

# 2023 Polish Genealogy Conference

## Lecture Summaries

### Lisa Alzo

#### **Diseases, Disasters, Distress: Bad for Your Ancestors, Good for Genealogy!**

Wouldn't it be nice if all the branches on our family trees were filled with bright shiny leaves that reflected only good kin and happy times? The truth is most of our pasts are dotted with blemishes and bad things did happen, often to good people. History is blanketed with disheartening tales of devastation and loss and at one time or another we may discover a family story of a great aunt who perished in some horrible epidemic, or some other relative who died as a result of a flood, fire, transportation mishap, or other accident. Certainly, it may be difficult for us today to comprehend the everyday adversity that befell our ancestors or the lasting hardships they endured as a result. But as genealogists, we can often find important clues among the rubble. This presentation will discuss five ways to learn how diseases, disasters, and distress may have impacted your family's history.

### Matthew Bielawa and Jonathan D. Shea

#### **Introduction to Polish and Eastern European Family History**

This session will expose researchers to basic research techniques needed to assemble a Polish American family history. American records such as ship lists, vital records, cemetery inscriptions and census records will be featured. The historical geography of Poland and map and gazetteer sources will be presented. Finally the nature and structure of high use Polish language European records will be discussed as well as their location and methods to access them. Information on websites and digitized records will also be discussed.

### Dr. Mieczysław B. B. Biskupski

#### **Television and Film: Hollywood Invents the Pole**

For generations the entertainment industry has been the main source of information for the American public. How the Americans understand Poland and the Poles is largely a result. Let us consider what that result has been: Not what the Poles really are, but how they have been invented.

### Daniel Bućko

#### **Researching Registers of Permanent Population (Księgi ludności stałej) as a Genealogical Resource**

Registers of Permanent Population (Księgi ludności stałej) are considered some of the most important official documents of genealogical value, especially for the second half of the 19th century and first half of the 20th century. These records were residency documents, a close equivalent to census records. In addition to simply

documenting information, Registers of Permanent Population often provide direction regarding where to look for missing information / other documents.

## **Researching Catholic Church Dispensation Records as a Genealogical Resource.**

Catholic church dispensation records are relatively unfamiliar and rarely used documents in genealogical research. Searching for church dispensations - mainly issued for couples who wanted to marry but could not due to canonical impediments - is particularly important in the case of parishes where vital records are incomplete - it can allow for the identification of ancestors (sometimes generations) that might not have been possible otherwise. Due to the priceless value of information in these documents, dispensation records should always be included and consulted during research.

### **Denise Kolesar**

## **Polish Genealogy in Canada: Census Records**

An often under-appreciated resource for genealogical research are Canadian census records. As with all East European research, transliteration or the misspelling of surnames can make it difficult to find your relatives especially if you do not know exactly where they lived. With the release of the 1931 Canadian Census on June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 it is time to take another look at these and past censuses and learn some tips and tricks to help you better understand your ancestor's lives.

### **Thomas Sadauskas**

## **Finding Your Family's Ancestral Village in Eastern Europe Using Maps, Gazetteers and Other Sources.**

Being able to locate your ancestor's birthplace in the Old Country is the sought after goal of most genealogists. Finding their birthplace can lead to the location of vital church records and government civil records. Having an understanding of the history of a region is vital to finding the right village. The presentation will review how to utilize current available map sources and gazetteers, tricks to finding the "correct" spelling of your ancestral village, and a brief historical review of the region.

## **How to Read Arrival Ship Manifests and the Information/Notations Added After the Immigrant Arrived in the United States.**

Knowing how to read and understand all the information that an arrival ship manifest is vital to being to identify where your ancestor came from in Europe as well as helping to track them once they arrived in the United States. The presentation will cover how and why the ship manifests were created as well as identifying related documents created by the shipping lines as well as documents created at ports of departure. Also included will be a review of INS (Immigration & Naturalization Service) notations made on the ship manifests as part of the Naturalization process and records created for Detained Aliens.

## **Kinga Urbanska**

### **Galician Records and How to Read Them**

The Austro-Hungarian Empire imposed its chancellery system in Galicia, and this significantly influenced the metrical records forms. What were these forms, how to deal with Latin, what information did they contain, and how did they change over time - all these topics will be covered in this webinar.

During the presentation, Kinga will present the historical background of the record forms introduced in Galicia, we will check how they changed over time and how to read them. As part of the webinar, Latin names of professions, social status and causes of death will be presented. The important part of the meeting will also cover the instruction on how to locate a metrical documentation concerning Galician parishes/communes within the current archival system.