avenue 20 acre farm. A search of deeds in the Schenectady County Clerk's office led me to the results. Just six years after coming to the USA, they were able to buy the 20 acre farm on Lexington Avenue from Albert and Mary VanVorst for \$7800, on 8 April 1895. Wow, how did they save all that money and still support their growing family of 3 daughters with their first son on the way? And then, by 1913, Great Grandpa

Great Grandpa Walenty Giniiecki, a.k.a. William Giniiecki

Carole McCarthy

Giniiecki had enough money to buy the 63 acre farm on Consaul Road. By the way, the surname on both deed indices was Gipeski! Three years later, on August 16, 1916, Joseph Tys and Mary Giniiecki were married at St. Mary of Czestochowa Church in Schenectady. And in 1925, Joseph and Mary Tys bought a 50 acre farm across the street from Mary's parents, William and Josephine Giniiecki. They paid \$8,000 for the farm and it had, what people said, was a hundred year old house on the property. My grandmother didn't want to buy the property because the house was so old, ~1820, and had no running water, no electricity and no indoor plumbing, a step down from the Lexington Ave farmhouse where the married Giniiecki children lived until they could afford their own place. In order to get his wife to agree to the purchase, Grandpa Tys promised that he would build her a new house, which he did in 1932. My grandfather wanted to buy the farm because it had a 'new' 60 x 40 foot barn. As it turns out, the 'new' barn was a lot older than he thought since it was made with beams and siding from three other barns that had beams over 200 years old!

So why didn't I know my Giniiecki Great Grandparents and granduncles and aunts since they only lived across the street? That is still a mystery to me but it may have something to do with what my mother told me. She said that her father bought the farm across the street from his in-laws, thinking that he would get a lot of help from them. Apparently the

'help' never materialized so, being the stubborn and hot headed person that he was, he might have told them that he didn't need their help and told them never to step foot on his property again! Could be??

(To Be Continued)-----

From My Maska Scrapbook--Phyllis Budka



Adventures on a Honeymoon – Antoni Jax; December 16, 1934 PNA Hall

Rosemary Gontarska and my father, Stanley Zych

Memories of Our Grandfather, Michael Chmielowiec

Ella Krajewski & Eleanor Monlea – Written by Ella

Memories of our Polish grandfather Michael Chmielowiec, a/k/a/ Melewicz, are of pure Kindness. He always took time to talk, show and encourage both my twin sister and me in everything we did. He had so much patience for us. We learned many things from him about gardening, weather, chickens and travel. He always read the Polish newspaper to us every day.

My grandfather, as all Polish immigrants, was very resourceful. He was a shoemaker and fixed all the family's shoes. As little children, a whittled wooden pair of shoes for my sister and myself were given to us. To this day, I have mine in my cabinet. He loved to tinker and create. He especially loved planting, and planted the entire garden, and loved tending to the potatoes, beans, chickens, and the cats with knowledge, kindness, and the patience of a saint. I practiced making the potato mounds just right as he, my grandfather, would do to plant the potatoes. It actually is an art form.

I learned to know what the approaching weather would be by the color of the night sunset, and to see the next day's weather or storm that was coming, or big winds by how to read the sky. I was a child who by watching my grandfather learned the things of nature, the beautiful sound and song of the Polish language. I learned the way of the land, the season, the weather for the day ahead of any weather forecast on radio.

When my grandfather would go to downtown Schenectady, he always dressed with pride in looking well kept: tweed jacket, brown hat, and polished shoes.

His favorite sandwich was liverwurst on rye bread. He would always talk of Poland, and I felt I knew the old country and lived with it's people. So descriptive in his words he was. I learned Polish as it was spoken to us, and we did answer in Polish. My twin and I were bi-lingual children and didn't know it. It was second nature to us by living with it. We could go from Polish to English instantly and answer and speak it.

He was a kind gentle man who saw so much of horror of the war. Polish traditions were kept alive and the Polish traditions on every Saint's feast day, Christmas, Easter, and Birthdays. To this day when birthdays are celebrated and the songs sung, always is followed by "Sto Lat nie zia zia nam".

I was a child who was never in Poland, but walked and lived the steps as if I grew up with all of them in my grandfather's life. Pride, honor, is the Polish grandfather I knew and loved, honest and good and always teaching through his good example in all things was my " Pa". From the Polish pride instilled in me, working in another state to continue the Polish culture, I went to the courses of POLISH HISTORY, given by the Felician Sisters who taught Polish in this course.

Polish traditions, St. Mary's Church, family dinner with talk of connections to roots. The memories still live....

My grandfather always listened to the beautiful Obereks and Polkas. Goralu was my favorite to this day. The Polish eagle will always speak of Polish pride. It is so as it was.

Ella and Eleanor – The Polish Twins

Sto Lat - Wikipedia

"Sto lat" (One Hundred Years) is a traditional Polish song that is sung to express good wishes, good health and long life to a person. The song's author and exact origin are unattributed. The song is sung both at informal gatherings (such as birthdays or name days) or at formal events, such as weddings. At state events it is not unusual to hear it performed by an orchestra, a military band. It is also noted for being an integral part of Polish immigrant culture even long after assimilation.

The song serves the equivalent function of "Happy Birthday To You" or "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow". Although a secular song, its message is similar to that of the Ukrainian song "Многая літа" (Многая літа, Many Years), derived from a Byzantine liturgical hymn.[]

The phrase "Sto lat!" is also often used to wish someone longevity or good fortune, or as a toast, without the song. However, the use of "Sto lat!" in this manner will often lead to the song being sung by those present. The phrase is also sometimes used to acknowledge someone's sneezing - similarly to "God bless you", though for that particular occasion a simple *na zdrowie* ("To your health") is more frequently used.

Sto lat, sto lat,
Niech żyje, żyje nam.
Sto lat, sto lat,
Niech żyje, żyje nam,
Jeszcze raz, jeszcze raz,
Niech żyje, żyje nam,
Niech żyje nam!

This translates roughly into English as:

A hundred years, a hundred
years,
Let him/her live, live for us.
A hundred years, a hundred
years,
Let him/her live, live for us.
Once again, once again,
Let him/her live, live for us,
Let him/her live for us!

Contact Re-established – Phyllis Zych Budka

Last week, with the help of a local relative, the postal service and the internet, I made contact with my husband's (Alfred Budka) father's relatives in Lutocin, Poland. Uncle Jan Budka's great-granddaughter, 17, e-mailed a family update, including the following about Jan, who passed away in 2006:

"Jan Budka and wife Anna were born in the countryside in XIXw. under Russian rule. Poland was not on the map of Europe, to 1918.

Our father and grandfather Jan (junior) was born under Russian rule in Lutocin 14 September 1914r. It is a large communal village in Mazowsze.

In 22 years old served in the military in Wołkowysku (Belarus) and in 1939 in II world War and fought at the front on the river Bzurą (Poland). Under Tomaszowo Lubelskie he was captured by German and was deported to Germany. He worked there for a role in the Host Bruna in Borken. He returned to Polish after 3.5 years. He must have 2 years to hide from the Germans. He slept in the dugout. After the war he worked on a farm as a musician and played the trumpet. For 40 years he was kapelmistrem orchestra Lutocinie."

**Marriage record of Joseph Zych and Rozalia Rozanski
St. Adalbert's RC Church January 30, 1904
My Paternal Grandparents - Phyllis Zych Budka**

<p>CONTRAHENTIUM NOMINA.</p> <p>5. Zych et Rozanska</p> <p>Marriage</p>	<p>Die 30 mensis Januarii A. D. 1904 praemissis 3 bannis, matrimonium inierit Josephus Zych, juvenis ex loco Nowy Targ, Galicia filius Gregorii et Mariannae ex Stembinski Rozalia Rozanska, virgo ex loco eodem filia Bartholomaei et Catherinae ex Wadowska Testes adfuerunt: Joannes Pajerski et Antoni Pekora</p> <p>Adnotationes:</p> <p>1-31-1940</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Rector Rev. Joseph Gogolewski</p>
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CONTRAHENTIUM NOMINE Contracting Names 5 Zych and Rozanski
The 30th day of January A. D. 1904 ? 3 banns, marriage ?
Joseph Zych, youth from Nowy Targ, Galicia, son of Grzegorz and Marianna nee Glembinski
Rozalia Rozanska, a maiden, from the same place, daughter of Bartlomej and Catherine nee Wadowska
Witnesses present: John Pajerski and Antoni Pekora
Rector Rev. Joseph Gogolewski



**St. Adalbert's Church
1903 - 1909**

"MASKA" (MASK) Dramatic Circle Ticket



Second Presentation of the Season
On Sunday, 17 November, 1935
At the Polish Home, Schenectady

"Hospital for the Insane" and
"Catching Fish Without Fishing"

The program begins promptly at 7:30
A special acrobatic performance
TICKET 35¢ - Includes a Dance after
the Performance

From my parents' scrapbook
Phyllis Zych Budka

Dear Reader:

Many thanks to Bernice, Ella and Eleanor, and Carole and for their family stories.

Bernice Izzo is building a database of names and places mentioned in newsletter articles that can be shared with others doing genealogy research.

Please send this newsletter to anyone who might be interested.

To be added to the newsletter e-mail list, contact Phyllis.

Next newsletter deadline: June 1st. The frequency of this newsletter's publication depends on the volume of family stories we receive.

To submit your family story, pictures, etc, e-mail Phyllis Zych Budka:
abudka@nycap.rr.com