

# POLISH HERITAGE SOCIETY

DEVELOPING A SPIRIT OF PRIDE AND SHARING OF POLISH CULTURE, TRADITIONS AND HISTORY

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April/May 2018



## Meeting Family in Poland (2)

BY JIM KRZUTSKI

In the January PHS Newsletter I submitted a story about how I came to meet my extended family members in Poland. I was fortunate to meet a man named Karol who is deeply involved in genealogy. My cousin Jadwiga reached out to him. So it was by luck or fate that I came to know my relatives in Poland. We spent 10 days in Gdańsk, Bydgoszcz and Radziejów, Poland, in January enjoying time with family members.

The experience was in-

credible for me and my wife Kay, who is now known as Kasia by my family members. It is difficult for me to put into words how much this trip meant to me.

The first family event was a dinner that was arranged by Kamil in Bydgoszcz. There were 19 of us that took over the back room at Katarynka Bistro (recommended!) on the Stary Rynek. My cousin Iwona took a train from Germany – 7 hours each way – to be there. I let Iwona know that I would be waiting at the Bydgoszcz Główna Train

Station (with flowers). Other family members had traveled as much as 90km to be part of the dinner. It was a wonderful evening with great conversation, hugs, kisses, and sharing photos. The family sang “Sto lat” to us, it was a moment and an evening that I will always cherish.

The next family gathering was another incredible event, the 35th Wedding Anniversary of my Cousin Paweł and Julita in Radziejów, Poland. It was a wonderful event and we were so fortunate to be

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## Polish-Israeli row

COMPILED BY ROBERT STRYBEL

**BACKGROUND:** On the eve of the 73<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, Poland's Sejm passed a draft amendment to the law on the National Remembrance Institute, (IPN) whose key passage went: "Whoever publicly and against the facts accuses the Polish nation or the Polish state, of being responsible or complicit in the Nazi crimes committed by the Third German Reich (...) shall be subject to a fine or a penalty of imprisonment of up to three years." The following day, at the Auschwitz commemoration held on Holocaust Remembrance Day, Israel's Ambassador to Poland Anna Azari departed from a prepared speech to comment on the draft saying: "Everyone in Israel was revolted at this news." In a more conciliatory tone she added: "I hope that as good friends Poland and Israel will find their way and a common language for remembering history together. Israel understands who built KL Auschwitz and everyone knows it was not built by Poles." Those words triggered an immediate reaction on both sides of the divide, quickly snowballing into a full-fledged diplomatic row.

**Obama's "Polish death camp" gaffe:** In May 2012, US President Barack Obama referred to Auschwitz as "a Polish death camp" while bestowing the Presidential Medal of Freedom on Polish war-time underground hero Jan Karski.

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk lost no time in accusing Obama of "ignorance, lack of knowledge and bad intentions." The White House expressed regret for what it described as a "misstatement," but Tusk replied that "the United States needed to end this with class." "Misstatements" of that kind had been appearing in the world media for years, but such a gaffe by the leader of the world's main superpower to many Poles seemed to be the final straw.

**Patryk Jaki, Deputy Justice Minister who authored the IPN amendment:** "The Justice Ministry was surprised at the reaction of the Israeli authorities to the amendments to the IPN law. If Israel had behaved diplomatically, it would have been good to inform us ahead of time that something was wrong with the draft. We therefore have a right to believe that something else was involved. Before adopting the amendment, we met three times, and I personally met with Ambassador Azari twice."

**President of Israel Reuven Rivlin:** "The Jewish people, the state of Israel, and the entire world must ensure that the Holocaust is recognized for its horrors and atrocities. Also among the Polish people, there were those who aided the Nazis in their crimes. Every crime, every

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SERVING NORTHEASTERN WISCONSIN

## UPCOMING EVENTS



**March 25, 10-3 PM** – Polish Club in Madison Spring Festival  
Immaculate Heart of Mary School, 4913 Schofield Street, Monona, WI.  
Open to the public. Polish lunch of pierogi, kielbasa, sauerkraut, and rye bread available for purchase while listening to live Polish music.

**April 1, 5:00 PM** – Polish Mass in Wisconsin Dells, Saint Cecilia Catholic Church, 603 Oak St, Wisconsin Dells, WI.

**April 12, 6:00 PM** – PHS Board Meeting  
Perkins, 2800 S Oneida, Green Bay, WI. You are invited!

**April 18, 7:00 PM** – "Afterimage" (Poland, 2016)  
Neville Museum, 210 Museum Place, Green Bay, WI. The story of charismatic Poland painter Władysław Strzemiński, who opposed social realism and maintained his own artistic freedom in spite of political obstacles. Co-sponsor: Polish Heritage Society.

**April 14, 12 PM** – Polish Heritage Society Easter Party and Annual Meeting  
Aging Resource Center, 300 S Adams Street, Green Bay, WI. For reservation call Malgosia Daugherty at 920.327.3195.

**April 29, 12 PM** – Annual Pierogi Dinner  
Polanki, the Polish Women's Cultural Club of Milwaukee, Polish Center of Wisconsin, 6941 S 68 St, Franklin, WI. Reservations are required by April 18 at <https://polanki.org/pierogi-dinner>. No walk-in reservation will be available.

**May 6, 5:00 PM** – Polish Mass in Wisconsin Dells.  
Saint Cecilia Catholic Church, 603 Oak St, Wisconsin Dells, WI 53965

**May 10, 6:00 PM** – PHS Board Meeting  
Perkins, 2800 S Oneida, Green Bay, WI. You are invited!

**May 11** – Newspaper article deadline  
Submit articles to Malgosia at [malgosia.daugherty@yahoo.com](mailto:malgosia.daugherty@yahoo.com)

**May 21, Monday, 6:30 PM**, Newspaper distribution meeting  
255 Terraview Dr, Green Bay, WI.

## 2018 PHS Easter Party and Annual Meeting

The 2018 Polish Heritage Society Easter Party and Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, April 14, from 12 PM to 3 PM. All members of the Polish Heritage Society are encouraged to attend. Please make your reservation by Thursday, April 12 and call Malgosia at 920.327.3195. Our event will be held at Aging & Disability Resource Center, 300 S Adams Street in Green Bay, WI. There will be \$8/person fee for non-members attending our event.

Suggested Potlucks:

K-A: Bring "Main Dishes"

K-R: Bring Desserts

S-Z: Salads, Vegetable, or Fruits Dishes.

Polish Sausage will be ordered based on reservation.

Our Meeting Agenda: 11:30 AM – doors will open, 12:00 PM – enjoy a delicious Easter Potluck meal, 1:00 PM – Annual Meeting with the President's Report, Treasurer's Report, and Elections.

Please contact Malgosia Daugherty to express your interest or to ask for more details about joining the board. This is an excellent opportunity to join our club and help forge the future of our organization.

## PHS invites you to see Polish film "Afterimage" (2016)

Neville Theatre in the Neville Public Museum  
210 Museum Place, Green Bay, WI

April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018, 7:00 PM. Free admission.

**From the Madison Film Festival notes:** "The final film from Andrzej Wajda (1926-2016), the godfather of contemporary Polish cinema, is a profoundly relevant dramatized biography of the avant garde artist and art instructor Władysław Strzemiński. Wajda introduces us to Strzemiński (Bogusław Linda) who lost an arm and a leg in WWI, as a charismatic and influential force on his students in the years following WWII. Soon, however, his revolutionary writings and ideas about art run afoul of the Soviet communist powers in Poland. Strzemiński's work has nothing to do with Stalin's favored social realism and superficial positivism and soon he finds himself blacklisted by galleries and as an instructor. Still idolized and supported by his long-suffering daughter and his former students, Strzemiński refuses to acquiesce to the party line, even when his health begins to seriously decline. The committed, transformative performance of Linda, star of many great Polish movies including Kieślowski's *Blind Chance*, is the embodiment of non-compromise. Wajda's *Afterimage*, completed when the director was 90, is a powerful, angry bookend to a major cinematic career that constantly examined the intersection of art and politics. – Jim Healy."

# Polish-Israeli row

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offense, must be condemned. They must be examined and revealed."

**Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki:** "Auschwitz is the most bitter lesson on how evil ideologies can lead to hell on earth. Jews, Poles, and all victims should be guardians of the memory of all who were murdered by German Nazis. Auschwitz-Birkenau is not a Polish name. 'Arbeit Macht Frei' is not a Polish sentence (...) A gang of professional thugs enters a two-family house. They kill the first family almost entirely. They kill the parents of the second, torturing the kids. They loot and raze the house. Could one, in good conscience, say that the second family is guilty for the murder of the first?"

**Israeli education and diaspora minister, Naftali Bennett:** "Poland's right-wing-dominated parliament has displayed a shameful disregard of the truth that went beyond the historic fact that Germans initiated, planned and built the work and death camps in Poland. It is a historic fact that many Poles aided in the murder of Jews, handed them in, abused them, and even killed Jews during and after the Holocaust. What happened must be taught to the next generation."

**Polish President Andrzej Duda:** "There were no Polish concentration camps. There

were such camps built on the territory of the non-existent Polish state by the Germans, the Hitlerites, who together with Soviet Russia attacked Poland, tore it apart and destroyed it. I do not agree to any hatred between nations, to anti-Semitism or other manifestation of xenophobia. But neither will I ever consent to us as a Nation, to Poland as a state being maligned through the falsification of historical truth and false accusations of which there have been so many in recent days against our country and our Nation. There were evil people who sold their neighbors for money, but that was not the Polish nation but individual people, that was not an organized campaign. In addition to cases of degeneracy there were cases of people giving up their life for a neighbors."

**Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu:** "This law is baseless and I strongly oppose it. One cannot change history, and the Holocaust cannot be denied. We will accept no limitation on truthful historical research."

**British peer defends Poland:** Lord Robert Anthony Carmichael Hamilton voiced his support for Poland in its current dispute with Israel over what has been called the "Holocaust-blame" law. In his letter he wrote: "Benjamin Netanyahu states that 'Israel has no toler-

ance for distorting the truth, re-writing of history and Holocaust denial. The statement refers to the proposal to make it illegal to describe the concentration and death camps in Poland as Polish camps. It must be clear to Mr Netanyahu that the death and concentration camps in Poland during the Second World War were German camps. The penalty in occupied Poland for helping a Jew was death not only for the helper but for his family. Some Poles were brave enough to risk this fate. I wonder if Mr Netanyahu would be brave enough to help a Pole were the situation to be reversed." Lord Hamilton sent his letter to Britain's "Daily Telegraph" daily, but the paper was not "brave enough" to print it.

**US Congressmen want President Duda to veto bill:** Eight US Congressmen belonging to an anti-Semitism-combating task force have appealed to Polish President Andrzej Duda to veto a controversial recently passed "Holocaust-blame" amendment. "It may affect dialogue, scholarship and culpability in Poland for the Holocaust." They wrote that the suffering of Poles under German occupation was widely known and stressed the significance of the Poles who have received the Righteous Among the Nations award for saving Jews during the Holocaust. But they added. "We must also take into account the numerous, documented instances of Poles who either directly or indirectly helped the Nazis kill Jews. To regard every instance of talking about that as illegal would be an injustice."

**Knesset votes to charge Poland with Holocaust denial:** Sixty-one members of the Knesset, Israel's 120-seat parliament, have sponsored an amendment Law for Defense Against Holocaust Denial that would make denying or minimizing the involvement of Nazi collaborators a crime. The amendment would also provide legal aid to any Holocaust survivor or educator taking students to death camps who face foreign lawsuits because they recounted what happened in the Holocaust.

**Political Science Professor Lech Jańczuk, Catholic University of Lublin:** "The

statement by the Israeli ambassador was rash. In the dispute over the IPN law there seems to be confusion between political arguments and the merits of the issue. I am not convinced that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had familiarized himself with the amendment to the IPN law. Polish diplomacy should hold talks with the Israeli Foreign Ministry and seek compromise on the basis of historical truth, not political arguments. Our main task is to convince the Israeli side that the amendment pertains to slandering Poland and does not prohibit Holocaust research."

**Israelis lacked sensitivity – Forum of Polish Jews:** "Israel's Prime Minister, its ambassador to Poland and other prominent Israelis have all demonstrated a lack of sensitivity and imagination, rash action and irresponsibility," wrote Paweł Jędrzejewski on the online Forum of Polish Jews (*Forum Żydów Polskich*). In his opinion, "in a matter of hours Israeli officials had undermined long-standing efforts to build positive Polish-Israeli relations." Such disagreements are normally discussed via diplomatic channels "instead of the ostentatious spectacle staged during the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz (an improvised speech by the Israeli ambassador). Polish-Jewish relations have suffered even more serious harm in purely human terms. People in Poland harboring anti-Semitic prejudice have been given a wonderful gift legitimizing their attitude."

**US State Department urges Poland to reconsider:** The US State Department warned Poland against adopting the contested IPN amendment fearing "it could undermine free speech and academic discourse." The statement, signed by State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert, said: "We all must be careful not to inhibit discussion and commentary on the Holocaust. We believe open debate, scholarship, and education are the best means of countering inaccurate and hurtful speech. We are also concerned about the repercussions this draft legislation, if enacted, could have on Poland's strategic interests and

relationships and encourage Poland to re-evaluate the legislation."

**Senate approves IPN amendment as is:** A stormy debate on the controversial IPN amendment dragged into the night and at 5 AM was approved by the Polish Senate without introducing any modifications to the draft adopted by the Sejm several days earlier. In Poland's 100-seat Senate. 57 voted for, 23 were against and two abstained. According to Senator Jerzy Fedorowicz from the liberal Civic Platform opposition party, "the amendment's major flaw is its failure to clearly spell out 'Polish concentration or extermination camps'." Senate Marshal (Speaker) Stanisław Karczewski replied that "the law is not perfect, because no law ever is, but we plan to conduct intensive dialogue to explain our position." "We have to send a clear signal to the world that we won't allow Poland to continue being insulted," emphasized Deputy Justice Minister Patryk Jaki (PiS). The opposition claims the amendment will further deepen Poland's existing crisis in its relations with Israel. The Senate-approved amendment goes to the President of Poland who can either sign it into law or veto it.



**POLISH  
HERITAGE  
SOCIETY**

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Your date of birth     Where in Poland are you from: City \_\_\_\_\_ Area \_\_\_\_\_ I don't know \_\_\_\_\_

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Famous Poles     Language info     News from the Board     Polish stories     Other \_\_\_\_\_

For any address changes  
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**GREEN BAY, WI 54301**

Please indicate the types of activities in which you might enjoy volunteering:

- Arti Gras (Feb)
- Paczki Day Party (Feb)
- Easter Party
- Public Relations
- Board Membership
- Polish Music event
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- Art Street (Aug)
- Input to Newsletter
- Polish Mass (Oct)
- Christmas Party
- Other talents to share:

\* for PHS use only to send event reminders

Bardzo dziękuję to Cyril Cieslewicz and Kay Patoka who each included a thoughtful donation with their membership renewals. A special thank you to lifetime members Vern & Gail Shukoski of Ocala, Florida for the generous donation presented to the PHS of NEW Board of Directors at our February meeting.

Thank you all for your support and interest in our Polish heritage. If you have any status inquiries about your membership, please feel free to contact me. Also, your board of officers' contact information is listed in this newspaper and on the phsofnew.org website.

Paul M. Zwicker, Treasurer  
(zwickerp@aol.com), phsofnew@gmail.com

# “Everything like in movies!”

People say that you can't choose your family. And that's true! In my case a family chose me and by this one decision they changed my life. I hope that I can change their lives as well.

My name is Maria and I am from Poland. I came to America as an exchange student for 10 months with the program Global Outreach. This is a Catholic program intended for teenagers from post-communist countries such as Poland, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Slovakia and Hungary. Its goal is to change the world through building

Big houses, yards without fences, big cars, great amounts of food... We couldn't believe that it was actually happening. After the weekend, we went for the orientation with our program. We were told what to expect and how to behave in our new homes. We were spending time together, sharing our feelings and fears. It wasn't easy to leave our loved ones for almost a year and go to a completely different country, with a completely different culture. We knew only ourselves – this was our Global Outreach family.



2017/2018 Global Outreach students

civilization of love. We are supposed to mature, become more responsible, be a servant leader for others, bring joy to our host families and of course experience something new. Coming to America is one of the biggest dreams of most teenagers in Europe. I'm glad that I could have this opportunity in my life!

I remember the day when we arrived. I was traveling with my two friends and we were all very excited. We stayed with temporary host families for a weekend to get rid of a jet lag and prepare to meet our real host families. We went for a ride to see the area. Everything was new for us and we were feeling just like in the movies!

When I saw my host family for the first time I was very excited. I saw their smiles and that was enough – I was sure that I would feel like at home. We spent about two weeks of vacation together. We went camping, we made campfires and they showed me things I had never seen before. I tried water skiing, I ate s'mores, I was kneeboarding... I thought that I was in a dream. Everything was just amazing! After the holidays I had to go to school. It was very stressful for me because it was my first time being in an American school surrounded by more than two hundred unfamiliar faces. Luckily, I knew two people: my Polish and Czech

friends. Even though everybody was very friendly and outgoing, I was terrified. Everything was happening so fast, I didn't know what to do. Amount of homework in English and new people, who were trying to get to know me... I was stressed when I came home. Throughout the year I was becoming more and more confident. I met very nice people, who I could honestly call my friends. Teachers helped me a lot, too. I took classes I could only dream about in Poland, like photography or pop music.

Now, I'm in the middle of my stay here. I have a whole five months behind me and I can see a lot of differences between America and Poland. The biggest difference is people's approach to life. In the States, everybody is so happy and friendly. You can talk to people you don't really know and you can expect help from them in every situation! Smiles and good words surround me all the time. But I miss some Polish habits. In my country we walk a lot, we spend quite a bit of time outside, we have public transportation and we can go anywhere we want by ourselves, without asking anybody for a ride! I miss the religious wealth we have in Poland. We have so many opportunities, like a couple of Masses each day, services which are not here and common prayers in church. I know that some differences arise from the place I live in. In Poland I live in a big city, while in America, I'm staying in a smaller town.

At all events, I can tell that this stay has changed me already. I learned more than just to smile a lot! I know that I should be friendly and positive all the



A special THANK YOU Susan and Paul Zwicker, Paul and Gloria Kaminecki, Frank Czarnecki, Mike Brzezinski, Scott LaLonde, Julie and Rick Stoeger, Joann and Mark Neily, the Passel family, Jan Serrgott and John Laka for helping this year at Arti Gras. Because of your contribution we were able to sell \$450 worth of merchandise and raise the awareness about our organization among the locals. Thank you for your help and being proud of your Polish culture. “Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart”.

time and towards everybody! I learned that even if I'm scared of doing something (which is not harmful or bad) I should do it, because it usually turns out to be a very nice and new experience! I think I'm more confident and I don't care about people's opinion so much. I'm so happy and blessed that I could come to America! I can take some interesting and good things and try to live like that, but I can also appreciate, what I have at home! I'm happy that I have an opportunity to change the world – starting with myself!

**Maria Lehmann**

Global Outreach Catholic Exchange Program is looking for Host Families for the 2018/2019 school year.

Have you ever wanted to make a difference in the life of another person, to do something great for someone whose life will never be the same because of you? We are looking for fam-

ilies to host Catholic students from East – Central Europe for the 2018/2019 school year. These students will attend one of the Catholic High Schools in WISCONSIN. We need loving families to provide room, board, and transportation for the school year. By hosting the Global Outreach student, you will be offering a young person the chance of a lifetime. Your own family will also be greatly impacted and enriched by generously opening yourselves to a Global Outreach student. For more information contact Barbara Tota-Boryczka, the Executive Director of the program at (920) 540-3085 or email boryczkabb@sbcglobal.net or Father Larry Seidl, the Spiritual Director of the program at (920) 412-0320 or ljsseidl1949@gmail.com. Please check our website www.globaloutreachprogram.com to learn more about our mission to build a civilization of love.

## What are Poles like? Seven truths about Polish women

BY EWELINA NURCZYK

Italian women are heads of their families, all French girls look and dress like Brigitte Bardot while ladies from Russia wear fur coats and hats all year long... These are just stereotypes, but let's see how Polish women are perceived and check if some of these are true.

### 1. Educated

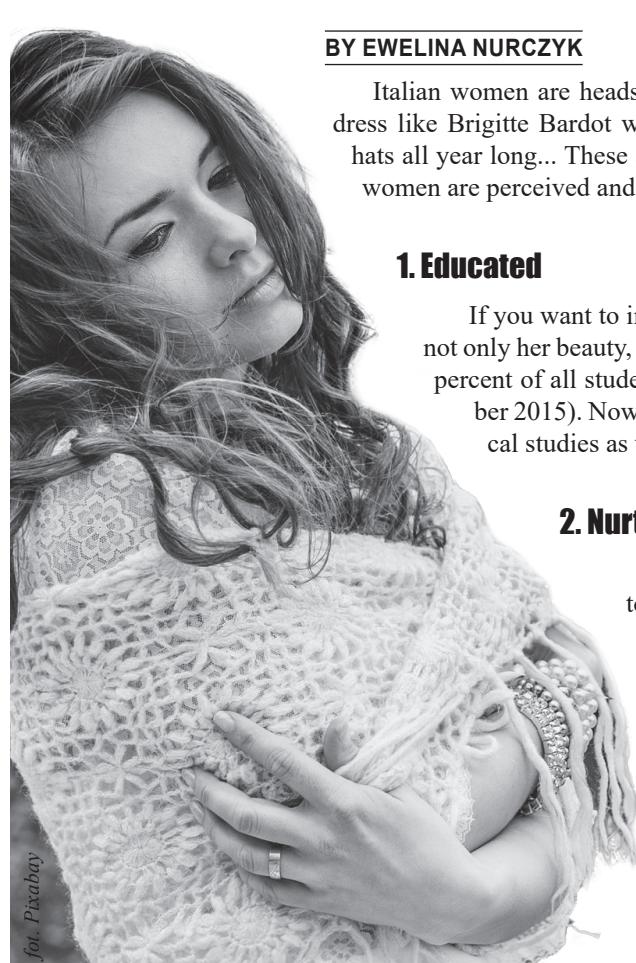
If you want to impress a Polish woman, you need to address not only her beauty, but also her brains. Polish girls make up 57.7 percent of all students at universities in Poland (GUS, November 2015). Nowadays more and more of them choose technical studies as well.

### 2. Nurturing

Do not be surprised if a Polish woman offers to cook for you or to take care of you when you are sick. Apparently, it is in their blood – they are nurturing but they definitely expect the other person to appreciate their efforts, so remember to show that you are grateful. After all, who doesn't need a bit of spoiling from time to time?

### 3. Family-oriented

Many Polish girls still cherish the same values held dear by their ancestors and



family is one of them. Mothers have a special place in Polish girls' hearts – if you are trying to reach your girlfriend on the phone and the line is busy – leave it be for 30 minutes, she is probably just catching up with her mum or babcia (Polish for grandma).

### 4. Elegant

While you may not mind wearing your pajama bottoms to pop into a local store to buy some milk, Polish girls will think twice before running such an errand without looking their best. This does not mean that they are overdressed, but they like to pay attention to their make-up and fashion choices. Whether it is a business meeting or a wedding reception, they are very likely to look put together.

### 5. Easy-going

Polish girls are not hot-tempered and rarely do you witness a lovers' quarrel in public places. Instead of making a scene, a Polish woman may keep her issues to herself and expect her partner to find

out about them without making it clear to him.

### 6. Hospitable

When you are invited to a Polish house, expect the hostess to take it very seriously. Women in Poland love entertaining guests at home so they can show off their hosting and cooking skills. Bonus points if the party is to take place around Christmas – you are very likely to be full at least until New Year's Day afterwards. Remember to accept all the food you are being offered, as refusing may result in your hostess's heartbreak.

### 7. Romantic

Due to traditional upbringing, Polish women expect their partners to act as their knights in shining armor at least from time to time. Almost three quarters of them believe in love at first sight, so who knows, maybe it will take just one look after your arrival to Poland?

Let us know if there are any other qualities or stereotypes you may want to add to the list!

## Meeting Family in Poland (2)

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there. About 40 people were at the party, and I was related to probably 30 of the people in attendance. The evening began with a toast to Paweł and Julita, followed by dinner, vodka, and other beverages. There was also music and everybody danced. When the musician took a break there was more food. The fun went on until 1:30 in the morning.

The rest of our trip included trips to the homes of several family members. On January 13 we visited my Great Aunt Zofia, where we had lunch and I got to see articles that belonged to my Grandfather, including his glasses. Aunt Zofia cooked us a wonderful lunch, including homemade paczki.

On January 14 we drove to the town of Piotrków Kujawski to the grave sites of my ancestors. After a brief stop there we drove to the home of Sławomir and Bogusia in the village of Szewce for lunch and conversation. We walked next door and visited Franciszka, who is related to my maternal Grandmother in ways that I have yet to determine. She was moved to tears when we met.

Following that, we walked another 100 meters to the birthplace of my maternal Grandparents Józef and Myra. I knew that Józef and Myra were neighbors, but I was unsure if they were from Poznań, Radziejów, or Piotrków Kujawski. This trip confirms that Szewce, Poland, is the place where my family

is from. My Great Grandparents Michał Maśliński and Józefa Maślińska lived here and had four sons, my Grandfather Józef and brothers Jan, Bronisław, and Kazimierz.

Our next stop was at the home of Andrzej and Halina's house for a visit and coffee. Their daughter Ada was there as was her daughter Ewa. We ended the day by taking the car back to the hotel in Radziejów and walking to Paweł and Julita's home, where we had vodka and a wonderful conversation. As a side note, do not drink and drive in Poland. .02 is over the limit and getting caught could result in one year in jail.

January 15 was the last day that we were able to visit family. We visited Aunt Jadwiga and her family members Krzysztof, Dorota, Paulina and Adam, in Bydgoszcz. We ended the day in Zamość, about 15km from Bydgoszcz, at the home of my cousins Teresa and Hary and their grown children Szymon and Monika. Teresa prepared a wonderful meal, there were about 15 relatives there. We made another trip to a cemetery to visit the graves of relatives with Teresa and her father Kazimierz. When the evening was over Teresa walked us to our car and waved good bye as we drove off.

I would be remiss if I did not mention that I met two of the oldest family members, Kazimierz and Bożena. Kazimierz is the son of my Grandfather's brother

Bronisław. Bożena married the late Edward, and Edward was also the son of Bronisław. Both of their spouses have passed away. Kazimierz is a fast walker and seems to be in excellent physical health. And while I don't mean to be crude or write anything inappropriate, Bożena is an attractive woman and her daughters are also attractive. I even told her as much, thanks to Monika being my interpreter.

During this trip I met 49 relatives, all of which I have documented on my family tree. I am grateful to my Karol for all of the genealogy work that he does. We met in 2012 and he joined us in Bydgoszcz for the family dinner. I am also grateful to my cousin Jadwiga for her pursuit of US-based family members. The only reason that I know my extended family members is because Jadwiga reached out to Karol. I am in frequent contact with Jadwiga.

The mystery concerning where my Grandparents were from and who are our relatives in Poland is finally solved. My nephew Adam is in the Army and is stationed in Germany and he joined us for part of the trip. Adam now has and cherishes the responsibility of staying in close contact with the family. Kay and I are planning a return trip in October of this year with my parents.

Feel free to contact me directly at jkruzitski@gmail.com if you want any travel tips.

Jim Kruzitski

## How son Tom saved Babcia Zosia's święcone

BY ROBERT STRYBEL

Although up in years, Babcia Zosia continued to live in the old Polonian neighborhood in the same white clapboard house where she and her late husband Wojtek had raised all their four kids. For them, Easter was mainly the Rezurekcja sunrise Mass and the festive Easter breakfast known as Święcone. That can be translated as Hallowfare, the holiday food, symbolic portions of which are blessed in church on Holy Saturday.

After the kids grew up, went off, and set up families of their own, like their kids, they began calling their mother Babcia, and that's how it stayed forever more. She hated the word "busia" which some of the neighborhood kids called their grandmas. Lately, Babcia had slowed down a bit so it took her longer to do things. But she insisted on preparing the traditional Easter breakfast from scratch as she had always done. And her food was out of this world. The very thought of her tart, creamy biały barszcz, baked fresh

kiełbasa, ruby-red ćwikła and fluffy raisin-studded babka made mouths water.

Except for the youngest, Eddie, assigned to the US Army Language School in Monterrey, California, the three Borkowski siblings and their kids arrived as always at the familiar family homestead. As always the table was set, and a large crystal vase full of pussy-willows graced the dining-room buffet. The only difference was that the usually cheerful and smiling Babcia Zosia looked distraught and glum.

"My children," she said. "I have confession..." and daughter Mary piped in; "You want to go to confession?" "Mary, don't interrupt. Let Babcia have her say," chided her older brother, Tom. Babcia continued: "I have confession. I make the whole food myself like all the time. In home it's OK. My leg it hurts but I can hold furniture so don't fall. But I try to go out with cane. Three times I try but cannot. Fraid I fall and spill święconka on ground. I sorry, please forgive, I do not go to bless food," she said

with undisguised anguish and dismay.

"What's the big deal? For once we can eat unblessed food," Mary commented. "No problem," retorted Tom, giving Mary a dirty look. And so it was. Within 30 minutes he was back from Saint Wojciech's down the street with the basket all blessed and ready to go. Smiling the warmest imaginable smile of joy and contentment, Babcia set about peeling a few eggs for the ritual sharing.

Tom had dashed down to the parish with the traditionally prepared święconka. Father Bill, who he had gone to elementary school with, had just finished Mass, got out his sprinkler and was more than happy to oblige.

If you were expecting this to be Babcia Zosia's proverbial "last święcone," it wasn't. The Święcone tradition at the old Borkowski family home continued for quite a number of years, with one main difference. On the Holy Saturdays that followed, her kids would now take turns getting the Easter fare blessed.

## DID YOU KNOW?

By FRANK CZARNECKI



Apparently it's not only American, and more specifically Wisconsin, kids who have a problem with obesity. In 2014 the Polish Peasants' Party put forward an amendment (law) to ban a long list of products including crisps (French fries?), sweets, fizzy drinks, and hamburgers from being sold or served on school premises. Also, advertisements for such products are forbidden in schools and the immediate vicinity.

The law affects kindergartens, primary schools, and

secondary schools. Schools for adults are exempted.

A UNICEF study indicated that 17 percent of Polish children suffer from obesity. In the survey of 29 developed countries, Poland had the eighth worst rate of child obesity. If it's any consolation, the three countries over 20 percent are the United States, Greece, and Canada!

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