

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

April 2020 Vol. 7 No. 2
Our Seventh Year!

Our objective continues to be to discover, document and digitally preserve genealogy, stories and pictures of Schenectady County's Eastern European immigrants.

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

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

Facebook: Schenectady and Capital District Polish Heritage Facebook Group

Thanks to Brianna Jolie (Guckemus) for starting this Facebook group. It's described as a "closed group" which only means that you can request membership and an "administrator" will give you permission.

Polish Genealogical Society of America (PGSA)

Thanks to William F. Hoffman, PGSA newsletter editor, for printing our Table of Contents and contact information in "Rodziny" the PGSA newsletter. PGSA Home Page is found at <http://pgsa.org/>

Polish Origins –

<https://polishorigins.com/>

Website allows one to enter surnames and places of interest; a good website.

NEW: See article on Page 14

<https://polishorigins.com/genealogy-services/>

Phyllis's note: I took the Polish Origins Galicia Genealogy Tour last fall and can recommend them highly.

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

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Nowy Targ Aug 20 1936 – Market ‘ Jarmark’
To learn more, see page 8

Can You Identify These People and Events From Over 100 Years Ago? Robert P. Yunick

My Mother, Mary, who died May 13, 2000 left three family heirloom photographs shrouded in a bit of mystery about the Lithuanian Remeika family. Perhaps some of you readers have memories from ancestors long ago who could shed light on these photos.

Juozas J. Remeika (b. 2/27/1876, d. 12/30/1940) arrived in the U. S. March 22, 1898 on board a ship from Hamburg, Germany, a port of departure for many Eastern Europeans who came to America. He was followed by Kazimira O. Chesnolovich (b. 1878, d. 4/4/1958) who would become his wife. He worked for American Locomotive Company in Schenectady, NY, where they raised five children.



Fig. 1 On right, John Remeika, born 1904. Person on left is unknown

Can You Identify These People and Events From Over 100 Years Ago? Robert P. Yunick

The attached pictures represent the three older siblings very formally dressed for some Roman Catholic religious occasion, each of them accompanied by a companion of unknown identity. The first picture is of my Uncle John Remeika, person on the right holding the candle, born July 10, 1904 (d. 12/26/70). In the early 1900s, the Remeika family attended St. Mary's Polish church on Eastern Avenue in Schenectady, but were later involved in founding the Lithuanian Holy Cross Church on North College Street in Schenectady closer to where they lived on Front Street. I've not been able to establish the date of this transition as Holy Cross has been closed for many years.

Uncle John's picture was taken by The Obenaus Studios of Albany, Troy and Schenectady. The two very serious looking lads dressed in high boots, knickers and jackets with corsages were not wearing their usual garb, perhaps the source of their seriousness, like a fish out of water. This was some special occasion such as First Communion or Confirmation, but I do not know which. Estimating Uncle John's age in the photo as perhaps eight to 10 years, dates the photo to sometime 1912-1914.



Fig. 2 On right, Helen Katherine Remeika, born 1905. Person on left is unknown.

The second photo is of my Aunt Helen on the right, born Helen Katherine Remeika on October 31, 1905 (d. 8/4/1999). Again, very serious faces, high boots and elegant clothes

Can You Identify These People and Events From Over 100 Years Ago? Robert P. Yunick

with Helen more elegantly outfitted with a veil and long-sleeved gloves, apparently the star of the event. But in this case, the other unidentified girl without gloves and veil holds the candle contrary to Uncle John holding it in his photo. Aunt Helen's photo was taken by The Romeo Art Gallery, Jay St., Schenectady. Estimating her age at perhaps 10 years dates the photo to 1915.



Fig. 3 On right, Mary Lillian Remeika, my Mother, born 1907. Person on left is unknown.

The third photo, taken by the same Jay St. firm, is of my Mother on the right, born Mary Lillian Remeika on November 28, 1907 (d. 5/13/2000). She, like Aunt Helen, is dressed to the hilt, less so the unidentified candle holder on the left, both with the same serious faces reflecting the enormity of the event. The estimated date of this photo is 1917.

Now, who among you super sleuths out there can identify the unnamed people in the photos as well as the occasions?

The Cat Has At Least Nine Lives!

Phyllis Zych Budka

Imagine the opportunity to bring to life a nearly ninety year old play script that had been performed only once – and that was in Polish!?! For me, that dream came true this past January 30th during Union College’s Academy of Lifelong Learning’s (UCALL) Winter term.

Fig. 1a and b show the cast of “The Claw,” my translation from Polish of Zygmunt Brzozowski’s “Pazura,” performing the reading for the UCALL audience in Union’s Yulman Theater. “Pazura” was previously performed once in the spring of 1939 at the Polish National Alliance Hall on Crane St., Schenectady, NY, by the Maska Dramatic Circle. When the faded script was found in a box of bits and pieces from other scripts in my Grandmother’s attic, I knew it had to be translated, which Google Translate and I completed in 2016.



Photo by Stan Blanchard

Fig. 1a The cast for the reading of “The Claw.” Standing in front, Phyllis Zych Budka. Seated, left to right, Gail Flanery, narrator; Bonnie McCullough, Clara; Betty Carol Barlyn, Broncia; Dave Walsh, Stas; Jim Comly, Syska; Elizabeth Paul, Kunnegunda; Paul O’Brien, Paul; Art Clayman, Tomek; Rob Weinzimer, Dr. Galareta, Kapuszcziak; not shown, Bob Saltzman, technical support.

The Cat Has At Least Nine Lives! Phyllis Zych Budka



Photo by Stan Blanchard

Fig. 1b Left to right Phyllis Zych Budka, Jim Comly, Elizabeth Paul, Paul O'Brien, Art Clayman, Rob Weinzimer

It took some arm twisting to convince UCALL's Winter Term Committee (I'm co-chair) to support a reading of "The Claw," with fellow UCALLERS as cast and crew as one of our 8 "January term" programs. We began rehearsals in August, laughing, commenting, tweaking the script. A few of us had some theater experience; most of us had none. I am still feeling the joy of that day within myself and radiated from my fellow actors.

The story behind the "Nine Lives" title above can be found on page 8 of the January 2017 issue of this newsletter.

Other parts of the Maska story can be found in the following issues of this newsletter:

September 2014 Page 3
The Maska Dramatic Circle Members
My Scrapbook Project

October 2016 Page 17
The Maska Dramatic Circle: Polish-
American Theater in Schenectady, New
York (1933-1942)

For more information about Maska's history, see "The Maska Dramatic Circle: - Polish American Theater in Schenectady, New York (1933 – 1942)," Phyllis Zych Budka, 2016.

<http://www.lulu.com/shop/phyllis-zych-budka/the-mask-a-dramatic-circle-polish-american-theater-in-schenectady-new-york-1933-1942/paperback/product-22773679.html>

The 1936 Album Phyllis Zych Budka

The email (edited) arrived on February 29, 2020 Leap Year Day:

Dzien Dobry Phyllis;

I just got your e-mail from the Historical Society.

My name is Leona // My Mother // traveled to Poland in 1936 for 2 months crossing on the Batory. She was 18 and lived in Philadelphia and a member of the Hacerstwo.

My Mom passed away quite a few years ago and now I am going through all of her memorabilia again this past fall and winter to decide where to donate the Polish history and items many of which she inherited from the Poles in Philadelphia.

In her collection is a well-documented album loaned to her by Sophie Zych [My Mother] for the 50-year reunion in 1986 that Mom helped organize. My Mom wrote an PNA article but not at my fingertips right now. The album is in very good condition since it was stored away.

In researching I think it's of your father Stanley for sure – hundreds of photos in an album each documented names and locations – Nowy Targ an example with a photo of cousin Helen Zych.

Researching Sophie on google led me to your Historical archive which is beautifully documented – was looking for Sophie because my Mom's note said return to Sophie. An aha moment! And then I located this blog where you shared that your Father didn't attend in 1986 due to health issues

<http://pahanews.blogspot.com/2013/08/my-fathers-trip-to-poland-in-1936-by.html>

I'm doing genealogy with 2 cousins I hadn't known of but thru ancestry we've connected in 2017 on our /// side who are from Nowy Targ. So today I have been going thru all of my Mom's photos, etc. in containers to find more photos of her visiting // uncles and cousins in Hastings, PA in 1937.

I can take a couple photos of the album photos – one has your Dad with Joseph // in Warsaw in "scout uniforms". But I'm certain after reading your Blog about your Dad's diary and you had a group photo.

Phone number and email here// I am happy to send UPS to your home.

Best,

Leona

Wow! I immediately called Leona and we had a great chat. Two days later, the album arrived on my doorstep. What a treasure! I knew about Dad's trip. He was a Polish Scout (Harcestwo) leader and at 23 years old, it was a very special event in his life. I had written about it (link above) but had not ever seen this album.

In the summer of 1936, about 150 first generation Polish American young people, Harcestwo leaders and members, spent a month touring Poland. My Father, Stanley J. Zych, of Schenectady, New York, was a Harcestwo leader and documented the trip in photos, complete with names, places and dates in a photo album. The album was "lost"

The 1936 Album Phyllis Zych Budka

until very recently; it is a treasure! For the first time I am able to put faces and names to my Nowy Targ Zych family and their friends!

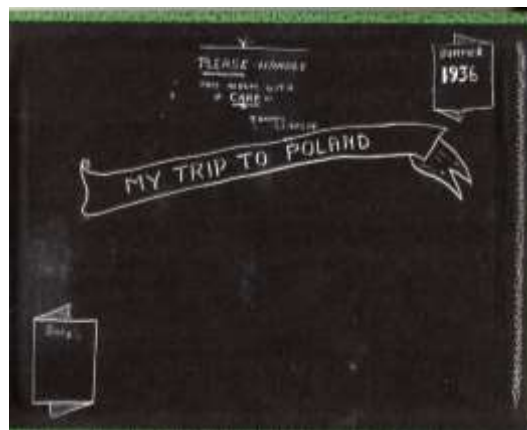


Fig. 1a and b Stanley J. Zych's summer 1936 photo album from his Poland trip with Harcestwo, Polish Scouts. Note is a reminder to return it to my Mom, Sophie.



Fig. 2a and b Nowy Targ, Poland: Birthplace of Rozalia Rozanska Zych (2a) and Jozef Zych (2b), Stanley's parents, my grandparents.

The 1936 Album
Phyllis Zych Budka



Fig. 3 My Uncle Tony –Arrow: Stanley Zych, my Father; Uncle Tony Zych on his right.
Aunt Rose on his left; Cousin Helen in white dress; boys - names unknown.
Nowy Targ Aug. 11 1936



The 1936 Album
Phyllis Zych Budka

Fig. 4 By my Grandparent's graves – Nowy Targ cemetery
Aug. 19 1936



Fig. 5 Mrs. Mrugała and Daughters



The 1936 Album
Phyllis Zych Budka

Fig. 6 My Home While in Nowy Targ Aug 18 1936 –Kolasa family home
Arrow points to family group.



Fig. 7 Kolasa family – Nowy Targ Aug. 20 1936 Mr. and Mrs. Kolasa, Gustus, Sewusia, Henry (baby)

The 1936 Album
Phyllis Zych Budka



Fig. 8 – Nowy Targ – Wincek Kolasa, Uncle. Phyllis's note: Which Uncle? At this time, there were more than one living in Nowy Targ.



<https://polishorigins.com/genealogy-services/>

Dear Phyllis,

As PolishOrigins we have specialized in Genealogy Tours for more than a dozen years. We performed hundreds of such Tours during this time. Each such trip meant genealogy research before and on that tour. Almost each time we were researching more than one lineage and we were looking for living cousins. We were learning stories that waited to be discovered for ages. We were reconnecting families separated for dozens of years. We were finding skeletons in the closet, too.

We are going to continue our mission by doing Genealogy Tours. But we want to have an even greater impact on more of you.

Through all these years we were asked for doing genealogy research by many of you. We were performing the research projects at the beginning (many years ago). Soon, we became overwhelmed by the number of requests and even though our team has been growing, we couldn't take all the projects. We had to focus on researching the ancestry of people who were traveling with us on Genealogy Tours.

However, we still were getting requests for researching ancestry from people who for different reasons couldn't come to Europe. Without promising anything we were telling them that we can try to find time for them in winter (when we make few tours), we were sending them to our Forum, or in most cases, we were just responding that we can't afford to perform a professional search because of the limited time we had.

But behind the scenes, when only time allowed, we kept thinking about how to help all who are not planning to take the Genealogy Tour anytime soon. We made a plan which needed "only" execution. This winter we started to realize the plan step by step.

The coronavirus situation influenced our plan. Or more precisely, speeded it up. We don't know how the disease will develop. Like everyone, we hope it will be stopped soon when warm spring will come. But now it seems that our genealogists may have more time in the next few weeks which they could use well for what they do best: ancestors' and relatives' search.

The basic structure of providing genealogy services is in place. It is ready to perform the first projects. We will be learning and perfecting it. But we are sure we have the most important element in place - **THE TEAM** of the best genealogists who, together with the experienced in providing dozens of Genealogy Tours project managers, will deliver the highest quality value.



Thus we officially **introduce PolishOrigins Genealogy Services** today.

We already contacted those of you who asked us about help in research and we had told you: “maybe in winter”.

If any of you reading this needs help in your family search, if you exhausted other sources, or maybe just want to take the first step, fill out the Genealogy Services request form: <https://polishorigins.com/genealogy-services-request> and we will tell you if there is a way we can help you.

Best Regards from
Poland!

Zenon Znamirowski
CEO and Founder
PolishOrigins

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