



# Gen Dobry!

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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://www.polishroots.org/gendobry/gendobry\\_index.htm](http://www.polishroots.org/gendobry/gendobry_index.htm)

If you’d like *Gen Dobry!* in PDF form, this issue is available for downloading here:

[http://www.polishroots.org/gendobry/PDF/GenDobry\\_IX\\_2.pdf](http://www.polishroots.org/gendobry/PDF/GenDobry_IX_2.pdf)

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\*\*\* BOOK REVIEW: JONATHAN SHEA'S *GOING HOME* \*\*\*

Reviewed by Deborah Greenlee <[daveg@airmail.net](mailto:daveg@airmail.net)>

***Going Home: A Guide to Polish American Family History Research***

Jonathan D. Shea, A. G., Language and Lineage Press, 2008

*Editor—I was delighted when Debbie Greenlee told me she'd written a review of Jonathan Shea's new book, Going Home, and offered to let me print it in Gen Dobry! I've been wanting to publish a review of the book since it was finally ready to sell, earlier this month. But since I'm the copublisher, and gave Jonathan some technical assistance with the book, I could not write the review myself—I'm hardly what you'd call unbiased. But I really think people need, and want, to know about this book! Fortunately, Debbie offered her review. She has no particular ties with Language & Lineage Press, and is perfectly capable of giving her own, independent evaluation. So here it is, and thanks, Debbie!*

This new guide to Polish American family history research, by Jonathan D. Shea, is geared more toward persons who have been working on their own family research for awhile, not necessarily toward the beginner—though that's not to say a beginner will be lost. The book goes into great detail about genealogical research, and presents information to break through the brick walls we all come up against from time to time. It offers over 400 pages divided into eight chapters, plus three appendices; and it is loaded with maps, record examples, charts, lists, and photographs. I can't imagine how long it took to compile the information for this book. It's wonderful! There, I said it; but read on anyway.

The Introduction is a really nice opener for the book, explaining how and when the widespread public interest in genealogical research got started in America. Who knew television had such an impact? Shea explains what motivated him to study his family history, and tells what steps he's taken to pursue that study. His tale inspires confidence that his experiences will help him guide us in our search, as well.

Chapter One, "The Language – Your Companion Throughout the Research Process," is an in-depth study of Polish pronunciation, letter recognition in records, and the influence of other languages and writing styles in record keeping. Shea stresses that researchers should "say these sounds aloud, to get a better feel for the language's sound system." He includes common spelling errors due to phonetic pronunciation (*Bączek*, not *Bonczek*). Shea gives wonderful examples of U.S. church record transcription errors. Without the knowledge of the Polish phonetic system, a person would not be able to ascertain his ancestor's correct name, even if he was able to find his ancestor in the records. This is information which needed to be included in a how-to book.

The rest of the chapters cover a "Capsule History of Poland and Worldwide Polonia; Sources on This Side of the Ocean; Records of the United States Federal Government; Geographical Sources; European Sources, Vital Records in Poland; Additional Polish and European Sources; Our Names in Europe and America."

Most researchers do not know Poland's history, but eventually some knowledge of it becomes a necessity. I think the inclusion of a brief history is very beneficial to both new and seasoned researchers. The chapter is well done, informative without putting the reader to sleep.

Shea discusses the importance of locating U.S. records over and above the usual birth, marriage, and death records. Great ideas! He mentions websites, the preservation of documents, locating grandma's Polish village once you know the name. He explains gazetteers; tells about vital records in Poland (the why, how and when); breaks down how to read documents from Poland written in Polish, Russian, Yiddish, German, and Latin; and explains how to find and access those records in the first place. Shea continues with names, locations, dates of operation of Polish newspapers in the U.S., along with a list of fraternal organizations. This information provides answers to exactly those kinds of questions that I see come up all the time on Internet mailing lists devoted to Polish genealogy.

The Letter Writing Guide section includes "new" sentences in Polish and Russian. The vocabulary lists are in Polish, Latin, Russian and German. As Shea did with the U.S. records, he makes suggestions as to what other Polish records might be located, aside from birth, marriage and death records.

One of the many sections I was thrilled with was Appendix A, a list of Polish parishes and cemeteries in the U.S. Wow! The other two appendices include Internet links and Polish church and civil archive addresses.

Shea included information in this book which until now has not been available in just one publication. I bookmarked several sections of this book which I found particularly helpful, and I've been working on my families since pre-computer days. *Going Home* could replace a whole shelf of resource books.

The book is available through the Language and Lineage Press web site:

<http://www.langline.com/GoingHome.htm>

It is also carried by the Polish Art Center in Hamtramck, Michigan, for those who prefer to order online and use a credit card for faster delivery:

<http://tinyurl.com/3a5lck>

What could be better than going home? And what is more helpful than a book that tells you how to get there?

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\*\*\* **LETTERS TO THE EDITOR** \*\*\*

Subject: Genealogy Programs That Support Use of Diacritics

Do you know if there any genealogical programs (or in the works) that are able to use the Central European (Polish particularly) diacritics? I have no problem with western European languages but would like to use the proper spellings and diacritics for my Polish family.

Thank you very much for your assistance.

Ray Wehr <[rajmundjw@gmail.com](mailto:rajmundjw@gmail.com)>

*Editor—I've seen this subject discussed before, but can't remember recommendations of any specific software. I told Ray I'd share his note with our readers, and maybe they can tell him the pros and cons of programs they've used. If you do have some advice for Ray, please send me a copy, so I can share it with our readers.*

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Subject: May Trip to the ITS in Bad Arolsen, Germany

*Editor—Tom Sadauskas sent me a note he posted on several Lithuanian genealogy Websites, and said I could print it here as well.*

In May 2008, I will be going to Germany as part of a group of forty genealogists who will be doing research at the archives of the International Tracing Service (ITS) of the International Red Cross (IRC). I will be researching my father's records but will have time to do research for others as well.

The ITS is located in Bad Arolsen, Germany (see URL below):

<http://www.its-arolsen.org/en/homepage/index.html>

Following the end of World War II, the Allies captured millions of German records regarding Jews killed in the Holocaust (Shoah) as well as information regarding other prisoners, forced workers, etc... These records were supplemented by new ones created by the Allies regarding displaced persons and others.

The ITS has 50 million individual records on 17.5 million individuals dating back to this period of history. One individual may have several records in the ITS database. These records have now been made available for research following a lengthy period of time during which access to these records was extremely limited.

I submitted an online inquiry to the ITS on 9 November 2007 and received a written letter from them on 28 January 2008. Based on the information I provided them, they were able to find at least 5 individual record entries regarding my father, who was a DP in the French occupation zone of Germany following the end of World War II.

The information included his German address in 1947, the location of three refugee camps (Re-

utlingen, Rastatt, and Bremen-Grohn) he was in while a DP in Germany, as well as information regarding his emigration to the United States in 1949.

Eventually, copies of all these ITS records will be available at the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C.

I will be there for five days and likely will be able to do research regarding other Lithuanian DPs. The ITS will be providing a full-time staff member to work with every two genealogists in the group I will be a part of.

If people would like to provide me with demographic information, I will see what I can find for them. Information should include such things as:

Name of Individual (including unmarried surname if applicable)  
Date of Birth  
Place of Birth  
Nationality  
Religion  
Marital Status  
Name of Father  
Name of Mother  
Possible locations where they lived in Europe (including dates)

The more complete info I have, the more likely the ITS archivists can find something.

Let me know if you have any questions about my research offer.

Tom Sadauskas <[Thomas.Sadauskas@tma.osd.mil](mailto:Thomas.Sadauskas@tma.osd.mil)>

*Editor—Thanks for the kind offer, Tom!*

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Subject: Polish-Named People in Memel

Perhaps you can point me in the right direction. In doing family research, I am trying to find facts to support a family story.

The story is that Frederick William's (born 1801) father and mother came to Memel from (possibly) Poland, because they had a Polish name. His father said to the family that from then on, their name would become Licht (German for light) because "Now we are Germans." They were Protestants. He was a tailor; his wife's name was Henrietta.

In doing a bit of online research, I can guess that one of the Polish Rebellions (either 1794 or 1831) brought them to Memel. Or perhaps (considering his first and middle names) they were

part of the 20,000 refugees from Salzburg, or other areas, who were invited to settle in this region by Frederick William I.

Would my guesses be accurate? Do you have any other thoughts on Polish-named people in Me-  
mel during the late 1700s to early 1800s?

Thanks for any help.

Joanne Rodgers <[joanne.rodgers@gmail.com](mailto:joanne.rodgers@gmail.com)>

*Editor—I told Joanne I couldn't help, but would gladly pass her question along to our readers, some of whom might have ideas.*

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Subject: What's Past Is Prologue Blog

I wanted to let you know that I started a genealogy blog if you're bored online one day. ;-) It's called "What's Past is Prologue" and the address is:

<http://pastprologue.wordpress.com>

My most popular article to date—the one that folks keep finding via search engines—is about Polish First Names and Name Days. I reference your book, so hopefully you'll get some sales out of it. The exact address to the article is:

<http://pastprologue.wordpress.com/2008/01/07/polish-names-and-feast-days/>

If you're just on the main page you'll have to look back to older posts to find it.

Donna Pointkouski <[djpoint@gmail.com](mailto:djpoint@gmail.com)>

*Editor—Thanks for the info, and for mentioning the book I co-wrote with George Helon. I'm glad you find it helpful, and I think other researchers will enjoy visiting your blog.*

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**\*\*\* OBTAINING DIGITAL IMAGES OF DOCUMENTS \*\*\***

by Roman Kaluźniacki <[romanka@comcast.net](mailto:romanka@comcast.net)>

*Editor—As happened with our last issue, I saw a note posted on the Galicia\_Poland-Ukraine mailing list by Roman Kaluźniacki, and I thought it was so informative that I asked to reprint it here. If you find you need to reproduce documents—and who among us doesn't?—this info could be very helpful. Thanks to Roman for letting me reprint it here.*

Folks,

I thought that my previous remarks on this subject would be sufficient. However, it seems that a bit more technical information is needed to help you resolve some of the questions and issues associated with obtaining digital images from LDS microfilms. So, in this lengthy note we will provide additional and hopefully useful detail.

The quality of the digital images you obtain is dependent on a large number of factors, some of which are simply not in your control. Let us go through the steps chronologically. Although I focus here on the church records of Galicia, you can extrapolate the data to other situations.

### 1. Original Document

There is little to discuss. You get what you get. Old documents just don't seem to be in pristine shape. They contain faded ink, finger smudges, water or fire damage, and all sorts of deterioration artifacts.

### 2. LDS Filming

The FHL photographs documents and places them on a 35mm roll of microfilm. This roll of microfilm is normally about 30 meters long and contains individual frames having size 24mm x 36mm. This is the same size as a slide produced by a camera using 35mm film. Typically an individual frame contains a full 2-page spread of a given book. The roll may consist of about 500 individual frames that are grouped into some number of Items, namely, individual books.

The first frame of an Item is a header frame that identifies the subject matter and provides a bit of technical information. Of particular interest, it gives the reduction factor used for that Item, a value typically between 12 and 20. The idea here is to use a lens that will fit the page into the frame but not make the image so small that it cannot be read.

The filming team has the first opportunity to either improve on the original document or degrade the quality of the resulting image. At times, you will see that a particular page has been photographed several times at different camera settings in an attempt to improve the contrast or readability. And at other times you might get fuzzy images.

The master film of the documents is jealously guarded and never released by the library for viewing. You simply get to see a copy (of a copy) of the original. And here is another opportunity to improve or degrade the product.

We now reach the first stage at which the user has some control over the process of producing digital images.

### 3. Microfilm Viewing

At the FHC you can view the microfilm at a reading station. If that reading station has a lens with

the same magnification as the published reduction value, you will see an image of the document on the table (at my FHC) or screen at its original size. Microfilm reading stations consist of a light source passing light through the film into an optical system projecting an image of the frame onto the table. Misalignment of the optical system with the table, non-uniform illumination, or poor optics will often degrade the image, for example, by failing to maintain focus across the entire image. These common flaws in reading stations are the prime reasons photography of images cannot faithfully reproduce the original image.

#### 4. Image Digitization

An image digitizer consists of three main components: a light source, an optical system, and an image sensor. All three of these components play important roles in determining the quality of the digital output. A uniform and bright light will ensure that the entire sensor is properly illuminated. A good optical system ensures that the image is correctly focused on the sensor.

The sensor itself is an array of photo receptors on a microchip. It may be manufactured either via CCD or CMOS technology. You can learn much more about these methods on the Internet. The current opinions seem to slightly favor CCD devices as higher quality, but CMOS chips seem to be less expensive. The chips come in various sizes and shapes. The optical resolution of an imaging device is determined directly by the number of individual photo sensors on the chip, each of which generates one pixel of the digital output.

An image scanner is an image digitizer, but it has an important additional feature, namely, the ability to physically move the optics across the image, that is, scan the image, allowing one to generate digital images that contain many more pixels than are available on the photo sensor. The camera on your cell phone is an image digitizer but not a scanner. The optical system of a scanner focuses one line of the image onto the sensor and takes a reading. Then a stepping motor moves the optics down the image for the next scan. Optical resolution depends on the sensor size as well as the motion increment of the stepping motor.

#### 5. Digitizing Equipment

Image digitizers are available in a very wide variety of forms, including your ordinary digital camera. We will focus on three types only.

##### a. Microfilm Scanner

A typical desktop microfilm scanner has a very specific role, namely, forming digital images from microforms (fiche, film, etc.). In addition to the imaging components, it will have a viewing screen as well as a small computer that can perform some image enhancement functions, format an image file, and send it down a wire to a separate computer. The optical system is responsible for enlarging the image to an appropriate size for viewing on the screen and for providing input to the sensors. Typical advertised optical resolutions are 600 ppi (pixels/inch) of the image after magnification via the optics. The scanning system normally consists of a flat mirror that slowly rotates to make different lines of the image available to the sensor.



## b. Flatbed Scanner

Unlike microfilm scanners, flatbed scanners do not have any optics that magnify the image presented to the sensors. Optical resolutions of typical consumer models will be 4800 ppi. To obtain an image with a given display or print resolution, one must multiply this number by the desired magnification of the microfilm image. For example, in order to see a document in its original size at a resolution of 150 ppi an image reduced by a factor of 16 must be scanned at an optical resolution of  $16 \times 150 = 2400$  ppi.

## c. Portable Scanners

These items should really be labeled “film digitizers” since they do not have real scanning ability. They simply make available the entire image to the photo sensor array at once. A 5-megapixel sensor array has dimensions 2592 x 1944 sensors.

## 6. Evaluations

In order to determine favorable scanning parameters, one should first perform some experiments using a flatbed scanner. Scan a newspaper at various resolutions, say at 72, 96, 150 and 300 ppi to determine the minimal comfortable reading resolution for the smallest print. Next determine the highest reduction factor (20x is a good number) for your favorite microfilm. If you are going to use either a flatbed or portable scanner, your resolution must then be set to the product of these two numbers. If you use a microfilm scanner, your work is already done for you since the image is magnified prior to scanning.

Hope that you haven't fallen asleep by now and that this lengthy discourse will be useful to others.

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\*\*\* **DONALD MARZY (DONALD DREAMS)** \*\*\*

This has nothing to do with genealogy, but we're interested in Polish culture and history, too, so perhaps you'll forgive me if I spend a little time on a rather remarkable, and thoroughly silly, phenomenon.

It began, for me, at least, when Grzegorz Brzoskowski <[grzegorzbrzoskowski@yahoo.com](mailto:grzegorzbrzoskowski@yahoo.com)> posted a note on the Polish Genius mailing list:

- > I know on the list there are many people who are interested not only genealogy but also what is going now in Poland.
- >
- > I would like to share two funny songs with has been very popular recently in my country.
- >
- > First version it is original Czech song “Jozin z bazin”

- >
- > <http://pl.youtube.com/watch?v=nzdrhOJ0DrA>
- >
- > Next version is adaptation about politics in Poland made by one of my favorite cabaret:
- >
- > <http://pl.youtube.com/watch?v=Ej4HnCgapFU>
- >
- > For all who wanted translation. You have to click on “więcej” (more) then you’ll see text and English translation.
- >
- > I hope you enjoy these funny songs.

I was intrigued, so I watched both clips, and I sat there scratching my head, saying “What the hell is this?” But I must admit, I was laughing as I did it. The more I watched, the more I was fascinated. I started using Google to learn more about both songs and exactly what was going on. In case you’re interested, let me tell you the background.

Back in 1978, a Czech group called Ivan Mládek and Banjo Band did a novelty song called “Jožin z bažin,” which translates roughly as “Joey from the swamps.” It was a pretty big hit in Czechoslovakia. Its popularity was probably due to the catchy tune and the clever lyrics, which tell a kind of fractured fairy tale (sort of like the book and movie of *Princess Bride*). It’s about a man driving to camp on the Orava river, who decides to risk cutting through an area in Moravia where there’s a monster in the swamps! The monster’s name is Jožin, and he eats people—but mostly just people from Prague. The only way to attack Jožin is with a crop duster. When the narrator stops along the way at Vizovice, the mayor tells him he’s sick of putting up with Jožin; to anyone who captures the monster, he’ll give his daughter’s hand in marriage, plus half a JZD (the local agricultural cooperative or collective farm). The narrator says no problem, borrows a plane, dusts Jožin with a white powder, and overcomes him. The narrator decides to make money by selling him to a zoo. I’m sure I’ve missed some of the subtleties, but that’s the basic story.

The first YouTube clip referenced above—one of many showing this clip—is a video of the Banjo Band doing this song. It includes the words in Czech and translations in Polish and English, as well as guitar chords. One of the things that struck me as really funny was the contrast between the straight, serious way Ivan Mládek sings the words, and the way he’s joined for the chorus by Ivo Pešák, who does a little dance with fluttering hand movements. It’s a sight gag, and a pretty funny one, if you like that sort of thing.

Well, so far so good; it’s no odder than Americans loving “One-Eyed, One-Horned Flying Purple People Eater” or “Monster Mash.” But now comes the first bizarre twist. Someone posted this old TV clip of “Jožin z bažin” on YouTube, and in the last few months it’s become a huge hit in Poland! If you read the comments Poles have written on YouTube, some think it’s the funniest thing they’ve ever seen or heard. Others shake their heads in wonder, completely unable to grasp why anyone would want to waste one minute of their lives on this nonsense!

Now the next bizarre twist. There’s a cabaret group in Kraków called Kabaret pod Wyrwigro-

szem. The name means literally “cabaret under Wyrwigrosz,” and apparently they chose that name because they started out in the basement under a Kraków restaurant called Wyrwigrosz (literally “snatch-penny,” used as a noun for something that threatens to become expensive). Recently the group decided to do a parody of “Jožin z bažin,” copying the melody and the presentation, but changing the lyrics to make fun of Polish politicians. Imagine Saturday Night Live adopting the lyrics of, say, “Macarena” to make fun of the President, and you’ll have the idea. They called their parody “Donald Marzy,” which means “Donald dreams” or “Donald fantasizes.” If you go to the second YouTube page mentioned above, you’ll see a video of the song, complete with the lyrics in Polish, along with translations into English and Czech.

The “Donald” they refer to is Donald Tusk, a Kashubian who is the current Prime Minister of Poland. The song is mainly about all the pie-in-the-sky dreams Tusk has for Poland, and the trouble he’ll have trying to make those dreams come true.

It begins with Tusk traveling on a rented quad bike, when suddenly there’s a horrible apparition. Is it the Taliban!? No, it’s just the face of the President of Poland, Lech Kaczyński, and he’s all offended about something. (I gather that is not an uncommon occurrence.) The chorus translates roughly as, “Donald dreams of everything being nice, / Donald dreams of dreams fulfilled, / Donald dreams of Polish people, / Donald dreams of them living a miracle. / Let’s add to Donald’s dreams / Being able to walk to the moon!”

The next verse tells of the Prime Minister and his Council flying to Brussels, looking down on all the nice stadiums they’d like to have in Poland, when they suddenly realize the plane has been hijacked by “the twins,” that is, Lech Kaczyński and his brother Jarosław, the previous Prime Minister. The final verse tells how Donald will give everyone raises, and has hidden away a hundred złotys for the teachers. The president asks where that money will come from, and Donald says he’ll get it by winning the lottery. The final chorus ends with “You wanted Ireland, you get a Czech film!” I think this means the Prime Minister dreams of turning Poland into the new Ireland—which has become very prosperous in recent years—but so far, all the Poles have to show for it is a Czech film. (An allusion to the video clip of “Jožin z bažin”?)

Part of the humor is the political commentary. But also hilarious is the way the group imitates the look and presentation of the original Czech clip. One of the actors—I think it’s Maurycy Polaski, one of the group’s founders—is very straight and serious, enunciating clearly, just like Ivan Mládek in the original. He’s joined in the chorus by another actor—I think it’s Łukasz Rybarski, another of the charter members—doing a hilarious imitation of the odd dance and hand movements Ivo Pešák did in the original. A YouTube clip of Kabaret pod Wyrwigroszem doing the song onstage (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=audMc2ptnWk&feature=related>), shows that the live audience enjoys the verses, but just falls apart during the chorus.

This parody may eclipse the popularity of the original! But the success of the Czech song in Poland recently motivated Ivan Mládek and the Banjo Band to do their first ever concerts in Poland, on February 21st in Opole, the 22nd in Poznań, and the 23rd in Warsaw—see their Website:

<http://www.ivanmladek.cz/>

Also, the Website of the cabaret group said they would be performing with Ivan Mládek (by now they've probably already done so):

<http://www.kabaret.pl/>

So if you're interested in pop culture, and especially Polish pop culture, this has been a fascinating phenomenon. It tells us something about the impact of the Internet. Perhaps this also tells us something about the Internet: a week ago I had never heard of these songs, the film clips, or the people who did them!

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**\*\*\* PAYING FOR POLISH RECORDS \*\*\***

*by Łukasz Bielecki*

*Editor—On the Posen mailing list, administrator James Birkholz posted this note, which Łukasz Bielecki had sent him. I think most of us know Łukasz from his work with the Poznań Project; he is a very experienced and knowledgeable researcher. His note sheds a lot of light on a topic that bothers many: what is the best way to pay for records provided by the Polish State Archives, and why is that the best way. It was good of James to post this note, and I thought some of our readers who didn't get a chance to read it before might want to read it now. There is a ton of good information and advice here!*

There are a few issues contained in the whole problem that has been discussed for a while. I think some light should be shed on this from the insider position. The picture would not be complete otherwise and leave the readers with an impression that something is very weird or simply wrong about the whole matter.

Let's start with details and maybe that will let us end up with some summarized view. First, as some have already indicated, payment with checks is not merely uncommon, it is nonexistent in Poland. Some say we have just jumped over one stage in the development of customs in this matter, anyway everything seems to be fully done electronically now in Poland, whether between private persons or institutions. Most people who are active in life matters, other than visiting their nearest grocer's store, have an Internet account set up, or at least go to their bank round the corner to make swift wire transfers from their account if it is not yet an Internet account. Checks are something really outdated; and as to foreign ones, you have to visit your bank for cashing them, then they are airmailed back to the U.S. by the bank for confirmation, and you get your cash roughly after seven weeks (minus the fee, \$8 in my case). No wonder this procedure is not recommended.

This being said, you see electronic/wire transfers are just *the* way of sending money within Poland and to Polish institutions. Another factor is that the financial/accountancy law simply rules out any other procedure when public institutions (as archives) are concerned. You cannot send cash or a Postal Money Order, or Postal Coupons (there are continually people asking if that

would also be an option), just because there is no legal way in the internal procedures to register this kind of revenue as payment for service and/or copies. Any money has to go thru the account with the name of the person who sent the payment.

By the way, to be eligible to have your visa application handled (if you are a Polish citizen, of course), you have to pay \$100 to the account of the U.S. Embassy in Warsaw. Imagine the American clerk at the Embassy getting a \$100 note instead, or an offer to go to a bank to get a personal Western Union transfer sent to his name that he should then assign to your visa application. If you consider he should do that without raising his eyebrow, then yes, you can still wonder why this is not possible when requesting your record copy at a Polish archives. (I remember someone suggesting this option).

There are further particularities. There exists a directive at State Archives to send correspondence exclusively with economy mail (which is by the way not really a big financial gain, in fact). Whereas it does not change much within Europe, when overseas countries are concerned, economy mail equals to surface mail -> 6-7 weeks to reach you in the U.S. Adding to it the usual couple of weeks before your request reaches its turn at the clerk's desk, no wonder you get any correspondence from a Polish Archive roughly three months after you sent out your letter. This must limit their potential income from paid research much more than the inconvenient payment method does. Of course using e-mail will change that significantly, but only in the case of bigger archives which have enough people to read and answer e-mail.

The public/administration sector (which includes archives) is still suffering from insufficient funding—this is changing but cannot result in a quick shift. And the staff is paid really badly. Capitalism is quite thriving in Poland in the private sector (and customer service with it), but the public sector is not generally supposed to generate profit, and high fees are probably aimed not so much at maximizing revenues as at limiting potential demand. This is the way of thinking of the sort: “Let's have few customers paying much—then if they come, we get much money; if they don't, we have less work.” Until recently, individual staff members working at your research had absolutely nothing themselves from doing it, they just could satisfy their hobby or desire to help you, and generated profit for their institution—actually for the whole system of the archives indiscriminately, not even for “their” archive. Needless to say, it is not very capitalistic, if you get the same salary whether you work more or you don't. These same people had (and still have) lots of other duties to do, which have much, much more effect on their future career in the system. I have the impression recently they started to financially motivate those doing the research at last, but it will certainly not change the system very much, because they still stress that making a profit is not their main mission.

The language issue is another sensitive one. For historical reasons, an average Pole would think it is a good thing to learn languages if this brings some money, but would make absolutely no effort to use a foreign language if it is the other party who wants something of him. “Let them also learn Polish” is the usual saying. “Polish is the official language in this country” is another one. The third one is “I will not make a fool of myself with my poor English, they can find a translator if they really want to know what I wrote”—in the best case, when the guy made at least the effort to understand what you wrote and fulfill your request. However, things are slowly changing for

the better, with the youngest generation entering the institutions, those who have usually learned English on a relatively high level, then were employed with English in their CV's, and find some fun in using it at work. This leaves hope that responding in English will slowly become a standard. I said "slowly"....

To summarize: I have to second someone's advice I read here. Manage your expectations. Something will be done with your request, it is nowadays unlikely to have it simply ignored, even if written in English (still it is recommended to have it translated, certainly will thus be bearing an invisible priority mark). It may take long. You will get an answer in Polish. No panic, you will probably find someone who knows it around the corner, or in the cyberspace. It is spoken by some 50 million people. You will have to pay quite a lot and use wire transfer. Good to know in advance. On the other hand, if the amount to wire transfer would be negligible, it would be even more stupid to wire transfer is, for the fees themselves are so high :)

The only good idea to cut the costs is finding someone in Poland (or using any European bank that makes wire transfers to Poland at low costs, there are many now that Poland is in the EU) who would make the transfer themselves. The archives have nothing against it, it is just necessary to provide the project number and your name in the transfer form so that they don't lose track. My experience with that procedure is only good, have been doing that many times for my US friends. It is only necessary to call the archive (I do it...) and find out how much the amount would be in Polish currency to make it (the rate depends on the day they issued the document). I am a little doubtful about Andre's advice to start a service doing that on regular basis, as probably to keep the profit reasonable with the present weak U.S. dollar, the fee would not much differ from what the U.S. bank charges (kidding).

Hope this clarifies a little bit.

Lukasz Bielecki <[bielecki@rose.man.poznan.pl](mailto:bielecki@rose.man.poznan.pl)>

*Editor— I might add that Ceil Jensen told me she'd signed up to use PayPal to pay dues to an organization in Poland, and she said it made a huge difference. So PayPal may be an option in some situations—but **not** when dealing with the State Archives. Just face it: you need to learn how to do wire transfers. I've done it, it's not so tough! And if you're afraid of learning how to do something new, genealogy is not the hobby for you....*

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**\*\*\* POLISH AMERICAN VETERANS ASSOCIATION POSTS \*\*\***

*By Paul S. Valasek, D.D.S.*

One valuable resource of PolishRoots is our databases on Polish Fraternal and Organizations. For the first time on the Web, PolishRoots is pleased to share a complete list of Veteran Posts that formed the Polish American Veterans Association (PAVA), aka Stowarzyszenie Weteranów Armii Polskiej (SWAP).

If you had a veteran in Haller's Army or the time frame of 1921-1939, as well as World War II Veterans, you may have some memorabilia, ribbons, medals, badges. Some may only have a Placówka/ Post #. Now you can identify what city these posts were located. Many of them, sadly, are no longer in existence; but some of their records may still be available from the home office in New York City.

The database may be visited at:

[http://www.polishroots.org/databases/swap\\_lodges.htm](http://www.polishroots.org/databases/swap_lodges.htm)

For a more detailed explanation of PAVA/ SWAP, please read the *Gen Dobry!* article from December 2006. Its link is:

[http://www.polishroots.org/gendobry/PDF/GenDobry\\_VII\\_12.pdf](http://www.polishroots.org/gendobry/PDF/GenDobry_VII_12.pdf)

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**\*\*\* WARNING ABOUT GROUPLY \*\*\***

*Editor—There were warnings on several lists about “Grouply,” and perhaps all of us need to know about this. Here’s a note Debbie Greenlee posted on the Polish Genius site.*

Dear Polish Geniuses,

Some of you may be familiar with “Grouply.” Grouply allows **other** group members (Yahoo groups for example) to access their groups through Grouply. The security issue is that you have to provide Grouply with your Yahoo ID and password. Once this is done Grouply has access to the whole list's information. As far as I'm concerned, this is a security risk I am not will for our list to take.

Effective immediately, anyone with a Grouply e-mail address will be removed from the Polish Genius list. If you wish to resubscribe to Polish Genius you will have to do so with a regular e-mail address and not go through Grouply.

For more information please see the following links:

<http://blog.grouply.com/protect#block>

to resubscribe to Polish Genius:

[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/polish\\_genius](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/polish_genius)

Thank you for your cooperation,

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**\*\*\* UPCOMING EVENTS \*\*\***

**Saturday, March 8, 2008**

**Meeting of the Polish Genealogical Society of Michigan**

The Polish Genealogical Society of Michigan, in cooperation with the Programs Department of the Sterling Heights Public Library, is hosting a Genealogy Internet Workshop on Saturday, March 8, 2008 at the Sterling Heights Public Library, 40255 Dodge Park Rd., Sterling Heights, Michigan. Welcome and late registration at 9:30 a.m. Workshop is 10 a.m. to 12 noon.

The workshop is open to PGSM members and the public. Ceil Wendt Jensen's lecture will be a live Internet demonstration. You can bring your own laptop computer and follow along. Wireless service is available at the library. One segment of the demonstration will be setting up a free Website on AOL or Comcast. You must bring your own login user name and password to access your personal system provider online.

To register, e-mail: <[info@mipolonia.net](mailto:info@mipolonia.net)>. Please register early.

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**Tuesday March 11, 2008**

**Meeting of the Toronto Ukrainian Genealogy Group - (TUGG)**

Marion Press will speak on "New Internet Technologies for Genealogy" at the St. Vladimir Institute, 620 Spadina Ave., from 7:30-9:30 p.m.

Contact: Jim Onyschuk (905)-841-6707

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**March 18, 2008**

**TRACING THE 20TH CENTURY IMMIGRANT USING CZECH/SLOVAK, POLISH AND RUSYN RECORDS**

**Paul S. Valasek, D.D.S.**

Meeting of the Northwest Suburban Council of Genealogists  
Forest View Education Center, 2121 South Goebbert Rd, Arlington Heights, Illinois  
7:30 p.m.

Paul S. Valasek, D.D.S., is a three-time graduate of Loyola University of Chicago, earning his Doctorate in Dentistry in 1984. Born and raised in Chicago, he and his wife, Andrea, have always been interested in their ancestries and where their families came from in Europe. Paul's



first of numerous trips to Europe was in 1974 with his immigrant grandfather Joseph Valasek, a major turning point in his life. Dr. Valasek has written numerous articles for genealogical publications, as well as being an international lecturer. He recently completed his first book, *Haller's Polish Army in France*, which makes available long-lost and obscure material detailing the formation of this fighting force of over 23,000 Polish Americans in World War I and the subsequent Polish Soviet War of 1919-1921. He also has the most complete database of the army with over 3 million facts accumulated to date.

[From the Website of the Northwest Suburban Council of Genealogists, <http://teresamcmillin.com/meetings.html>]

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**April 18 – 21, 2008**

**UNITED POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETIES (UPGS) SEMINAR  
Salt Lake City, Utah**

We have knowledgeable speakers from Poland and the U.S., and plenty of time for library research. Please visit our blog (set up by speaker Steve Danko):

<http://upgs.wordpress.com/>

And online registration is at:

<http://upgs08.eventbrite.com/>

I'm happy to field any questions you might have.

Ceil Wendt Jensen, MA, CG  
Certified Genealogist  
Michigan Polonia  
<http://mipolonia.net>

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**June 6 – 23, 2008**

**TUGG'S DISCOVER YOUR ROOTS TRIP TO WESTERN UKRAINE**

The Toronto Ukrainian Genealogy Group (TUGG) [www.torugg.org](http://www.torugg.org) is hosting its Second Genealogical Tour to Western Ukraine in June of 2008.

To read an account of the archives we visited in 2007 see:

[http://www.torugg.org/visiting\\_the\\_archives.html](http://www.torugg.org/visiting_the_archives.html).

To read a full account of our last visit see: [http://www.torugg.org/trip\\_diaries1.html#2007](http://www.torugg.org/trip_diaries1.html#2007)

If you wish to join us, you are most welcome! Here are the particulars.

The “Discover Your Roots Tour” runs from June 6 to June 23, 2008. For complete details and how to register see: [http://www.torugg.org/TUGG%20Projects/trip\\_to\\_ukraine.html](http://www.torugg.org/TUGG%20Projects/trip_to_ukraine.html)

We will spend a number of days in Lviv, Chernivtsi, Ivan-Frankivsk, Ternopil and Kyiv, both as tourists and researchers. We will visit various archives and visit the villages of our ancestors. Here is a more detailed Itinerary of the Tour: [http://www.torugg.org/trip\\_itinerary1.html](http://www.torugg.org/trip_itinerary1.html)

If you are not sure if there are existing records for your ancestors villages please fill out as much as you know on the following Archives Family Search Form ([www.torugg.org/archive\\_form.html](http://www.torugg.org/archive_form.html)). We have a listing of every village in Ukraine and know where the parish records are kept. We can help you to locate any available records.

Those wishing to go on this “Discover Your Roots Trip” will need to fill out a Reservation Form, [http://www.torugg.org/reservation\\_form1.html](http://www.torugg.org/reservation_form1.html).

It is important that the Archives Family Search Form be filled out as best you can. Our intention is to forward the requests from the Form to the respective archives for processing. We will inform them when we will be visiting their archive and hopefully the requested genealogical information will have been prepared and readied for our visit.

It is too early to determine the 2008 costs. For a general idea the costs for the 2007 Tour were:

Air/Land rate, based on a twin/sharing basis — \$3,599.00 (CAN\$)

For Single Occupancy per Person add \$600.00 (CAN\$)

[From a note posted to the Galicia\_Poland-Ukraine list by Jim Onyschuk, <http://www.onyschuk.com>.]

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**July 17 – 28, 2008**

## **POLAND IN THE ROCKIES**

*Poland in the Rockies (PitR)*, the biennial international student conference launched in Canada in 2004, is now accepting applications for 2008.

Speakers confirmed to date include major figures from politics, television, film, the press and academe. Among them will be former Polish Minister of Defense, Senator **Radek Sikorski**;

Washington Post columnist **Anne Applebaum**; BBC documentary maker **Wanda Koscia**; former advisor to Leszek Balcerowicz, Professor **Jacek Rostowski** of the Central European University in Budapest; the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's "most influential" producer, **Mark Starowicz**; and Director of the Polish Studies Center at Indiana University in Bloomington, **Bill Johnston**. History, an important element of PitR, is presented in many voices. **Timothy Snyder**'s (Yale) incisive view of Poland's past within Poland's present; **Piotr Wrobel**'s (University of Toronto) analysis of a century of challenges including a culture under siege; **Lynn Lubamersky** (Boise State University) on social and family history; and **John Bukowczyk** (Wayne State University), a foremost authority on the history of Polonia.

"*Poland in the Rockies* is not 'a course' in Polish history," says director Tony Muszynski. "There is no long lecture in one voice. On the contrary. It is a fast-paced, intensive, wide-ranging discussion of 'things Polish,' and ultimately an exploration of the many facets of the Polish identity."

Launched by the Polish Canadian Association of Calgary and the Canadian Foundation for Polish Studies in Montreal, PitR's aim is to stimulate an interest among English-speaking Americans and Canadians in Polish history and culture; to create a network of well-informed and dynamic friends of Poland; and to encourage Polish Americans and Canadians to integrate their identity into the mainstream of North American life—but not to lose it.

Funded entirely by Polish organizations and individuals in the United States and Canada, PitR is not designed for specialists in Polish studies but is intended for students from a wide variety of disciplines. Full scholarships are granted on the basis of a student's curriculum vitae, letters of reference, and an essay explaining their motivation for attending. Geographical diversity is also taken into consideration.

For complete information, prospective sponsors and candidates should refer to the Website:

<http://www.polandintherockies.com>

Media relations contact: Marek Domaradzki, tel. 403-262-7141

[From a press release sent by Maureen Mroczek Morris <[maureenm@sbcglobal.net](mailto:maureenm@sbcglobal.net)>]

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**August 12 - 24, 2008**

## **HUSARIA TOUR OF POLAND**

I'd like to let you all know about our plans for a special and unique tour. In August 2008 will be the first annual "Husaria Tour of Poland."

One of the features of this tour will be a weekend at Vivat Vasa—the largest 17th-century reenactment in Poland. The event is held at historic Gniew castle with over 300 re-enactors reliving the battle that took place there in 1627 between the Polish winged hussars and the Swedes under

Gustav Adolphus. Those of us with 17th-century kits have been invited to participate in the event but it is not mandatory for those on the tour to do so.

We'll also be visiting the major collections of husaria arms, armor and related 17th-century items across the country. We'll be seeing many of the major sites, castles, battlefields across the country. This should be a once in a lifetime trip and PAT Tours of Springfield MA. will be arranging the hotels, transportation and all the details. PAT Tours has over 30 years of experience in developing custom tours of Poland.

Here's the best part, our friend and noted Polish historian and author Radek Sikora will be our historical guide through out the trip. Radek will be a great resource, guiding us through all those wonderful museum collections and answering many of our questions. So if you are serious about considering being a part of the tour please contact me and I'll get you all the details and answer your questions.

[http://www.polishhussarsupply.com/contact\\_us.html](http://www.polishhussarsupply.com/contact_us.html)

Pozdrawiam  
Eryk Jadaszewski <[jrjada@juno.com](mailto:jrjada@juno.com)>  
Rotmistrz husarski  
The Czarniecki Division  
17th century Polish re-enactors

[Forwarded by Paul S. Valasek from the PolishAmericanForum.]

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**August 17 – 22, 2008**

## **28TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON JEWISH GENEALOGY**

Honolulu, HI - December 12, 2007. The International Association of Jewish Genealogy (IAJGS) announces the 28th International Conference on Jewish Genealogy to be held in Chicago, August 17 - 22, 2008 at the Chicago Marriott Downtown Magnificent Mile. The IAJGS is proud to co-host this conference with the Jewish Genealogical Society of Illinois and the Illiana Jewish Genealogical Society.

This annual conference is the premier event for Jewish Genealogists. Attendees from around the world gather to learn, share expertise, find others researching the same locales, and maybe even meet a relative they didn't know about before. From beginners to experienced genealogists – all are welcome and will have an unforgettable experience.

Sixteen Special Interest Groups (SIG's) will host sessions concerning their research focus such as German-Jewish Genealogy, Ukraine, Poland, and Litvak Jewish Genealogy research. A number of specialists or archivists from Europe or Eastern Europe will be in attendance to make presen-

tations and advise attendees about resources available in their country. Some of the SIG's will hold luncheons with a featured speaker.

At least sixteen smaller groups, Birds of a Feather (BOF), will hold meetings such as the BOFs for Yiddish Theater, Suwałki-Lomża, Posen Prussia, and Lublin & Zamość Area.

There will be sessions on aspects of researching Sephardic ancestry, the Midwestern Jewish experience, using computers, immigration records, and much, much more. A Resource Room with a wide variety of genealogically relevant materials will be open to attendees. There will be an Exhibitor Room with vendors selling books, maps, and other items of interest to genealogists.

A special mini-symposium will be held on Genetics, Jewish Diseases, and the Role of Genealogists, underwritten by an educational grant from Genzyme Corporation. Speakers will include Dr. Lee Shulman, MD, Anna Ross Lapham Professor in Obstetrics and Gynecology, Chief, Division of Reproductive Genetics, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Feinberg School of Medicine, Northwestern University; Gary Frohlich, Certified Genetic Counselor with Genzyme Therapeutics; and a representative of the Chicago Center for Jewish Genetic Disorders.

A film festival will feature a wide range of films of relevance to Jewish genealogy.

Chicago offers many research opportunities for genealogists such as the Spertus Institute of Jewish Study (with its Asher Library and the Chicago Jewish Archives); The Newberry Library; and public institutions (e.g. Chicago Board of Election Commissioners, the Office of the Circuit Court Clerk of Cook County, the Cook county Assessor's office (for property records), the Cook County Vital Records office) and the Great Lakes Regional branch of NARA (the National Archives).

The hotel has wonderful facilities. All registered conference attendees will get free internet access from their hotel guest rooms and complementary access to the hotel's health facilities.

To register or find additional information, see the conference Website at [www.Chicago2008.org](http://www.Chicago2008.org).

The conference Website has a conference flyer that can be printed for publicity purposes.

The IAJGS is an organization of organizations, founded in the late 1980s, to provide a common voice for issues of significance to its members, to advance our genealogical avocation, and to ensure there is an annual International Conference on Jewish Genealogy. Go to [www.iajgs.org](http://www.iajgs.org) for more information.

Contact:

Anne Feder Lee, IAJGS President and Chicago 2008 co-chair

Telephone: 808-395-0115 (Honolulu, HI)

E-mail: <[FederLee@msn.com](mailto:FederLee@msn.com)>

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**October 2008  
4th ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL  
PLANO, TEXAS**

*Uwaga!* Attention!

Those who live in Texas need to mark their 2008 calendars for the 4th annual International Festival to be held October 2008 in Plano, Texas.

There is a Parade of Nations, in which Poland is represented, as well as a Polish Cultural Booth, a food booth, dance ensemble, two concerts (Polish musicians).

The group responsible for the above is the Polish-American Foundation of Texas:

<http://www.polamfound.com>

The organization is planning several more events for the near future.

Hope to see you there!

[From a posting by Debbie Greenlee on the Polish Genius mailing list.]

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**Friday and Saturday, October 3 – 4, 2008**

**PGSCTNE 2008 POLISH GENEALOGY CONFERENCE**  
Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, Connecticut

Sponsored by the Polish and Polish American Studies Program, Central Connecticut State University. We will be featuring **Dr. Stephen Morse**, who will be lecturing on “Searching the Ellis Island Database on the One-Step Website.”

There will also be a Polish history lecture by **Dr. Mieczysław Biskupski** and a Beginner’s Workshop.

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**\*\*\* MORE USEFUL WEB ADDRESSES \*\*\***

<http://sowa.Website.pl/cmentarium/Cmentarze/spisLuteranski.html>

On the Posen mailing list, Gerd Müllenheim <[muellenh@pt.lu](mailto:muellenh@pt.lu)> posted a note saying that this site gives a list of names on gravestones at the Evangelical Lutheran Cemetery in Warsaw. He adds that other Polish cemeteries can be found on this Website.

<http://www.kartenmeister.com>

Also on that list, Uwe-Karsten Krickhahn announced that after 12 years of work, he's entered over 75,000 places into the Kartenmeister database, as well as 38,406 surnames, and 9,277 e-mail addresses. He said 10,275 of those places were in the Posen district, and he plans to keep adding places, especially in East Prussia. If you have roots in the eastern lands once ruled by Germany—Silesia, Posen, West Prussia, Pomerania, Memel, and Brandenburg—Kartenmeister is a tremendous resource! We should thank Uwe for his efforts, wish him continued success, and mention any mistakes we can find, so he can correct them.

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<http://tinyurl.com/2t66n5>

James Piechorowski <[Jamespiech@aol.com](mailto:Jamespiech@aol.com)> wrote to tell us of “the completion of the transcription of a list of St Joseph County Indiana Polish Marriage Applicants 1905 to 1915 compiled by Gene Szymarek.” It is available online at the above URL. He added, “We have also completed the entire Cedar Grove Cemetery transcription of 3,600 graves in St Joseph County.” That can be visited here: <http://tinyurl.com/215pju>

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<http://www.polonia.com>

On the Herbarz mailing list, Leon Stevens <[lstevens@walterhav.com](mailto:lstevens@walterhav.com)> posted a note on a new Polish armorial which can be purchased through this site. He wrote, “Tadeusz Gajl has just published his third new improved armorial, *Herbarz Polski - od średniowiecza do XX wieku* (‘The Armorial of Poland - From the Middle Ages to the Twentieth Century’) (L&L, Gdańsk 2007). In it he corrects mistakes in his first 2 works, makes additions, and importantly, finally indicates the sources of his arms portrayals. He also indicates whether or not a titled noble used each COA. Gajl includes some variants, but not all, in spite of the fact that some of those he excludes are readily available in standard sources. Unlike his previous work, he combines arms issued before and after the partitions into one volume alphabetized A-Z. This volume features over 4,500 P-L COA's in full color, the largest collection of such arms to date. Unfortunately this tome is not as elegantly bound as his prior armorials. It's currently available in the U.S. through [www.polonia.com](http://www.polonia.com). (I have no connection, business or otherwise, with Polonia Bookstore.)”

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<http://www.kruenitz1.uni-trier.de/>

On the newsgroup soc.genealogy.jewish, Reuven Mohr responded to a question about translating a German term by recommending the online German dictionary at this site. He said, “To handle this site really needs good knowledge of German, but then it can be very helpful with old German professions and goods.”

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<http://www.avotaynu.com/books/EveryFamily.htm>

In the February 17, 2008 issue of the free e-zine *Nu? What's New*, available at <http://www.avotaynu.com/nu/V09N04.htm>, Gary Mokotoff provided information on a new Avotaynu book that sounds really fascinating, *Every Family Has a Story: Tales from the Pages of AVOTAYNU*. This is not a reference work on how to do genealogical research; it's a look at the human side of

genealogy. “It consists of 72 *Avotaynu* articles that focus on the human side of genealogy—how genealogists have been personally affected by their research and how the research of genealogists has affected others.” If you’re one of those folks who occasionally looks beyond charts and data to consider why we do this, and what it means, this book might be must reading for you!

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<http://genealogia.kresowa.info/>

While messing around on the Internet recently, I discovered this site, a Genealogical Portal for the *Kresy*, the Eastern Borderlands once ruled by Poland but now within the independent nations of Belarus and Ukraine. It’s all in Polish, so don’t bother if you’re intimidated by that. But if you have roots in the *Kresy*, I think you should make an effort to get familiar with this site.

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[www.galziengermansdescendants.org](http://www.galziengermansdescendants.org)

On the PolandBorderSurnames list, Henryk Herman <[actinictch@dial.pipex.com](mailto:actinictch@dial.pipex.com)> responded to a request for information on a family from Galicia with a German name by mentioning this site, which has a number of useful features.

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<http://www.ptg.gda.pl/index.php/default/lang/en-utf-8/>

Ceil Jensen and Grzegorz Brzoskowski posted notes to the Polish Genius list mentioning this Website, for the Pomeranian Genealogical Association. The URL given above is for the English-language version. Grzegorz explained that not all the content is available in English, but “this Website includes indexes of baptism/birth, marriage, death and cemeteries records from our Pomerania area. We generally have indexes from records located in Diocese Archive in Pelplin but it is not all from this archive. We have some from parishes and cemeteries. Feel free to help us in indexing any records if you want. On our Website you can find instruction how to index records.” Grzegorz is a member of the Association, and says people with questions are welcome to contact him <[grzegorzbrzoskowski@yahoo.com](mailto:grzegorzbrzoskowski@yahoo.com)>.

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<http://upgs.wordpress.com/2008/02/12/wheres-your-ancestral-village/>

Ceil Jensen <[cjensen@mipolonia.net](mailto:cjensen@mipolonia.net)> sent me a note about this site, which invites attendees at the upcoming UPGS Conference to mark the site of their ancestral village. Information at the site explains how to do it. This is a nice technological upgrade to a feature we’ve seen at many past conferences, where a map of Poland was set up and attendees were welcome to mark their villages on it. Now you can do this online!

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<http://chopinproject.com/>

Ceil also forwarded a note to the Poland-Roots list about a new Web Portal for the Chopin Project at this address. Marysia Ostafin, of the Center for Russian and East European Studies at the University of Michigan, announced as follows: “The Center for Russian and East European Studies is pleased to announce the launch of The Chopin Project, an online resource dedicated to promoting the discovery, research, and pure enjoyment of Frydryk Chopin’s keyboard works to a worldwide community. The site builds upon The University of Michigan



Chopin Project, an initiative of the School of Music, Theatre & Dance that was co-sponsored by the Copernicus Endowment; Hammell Music of Michigan; and Frederick Slutsky Arts.” For more information, visit the site.

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<http://www.lithuaniangenealogy.org/databases/il/ChicagoLith/index.html>

On the Lithuanian Genealogy list, Richard Gostautas announced that this database allows you to look up mention of biographies in the book *The History of Chicago Lithuanians (1869-1959)*, “authored by Alex (Aleksas) Ambrose (Ambrozaitis) and published by the Lithuanian American Historical Society in 1967.” At the URL given above, “Scroll to the bottom of the page and click on the link to view the database. On the following page, you will find the link to access the directory for all 664 pages of the book. This directory is password protected and so you will be asked for a username and password. You will find the username in red and the password in blue on this page. After you enter the username and password you will be provided with a directory listing of each page. Scroll to find the page of interest and then right click on the file to save the .PDF to your computer.” Note that all the biographies are in Lithuanian. Many thanks are due to Jonas Gerulis, who scanned in each of the individual pages. If you have questions, contact Richard <[gostautas@gmail.com](mailto:gostautas@gmail.com)>.

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<http://www.wqed.org/ondemand/onq.php?cat=&id=231&part=2>

Catherine <[Cgwedge@aol.com](mailto:Cgwedge@aol.com)> posted a note to the PolandBorderSurnames list, giving this address and explaining its significance. “The largest mine disaster in Pennsylvania history took place on December 19th 1907 at the Darr Mine, just across the Youghiogheny River from Jacobs Creek, PA – hometown of the Simkovich family. Because the local Carpatho-Russians (Carpatho-Rusyns) had taken off work on a Monday with no pay in order to attend church for the Feastday of St. Nicholas, their lives were spared. Pittsburgh public television station WQED recently produced a 30 minute program to mark the 100 year anniversary of the mine disaster, and it’s now online ... Click here to start Part 2 of the program ... The segment on Jacobs Creek’s St. Nicholas Orthodox Church and the Rusyn people begins at the 3 minute 49 second point, ending at the 7 minute 12 second point. It opens with Charles Bobich (a Simkovich on his mother’s side) ringing the church bell. Interviews are conducted inside the church and in the church hall in the basement. During the time of the mine disaster, this church was actually Greek Catholic. This program was first aired on television in December...”

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