



Gen Dobry!

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CONTENTS

How About Some Love for the Newbs?
Letters to the Editor
<<http://PolFamily.info>>
Dr. Alexander Beider Receives IAJGS Lifetime Achievement Award
PGS-Michigan Announces Dziękuję Award Recipients
Another Award for JRI-Poland
Upcoming Events
More Useful Web Addresses
You May Reprint Articles...

***** WELCOME! *****

to the latest issue of *Gen Dobry!*, the e-zine of PolishRoots®. If you missed previous issues, you can find them here:

<<http://polishroots.org/GenDobry/tabid/60/Default.aspx>>

*** HOW ABOUT SOME LOVE FOR THE NEWBS? ***

by *Fred Hoffman* <wfh@langline.com>

For those of you who wonder if the title of this article is in English, let me assure you it is. But it's the kind of English my granddaughters speak. With the wisdom of their 14 years on this earth, they look upon newbs, or newcomers to the online world, with a definite attitude of benign contempt. They're not mean about it, but they don't attempt to disguise their feelings. They will learn, as we all do, that we are all newbs, at one time or another, in every field of endeavor we choose to frequent.

(Incidentally, if you have nothing better to do and want to marvel at the subtleties of the English language, get online and study the difference between *newbs* or *newbies*, on the one hand, and *noobs* or *n00bs*. Apparently, it's OK to be a newb, but you don't want to be a noob. Who noo?)

We in the genealogy world can be impatient with newcomers to our field. It's a human thing; we forget we have not always basked in the glorious state of wisdom we have now attained (cough, cough). We were once beginners, too.

I was reminded of this recently, when some newbs, in all their dewy innocence, spoke up in an online forum and asked some of those questions that make us veterans wince. You know, stuff like "Can you tell me where my great-grandpa Nowak came from in the old country?" Or "How do I find my relatives in Poland?" They were promptly answered by some crusty old pros who meant well, but made it quite clear they did not suffer fools gladly. Hurt and dazed, the newbs uttered plaintive cries along the lines of "I'm gonna take my ball and go play somewhere else." Then others spoke up, begging them to hang in there, to understand that their questions made them sound dumber than a box of rocks—but that's no reason to give up.

I don't mean to be cantankerous, but I sometimes wonder if people that easily deterred have any business studying genealogy. It's not for the weak of mind or faint of heart. Still, if you're like me and think back on some of the things you've said before, you'll realize none of us has any business slapping down those who are just getting started. Hell, I'm happy if I get through a single day without doing something moronic—and I don't have inexperience as an excuse!

Anyway, I was pleased to see that Julie Roberts Szczepankiewicz, the leader of the Polish Genealogy group on Facebook, has been mindful of the novices, and uploaded a Word document with tips for them. It can be downloaded at this address:

<<http://tinyurl.com/no63kty>>

If you have any trouble downloading it, or don't want to risk contamination with Facebook, write me at <wfh@langline.com> and I'll forward the Word file to you. Or I can convert it to a PDF, if you prefer. Just be sure you give credit to Julie if you pass it along.

Now, I don't want to raise expectations to an impossible level. Julie's tips run not quite three full

pages, and it's not as if they contain the wisdom of the ages. They are good, solid tips that will benefit anyone who's just starting. In fact, it wouldn't hurt some old pros to take a quick look.

Incidentally, Julie also posted a link to FamilySearch's PDF guide to finding Polish ancestors:

<https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/images/0/0f/Finding_records_of_your_ancestors_Poland.pdf>

This is a full-on, professional publication, 20 pages in length. Between it and Julie's list, no one has any excuse for not getting off to a great start!

Meanwhile, I encourage experienced researchers to be a little patient with the newbs; and I will attempt to follow my own advice. We all want status, and it is painful to be a newcomer—as my granddaughters are realizing, having just started high school as freshmen, than which there is no lower form of life on this planet.

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

Subject: Ancestor who worked in the Wieliczka mine

After multiple email attempts to researchers (fellow anthropologists) working in the Wieliczka Mine area, I still do NOT have an answer to my question about my great-grandfather, Andrew Kuc, whose family lived in Błazowa, Rzeszów, Subcarpathia, Poland.

Family tradition tells me that he worked in the Mine around 1888 to about 1890, stepped on a rusty nail and died of gangrene. He may be buried in a Mine Cemetery, if there is one, that holds the remains of miners from that era.

Please help!

Walter E. Smithe (family's original name: Woźniak) <WaltS@smithe.com>

Editor—A Google search of “Kuc Wieliczka” turns up a few people named Kuc who live in that area. One of them is Teresa Kuc, director of the educational department of the Muzeum żup krakowskich (Kraków Salt Works); her e-mail address is <t.kuc@muzeum.wieliczka.pl>. It would do no harm to write to her. Kuc is not an uncommon name in Poland, and there's no guarantee she's related. But if, by chance, she is ... well, she could be a priceless contact. The Małopolskie Genealogical Society might also be worth a try, <<http://www.mtg-malopolska.org.pl/>>.

I know many of our readers have been to Wieliczka. Can any of you offer some insights that might help Walter on his quest? Insights on accessing employment or other records of the mines during the late 19th century would be particularly valuable.

***** HTTP://POLFAMILY.INFO *****

I heard from an old friend this week, James J. Czuchra. We have corresponded often in the past, as Jim has worked on a number of projects that interested me. For some time, he was the webmaster of PGSA's website; he also completed the job of indexing obituaries from the *Dziennik Chicagoski*, covering the years 1930–1971, after Thomas L. Hollowak and I had done 1890–1929. Jim has put a lot of time and effort into using his gifts to make computers assist us in our research.

I did not know it, but Jim has been working for some four years now on a website at <<http://polfamily.info>>. He has been expanding it and improving it; it is particularly rich in Chicago and Toledo Catholic parish record indexes, with more extensive and more accurate data than ever. Now he would like more people to know about it, and I am pleased to help spread the word.

The site includes short articles, much like blog entries, on various subjects he has studied and learned about. But probably the most valuable features are his subscriber databases:

- Polish Family Info Birth Index — Subscribers Only Birth index for selected Polish parishes in the US and Poland.
- Polish Family Info Death Index — Subscribers Only Death index for selected Polish parishes in the U.S. and Poland.
- *Dziennik Chicagoski* 1930-1971 Death Notice Index Death notice index for a Chicago Polish language daily newspaper, 1930-1971.
- Polish Family Info Marriage Index — Subscribers-Only Marriage index for selected Polish parishes in the US and Poland with expanded information.

He has to be able to pay the bills to keep the website up, so he does require a subscription of \$10.00 a year. You can read more about what's involved on his FAQ at <<http://polfamily.info/mission-faq>>. Payment is made through PayPal, and it's very easy and convenient, as I discovered when I signed up.

I highly recommend taking a close look at what this site offers.

***** DR. ALEXANDER BEIDER RECEIVES IAJGS LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD *****

by Gary Mokotoff

Editor—This is reprinted, with permission, from the 10 August 2014 issue of *Nu? What's New*, the e-zine of Avotaynu, Inc. I'm delighted to hear Dr. Beider has received

this recognition. He books on Jewish first names and surnames are splendid, and he's a pleasure to deal with personally. The only reason I question giving him a lifetime achievement award now is because I believe, and hope, many more years of splendid achievements lie before him! I appreciate Gary Mokotoff's permission to reprint this.

The IAJGS Lifetime Achievement Award 2014 was given to Dr. Alexander Beider "in recognition of his many significant contributions to the specialized science of the origins and forms of proper names and surnames of persons as applied to the field of Jewish genealogy, as well as, for the scholarly works that he has authored that have become over time, indispensable reference resources for genealogists and families who are researching their ancestors."

As publisher of his works on names, I have had the honor of knowing him for more than 20 years. He is a remarkable person whose initial doctorate in a natural science, applied mathematics, makes him unique in the social science fields of onomastics and linguistics.

His new love is the origins of Yiddish. He has published numerous scholarly papers on the subject, and they are now being consolidated into a single book that will be published by Oxford University Press. Since this is a subject of interest to many Jews—certainly genealogists of Ashkenazic ancestry—I have asked him to write an intelligible companion book for us mere mortals. If there was a Nobel Prize for Jewish Studies, he would be a candidate.

***** PGS-MICHIGAN ANNOUNCES DZIĘKUJĘ AWARD RECIPIENTS*****

by Valerie Warunek Koselka

Editor—Valerie posted this note to PGS-Michigan's Facebook page, and I think it deserves to be passed along.

Every year since 2008, PGSM presents two awards to those who have contributed in some way to the genealogical community. We are very pleased to include Randy Riley, our State Librarian, and Mark Harvey, State Archivist, to the list of recipients. Past recipients of the Dziękuję Award are Steve Morse, Joan and Raymond Bittner from the Polish Art Center, Bernardine Drobot, Jan Zaremba, Fred Kuplicki, Helen Kraft, Baerbel Johnson, Tom Koselka, Patricia Ibbotson, Susan Ryntz, Fran Timmerman and Agnes Kardel. Agnes died shortly after having received her award. Pam Lazar received the Dziękuję Award, posthumously in 2010. The other award is named after Władysław Reymont; Bill Gorski was the first recipient.

Editor—That is a distinguished list of recipients! There is a photo of Valerie and of Bill Gorski presenting the award to Randy Riley and Mark Harvey on the Timeline Photos page of Library of Michigan. Here is a TinyURL link, if you wish to see it: <http://tinyurl.com/nvgvx5w>.

***** ANOTHER AWARD FOR JRI-POLAND *****

by Stanley Diamond

Editor—As long as we're mentioning people who've won awards lately, it seems only fair to congratulate Jewish Records Indexing–Poland for the award it received at the recent International Conference on Jewish Genealogy. Let me quote the statement Stanley Diamond posted earlier this month to JewishGen.

Dear fellow researchers:

At the International Conference on Jewish Genealogy earlier this month, Jewish Records Indexing-Poland was presented with the 2014 IAJGS (International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies) “Award for Outstanding Contribution to Jewish Genealogy via the Internet.”

The Board of JRI-Poland wishes to express its gratitude to the IAJGS for presenting us the award and to the hundreds of JRI-Poland volunteers who have contributed to our organization's success.

The certificate accompanying the award states:

JRI-Poland is recognized for providing since 1995 searchable on-line indices of Jewish records from current and former territories of Poland and for its recent ground-breaking multi-year agreement with the Polish State Archives (PSA) in a massive effort to digitize all vital records in more than 30 regional archives. This initiative will dramatically expand access to records for family historians tracing their Jewish roots to Poland and make them freely available online.

The award and certificate appear on the JRI-Poland home page at <<http://www.jri-poland.org>>.

This award is of singular pride for everyone associated with JRI-Poland; it is the first time the IAJGS has given this award a second time to the same organization. JRI-Poland previously received the award in 1999 when there were just a half million entries in the database.

The executive committee and board of Jewish Records Indexing-Poland acknowledges the remarkable efforts of its many hundreds of volunteers and the generosity of researchers around the world. Our success is due to the boundless energy of those volunteers together with the support of contributors with a common interest.

Stanley Diamond
Executive Director
For the Board of Jewish Records Indexing - Poland

Editor—I love it when people who do good work to help others get a little recognition. Genealogy's tough enough—think what it would be like without the efforts of these award winners!

***** UPCOMING EVENTS *****

Note: see also <<http://www.eogn.com/calendar>> for a large selection of upcoming events in the world of genealogy.

Tuesday, September 9, 2014

**MEETING OF TORUGG (the Toronto Ukrainian Genealogy Group)
St. Vladimir Institute • 620 Spadina Ave. • Toronto
7:30 – 9:30 p.m.**

James Motluk will give a presentation on *JAJO's SECRET*.

JAJO'S SECRET is a documentary about the internment of Ukrainians by the government of Canada during World War I. In 1914, the government introduced the War Measures Act and rounded up thousands of Ukrainians, sending them to 24 concentration camps located across the country. Some prisoners were paroled and made to work as forced labour for some of Canada's most profitable companies. This riveting documentary tells the story of how filmmaker James Motluk discovers that his *Jajo* (grandfather) was one of these parolees.

Contact: (905) 841-6707I
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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Saturday, October 11, 2014

**BALTIMORE FAMILY HISTORY CENTER GENEALOGY CONFERENCE
Family History Center • 120 Stemmers Run Road • Essex, MD 21221
Begins 8:30 a.m.**

In addition to the keynote speech by Robert Barnes, Former President of the Maryland Genealogical and the Baltimore County Genealogical Societies, there will be two presentations by **Tom Sadauskas**: "How Your Ancestors Came to America & How to Find Their Records," and "Your Frequent Flier Ancestors." The second presentation covers the little-known fact that about 33% to 40% of immigrants to America ultimately returned back to their homelands. Many of these immigrants made multiple trips to and from America. Tom provides several case studies of such occurrences and shows how you might be able to uncover some cases of your own ancestors.

The online registration was at <<http://www.baltimorefamilyhistoryworkshop.org/Registration.html>>, but it now says online registration is closed. "Walk-ins are welcome, but some classes may be full."

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October 18, 2014

**POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF MICHIGAN
ANNUAL SEMINAR OCTOBER 18, 2014
American Polish Cultural Center • 2975 East Maple Rd. • Troy, MI
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

Robert Sliwinski, MS, biologist and genetic genealogist will present a talk on the Basics of DNA. Robert will go over the different types of tests available from different companies, compare the newest tests and prices and provide recommendations for what test to take to provide beneficial results for genealogical research.

Interpreting DNA Results: You have your DNA test results...now what? Robert will show through case studies the steps to take to interpret your DNA results. Join Robert as he presents interpretation of some PGSM members DNA results and other case studies. Robert is a member of the International Society of Genetic Genealogists and spoke to the PGSM group in April, 2013. He is a volunteer administrator for three Family Tree DNA projects and started his own company called DNA EXPLORERS.

Kamila Mazurek will present two talks. The first one is called “Doktor Housowski, M.D.” Have you ever wondered how your Polish Ancestors died? Is it possible to deduce cause of death just by looking at the photographs of your ancestors? Is it true your ancestors died because they did not wash their hands and refused to cut their hair? How to determine the cause of death without its name in the death records? How to trace and catch ... Death. Join Kamila on a death hunt for the “serial killers” of our Ancestors’ times.

The second talk is called “Clicking With Your Polish Ancestors.” Take advantage of millions of Polish vital and church records on the Internet. Explore the most popular genealogical databases covering all three former partitions of Poland. Search the Polish digital libraries for addresses, phone books, maps, census records, newspapers, periodical literature on genealogy and heraldry. Learn what treasures are waiting for you at the state and church archives in Poland.

Join us for a fun-filled day at the American Polish Cultural Center in Troy. Download the registration form from Facebook, or register online from our store: <<http://pgsm.org/forsale.php>>. For more information, simply visit <<http://www.pgsm.org>>.

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October 25, 2014

**UKRAINIAN HISTORICAL AND EDUCATIONAL CENTER OF NEW JERSEY
НАШІ ПРЕДКИ (NASHI PREDKY) — “OUR ANCESTORS”
2014 Family History Group Conference
8:30 AM - 4:30 PM**

Ukrainian Cultural Center
135 Davidson Avenue. Somerset, NJ 08873
\$55 (\$45 by October 3)

- Galicia: An Introduction to the Austro-Hungarian Province
- Ukrainian Vital Records: Finding Them, Reading Them, Understanding Them
- The Central State Historical Archives of Ukraine in L'viv
- DNA and Eastern European Ancestry
- Q&A Panel: Breaking Down Your Brick Wall Ancestor

featuring experts: **Matthew Bielawa, Angie Bush, Michael Buryk, and Michelle Chubenko**

<<http://www.ukrhec.org/family-history-group>>

<<https://www.facebook.com/groups/NashiPredky/>>

<<https://plus.google.com/u/0/communities/107238252771720982783>>

[From a post by Michelle Tucker Chubenko to the GaliciaPoland-Ukraine mailing list]

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February 11–14, 2015

FEDERATION OF GENEALOGICAL SOCIETIES 2015 CONFERENCE

Salt Lake City, Utah

Registration is now open for the FGS 2015 national conference scheduled for February 11–14 in Salt Lake City, Utah. This highly anticipated genealogy event puts the FGS and RootsTech conferences under one roof at the Salt Palace Convention Center (SPCC).

Registration opens with a special early bird price of \$139 for a full FGS conference registration. That pricing is available through **September 12, 2014**. Attend only FGS or add-on a full RootsTech pass for an additional \$39. Register now at: <<http://FGSconference.org/2015>>, and visit that site for more information.

[From an e-mail sent out by FGS]

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

<<http://www.przemysl.ap.gov.pl/news/announcements.html?lang=en>>

Debbie Greenlee kindly passed this URL along to me. This page lists announcements of the State Archives in Przemyśl, and the one that Debbie noticed was dated 24 July 2014. Translated, it reads as follows:

On July 15-19, the State Archives in Przemyśl were visited by Yuri Humen, Directive of the District Archive in Ternopil, Ukraine, with his wife, and by Eugenia Lisowska,

Deputy Director of the Central State Historical Archive in Lviv, Ukraine, with her husband. Our guests familiarized themselves with the most valuable holdings of the Przemyśl archive and with methods of storing, preserving, and accessing them. They visited the exhibits on display, and also had the opportunity to participate in the inauguration of ceremonies in Przemyśl to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of World War I. The purpose of the visits was to establish contacts between the archives and to outline areas of future collaborations. The subjects of talks included matters involved with merging the registrations and digitizing documents from the so-called Galician Cadastre. A joint agreement was drafted between the District Archive in Ternopil and the State Archives in Przemyśl, which will be signed after approval by the authorities in charge of both archives.

If you're curious, the most recent announcement, the one dated 11 August 2014, informs us that Anna Nowak, longtime Deputy Director of the State Archives in Przemyśl, who had served as Acting Director for the last year, has been named to the position of Director permanently. The rest of the article mentions local luminaries in Przemyśl's academic and political community who attended the ceremony.

<<https://sites.google.com/site/edwarddavidluftbibliography/>>

It appears that the website GetCited has ceased operations. Edward David Luft, a distinguished researcher who has been kind enough to let us publish some of his articles, liked to use GetCited to list his published works, but has had to find a new home for the list. Accordingly, he set up the site available at the above URL. It's worth a look to see this impressive list; and those of you who have had works published might want to follow his example.

<<http://spuscizna.org/music/index.html>>

This section of the Spuscizna site is dedicated to Polish music, and has an impressive collection of links to YouTube clips, separate HTML pages with lyrics, MIDI files, and so on. If you enjoy Polish music, you should bookmark this page.

<<http://www.genealogyblog.com/?p=32732>>

This page on the GenealogyBlog announces Family Roots Publishing's latest German Map Guide. This one, written in English by Kevan Hansen, is volume 48 of the series, and the final volume of those printed for East Prussia. *Map Guide to German Parish Registers – Kingdom of Prussia, Province of East Prussia III, Regierungsbezirk Gumbinnen* is made up of 229 pages. It includes a total of 3,019 places, mostly towns, found in the Kingdom of Prussia, Province of East Prussia, Regierungsbezirk Gumbinnen. This book also includes a master index to Volumes 46 through 48, which covers all of East Prussia.

<<http://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/meet-polish-catholic-devoted-helping-american-jews-n185976>>

Ed Rozyłowicz sent me this link to a story published 23 August 2014 by Don Snyder of NBC News. It's about Jan Jagielski, who at 77 has become one of the leading authorities on Polish Jewish history. The article describes him as "the go-to man for Jews traveling from the United States and elsewhere to trace their ancestors."

<<http://www.azpolonia.com/?siteg=en>>

I heard recently from John Was, a gentleman who wrote articles some years back for *Pathways & Passages*, the journal of the Polish Genealogical Society of Connecticut and the Northeast. John lives now "between Phoenix and Tucson in Arizona." He mentioned that there is a very active Polish group in Phoenix, "always something of interest going on with them. Check out the videos." I had no idea there was so much Polish-related activity going on in that area. Live and learn—thanks for the info, John!

<<http://www.geshergalicia.org/inventory/maps-przemysl-state-archives/>>

As usual, Gesher Galicia has been hard at work acquiring new maps and other resources of value to any researcher with roots in Galicia. The above link is to a new inventory of cadastral map holdings in the Przemyśl branch of the State Archives; if it doesn't work, try <<http://tinyurl.com/mjd7r8a>>. Gesher Galicia also has a new link for Rzeszów maps at <<http://www.geshergalicia.org/inventory/maps-rzeszow-state-archives/>> or <<http://tinyurl.com/kssjt2c>>. To learn more about Gesher Galicia's ongoing project to acquire these materials, visit <<http://tinyurl.com/lm9s4tp>>.

<<https://www.google.com/maps/preview?hl=en>>

The August 17 issue of *Nu? What's New?* mentioned that a surprising number of towns in central and eastern Europe can be visited using Google Maps. You can key in the name of a place in the search box at the above site, and even take a tour through the town using the Street View feature. Now that I think of it, I remember a few years ago, I used Street View to take a virtual walk past our old house in Holyrood, Kansas, marveling at how little had changed in 30 years. I am indebted to Gary Mokotoff for pointing out that you can do the same thing in many communities of Europe. Amazing!

<<http://www.unz.org/Pub/ReymontLadislav-1937>>

Loretta Mikolyski posted a note to the Polish Genius mailing list, explaining that "the 4-volume book series of *The Peasants* is available online, seemingly free." Above is the link where she found it. IT consists of PDFs of various chapters—and yes, it is in English. Loretta wanted to share the information, and I felt some of you might like to know about it.

<<http://lists.iajgs.org/mailman/listinfo/records-access-alerts>>

Jan Meisels Allen posted an update on the proposed Polish law on civil registers to the

JewishGen list. We featured Tony Kahane's article on this law in the last issue of *Gen Dobry!*, and wanted to help you keep up with what's happening. Jan suggested subscribing to the list at the URL above. Note, however, that you have to be registered as "a member of a JGS or JHS or a subscriber to the JewishGen Discussion Group or any SIG is eligible to subscribe." I signed up as a user of JewishGen some years back, figuring it would prove valuable in my work; and I can assure you, joining is neither difficult nor painful.

<<http://www.mittelpolen.de/irm/>>

This site is dedicated to the history of Germans who emigrated to Poland over the centuries, from about the mid-18th century to the end of World War II, especially in the areas of Lodz, Petrikau, Belchatow, Kleszczow, Radomsko, Dziepolc, Kalisch, Kielce, Pabianice, and Tomaszow. If you can't cope with those German names of these places, this site is not for you. In fact, the whole site is in German, and they point out with an underlined sentence on the home page, "Wir sind kein Übersetzungsbüro!" (We are NOT a translation service!). But there is a lot of material here, and some of it requires no particular fluency in German.

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