



Schenectady County  
Historical  
Society

# Newsletter

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## *A Town of Cousins*

by Phyllis Zych Budka

The long, narrow framed graphic over Babcia Zych's sofa showed green mountains with a small town nestled at their base. We lived downstairs; Babcia, my father's mother, lived upstairs. Even though my grandmother Rozalia Rozanska Zych passed away many years ago, and that picture is long gone, my mind's eye can still see the name of that town imprinted on the mountainous graphic: Nowy Targ (or was it "Novy Targ?").

All my grandparents came from somewhere in Poland. On my mother's side, we have ties with Polish cousins that include visits back and forth over more than 30 years. Thanks to my cousin Jane Korycinski Smith and her lifelong interest in genealogy, we have a treasured book, a record of the Gzyms and Korycinski families that was published in honor of Babcia Korycinska's 100th birthday. Babcia Victoria Gzyms Korycinska lived to be 102 years old.

As the oldest grandchild on both sides of the family, I found myself with a rich source of information about my mother's family—and almost nothing about my father's side beyond the aunts, uncles and cousins I grew up with. And there was no one left to answer questions. During my first trip to Poland in 1999, I met Anna Kuczynska, a University of Warsaw Anthropology Professor. She accompanied me on a weekend trip to Krakow and we enjoyed each other's company. Anna recalls that I taught her how to use e-mail. We've kept in touch ever since.

In July of 2008, I had the pleasure of teaching in an English language immersion school for high school students in Krakow, sponsored by UNICEF and the Kosciuszko Foundation. One Sunday, a very kind man offered to drive me to Nowy Targ, about 40 miles away, to show me the place where, perhaps, my paternal Grandparents came from. All I had to go on was an address in my father's trip diary from 1936: Jan Rozanski, 10 Ul. Sw. Dorota, Nowy Targ. Jan was my grandmother's brother. We found that address, a small building now used for storage. We spent three hours in the Nowy Targ cemetery, quickly looking at old headstones for those two surnames, Zych and Rozanski. We found many!



*Flier - Polish National Alliance's Grand Tour of Poland for Scouts.*

Continued on pages 4-5

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## HOURS

## MUSEUM & LIBRARY

Monday-Friday 9-5

Saturday 10-2

## MABEE FARM

TUESDAY-SATURDAY

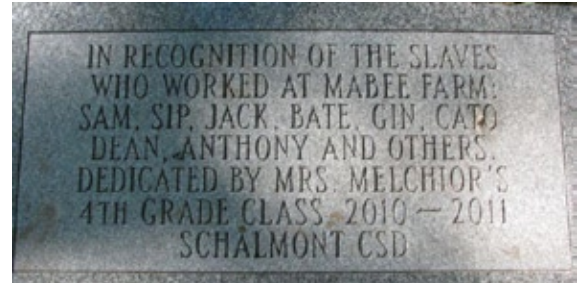
10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

## Letter from the President

### MAKING (ELECTRICAL) HAY WHILE THE SUN SHINES

Progress at the Franchere Center has reached a red-letter day in that our solar panels are operative, generating electricity, powering the geothermal wells that cool the inside, and—on days when there is abundant yellow sunshine—earning us some green stuff.

But there are other ways of generating electricity too, such as filled the air when. Jessica Melchoir's 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Class from Jefferson School came to our Mabee Farm in May to present us with a memorial to the slaves who lived there in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The Franchere Center can be seen in the left corner. The monument, now reverently installed in the Mabee Cemetery, is depicted to the right of the photo.



I am pleased to announce that Erica Flanagan joined our staff on May 9. As Associate Curator-Archivist, Erica will be assisting Curator Ryan Mahoney with the care of artifacts at all SCHS worksites. She will also serve as an Educational Specialist who will extend our current 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade warm weather school visit programs to serve children at other grade levels who will attend newly developed programs held in fall and winter at the Franchere Center.

All three of our most recent hires, Curator Ryan Mahoney, Librarian Melissa Tacke, and now Erica Flanagan, have moved from elsewhere into Schenectady, a mini economic stimulus we are proud to bring to our area. Metroplex, take notice!

-Ed



**Erica Flanagan** grew up in a suburb of St. Louis, Missouri. After earning a B.S. in History at Truman State University in 2007, she relocated to Kansas City for a position in archives at the Harry S. Truman Library, where she had previously interned. While working full-time, she attended graduate classes part-time to earn an M.S. in Information Science from the University of Missouri. Erica left the Truman Library after two and a half years to accept an African-American History internship at the Missouri State Archives in order to expand her knowledge of and experience in archival repositories. Following this, she took a six-month internship at the Johnson County Museum of History in Lenexa, Kansas, cataloging archival and museum collections. After receiving her Masters in the spring of 2010, Erica then took an internship at the National Baseball Hall of Fame & Museum in Cooperstown, NY, working in museum collections cataloging and preserving baseball games. While there, she also assisted with developing a plan for the education collection and presented public programs. In her free time, Erica enjoys traveling, cooking, crafting, and volunteering with Habitat for Humanity. She lives in an apartment in a former elementary school in Schenectady with needy cats and doomed houseplants.

## *MUSEUM Exhibit*

### **Opening Thursday - July 21 6:00-8:00 PM** ***Through His Eyes: Charles Lewis and the Civil War***

The diary of Charles Lewis offers firsthand insight into the Civil War. The writing begins in August of 1863, just as Lewis is returning to the front lines after having been in Schenectady recuperating from the wounds that he received during the Battle of Chancellorsville.

Throughout the diary Lewis shares his views and experiences of the War, discusses his trips back home to Schenectady, reveals his thoughts on his own mortality, relives battles, and gives us a front row seat to one of America's most infamous historical events.

This exhibit follows Charles Lewis and his experiences during the Civil War. Using direct quotes from the diary, as well as supporting information to gain a better understanding of the events Lewis is describing, the viewer will experience the Civil War the way Charles Lewis saw it.

## *FRANCHERE CENTER Exhibit and Fundraiser*

### **Exhibit Opening: Friday September 23<sup>rd</sup> at the George E. Franchere Education Center located at the Society's Mabee Farm Historic Site** ***A Journey Through History: The Artistic Works of Len Tantillo***

Come join us for a festive fundraiser with artist Len Tantillo. Enjoy refreshments and a very special Silent Auction. Proceeds raised from this event will go toward preserving the collections of the Schenectady County Historical Society at the Mabee Farm Historic Site. Tickets @ \$25/ per person will go on sale August 1<sup>st</sup> at the Society headquarters on Washington Avenue and at the Mabee Farm Historic Site.

**PLEASE NOTE: During July and August, there will be no extended 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM hours on Thursday evening at 32 Washington Avenue. Extended Thursday hours will resume the first week of September.**

### **SHOP FOR A CAUSE:**

The Schenectady County Historical Society is partnering with Macy's for this year's "Shop for a Cause" program. Purchase a \$5 Shopping Pass for use on **Saturday, August 27<sup>th</sup>** in any Macy's store or online at macys.com. You will earn significant discounts on

what you buy, will automatically be entered in a drawing to win a \$500 Macy's Gift Card, and the \$5 becomes a donation to the Society. This is a great way to support SCHS and enjoy the savings offered on many products at Macy's. For more information, or to purchase tickets, contact Ryan Mahoney at [curator@schist.org](mailto:curator@schist.org) or by phone at 518-374-0263.

## *Mabee Farm Classes*

### **July 10 Spinning with a Drop Spindle**

Hours: 9 AM-12 PM

Spin along with Badger, our resident sheep, who is providing the wool. Learn how to create homespun yarn using our spindles or bring your own wool!

Instructor: Pam Bucci Fees: \$50 + \$5 materials

### **July 23 Basket Making**

Hours: 8:30 AM-5:30 PM. Bring your lunch. Create a blueberry picking / gathering basket. This style basket is based on an Adirondack Pack Basket. The Shaker tape strap leaves both hands free for picking. Learn to split and narrow reed spokes to hand shape the basket. Approximate final size: 5 1/2" x 3" x 12"

Instructor: Beverly Cornelius Fees: \$85 (class) + \$25 (materials)

### **August 20-21 Beginning Blacksmithing**

Hours: 9 AM-PM each day

Explore a variety of forging techniques and build your blacksmithing skills in this two-day class. Learn basic skills making nails, S-hooks, and learn how to care for a forge and equipment.

Instructor: John Ackner Fee: \$150 (covers both days).

Early Technologies Day	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Flint Knapping</li><li>• Atlatl Throwing</li><li>• Brain-tanned Leather</li><li>• Native artifact identification</li></ul>
<b>August 6</b> <b>10am-4pm</b> \$3 adults, \$2 children & seniors, or \$10 a carload. Includes free house tour. <i>Co-sponsored by the Native American Institute of the Hudson River Valley</i>	
Mabee Farm Historic Site Route 5S, Rotterdam Junction, NY (518) 887-5073 <a href="http://www.mabeefarm.org">www.mabeefarm.org</a> <a href="mailto:mabee@gmail.com">mabee@gmail.com</a>	

I took photos and still have no idea if or how the people are related. But there was joy in knowing that I was on the right track. As we drove around the town, I spotted my maiden name in large letters on a building façade: “Zych Off-Road” – in English! This really was their home area!

Another fact that struck me during that cemetery visit: I recognized at least six tombstone surnames as family names in my Schenectady, NY Polish Catholic parish community of Saint Adalbert! Thus, I developed the premise that I have yet to prove: more than 100 years ago, there must have been a significant emigration from the Nowy Targ area directly to my home town of Schenectady. The reason for this large influx was rather obvious; both the General Electric Company and the American Locomotive Company were young and rapidly growing at that time. Three hours in a cemetery was definitely not enough time to begin testing this idea.

When I got home, browsing the internet led me to the e-TARG website, [www.etarg.org](http://www.etarg.org). There I found information on the history of the general Nowy Targ area, and a host of people who were also searching for information on relatives from that area. I posted the surnames I was researching and read the entries of others, but made no progress.



*Scout Trip in Warsaw, July 23, 1936*

With more surfing, I found the “Zych Off-Road” website. The business is owned by Tomasz Zych. I clicked the “contact” button and sent a brief message describing my search and the few family facts that I knew, and concluded with the question:

“Are we related?” That brought no response. Then I discovered the City of Nowy Targ’s excellent website, [www.nowytarg.pl](http://www.nowytarg.pl), complete with two webcams. With a click on a little “British flag” icon, I could read the daily news and other articles in English!



*Stanley Zych*

I found a picture and article about Jozef Rozanski, a master beekeeper, complete with e-mail address. I clicked, and again sent my brief message: “Are we related?” Again, no response. I enlisted Anna Kuczynska’s help to translate my message and send it again to Zych and Rozanski, listing what I knew. She sent them e-mail, saying in Polish that she knew me. Still no response.

Last winter, I reluctantly joined Facebook to enable communication with a young Polish cousin. Suddenly, I was receiving Friend requests from my Krakow English school students! Among them was Piotr (Piotrek) Sypek. I recalled that Piotrek went to high school in Nowy Targ. Since his family lived a distance from the town, he lived with his grandparents during the school week. I enlisted Piotrek’s help in my search and he agreed. I had to return to Nowy Targ! Knowing that my Polish language skills were too weak to accomplish any meaningful conversation, I asked Anna Kuczynska to be my travel companion. She agreed.



In August 2010, I flew to Warsaw and met Anna. After a few days in Warsaw, Anna and I took the train to Nowy Targ where we spent five days, looking for my Zych and Rozanski relatives. We met up with Piotrek Sypek from our Krakow School.

I went armed with about 30 old pictures that my first cousin Paul had brought to me. His comment: "I don't know if these are from my mother's side (my side) or my father's side." Anna and I started with Pan Antoni Nowak, the regional European Union administrator for the Tatra Region, and local historian. The two days spent with Piotrek included meeting the Mayor, Mark Fryzlewicz; and knocking on doors and asking people if they could identify people in my pictures. We were directed to Jozef Rozanski, one of (at least) two Jozef Rozanskis in Nowy Targ. Pan (Mr.) Rozanski graciously welcomed Anna, Piotrek, and me to his home. As we sat down at his dining room table he said, in Polish, "My Grandfather was born in Schenectady." Then he opened a Baptismal Certificate dated 1907 for Kazimierz (Casimir) Rozanski, son of Vincenty, from St. Mary's Church, Schenectady, New York! We learned that Vincenty (and his family) returned to Nowy Targ; Vincenty had two other sons, Ignas, the oldest, and Wladyslaw, the youngest. Vincenty later returned to the United States. Are we related? We have no evidence one way or the other.

Scout Tour in Zakopane



I did meet a blood relative, (Andrzej) Jozef Rozanski, a man in his 70s, who is a friend of Piotrek's grandfather. He is the master beekeeper I had contacted earlier and he served as Mayor of Nowy Targ in the 1970s. He and his wife Jadwiga were most gracious and welcomed us to their home. In our excitement and due to my own limited

Polish, we failed to establish what, if anything, is our blood relationship. I still don't know how we are related, but I am working on that.

We made two visits to Pan Nowak's office. During the first visit, I showed him Cousin Paul's old pictures and his eyes lit up! "This is like something fallen from the heavens," he exclaimed! In one picture, he identified his own great uncle, a man in a World War I uniform, who was a local hero and killed at Auschwitz!

Paul's trove of old pictures deserves a separate commentary, and there is more to learn about them. Suffice it to say, these are people from Nowy Targ, but they may or may not be my blood relatives. It's possible they might be from Paul's father's side of the family. These pictures do, however, strengthen my hypothesis about the special relationship between Schenectady, NY and Nowy Targ, Poland, one that goes back more than 100 years.

Pan Nowak gifted me with 2 Nowy Targ history books. One is a book of old pictures, authored by his daughter, Anna Majorczyk (1). The other book (2) lists Nowy Targ surnames, their meaning and date of first occurrence in a document. So far, I now know that my maiden name, Zych, comes from "Zygmunt" and first occurred around the beginning of the 17th century. My grandmother's maiden name, Rozanski, comes from a geographic region and is dated to about the same time. Given that there were 11,000 people in Nowy Targ at the turn of the last century, and there are now about 38,000, I am reasonably certain that *most* of those people are my cousins!

#### References:

1. Anna Majorczyk, "*Nowy Targ, Obrazki z Miasteczka Dwoch Kultur*" ("Nowy Targ, Pictures from a Town of Two Cultures"), Wydawca Zwiasek Euroregion "*Tatry*" (Published in association with the Tatra Euroregion), Nowy Targ, Poland, 2007
2. K. and T. Baranowie, L. Wyrostek, "*Z przeszlosci miasta Nowego Targu*," ("The History of the City of Nowy Targ, ") Nakladem Zarzadu Miejskiego w Nowym Targu, (Nowy Targ Municipal Administration), AKADE, Krakow, Poland. 2003

## *New Materials in the Library*

### **BOOKS**

*Adirondack Railroads: Real and Phantom* by Harold K. Hochschild, gift of **William Yunick**  
*An Adirondack Resort in the Nineteenth Century: Blue Mountain Lake, 1870-1900* by Harold K. Hochschild, gift of **William Yunick**  
*Excavating the Sutlers' House: Artifacts of the British Armies in Fort Edward and Lake George* by David R. Starbuck, gift of **Eleanor Alger-Monlea**  
*The History of the Snowman: From the Ice Age to the Flea Market* by Bob Eckstein, gift of **Laura Lee Linder**  
*Life and Leisure in the Adirondack Backwoods* by Harold K. Hochschild, gift of **William Yunick**  
*Lumberjacks and Rivermen in the Central Adirondacks* by Harold K. Hochschild, gift of **William Yunick**  
*The Maryland Campaign of September 1862, Vol. 1* by Ezra Carman, gift of **Kathleen Seeker** and **Tom Clemens**  
*The Polish-American Encyclopedia*, ed. by James S. Pula, gift of **Phyllis Budka**  
*Union College: Celebrating Two Centuries, 1795-1995* by Peter Blankman, gift of **Ann and Jim Eignor**  
*Wayne County: The Aesthetic Heritage of a Rural Area* by Stephen W. Jacobs, gift of **Dianne Gade**

### **CHURCH RECORDS**

First Reformed Church of Schenectady: baptisms, 1853-2002; marriages, 1853-1999; deaths 1854-2002, gift of **First Reformed Church**

### **HISTORIC DOCUMENTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS**

Darling family materials, gift of **Patty Hoenigman**  
Duck and Bourgeois family materials, gift of **John Bourgeois**  
Letters related to Glen Sanders Collection, gift of **Donna Reston**  
Publications related to Otyokwa Club of the YMCA / YWCA, 1947-1950, gift of **David Bianchi**  
Two unidentified photographs of young women, gift of **Shelley Cardiel**

### **MAPS**

Vol. 1-2 of the 1930 Sanborn maps of Schenectady; 2002 Rotterdam Election District map gifts of **Ann Marie Gotzen-Berg**

### **DONALD KEEFER COLLECTION**

*All materials gifts of Donald A. Keefer*  
Baptist Church Cemetery (Maple Shade), Vly Rd.  
Park Cemetery, First Reformed Church of Scotia, Sacandaga Road;  
Bridges & ferries, Part 1 & 2; Brown Family;  
Families of Claas Van Patten & Rebecca Groot, Frederick N. Van Patten & Elizabeth Groot;  
Glen Sanders Mansion; Mills & industries of Glenville; Reynolds Family;  
*Story of the Maalwyck, its Settlers, its House Being a Famous Landmark, and of its School, the First North of the Mohawk River*, by Percy Van Epps;  
Swart Family; Van Epps Family; Van Patten family  
Washout & Washout Road, Glenville

### **MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS AND FAMILY PAPERS**

Heitkamp Collection, gift of **Frederick W. Heitkamp**. The Collection includes documents of several generations of the Henry Lewis family.

### **NEWSPAPERS ON MICROFILM**

Gifts of the **American Antiquarian Society**  
*Daily Evening Star & Times* Sep. 13-Nov. 22, 1864 / May 1-Oct. 24, 1865; Jan. 4-Jul. 14, 1865; Oct. 25-31, 1865; Apr. 20-Oct. 31, 1866  
*Daily Evening Star & Times / Evening Star & Times*  
Nov. 23, 1863-Dec. 22, 1865 / Feb. 14-Nov. 2, 1863; Feb. 1-Oct. 20, 1866 / Jun. 13, 1861-Apr. 7, 1862  
*Evening Star* Jan. 17, 1857-Apr. 16, 1859; Jun. 3, 1859- Aug. 9, 1860; Oct. 2, 1858, Mar. 11-Dec. 28, 1859  
*Evening Star & Times* Apr. 1-May 5, 1862  
*Schenectady Reflector* Jan. 3, 1845-Nov. 26, 1847; Dec. 3-31, 1847; Oct. 26, 1855-Dec. 26, 1856; Jan. 2, 1857-Dec. 31, 1858; Jan. 5-Dec. 28, 1871  
*Schenectady Republican* Mar. 17, 1866-Jul. 27, 1867; Aug. 3-Nov. 9, 1867

**FINDING AIDS** for the following have been added to [www.schenectadyhistory.net/library/collections](http://www.schenectadyhistory.net/library/collections): The Collections of Joseph Fazzone; Carl George; Larry Hart; Frank Keetz (Baseball); Robert J. Mielke; Helen Quirini; and Harold Woodworth (Photographs).

**Thanks to all who made gifts to the Gremis-Doolittle Library and who gave of their valuable time as volunteers.**

## *Revolutionary War Re-enactment at the Mabee Farm*



*Photos: Cindy Allers, Ed Reilly*





# Schenectady County Historical Society

**HOWLIN' AT THE MOON CONCERT SERIES**

**Mabee Farm Historic Site**



**July 15**  
*Three Quarter North*  
 Also performing: John Rice and Terri Robin

**August 13**  
 TBA

7-9pm • \$2 per person donation

*Sponsored in part by Rose & Kierman Insurance and the Dutch Barn Preservation Society.*

Mabee Farm Historic Site  
 1080 Main St  
 Rotterdam Jct

www.mabeefarm.org  
 Phone: 518.887.5073  
 E-mail: mabeefarm@gmail.com

**Canalfest**

Sat. July 16 • 11 am - 4 pm

An afternoon of great ol' time music



**Ramblin' Jug Stompers** **Jo Henly**

**Everest Rising** **Rich Balf**

**Stewart's Shops** **ERIE CANALWAY**

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**MABEE FARM HISTORIC SITE**  
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 (518) 887-5073

www.mabeefarm.org mabeefarm@gmail.com

**Mabee Farm Historic Site** **7th Annual Arts & Crafts Festival**

August 27th  
 10am - 5pm

The best in area artists and craftspeople exhibit and sell their wares. Quality galore!



\$3 adults, \$2 children & seniors, or \$10 per carload. Includes free house tours.



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