



# 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/archives.htm>

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

[http://www.polishroots.org/gendobry/PDF/GenDobry\\_X\\_5.pdf](http://www.polishroots.org/gendobry/PDF/GenDobry_X_5.pdf)

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\*\*\* EDWARD DAVID LUFT'S ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN POLAND \*\*\*

by Edward David Luft <[luft1111@hotmail.com](mailto:luft1111@hotmail.com)>

*Editor*—Edward has submitted a number of fine articles to numerous publications, including *Gen Dobry!*. It is always good to hear when someone gets well-deserved recognition.

I was in Poland for a week in the latter half of April 2009 because I was invited to be present at the publication of Vol. II of the *Studia Iudaica Ostroviensia* in Ostrów Wielkopolski. More of that later.

The first day in Ostrów, I gave a lecture in English to senior high school students at their school, comparing Article I of the 3 May 1791 Polish Constitution to the August 1790 letter of George Washington to the Hebrew Congregation at New Port, Rhode Island.

The next evening I went with the editor of the *Studia Iudaica Ostroviensia* to the Public Library in Ostrów Wielkopolski, where a large part of Ostrów's intelligentsia was gathered to hear about the new publication. I wrote an article which appeared in the volume, Vol. II, in both English and in Polish. It is entitled in English, "Ostrowo's Jews under the 1833 Decree Naturalizing the Jews of the Grand Duchy of Posen and the Man Behind the Decree." I was asked to speak and then took questions from the audience, which I did for over an hour, translated by a very nice your lady standing next to me. The volume of the periodical is too new to be in any library in the United States yet but will be coming soon. The Library of Congress and other libraries have standing orders for the publication. See <http://lccn.loc.gov/2008368319>.

The next day, I went with some friends, all present the previous evening, from Ostrów to Kępno by car. When we arrived at the Kępno City Hall, I was greeted by the Deputy Mayor (who apologized because the Mayor was ill), the President of the City Council, the Museum Director, the Editor-in-Chief of the local weekly newspaper, *Tygodnik Kępiński*, and several other dignitaries. I was assigned my own interpreter. Virtually my entire visit was filmed for local television. I was ushered inside the newly restored City Hall to a large room, filled with food. There I was shown a video in English, and we talked about the local synagogue for over an hour. At the end, I was interviewed by a reporter for television and given gifts, including an original oil painting of the synagogue as it was in 1915. The Editor-in-Chief, Mirosław Łapa, recently published a book on the Jews of Kępno, *Kępińscy Żydzi*. His book is at the Library of Congress; see <http://lccn.loc.gov/2009375229>.

We then walked through the former Jewish quarter to see the synagogue. Kępno was the fourth largest Jewish community in all Provinz Posen before World War I, and the President of the City Council was proud to say that there were good relations among Catholics, Jews, and Protestants, with never even one major incident.

We went inside the synagogue and then viewed some gravestones collected outside. We then proceeded to the museum, and I saw an exhibit, mounted in my honor and featuring their Jewish collection. We then proceeded to lunch in the City Hall and further discussions over lunch. After that, we returned to Ostrów.

When I arrived the following day in Poznań, I found that my article, “Źródła do badań genealogicznych o poznańskich Żydach” [Sources for genealogical research on the Jews of Poznań] had just been published in the *Kronika Miasta Poznania*, in the volume subtitled “Poznańscy Żydzi II” [Poznań Jews II]. You can find a link to the periodical at the Library of Congress at <http://lccn.loc.gov/58054316>. Again, it is too new to be there yet but should be there soon.

One more item that I have written remains to be published in Poland, a review of the CD by Angelika Ellmann-Krüger and her husband, Dieter Ellmann. It is entitled in English, “Bibliography on German-Jewish Family Research and on Recent Regional and Local History of the Jews.” The review is available in English in a slightly different version online at <http://www.avotaynu.com/books/KruegerLuftReview.pdf>. The review of the CD should appear in Polish before the end of 2009 in the *Studia Historica Slavo-Germanica*. For the link to this periodical at the Library of Congress, see <http://lccn.loc.gov/74642424>. The volume in which the review will appear will be Vol. 27.

For those wishing to see a Polish-language YouTube short and Polish newlinks of my time in Os-trów and in Kępno, please see:

[http://www.radiosud.pl/tele-objektyw-28-kwietnia-2009-\(cz.i\),232.html](http://www.radiosud.pl/tele-objektyw-28-kwietnia-2009-(cz.i),232.html)

[http://www.ostrow-wielkopolski.um.gov.pl/cache/18/1815/1816/1901/6205/\\_2009/04/27\\_/19808.html](http://www.ostrow-wielkopolski.um.gov.pl/cache/18/1815/1816/1901/6205/_2009/04/27_/19808.html)

<http://www.biblioteka.ostrow-wielkopolski.pl/page1.htm>

[http://www.um.kepno.pl/pl/2792/11894/WIZYTA\\_EDWARDA\\_LUFTA\\_W\\_KEPNIE.html](http://www.um.kepno.pl/pl/2792/11894/WIZYTA_EDWARDA_LUFTA_W_KEPNIE.html)

[http://www.um.kepno.pl/pl/22421/0/WIZYTA\\_EDWARDA\\_LUFTA\\_W\\_KEPNIE.html](http://www.um.kepno.pl/pl/22421/0/WIZYTA_EDWARDA_LUFTA_W_KEPNIE.html)

<http://tygodnikkepinski.pl/nius/fullnews.php?id=2335>

<http://www.radiosud.pl/Kepno-wizyta-edwarda-lufta,228.html>

All are in Polish, but you can hear me in English a bit in the last one.

*Editor*—Edward just wrote to tell me that the city of Kępno took title to the synagogue building on 25 May 2009 and will seek to begin renovation in 2010 after securing funds, which they hope to receive from the European Union.

While we’re discussing Edward’s works being published in Poland, he has sent me a long article with a lot of substance on Poznań research that first appeared in Polish translation in a Polish periodical. We hope to publish the original English-language version in next month’s *Gen Dobry!* While it is particularly useful for Jews with roots in the Poznań area, there’s a lot of substance to this article that will benefit anyone whose ancestors came from that area, regardless of religion.

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

Subject: *Behind Closed Doors: Stalin, the Nazis and the West, Cracks in the Alliance on PBS*

On Wednesday evening, May 13th, my husband and I watched a film entitled, *World War II: Behind Closed Doors: Stalin, the Nazis and the West, Cracks in the Alliance* on PBS. It could have had a subtitle, *The Sellout of Poland and/or the Heroism of the Polish people*. If you go to <http://pbs.org>, you can find the times the film will be shown on PBS in your area. I found that on May 20th another segment was to be shown: *World War II: Behind Closed Doors: Stalin, the Nazis and the West: Dividing the World*.

According to the PBS Website, film maker Laurence Rees based the BBC series on Stalin's actual conversations with Franklin Roosevelt, Winston Churchill and Adolf Hitler—and their far-reaching consequences. Mr. Rees has been writing books and making documentary films focusing on the Nazis and World War II for 20 years. In this World War II series he has shown old film footage along with scenes with actors portraying Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill. It was a very interesting two hours.

Armela Hammes

*Editor*—Mrs. Hammes later sent this follow-up note:

After having watched *World War II: Behind Closed Doors: Dividing the World*, I would suggest that your readers try to view the first segment, *Cracks in the Alliance*. While *Dividing the World* was interesting, it covered the time frame of summer 1944 to spring 1953, and only touched on Katyn, Monte Cassino and the Warsaw Uprising. *Cracks in the Alliance*, however, covers summer 1942 to fall 1944 and has a more in-depth viewing of Katyń, Monte Cassino, and the Warsaw Uprising. You can still go to <http://www.pbs.org/behindcloseddoors/> to see when and if these two segments are being shown in your area.

Armela Hammes

*Editor*—The PBS stations apparently don't have this film scheduled for repeat any time soon. But I wanted to go ahead and print Mrs. Hammes' notes because genealogists are a resourceful lot; once they know something exists, they have a way of finding it. If nothing else, the info Mrs. Hammes gave will help you know to keep an open for this film when it is shown again!

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Subject: Re Roman Miller in Haller's Army

*Editor*—Actually, this note was sent to Paul Valasek, regarding his article in the last issue.

A family of Meller came to New Zealand on ship *Fritz Reuter* from Hamburg in 1876 to Taranaki province. They came from what was then called Kokoschken, *Kreis* Prussian Stargard, now Kokoszkowy, pow. Starogard Gdański. They have been anglicised to *Miller* and my Grandmother's brother, Johann Neistrowski, from Greblin east of Pelplin, married Rosalia Meller. The region they came from was then called West Prussia but they were Kociewians (Editor—If this reference puzzles you, see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kociewie>).

The “German influence” mentioned was so great that every family here had menfolk volunteer to go fight the Germans to get revenge in World War I—e.g., 22 Dodunski descendants alone signed up for military service.

Ray Watembach, President, Polish Genealogical Society of New Zealand

*Editor*—I have no trouble believing that, having looked through issues of *Dziennik Chicagoski* during the World War I period. It was obvious many Poles would do practically anything to get a chance to fight Germans or Russians, depending on which partition they came from. Paul Valasek's book on Haller's Army gives some idea just how badly they wanted to pay back their former tormentors!

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Subject: Video Clips of Polish Towns or Cities

Sent to me by my cousin Tomasz ... a site that shows a video clip of his small town of Kozuchów, Poland:

<http://kochamtomiasto.radiozet.pl/VideoWatch.aspx?mediaId=179>

(Site is all Polish ... video clip has no voiceover. BTW ... *kochamtomiasto* means “love this city.”)

Should I start packing ???

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Interested in seeing video clips of other Polish towns or cities that have posted their unique video clips to this site ? A sort of video travelogue of Polish towns ... big and small ?

1. After you ‘click’ on the link given above, note a graphic icon near the top, on the left ... (Love this CITY with Radio ZET)

2. Click on this icon and it will take you to another page that displays a short list of additional videos. To display a longer list, click on the icon that says “Wszystkie filmy” (all films) located at the bottom right side of the page.

True, the videos are labeled in Polish: but the name of the city or town is almost always clearly shown in the title.

Enjoy ... I found many of the “self-promoting” videos of the town not only entertaining but informative as well. Travel to Poland cheaply ... with Radio ZET.

Ed Rozylowicz, Las Cruces, NM USA

*Editor*—Thanks for the tip! The only problem I had with watching these clips is that they’d play for a few seconds, then pause while the next it loaded, and so on. But that may just be a problem with my Internet connection.

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Subject: Google Tip of the Decade

*Editor*—Ray Marshall sent me this, calling it the “Google Tip of the Decade.” I thought it worth passing along.

“We recently announced Search Options, a new feature in Google Web Search. You can now slice and dice your search results using a variety of filters, which generate different views of your results page to more easily and quickly find what you need. To try it out, click the “Show options...” link on top of your search results to display the Search Options panel. Watch this short video to learn more. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MtirDMfcOKE>.”

Check out that video.

When I do a normal search, say, on Rogozno, I get 751,000 hits. Well, I don’t know about you, but I rarely look at more than ten or twenty unless I really need something.

But if you look underneath the Google logo, you will see “Web” and “Show Options.” If you click on “Show Options” you will see information in the left sidebar.

I’m sure you figured out already what to do with the options, but if you haven’t, by clicking on “past year” that number will drop to 58,500. Still a huge number, but I have to assume that these are Websites that have been updated in the last year.

By clicking on “past week”, the number drops to 2,140. I’m sure you get my drift so I won’t continue.

If you’re hypercompulsive, 50 sites have been updated in the last 24 hours.

Could we ask for anything better? I’ve been making the same search requests for 30 years, and seeing the same results each time. I actually did ask Google to rank things by time once. I don’t know if my query made a difference, but I prefer to think that it did.

“Related searches” will give you some options you might want to look at.

The “wonderwheel” option didn’t do much for a search on Rogozno, but the video showed that it would do it for some other things. Maybe a word with different meanings.

“Timeline” will give you Rogozno hits from the 1300s, if that’s what you are interested in. Click on it and it will take you right to the month in 1953.

Ray Marshall

*Editor—Thanks, Ray. This is one I want to familiarize myself with, as I suspect its true value will become apparent with use.*

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Subject: Polish Falcons

*Editor—This is another note sent to Paul S. Valasek, not to me. It’s about a recent article of his that we printed. I think you’ll all enjoy reading it.*

Dear Paul,

As soon as I saw the article “Polish Falcons of America, Nest #37, Chicago South Side, Town of Lake,” I knew I was going to find my grandfather’s name. Sure enough, there he was, Galezewski, W. (Wawrzyniec, or Lawrence). He did not sign up with Haller’s Army, as in 1917 he was 48 years old, married with five children. I have found the Draft Registration for his eldest son, Edward, dated June 5, 1918; however, I don’t think my uncle spent any time in the military.

The 1900 and 1910 census lists my grandfather as living at 4757 Paulina, as a saloon keeper and as a proprietor of a saloon. My mother said that the wives used to come to the back door for a bucket of beer for their husbands to take to work at the stockyards. There was a family story that I wanted to confirm, that of the young immigrant businessman purchasing the bells for St. Joseph’s Church. When I wrote a letter to the parish, I was told by the secretary that she couldn’t go up to the bell tower to see if there was any kind of plaque with my grandfather’s name. Dead end.

But looking through the microfilm for St. Joseph’s Church, I was able to confirm one thing that my mother stressed about her parents being active community members. Over a period of 20 years my grandfather was godfather 19 times to babies that were not family members, and my grandmother was godmother 10 times to non-family members. This was in addition to their being godparents for family members.

The 1920 census still shows the family at 4757 Paulina. Grandpa died 8 December 1929. I never knew the man. I just know him through my mother’s memories of what a wonderful human being he was. I think it’s true because we have a quite a few family members named Lawrence.

According to grandpa's obituary, there were several more clubs or societies that he belonged to. And according to my mother, grandpa's funeral procession was huge. Sorry to ramble on, but seeing his name just triggered all that my mother spoke of her father. I wish that I had known him. He had a big heart that stopped too soon.

Armela Hammes

*Editor*—That's always the nicest thing to hear about one of our articles, that it helped someone reconnect to a family member who's gone.

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**\*\*\* THE MICHIGAN HUMANITIES COUNCIL AWARDS \$15,000 to THE POLISH MISSION \*\*\***

by Ceil Jensen <[cjensen@mipolonia.net](mailto:cjensen@mipolonia.net)>

*Editor*—Ceil Jensen posted this press release on the PolandBorderSurnames list, and I thought it was worth passing along. The Polish Mission at Orchard Lake seems to be very active and productive!

(Orchard Lake)... The Polish Mission at Orchard Lake Schools announces it is the recipient of \$15,000 to support two fall programs: The Polish Mission Commemorates 1 September 1939 and Celebrates SS Cyril & Methodius 1909-2009. The Michigan Humanities Council awards National Endowment for the Humanities grants to Michigan non-profit organizations. The funds will be used for The Polish Mission Commemorates 1 September 1939 and Celebrates SS Cyril & Methodius 1909-2009 events on the campus of Orchard Lake. The Polish Mission seeks to increase the community's awareness of Poland's suffering and strength during World War II and to spotlight SS Cyril and Methodius Seminary's 100th Anniversary at Orchard Lake featuring Polish pastors, parishioners and parishes of Michigan.

The Polish Mission's funding will facilitate the creation of an exhibition catalog and events based on museum holdings. These museums were created by the Polish veterans who came to Michigan as Displaced Persons and lived their adult lives in Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb Counties.

October is Polish Heritage Month and the fall event will document how Polish descendants impacted Michigan's farming, mining, forestry, industry, and politics. The Polish Mission will hold an old fashioned Polish harvest festival "Dożynki" on the grounds as a culminating activity.

Additional information will be available at [www.polishmission.com](http://www.polishmission.com) or by contacting The Polish Mission at 248-683-0412. The Polish Mission of the Orchard Lake Schools, founded in 1885 by Polish immigrants was established to preserve and promote Polish and Polish-American culture, tradition, and history for present and future generations. The Polish Mission organizes programs, courses and events that highlight Polish and Polish -American culture and accomplishments, and



ensures a repository for artifacts, archival materials, works of art, and publications.

The grant preparation and submission was undertaken by Michigan Polonia, LLC.

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**\*\*\* REPORT ON THE POLISH MISSION'S MAY 3RD EVENT \*\*\***

by Ceil Jensen <[wfh@langline.com](mailto:wfh@langline.com)>

*Editor*—Here's another item on the Polish Mission that Ceil sent in.

That was kind of you to mention The Polish Mission and our 3rd of May event. We had a sunny day and a good turnout. As one instructor of the language school said, we exceeded expectation. Last year the treats were tic-tacs from the teachers' purses!

Here is our spin this year: (I think there will be a larger article written by Alicja Karlic, but here is my write up on my part of the event. Marcin will have photos in a day or two)

The Polonica Americana Research Institute event was advertised as a "Picnic with Genealogy" for kids, parents and grandparents. Held in the Father Andrew Wotta Center, the Panorama Room was buzzing with activity. The preparations for the day were facilitated with the help of Hal Learman, Mrs. Joanna Paszelniec-Jarzynska, Eugenia Gorecki, Marcin Chumiecki, and Ceil Wendt Jensen.

Children first visited the refreshment table where nine year old Michelle Chumiecki, wearing the regional dress of Krakow, greeted them and offered juice and cookies. Refreshed, they participated in the activities organized by Art instructor Kasia Adilman MA, painting Polish flags, putting together puzzles that formed maps of Poland, and receiving bottles of bubbles to use outside. Many of the children were fascinated by the figures in the Panorama. The colorful historic figures of Polish kings, queens, military leaders, and simple peasants move slowly on a track, and the children knelt in front of the stage mesmerized as each one passed by.

Regional dance costumes from The Polish Mission's collection were on display including vests, jackets, skirts, and hats. The children used the hats and shawls to mimic the figures of the Panorama. Visitor Ron Pruss of the Polish Genealogical Society of Michigan (PGSM) took photos of his grandson Nathan wearing a black highlander hat complete with a red band adorned with shells. There was also a "hands on" museum allowing the children to pick up and explore wooden artifacts from Poland.

The Polonica Americana Research Institute Director Ceil Wendt Jensen was joined by fellow PGSM members Betty Guziak, Joe Guziak, and Brenda Kociemba. They answered genealogy questions and helped translate records and letters family historians brought in for review.

Researchers had fun using the website Moikrewni (<http://moikrewni.pl>). The website allows

researchers to make a map showing where their surnames are prevalent in Poland today (<http://www.moikrewni.pl/mapa/>). Surnames mapped include: Chiemielewski, Freitag, Guziak, Pruss, and Wojciechowski. Ceil demonstrated how to add your pedigree to the website and connect with family and distant cousins in Poland. After adding her Zdziebko line she used the program's search engine and found 132 possible family members. The website is free and based in Germany, offering a homepage for many countries and languages including Poland ([moikrewni.pl](http://moikrewni.pl)), Germany ([verwandt.de](http://verwandt.de)), Italy ([parentistretti.it](http://parentistretti.it)), and Russia ([semyaonline.ru](http://semyaonline.ru)).

The Polish Mission's 3rd of May visitors included Rev. Leonard F. Chrobot, Ph.D. past president of St. Mary's College and St. Mary's Prep alumni, Antoni Walawender noted teacher and alumni of St. Mary's Prep, Barbara Lemecha and Henrietta Nowakowski award winning leaders of the American Council for Polish Culture (ACPC).

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**\*\*\* DP SHIP, USAT GENERAL HARRY TAYLOR, SUNK \*\*\***

by Thomas Sadauskas <[wfh@langline.com](mailto:wfh@langline.com)>

*Editor*— Tom wrote, "Here's an entry for your next *Gen Dobry!* I came across an article in a local paper and thought the ship might have served as a ship transporting displaced persons from Germany to the U.S. Fortunately, I was able to find the ship's original name and checked my listing of transport ships that brought over DPs."

From 1949 to 1952, the ship, U.S. Army Transport Service (USATS) *General Harry Taylor* (AP-145) made about 39 trips ferrying displaced persons (DPs) from Germany to the United States (including four trips to New Orleans). The *General Taylor* was a converted World War II troop ship that was used to ferry nearly 40,000 DPs to the United States.

The ship was later renamed the *General Hoyt S. Vandenberg*. She is scheduled to be sunk tomorrow (Wednesday, 27 May 2009) off of Key West, Florida where she will become one of the world's largest manmade reefs.

See Wikipedia entry ship entry:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS\\_General\\_Harry\\_Taylor\\_\(AP-145\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_General_Harry_Taylor_(AP-145))

Ship sinking as a reef :

[http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5iy4pXyqcS5Pg7dtwIA40\\_zr3pPaAD98DAD-T00](http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5iy4pXyqcS5Pg7dtwIA40_zr3pPaAD98DAD-T00)

<http://www.keysnet.com/news/story/105128.html>

Some of the readers of this news group may be the descendants of emigrants who came to this

country aboard this ship.

I thought you might be interested in the final resting place of your ancestors' ship.

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

**July 4 – August 10, 2009**

**Summer Study-Tour at Catholic University in Lublin, Poland**

As in past years, Professor Michael Mikoś of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee is leading a Summer Study-Tour in Lublin, with a 100-hour course of the Polish language at beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels. Also available is a three-week/six-credit course in Polish Culture and Polish Language from July 6-24. The trip includes excursions to Warsaw, Kazimierz, and other places of interest, with optional trips to Kraków and Białowieża National Park.

Program fees:

\$2,515.00 for Five Weeks, All Inclusive

\$1,417.00 for Two Weeks, All Inclusive

The program fee includes lodgings and all meals in Poland, lectures, language classes, performances, and health insurance; it does NOT include round-trip air transportation from Chicago to Warsaw. For details, contact Professor Mikoś at 414-229-4151 or write via Dept. of Foreign Languages & Linguistics, University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee, P.O. Box 413, Milwaukee, WI 53201, e-mail <[mikos@uwm.edu](mailto:mikos@uwm.edu)> or visit [www.lrc.uwm.edu/tour/](http://www.lrc.uwm.edu/tour/).

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**July 24 – 25, 2009**

**SUPER CONFERENCE 2009**

**JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY**

**Joint Conference / Convention of the Society for German Genealogy in Eastern Europe (SGGEE) and the Federation of East European Family History Societies (FEEFHS)**

Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
Radisson Hotel North Shore

(Mention the FEEFHS conference when booking, or book online at the URL below using “FEEFHS” in the special code box to receive your special conference rates.)

For more information, go to <http://www.sggee.org/conventions/ConventionNews>.

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**August 2 - 7, 2009**

**29TH IAJGS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON JEWISH GENEALOGY**

**Sheraton Philadelphia Center City Hotel  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

The annual conference of the IAJGS (International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies) is always the premier event in the United States for Jewish genealogists. This year, there's an interesting twist: the keynote speaker is a Catholic priest! Father Patrick Dubois, author and humanitarian, will speak on "The Holocaust by Bullets: A Priest's Journey to Uncover the Truth Behind the Murder of 1.5 million Jews," which is also the title of his recently published book. Fr. Dubois is best known for his work in searching for and uncovering mass graves in Ukraine.

The fascinating people who will be there include Dorin Dobrinicu, the Director General of the Romanian National Archive system, and Deputy Director Olga Muzychuk, a representative from the State Committee on Archives of Ukraine, who will be giving a talk. Among the huge roster of speakers, names that may be familiar to our readers include Matthew Bielawa, Logan Kleinwaks, Gary Mokotoff, Stanley Diamond, Stephen Morse, Kahlile Mehr, and Warren Blatt. Check out the entire program at <http://www.philly2009.org/program.cfm>.

For more info, visit the Website <http://www.philly2009.org/>.

[From a posting to the soc.genealogy.jewish newsgroup by Mark Halpern]

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**August 7-8, 2009**

**PGS-CONNECTICUT/NORTHEAST 2009 CONFERENCE -- 25TH ANNIVERSARY!**

For detailed information on this event, visit this page on the Society's Website:

<http://www.pgsctne.org/Conference%202009%20materials/index%20page.html>

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**September 18 – 19, 2009**

**FALL CONFERENCE OF THE POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA  
(PGSA)**

***"UNRAVELING THE MYSTERIES"***

Friday, September 18th (1/2 day) and Saturday, September 19th (all day).

Location:

Chicago Marriott Schaumburg  
50 North Martingale Road  
Schaumburg, IL 60173

For more information and updates visit <http://www.pgsa.org>.

Speakers confirmed to date:

- \* **Don Litzer**, former librarian of the Allen County Public Library, Fort Wayne, IN
- \* **Kahlile Mehr**, manager of the Slavic/Germanic Collection at the LDS Family History Library in Salt Lake City
- \* **Michael J. Mikoś, Ph.D.**, professor of foreign languages and linguistics at University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee
- \* **Cynthia Piech**, Board Member and Treasurer of the PGSA
- \* **Craig Pfannkuche**, president of Memory Trail Research, Inc. and genealogical archivist at the Chicago and Northwestern Historical Society
- \* **Julianna Smith**, editor of Ancestry.com newsletters, author of genealogy books and magazine articles
- \* **Loretto Szucs**, author of genealogy books and executive director and vice president of community relations at Ancestry magazine

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

[http://www.genealogybuff.com/ancestry\\_free.htm](http://www.genealogybuff.com/ancestry_free.htm)

Maralyn Wellauer-Lenius posted a note saying that this site gives you information on free databases at Ancestry.com. The Webmaster says people gripe a lot about how Ancestry charges for so many of its services, but these are just a few of the 200+ that are free!

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<http://www.polishclubsf.org/>

Maureen Mroczek Morris sent along this URL for the San Francisco Polish Club. If you live in the San Francisco area, check it out!

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[http:// http://3989.pl/en](http://http://3989.pl/en)

On the Polish Genius mailing list, Lindy Kasperski said this was an interesting Website. He explained, "This year 2009 marks the 70th Anniversary of the invasion of Poland in 1939 launching World War II and also the 20th Anniversary of the overthrow of Communism in Poland in 1989 ... Just as an aside, the nuances of translation to English likely should indicate that the 1939 invasion is NOT being celebrated, but rather commemorated."

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<http://www.latimes.com/news/la-fg-russia-stalin20-2009may20,0,5590089.story?track=ntothtml>

Also on that list, Alan J. Kania posted this link to an article in the *Los Angeles Times*, "1940 Massacre of Poles Remains Potent Issue," on the Massacre at Katyń. There was a brief period during which the Russian government was cautiously willing to admit the truth, or at least sniff around its edges; but it appears that brief interlude has passed.

Also, Maureen Mroczek Morris posted a follow-up note, saying there is a documentary film about Katyń in progress, and you can read about it here: <http://www.goatshill.com/GoatsHill/Home.html>.

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<http://www.stophcommerce.com>

A recent issue of Eastman's Genealogical Newsletter (EOGN) had an article on a documentary video available at this URL, which tells the story of a family that last some \$400,000 when taken in by a genealogy-related e-mail scam. Though Eastman points out that such dangers can be avoided with a bit of common sense—and the documentary is sponsored by McAfee, which of course wants to scare you into using its products—it is worth watching. The reason crooks keep spamming and scamming is because people fall for it; the more you know, the less likely you are to be taken in.

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[http://www.birchy.com/GenWiki/index.php?title=Professional\\_Genealogy\\_Researchers:\\_Posen](http://www.birchy.com/GenWiki/index.php?title=Professional_Genealogy_Researchers:_Posen)

For those who need to do research in the Poznań area, this page on James Birkholz's site contains good info on various Poles who can and will help you out. It includes contact info and, when possible, ratings provided by people who used their services. It includes the usual names—Iwona Dakiniewicz, Kasia Grycza and the others at Discovering Roots—but includes others who don't get as much attention. I hear often from researchers who want help from Polish professionals, and I think I'll make a habit of recommending they take a look at this page.

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<http://www.geneteka.genealodzy.pl/>

James also posted a note on the Posen mailing list about this site, which he described as "a new Polish player in the online genealogy field. Very little of the site is in English, however." This URL is a connection to a search for names in birth, marriage, and death records for 12 of the modern provinces of Poland, as well as selected areas of Belarus, Lithuania, and Ukraine. You click on a province on the map and you can search for names indexed so far. You don't have to specify a particular parish; in the drop-down box under "Księga" (book), selecting "Wszystkie księgi" means "all books," that is, "all parishes." The phrase "od roku" specifies the beginning year for the search, "do roku" the ending year. "Nazwisko" marks the box where you input the surname to search for; and correct Polish spelling, with diacriticals, does not seem to be necessary — a search for ZIELINSKI appears to produce the same results as a search for ZIELIŃSKI. Click on the box that says "Wyszukiwanie dokładne" (exact search) if you want to match precisely. You can also limit your search to birth records (abbreviated U), marriage records (S), or death records (D). When you've input all the search parameters necessary, click on "Wyszukaj" (Search). As more and more records and parishes are indexed, this seems likely to become a very valuable site!

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<http://www.oneness.vu.lt.pl>

On the Poland-Roots mailing list, Ceil Jensen wrote “I just found out about this free site that helps beginners learn Polish. It’s fun!” I took a look and agree; it’s a pleasant introduction to the language. Jim Presenkowski also said there are some good videos on YouTube, which you can find by searching “learn Polish language.” Chris Knopf added, “When it comes to hearing how Polish words should sound, I’ve been using <http://say.expressivo.com/>. It’s a Website that will speak Polish words and sentences for you. When I find a town in Poland that an ancestor came from, I copy and paste it into the window with all the proper diacritical marks and have it speak it for me using one of the Polish voices, so i can get an idea of the proper way to pronounce a village name. it sounds good to me, but maybe someone else who’s more familiar with Polish can give it a more accurate critique.” I must say, it sounds pretty good to me!

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<http://www.wdl.org/en/item/42>

We mentioned this site in the last *Gen Dobry!*, but Bronwyn Klimach mentioned this particular page, with a beautiful collection of postcards and easy-to-read penmanship. There are a number of good pages on the WDL site, including geographic material at <http://www.wdl.org/en/item/2589/> and the map of Poland at <http://www.wdl.org/en/item/482/>, which shows archaic Russian Cyrillic spellings of many places in Poland. I wish this site had been available back when we were working on *In Their Words ... Volume 2: Russian*. It would have saved me a lot of time while working on the geography section.

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<http://www.avotaynu.com/nu/V10N09.htm>

The 11 May 2009 issue of *Nu? What’s New?* had some very interesting articles, including one on how the controversy over Mormon baptism of the dead continues. Apparently President Obama’s mother is among those who have posthumously been turned into Mormons. At least the LDS has added a “famous people filter” to screen out names of famous people so that they can no longer be baptized, including Adolf Hitler...

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[http://scienceblogs.com/gnxp/2009/05/genetic\\_structure\\_of\\_eastern\\_e.php](http://scienceblogs.com/gnxp/2009/05/genetic_structure_of_eastern_e.php)

On the Lithuanian Genealogy list, Liuda posted the article at this URL, “Genetic Structure of Eastern European Populations,” which she thought might interest some readers.

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<http://www.poloniatoday.com/rotkiske0509.htm>

On the Polish Genius mailing list, Elaine K. cited this article, “The Names Joseph Rotkiske Buried,” by Edward Pinkowski, and said “Here is a good example of how hard it is in tracing one’s ancestors and the misspelling of family names.” Amen!

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<http://www.rustran.com/>

On the soc.genealogy.jewish newsgroup, Scott Schultz recommended this site for

translating Russian as “a real gem ... With this, you can ‘cut’ the Russian text from one Website and “paste” it into the Rustran web site (in the Promt box). You can do single words or whole sentences and the best part is it is free!”

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<http://pilot.familysearch.org/recordsearch/start.html#start>

Tom Sadauskas told me this URL “is for beta site that’s part of the LDS Family Search website. Among the documents that they have digitized are copies of Cook County birth, death, and marriage documents. The copies free and can be downloaded to your PC. It looks like they may have some records that are not yet indexed or available on the Cook County Clerk’s website which charges for copies. For example, searching for ‘Janina Manakas’ yields her 1915 birth certificate which cannot be found using the Cook County Website or Ancestry.com index to the Cook County website. Searching on MANAKAS also leads to Janina’s parents wedding license from 1914.”

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[http://csb.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prz%C3%A9dn%C3%B4\\_starna](http://csb.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prz%C3%A9dn%C3%B4_starna)

I was fascinated to see that there is now a Kashubian version of Wikipedia, available at the above URL.

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