

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

June 2014 Vol. 1 No. 3

Welcome to our third newsletter! 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 on page .

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Nowy Targ, Poland: Do YOUR Roots  
 Extend There, Too?  
 Phyllis Zych Budka  
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Imagine yourself walking the streets of a southern Polish town and feeling as if you have been transported back in time more than 60 years to the Mont Pleasant Schenectady neighborhood where you grew up. That's how I've felt on each of the 3 occasions when I visited Nowy Targ, Poland, the birthplace of my

paternal grandparents, Rozalia Rozanska Zych and Jozef Zych.

My first visit, in 2008, was a three hour walk in the beautiful hillside cemetery overlooking the town. Was this REALLY their birthplace? I was just at the beginning of my genealogy quest, and not quite sure of the answer. But there were several tombstones with the Rozanski and Zych surnames, including a very imposing granite mausoleum at the entrance to the cemetery with "Rozanski" carved on it. As I walked

**Nowy Targ, Poland: Do YOUR Roots Extend There, Too?**  
**Phyllis Zych Budka**      **abudka@nycap.rr.com**

around the cemetery, what struck me was that I saw several other surnames on the stones that were familiar to me from my home community in Schenectady! On our way out of town, we passed the firm, "Zych Off Road Vehicles." Was this a cousin?

On my next 2 trips to Nowy Targ in 2010 and 2011, I spent several days there with my Polish friend, Anna Kuczynska, a University of Warsaw anthropology professor who speaks English fluently. Our visit was timed to coincide with the annual Nowy Targ Festival. The faces were familiar, the food was familiar, the language was familiar, the music was familiar. The bakery rolls and pastries had the same taste as my memory of the White Eagle Bakery's on Crane Street. The small grocery store's lunch meats such as krakowska kielbasa reminded me of sandwiches my Mom made. Potato pancakes, my favorite, were available in several small restaurants. As we walked the town center, signs advertising Zych Hardware, Siaskiewicz construction (a Mont Pleasant family), further piqued my curiosity.

With the help of the Nowy Targ Church archivist, I now have my paternal genealogy back to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Using ellisland.org, an amazing database, I have also found a surprising reason why today's Nowy Targ is so familiar to me: More than 45 individuals came directly to Schenectady from Nowy Targ! The exception was my grandmother's brother, Jan Rozanski, who settled in western New York. The search of the website's database was gleaned mainly by sheer determination and dog work. There are more than 10 variations of the Nowy Targ name in the "Last Place of Residence" field: Novylarg, New Market (the literal translation), etc.

Table 1 summarizes the results of my task.

Do YOUR roots reach back to Nowy Targ? Take a look at the list of Nowy Targ citizens who came to Schenectady, mostly before WWI. If you find a potential relative, please let me know.

I visit the excellent Nowy Targ website often at

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

To read the website in English, click on the British flag on the lower right of the page. You MIGHT see some familiar names!



Nowy Targ 2011: Phyllis with Adam Zych and his father. Are we related? Still not sure. They said as of 1946 there were 2 Zych families in Nowy Targ but did not know ancestors further back. We stayed in Adam's delightful bed and breakfast, Willa nad Dunajcem.



Nowy Targ 2011: Phyllis with Goral at Nowy Targ Festival.

**Table 1 – People Who Came To Schenectady from Nowy Targ**

First	Last	Date	Age	Comments from ship's manifest
Jozef	Zych	1899	24	
Jan	Bryniarski	5/21/1887		
Katha	Batkiewicz	3/20/1901	23	Niece of Ignac Batkiewicz, 56 Foster Avenue
Jan	Dlugopolski	3/20/1901	45	Brother
Rozalia	Rozanski	9/1/1902	20	
Mary	Bryniarski	?		
Jozef	Bryniarski	7/21/1902	46	On same list as Jan Rozanski
Ignacy	Stanek	7/21/1902	12	On same list as Jan Rozanski
Jozef	Galik	4/1/1902	36	
Jan	Galik	4/1/1902	10	
Franciszek	Galik	4/1/1902	4 1/2	
Stanislaw	Galik	4/1/1902	3	
Walenty	Zych	4/22/1903	25	Brother-in-law - Jozef Galik; 600 1/2 ??
Jan	Pajak	5/20/1903	31	
Tomasz	Winiarski	5/20/1903	33	Jacob Winiarski, Schenectady, NY
Walenty	Zych	4/22/1903	25	Brother in law Jozef Galik
Michal	Bryniarski	3/12/1905	33	
Magdalena	Bryniarski	3/12/1905	32	
Zofia	Bryniarski	3/12/1905	8	A line through the name with comment "Died at sea 3/8/1905"
Maria	Bryniarski	3/12/1905	6	A line through the name with comment "Died at sea 3/8/1905"
Wladyslaw	Bryniarski	3/12/1905	4	Died at sea 3/8/1905
Jozef	Bryniarski	3/12/1905	2 1/2	?
Albin	Bryniarski	3/12/1905	9	
Bronislawa	Rozanski	1/7/1905	3	
Vincenty	Rozanski	1/7/1905	30	Machinist; was in US before - Nov 1902;brother-in-law John Pajerski, 19 Jefferson St.
Mariana	Rozanski	1/7/1905	30	
Wladyslawa	Rozanski	1/7/1905	9	
Anna	Rozanski	1/7/1905	4	
Andreas	Skalski	2/16/1905	19	Brother Marcin Skalski, Davis Terr. Schenectady, NY
Vincenty	Kolasa	2/16/1905	21	Uncle Andrzej Kasowski, Robstr 122
Karol	Potkanowicz	3/12/1905	28	Brother Jan Podkanowicz 19 Jefferson Ave
Antoni	Siaskiewicz	12/11/1906	26	1904/1906; wife Maria Siaskiewicz; 124 Railroad St
Jan	Zych	12/11/1906	25	Brother Valenty Zych, Car?str 125
Franciszka	Garb	11/14/1907	18	Maid
Wladyslaw	Borowicz	1/23/1907	23	Non-immigrant alien
Stanislaw	Batkiewicz	9/12/1907	20	Brother Michal Batkiewicz
Jozef	Batkiewicz	3/28/1907	17	Father Michael Batkiewicz 14 Mohawk St.
Marcin	Skalski	7/6/1909	35	1903-1906; brother Jacob Skalski
Stanislaw	Batkiewicz	6/29/1910	25	Friend Michal Potkanowicz 11 Monroe St
Ludwig	Pajerski	2/28/1911	35	
Magda	Garb	11/25/1912	31	Housewife
Jan	Podkanowicz	1903/1913		
John	Pajerski	9/21/1914	35	Citizen; (probably came to US many years before - PZB)
Katarzyna	Klocek	5/20/1914	18	Servant; Uncle Jan Podkanowicz, Schenectady, NY; father Kasper Klocek, Nowy Targ
Zofia	Klocek	5/20/1914	17	Servant; Uncle Jan Podkanowicz, Schenectady, NY; father Frank Klocek, Nowy Targ
Joseph	Mrozek	6/28/1920	25	Blacksmith; sister-in-law Miss Marie Bednarowski, 226 Third Ave
Andrew	Pajak	6/28/1920	28	Wound on leg; John Pajak uncle; 122 Howell St.

## Memories of Growing Up on North St.

Jessie (Kotarski) Malecki

This article was originally printed in "The Stockade Spy"

I was born in an upstairs room in a house on North Street on February 17, 1924. For me, there is a lifetime of memories here, in that house and on that street. When I was very young, it was paved with cobblestones and was home to a very ethnic community, with about 90% of the residents being Polish. Many were immigrants; my parents immigrated from Poland in the late 1880s. It has always been a short, dead-end street with about 11 houses on each side. When I was growing up, there were families with names like Kotarski, Dobies, Kaczmarczyk, Spurgas, Trzeciak, Lencewicz, Marczinkiewicz, Wekszner, Mlodzianowski, Miakisz and Snyder. There were also a few non-Polish names, like Clark, Keeler, Schultz and Bruce.

You could park on both sides of the narrow street, but there were not many cars back then, so it didn't cause any problems. One small house at the top of the street (#5) housed six children and two parents. It also contained a one-room grocery store. The house is still there, and you can see for yourself how incredibly small it is. Pan and Pani (Mr. & Mrs.) Krawiecki made homemade Polish sausage which was very popular - people came from all distances to purchase it. They sold other groceries, also, including a variety of vegetables and fruit. Most everyone shopped here, including my mother, attracted by the convenient location and the high quality of their meats.

Regular customers kept a small notebook, and whenever they shopped, one of the owners would use an indelible pencil to write down the purchases, wetting the pencil with their lips. To me, it looked like all the writing was exactly the same, very vertical, very neat, but I couldn't tell a difference between the way

they wrote "crackers" or "kishka." On Friday or Saturday, my mother would pay for everything she bought on account during the week. For her promptness, she received a bag of free groceries. I remember Mrs. K. had asthma and used to smoke cigarettes which were supposed to help her with her condition. It seems unbelievable today, but 80 years ago it wasn't uncommon.

Other stores in the vicinity: On the corner of Front and Green, near Lawrence the Indian, was a very nice grocery store called Smith's. Next door was a small shoe repair shop called Michael's Shoe Repair. Michael had a very good business there and everyone liked him. His family helped him in the shop, also. In fact, when he moved to upper Union St. his son eventually took over the business and a family member still runs the shop. Izzo's Barber Shop was where Arthur's Market is located. Across from Riverside School (now condos) was a store run by Polish people but I cannot recall the name. Stern's was another store, just beyond Front St., on College St. The corner of Ferry and Liberty streets was home to a great market called Krueger's. It had everything imaginable in meats and groceries. Pfeiffer's Cleaners stood across the street on Ferry, and of course, Mr. Vogel's News Room was just down the block. He delivered the morning newspaper early every morning rain or shine, and kept his business going until he was in his 90s. Vogel's was where the Moon & River Cafe is today.

During my childhood, most families on North Street had rowboats so they could get to the island in the Mohawk River and plant vegetables. Of course, the boats also came in handy during the floods. When the Mohawk flooded, all of us kids

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had time off from school. It was fun to watch what was going on through the windows, but our parents were always worried. After the water receded, the firemen came down to pump the water out of our cellars (basements).

Riverside Park, at the foot of the street, was wonderful. During the summer, children were taught crafts and other activities by instructors who worked for the city parks, and we had softball teams and other activities to keep us busy during summer vacations. At the side of the park in my neighborhood, in the very last house at the foot of Ingersoll Ave., lived Pan and Pani Lewandowski. They had an ice cream/candy store, a one-room freestanding building near the river bank. It was practically in the park, so it was a very popular place. You could buy penny candies, chocolate bars, or reach into the red Coca-Cola cooler and pull a bottle of soda from the ice on a hot day. They even had a pool table, which was the only one I recall in the immediate neighborhood.

Practically every yard had grapevines, and people made homemade wine for their own use. One of our neighbors on North St. raised chickens. If their door was left open, a chicken often took a walk inside the house, which we kids thought was very funny. My parents had a tenant who kept a pony in the backyard shed. One of my brothers loved being in a pigeon club. He sent his pigeons to different places with messages tied to their feet. My mother was a very practical woman and money was scarce in those days, so every once in a while we were told that we were having small chickens for dinner. We all knew they were pigeons, so we would not eat them.

During the Depression, people hated to ask for help from the government, which was called "relief". They were ashamed, and it was only a last resort when they were totally desperate.

Many of the children I knew started classes at Riverside School but eventually went to a parochial school. Being Polish, a number went to St. Mary's, which was on Irving St. off Eastern Ave. Inasmuch as it was not a public school, we were not eligible for busing, so we walked gathering a group to walk to school.

Movies were only 10 cents in those days, so every Sunday -- AFTER going to church services -- we were allowed to attend theaters like Proctor's, the Plaza, Erie, State and Strand.

Everyone had a long clothesline, stretching from the house to a telephone pole in the corner of the backyard. Women hung clothes out in all kinds of weather. In the winter, everything would freeze on the line and would have to be brought into the house and put on wooden racks to defrost and dry. Doing laundry was real work back then. A wringer washer was brought out with a tub for rinsing clothes, and after you gave each item a good scrubbing and rinse, you fed it through the wringer. Everyone wanted their sheets really white, so many times they were literally boiled on the stove. Today it is so easy compared to then.

It was a real feat to cook and bake on an old black coal and wood stove. My mother baked delicious bread, apple pie, and many other items, but how she kept a stable temperature in the oven is still beyond me.

The original Schenectady Curling Club, now up on Balltown Road, was just

Jessie Malecki (cont'd)

beyond our backyard fence. As kids, we would watch the players sweep the ice to make the rocks curl on their path to the target area. The original Yacht Club was at the foot of Washington Ave.

For the most part, our little street was one big happy family. Of course, there were family dramas and tragedies, but even though people had very little, they helped each other when necessary. I hope my little trip down my Memory Lane, North St. in the Stockade, held something of interest for you. Oh, yes, by the way -- I still live there!



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Phyllis' comment: Website is in English but based in Poland. It has a good search tool. You can enter surnames and villages / towns / cities. Worth a look.

## **Aunt Blanche's Memory Box** **Eleanor Monlea**

Last year, after the death of Aunt Blanche M. Melewicz Partyka, aka Parker, I finally started sorting through her box of memories and found another reminder of the "Polish in Schenectady," especially the connection to St. Mary's Church and the Eastern Avenue area. Blanche, my mother's younger sister, married her sweetheart, Vincent S. Partyka, on November 22, 1957, in St. Mary's Church, Eastern Avenue, Schenectady, NY (Fig. 1).

Before their marriage, Uncle Vincent lived at #2 Paulding Street with his widowed mother, Rozalia Halka Partyka (Fig. 2 Taken in the 1940s). His sister, Adele Partyka Sojka (aka Cyka) and husband Clem, lived at 821 Eastern Avenue above Clem's Barber Shop. Do you remember the barber pole outside? It was right across the street from St. Mary's Church and right next door to Kazyaka's Funeral Home. Rozalia Partyka came from the same village in Poland that my grandfather, Michael Chmielowiec, aka Melewicz, the village of Majdan Krolewski, Huta Komorowska, near Kolbuszowa.

While looking through the Memory Box, I found envelopes tied together that were sent to Rozalia by her family in Poland. The return addresses have names such as Halka, Rebisz and Brzoza, names that I heard growing up. As I looked at the stamps and family addresses, it appeared that real life history was taking place connected to events that were happening in the world and in Poland. One envelope, with a February 10, 1941 postmark, has the symbol of an eagle and swastika, with the words

“Oberkommando der Wehrmacht” and Gepruft (High Command of the Wehrmacht – tested). There was a letter from Ludomir Halka with a German stamp that was sent to Mrs. Adele Sojka. The return address is from a Displaced Person camp in Hannover – Vinhorst, D. P Camp Schulenburg, Barrack 24 Zimmer 5, U.S. British Zone, Germany. In this envelope were pictures of her family.



Fig. 1 Blanche Melewicz Partyka 11/22/57



Fig. 2 Rozalia Halka Partyka - 1940s

## Great Grandpa Walenty Giniecki, a.k.a. William Giniecki, Schenectady, NY Part 2 – Carole McCarthy

Since publishing the first half of this story in the April edition, my daughter asked a critical question that has shed some light on why I didn't know my Giniecki Great Grandparents, granduncles and aunts since they only lived across the street. My daughter asked me when my Giniecki Great Grandparents died. I looked up the information and found that my Great Grandmother Josephine Giniecki died 13 August 1944, when I was less than one year old. My great Grandfather Giniecki died 04 May 1951 when I was seven years old. So my daughter's point was: of course you didn't know them, you were too young! That would be true for my great grandmother but I certainly would have remembered visiting my great grandfather and uncles and aunts across the street if we had ever visited them. So the mystery still persists: why didn't I know that the family of my grandmother, Mary Giniecki-Tys, lived across the street from the Tys farm where my sister and I would help out for 3 months every summer from about the age of 5 until we were 15?

I digress; let me continue to tell about my adventures in searching for my Giniecki Great Grandparents in genealogy records. As described in part one, I had found my great grandparents in all the censuses from 1900 to 1930 despite the variations in the spelling of the family name. I now wanted to find my Giniecki Great Grandparents on a ship's manifest, documenting their immigration from Poland. With all the name variations, I didn't know which name to search under. From my mother's Memoirs she said they came into the port of New York. If they came in 1889 that would be before Ellis Island, so I had to search under the port of Castle Garden, NY. Of course, I didn't realize this at the time, so I made many searches on the Ellis Island site for all the

variations in their name. Then, one day, I put in the exact year of their arrival as 1889, instead of a range, and then I was told that Ellis Island was only opened after 1892! Searching the Castle Garden site did not show much promise; I came up empty for each name variation. Then one day, I just entered Valentinus, the Latin equivalent of Walenty, with no last name, and the year 1889. I got a hit for Ginetzky. Since the Castle Garden website only shows the one person you search on and not a list of passengers like at the Ellis Island site, I then searched for Josephine 1889 and there was a Jozepha Ginetzky. This offered some promise. It could be just another name variation. The date of crossing and their given names were correct. However, I didn't think it was my Giniecki Great Grandparents since it said their destination was Boston and that they were from Russia. The ages were about correct for them arriving on April 18, 1889, 25 for Valentin and 23 for Jozepha. This seemed to match the marriage information I already had from the on line 'Poznań Project' at [www.bindweed.man.poznan.pl](http://www.bindweed.man.poznan.pl) for a Valentinus Giniecki and Sophia Bamber who married in 1885 at the age of 22 and 21 in the parish of Ostroróg, Poland. But I still didn't think it was my Giniecki Great Grandparents since it said their destination was Boston. As I often do with things that are puzzling, I let it go for awhile and then I come back to it from time to time to see if I have any fresh insights. Well, 2 years later, I was looking at the Castle Garden document and decided to put in the name Ginetzky into Ancestry.com and search immigration. Of course, I had searched Ancestry for my Giniecki Great Grandparents before but only under all the other name variants, never under Ginetzky. I couldn't

**Great Grandpa Walenty Giniecki, a.k.a. William Giniecki, Schenectady, NY**  
**Part 2 – Carole McCarthy**

believe it! There they were, not only on the manifest of the SS Kansas coming into Boston on 18 April 1889, but also on a Hamburg manifest! The Hamburg manifest said that their destination was Schenectady, so why did they go to Boston? It looks like they must have changed ships in Liverpool, since the SS Kansas manifest said that passengers were picked up in Liverpool. Did something happen to the Warrington, the ship they departed on from Hamburg to Liverpool? Was the Warrington supposed to take them to NY but something happened in Liverpool? Another mystery to solve at a future date! However, I do know that another Polish family, Thomas and Margaret Plawensky, who were listed after the Ginieckis on the Hamburg manifest, also came with them to Boston on the SS Kansas. So does this mean that the Giniecki first born daughter, Anna, was born under a tree in Massachusetts instead of NY or were they able to get to the NY border before she was born? I have not found a birth certificate for Anna, but in all the censuses where she is enumerated, she is listed as being born in NY.

Walenty became a citizen in 1897. In his application for citizenship, he said he arrived in New York on 20 April 1888. Since this was 8 years after his arrival, you can understand how he might not remember the exact day or even the year, but you would have thought he would have remembered if he came to Boston or New York! Then again it was probably a political move since he was getting his citizenship through the state of New York! By the way, I never did find Walenty's citizenship papers in the Schenectady County Clerk's Office where the petitions are archived. However Carol Lewis and Melissa Tackle

of the Schenectady County Historical Society (SCHS) found it in the SCHS archives.

Now, fast forward to the fall of 2013. My husband and I are in Poland. We rented a car, and with the help of my Polish cousin Aneta, are searching for the village of my Great Grandparents Giniecki. We knew from the Baptismal records of their children at St. Mary's Church in Schenectady, that both Walenty and Josephine were from Kluczewo, Samotuly (German Samter), 'Grand Duchy of Poznan'. We also knew they were from the Parish of Ostroróg, as indicated on their marriage record on the website, "Poznań Project". On the way to Kluczewo, we stopped at the State Archives in Poznań. There we found the original marriage record of my Giniecki Great Grandparents. There was so much more information on the original record than on the internet. I learned that Walenty's parents were Marcin and Maryanna (Eliasz) Giniewcki. I then found out that my 2<sup>nd</sup> great grandparents were married in 1846, in the same parish church in Ostroróg. And in that marriage record, were the names of my 3<sup>rd</sup> Great Grandparents, Stefan (Szczepan) Heliasz (Eliasz) and Regina Gwizdała, married in 1827 in the same parish of Ostroróg! I thought that it couldn't get much better than this, but it did. We arrived in Kluczewo and drove around the farmlands and then went to the parish church in Ostroróg, the Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary of the Assumption. There has been a parish church here all the way back to 1432. Wow, maybe my 10<sup>th</sup> great grandparents were married in this same church! We took some pictures and then came back the next day for Mass. It seemed like a dream to be in the same church that my 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> great grandparents were married. The

## Great Grandpa Walenty Giniecki, a.k.a. William Giniecki, Schenectady, NY Part 2 – Carole McCarthy

present church was renovated in 1776 in a baroque style. It is a magnificent church that you can see in the attached pictures.

I am happy to say that even though I didn't solve the mystery of the Tys - Giniecki 'feud', time has erased any misunderstandings for later generations. Since about 2006, I have come to know and become very good friends with two Giniecki first cousins, once removed, living in Schenectady. We visit often. Robert is a commercial sales expert and his younger brother Bill, has owned and operated the Country Gardens on Consaul Road for many years. The Country Gardens was part of the original 63 acre farm that his Giniecki Grandparents (my Great Grandparents) bought in 1913. He only recently sold the remaining 9 acres of the Giniecki farmlands and the development is now called the Country Garden Estates. The old farmhouse, circa 1900, still sits proudly on top of the hill on Consaul Road, keeping vigil over the land while holding all of its memories safe in her keeping.



Sign entering Kluczewo , Samotuly, Poland where my 1st, and 2nd Great Grandparents Giniecki were born and lived.



The Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary of the Assumption in Ostrogóg, Samotuly, Poland. This is the church where my 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Great Grandparents Giniecki/Bamber, Giniewcki / Eliaszyk and Eliaszyk/Gwizdala were married. Church was built in 1432 and rebuilt in the Baroque style in 1776.

## Uncle Jake – Another Mother Story Bernice Izzo

Last time, I told you that Aunt Vicki was my mother's favorite aunt. Well, her husband John Jaskiewicz, better known as Uncle Jake, was her favorite uncle.

According to my mother, Aunt Vicki and Uncle Jake were always the first to get the latest consumer product that came on the market. Remember we are talking about things we take for granted, like a refrigerator and a car. When they got their new refrigerator, they invited the neighbors to parade through their house so they could see it. It became a party.

Uncle Jake was the rebel for Paulding Street. He worked for General Electric and not ALCO like much of Paulding St. According to the census and his World War 1 draft card, he worked for the refrigeration department. That might explain the refrigerator. I wonder if there were employee rebates in those days?

Uncle Jake was also the first person on Paulding Street to get a car, a Model T. (see the picture of my mother, Dorothy Finley Izzo and her brother, Thomas Finley seated on the running board with Uncle Jake.)

The story goes that Uncle Jake would take my mother and her brother to Saratoga Springs on the weekends. They were waiting for the school year to end so they could move to Saratoga permanently. He would always stop at the corner of Milton Ave. and Church Ave. (The first light in Ballston Spa just before you go down the hill.) He would park the car, get out to sit on the bench which was there at that time. He would light his pipe and smoke it. When he was done, he would get back in the car and finish his trip in whatever direction he was traveling.

I asked why Uncle Jake did this and she did not know. I do know Route 50 was not what it is today. There is a story from the other side of the family that the road was so rough that his car started on fire. So maybe he was afraid to smoke in the car or he just needed to stop to rest. It was a might longer ride in those days. Whatever the reason, this small act made a big impression on my mother because she told the story over and over and definitely every time we drove through Ballston Spa.



Uncle Jake with Dorothy and Thomas Finley



Vicki and John (Jake) Jaskiewicz

**Grems-Doolittle Library Schenectady County Historical Society**  
**32 Washington Ave., Schenectady, NY 12305**  
**(518) 374-0263, option 3**  
**librarian@schenectadyhistorical.org**  
**www.schenectadyhistorical.org**

Information courtesy of Melissa Tacke,  
Librarian / Archivist

**Researching People of Eastern  
European Descent in Schenectady  
County:**

**Resources in the Grems-Doolittle  
Library**

**Books**

Baxter, Angus. *In Search of Your European Roots: A Complete Guide to Tracing Your Ancestors in Every Country in Europe.*

Chorzempa, Rosemary. *Polish Roots: Korzenie Polskie.*

*Church of St. Adalbert* (church history).

Denisoff, Gail. *Neighborhoods in Transition: A View of the Italian and Polish Immigrants, 1880-1930.*

Haiman, Miecislaus. *Polish Past in America, 1608-1865.*

Huth, Nancy. *Schenectady's Immigrant Past in Census Records.*

Pascucci, Robert R. *Electric City Immigrants: Italians and Poles of Schenectady, New York, 1880-1930.*

Pula, James S., et al. *The Polish American Encyclopedia.*

Reed, Robert D. *How and Where to Research Your Ethnic-American Cultural Heritage: Polish Americans.*

*St. Mary's Church, 1892-1967: Diamond Jubilee* (church history)

*St. Mary's Church 100th Anniversary, 1892-1992* (church history)

Strum, Harvey. *Schenectady's Jewish Community.*

Szucs, Loretto D. *Ellis Island: Tracing Your Family History Through America's Gateway.*

Szucs, Loretto D. *They Became Americans: Finding Naturalization Records and Ethnic Origins.*

Yetwin, Neil. *Schenectady Jewry: Reform and Response in the 20th Century.*

**City Directories**

City directories offer an alphabetical listing of residents, their occupations and addresses. Directories also include guides to local businesses, religious institutions, associations and organizations, amenities, and a guide to current streets.

Some directories only include the city of Schenectady; many include Scotia and some include other towns in Schenectady County. See city directory list on library shelf for more details about years and localities covered.

Years covered in our library: 1841, 1857-1858, 1860-1968, 1980, 1984.

**Clipping Files**

Clipping files consist of a variety of photocopied information – mostly newspaper articles, occasionally photocopies of original documents and photographs or compiled histories – about a topic. Helpful topic headings include local religious institutions, ethnic groups, neighborhoods, and organizations.

**Surname Files**

Surname files provide a great starting point for conducting biographical and genealogical research. Check our index of names to see if there is a file for the surname you are seeking.

**Document Collections**

Original documents related to a number of subjects, including ethnic groups,

**Grems-Doolittle Library Schenectady County Historical Society**  
**32 Washington Ave., Schenectady, NY 12305**  
**(518) 374-0263, option 3**  
**librarian@schenectadyhistorical.org**  
**www.schenectadyhistorical.org**

ethnic organizations, religious institutions, and neighborhoods.

**Census Records**

Federal and New York State Census records are a great resource for finding biographical information about residents of a home. Our library has microfilm copies of most New York State and Federal Censuses, along with a number of printed indexes and transcriptions. We also have a subscription to online services which offer searchable, digital access to census records.

**Selected Personal Papers and Business Records**

Phyllis Zych Budka Collection

Presentations, articles, family stories, and other information related to the Zych, Korycinski, Rozanski and Gzysms Families of Nowy Targ, Poland, and Baptai and Zailgi, Lithuania.

Larry Hart Collection

Collects the papers of Schenectady city and county historian Larry Hart. Includes clipping files and photograph files on Polish-American and Jewish communities in Schenectady, city neighborhoods and religious institutions.

Francis Poulin Scrapbook Collection

Applicable topical scrapbooks include history of Jewish community of Schenectady and Mont Pleasant neighborhood history.

Helen Quirini Collection

Personal papers of Helen Quirini, a Polish-American union organizer, community activist, and lifelong resident of Schenectady.

Dear Reader:

Many thanks to Bernice, Eleanor, Jessie, Carole and Melissa for their contributions.

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: September 1<sup>st</sup>. 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

## 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](http://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, Grzyboski, Kwiatkowski, and Grudzinski families" inspired this Project.

### Project 2

Collect digital photos taken before 1950 of First Communion, Graduation, Wedding or other significant life events from now until December 31<sup>st</sup>. Include name(s), event, place and date. Send to Phyllis Budka at

[abudka@nycap.rr.com](mailto: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](http://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](http://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](http://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](mailto:bentley4@satx.rr.com)