

The primary reason for our crusade to the Przemysl archives is that these particular books have not been microfilmed by the Family History Center (of the Mormon Church) ... masters at filming anything to do with family genealogical research. It's probably more to do with the Catholics not liking the Mormons but principally because the Przemysl Diocese wishes to "own" the information and desires not to share it in film or print with anyone. We were told, in advance, that we would not be allowed to record any information using our digital cameras. Only a pen-to-paper transcription would be allowed. This, of course, would be tedious and time consuming but the only option open to us if we wished to see the books. My personal reason for being here is that the Lautsch (maternal) side is linked directly to Muzylovice. Now can you appreciate my deep interest in restoring the ruined church in Muzylovice? Muzylovice Kolonia (aka Munchenthal) was a vibrant German Catholic colony established in 1786, which thrived until the departure of the colonists due to the Hitler-Stalin Pact and other events during WWII. The first Lautsch immigrated to this region in the 1790s and our effort is to trace the descendants of the first Lautsch's to identify and locate any that are directly linked to our Rozylowicz branch. No other sources are available, so this Przemysl search is our best hope.

Dolores and I settled in and began our search with the middle years, the time frame known to me as the birth of George Lautsch, my maternal grandfather. Immediately we hit pay dirt as we located his birth record --- February 12, 1869, in House #131 in Muzylovice. We found Lautsch's popping off each page in rapid succession. In the course of an hour we found that George was the last sibling born and his brothers and sisters numbered three, all born in House #131 between 1861-1866. We knew that they all were siblings as the house number (131) in the birth records was identical. We frantically copied all the salient information on forms my colleague gave us. One year finished we tackled another year and the next and the next after that. Lautsch name after Lautsch name was exposed to us. What relevance they had to our direct Lautsch lineage was not certain so we just copied down all the information to be transcribed and interpreted when we returned home. Time was short here and we had 75 books to scan. But before you can utter "holy cow" it was 12:30PM and Fr. Borcz advised us that the archives will close in 15 minutes and we better get our tails in high gear. Winding down our search we secured our findings, slowed down our search and prepared to leave. It was a fruitful day ... many Lautsch's were discovered. We expressed our delight to the rest of the group as we exited the building and made our way into the mid-day sun. Not wishing to return to the dark hallways of our "hotel", the group elected to just wander near the City Center and see what sights may be seen. We waked nearly everywhere, as this region is small and compact. We paid a visit to a few shops, made a number of small purchases then paraded to a nearby market (right) and picked up some choice breakfast items (tomatoes and fruit). The rest of the day is a blur to me, the only thing I remember is returning to the same restaurant we dined the night before, ordering some more pierogis and Hungarian soup and heading on down to the "hotel". Along the way we stopped at a "market store" to pick up some breakfast items: yogurt, tea, buns, cheese, cold cuts, soda and drinking water. Oh yes ... we had some Polish ice cream too. We arrived at the "hotel" as it was getting dark and before long we each migrated to our respective rooms and it was "lights out".



Thursday ... after I showered and gotten ready for the day, we all piled into our room and prepared breakfast (left). Cold sandwiches, yogurt and hot tea are not exactly 5-star dining stuff but it was all that could be managed under the circumstances. We dilly-dallied and finally left the "hotel" ... late again. We arrived at the archive nearly 20 minutes after it opened. Time is precious and this tardiness was annoying me. We retrieved our books and started our search when my colleague had a request that got me quite nervous. Fr. Borcz would only allow one set of books per researcher in the room, in this case that for Muzylovice only. But my colleague wanted to gain access to other sets of parish books. I still don't know how or why but we ordered books for a parish that he was researching for a friend and I ordered the Brzozow Parish Books, my paternal grandmother's supposed place of birth. I was not ready for the Brzozow search as my notes were left back in the "hotel". To this day I do not fathom why this happened or why I agreed to it, but I spend 90 minutes poring over parish books not having a clue of what I was looking for or for what year. In essence, I wasted 90 precious minutes; I found nothing because I did not know what to look for. When I finished this hapless search I returned to the Muzylovice books. This loss of time would haunt me later. I momentarily lost control over my search. I was frustrated at this turn of events. The rest of the

morning I continued my search and again uncovered a host of appropriate records. The joy returned to my task on hand. But all things must end and 12:45PM arrived sooner than I hoped for and we had to leave the archive.

While the rest of the group did some sightseeing I walked to the nearby train station and purchased my return tickets to Krakow. Initially we agreed that our colleagues would be in Przemysl with us until we all left Saturday morning, but sometime during the trip they elected to leave Przemysl Friday afternoon instead. No big deal, Dolores and I would spend a leisurely Friday evening by ourselves. After buying the tickets, I purchased some more "breakfast items" and met up with the rest of the group along May 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, the road back to the "hotel". I'm not certain here either but I believe that before returning to the "hotel" we stopped for an early supper at an upscale restaurant (that means with tablecloths). Dinner was great; I picked up the tab this time around. After some ice cream cones next door, we shuffled our way back to the "hotel". While in town, I kept looking for an Internet Café to send messages back home. Found some but they all closed by 5PM. Would you believe it, as we were about to enter our "hotel" I noticed that the sign pointing to an Internet Café was pointed in the direction of the "hotel" lower level. There was an Internet Café under our very feet. I detoured momentarily, spend ½ hour clearing and sending messages and returned upstairs to my room just as everyone turned in for the night. Tomorrow, our last day in Przemysl, I hoped will be productive and allow me to complete my Muzylovice search.

Friday and the breakfast was eaten in silence. Seemed that there was tension in the air ... not sure why. We left on time and arrived at the archive as it just opened up. We dug in and spend the balance of the morning frenetically jotting down as much information as possible. I knew my race against the clock was a losing one but I hoped for the best. By 12:30PM I knew I lost the race ... I still had four years' worth of books to finish and time ran out. My search was essentially incomplete. The 90 minutes I lost on the Brzozow books yesterday was the difference. Nothing I could do now except to plan to return to Przemysl at some future point. I had to leave with what I found. Still, I was not that disappointed ... I know more now than I did three days ago. We prepared to leave the archive but before that I asked Fr. Borcz if I could take his picture. He agreed and met me in his private office. That done, I thanked him for the opportunity then left with the rest of the group. From 1PM until our colleagues left at nearly 4PM we wandered over to a few interesting spots. First we walked the few steps to the Przemysl Castle (right) directly above the archive. We started our tour with some beer and mineral water at the outdoor café. It was a brisk and cool afternoon. This castle is an interesting fortification ... erected in 1340 by Kazimierz the Great. This Castle was the lynchpin of a double-ringed fortification consisting of a 15-kilometer ring of forts to which another outer 45-kilometer ring was added, consisting of 15 powerful forts and constituting the main defensive line. With these defenses, Przemysl flourished and became the 3<sup>rd</sup>



biggest town of Galicia. We toured the various internal rooms and the grounds, which were preserved remarkably well in spite of the heavy damage inflicted during WWII.

In time we descended the high hill overlooking Przemysl and made our way to the San River, crossing it near the Benedictin Sisters Monastery. We stopped for some ice cream and eventually headed back to the "hotel". Over the course of the past few hours I held some serious conversations with my colleague regarding the restoration project and the way things were progressing. My main concern was the lack of a business plan and the issue of micro-managing this European project from North America. Coupled with who would be the money manager for us it just seemed that we were novices with a noble goal but unprepared for the reality of such an enormous undertaking. But in the end, I did advise him that I was still committed to this project if only my concerns could be resolved. It was nearly 4PM when we waved our goodbyes to Olesya and her group as they were headed north to some a cousin of his. With four more hours of daylight left Dolores and I decided to go back to the City Center area and do a little more exploring on our own.



In fifteen minutes time we were in and out of so many towers (right) churches east of City Center and heard and seen so many large bells (right) (Przemysl is noted for its foundries that cast bells) that we had enough and started to look for a place to eat. We walked the San River riverfront to the Gromada Hotel but found nothing of interest. On the way back we spotted a Sports Club that had an outdoor café. We said "why not", entered and ordered a dinner. As soon as soup was delivered a cold front came through with horizontally driven rains. We were forced inside, which was not so bad. By the time we finished



eating, the front passed, the air was damp but clear and we walked leisurely back to our "hotel". Beside us, there was only one other room occupied. We never heard those come or go. The sleep that night was uneventful. We leave for Krakow at 9:30AM the next morning.

We ate the leftover "breakfast items" and packed our luggage. The taxi ride to the train station took all of eight minutes ... cost \$2 US. Double-checking the train schedule and the platform information we waited for the train to arrive. Finally at 9:05 a train pulled in and we boarded (after making sure it's the one to Krakow). At 9:30AM sharp we left. The ride back was equally uneventful except that before the train left the station I walked the length of our car and found that virtually every compartment has passengers that were eating fried chicken ... for breakfast. The odor of fried chicken permeated the length of the car for the next three hours. The day was sunny and the scenes outside our compartment window were interesting if not familiar by now. In time we passed Tarnow and again saw the church spires of the Bielcza church in the distance. Time went by fast and we arrived in Krakow only ten minutes late, at 1PM.



Disembarking at Glowny Stacja we knew where we were headed, for we made prior arrangements to stay at a new hotel, one close to Rynek Glowny and Wawel Castle. The short walk to the Wyspianski Hotel (left) took all of 10 minutes on foot. We checked in, retrieved a note from Iwona, paid for our lodging in advance and took the "winda" to our room. Not bad ... I thought. Cheaper by \$50 US a night; clean and modern but tiny. Only 9 feet wide by 16 feet long this was not my ideal room setting but we took it as being OK. Strange thing in European hotels, they do not believe in double, queen or king size beds. Everything is this narrow single bed ... sometimes barely large enough to sleep one adult.

After unpacking we called Iwona and made arrangements for tomorrow's sightseeing. This is one aspect of this trip that pleased us the most ... in Krakow nearly everything that was done and seen has been the direct result of Iwona's planning. Sure pays to have family in foreign cities. With nothing

planned for this Saturday evening we strolled to Glowny Rynek and were surprised to see an event staged most unexpected ... a Blues Concert by Sukiennice (right). Similar to the one we briefly experienced in Prague, this event was huge and well attended ... and LOUD. We attempted to stroll through the large plaza but people again were wall-to-wall, most of them just lying about on the pavement.



We stayed awhile and listened to a set performed by an English-speaking group but soon departed for another stroll among the side streets. We visited some more churches, shopped for Dolores' hair care items, explored the many artists' displays and eventually chose, at random, a restaurant to eat our only meal of the day. In all the day was somewhat harried but uneventful. We crashed early as tomorrow we plan on meeting Iwona and Wieslaw and "head for the hills".

Sunday morning was the start of another beautiful day. After an early breakfast, included in the hotels' room rate, we AGAIN decided to walk the Glowny Rynek area. It is an ideal time to see this plaza with all of its attractions because it is virtually deserted. Each time we pay an early visit we discover something new of interest. The streets are being cleaned by city crews, the cafes are hosed down and the pigeons have not arrived as yet. We enter the Mariacki Church for a few minutes to take in the early mass. But by 10AM we are back at the hotel ready to be picked up for our day trip.



Today Iwona arranged for us to visit Pieskowa Skala (below) ... a well-preserved Renaissance Castle along the route "Eagle Nests Trail" in the Ojcow National Park. Situated some 35 kilometers from the outskirts of Krakow, this Castle is perched on a lofty rocky terrace and dominates the valley of the River Pradnik. Its situation alone made it practically inaccessible. The precipitous, vertical cliff protected it well on the south, west and north from any danger. The eastern side - the only lacking natural defensive character - where a road ran up towers the Castle, was provided with a system of fortifications gradually improving the safety of its inhabitants. In the Middle Ages the Castle at Pieskowa Skala was one of the royal strongholds guarding the route from Krakow to Silesia. Fortified castles used to be permanently garrisoned even when there was no unrest. This

was the case of Pieskowa Skala; as long as the castle remained under the king's protection its residential function was reduced to an indispensable minimum in favor of its defensive role. The 16<sup>th</sup> century was the most important period in the history of the castle at Pieskowa Skala. It was at that time that it gradually underwent transformation from fortress into an impressive and comfortable residence, not lacking, however, some defensive features. Today it is home to the Museum of the National Wawel Art Collections. We wind our way



through the lush countryside towards the Castle with the intent of getting there before the horde of tourists descend ... this was a Sunday. Leaving Krakow behind we travel a beautiful country road through villages named Bibice, Garliczka, Cianowice, Duze and finally arrive at Skala, a fairly decent sized village. Turning left we head for the National Park. As we descend a narrow road into the valley the springtime lush views are wondrous ... everything is so green and lush that the drive itself is worth the effort. The road winds and dips as we head on north. Within a short time we round a curve and see the faint outline of a castle wall but what got our attention was a HUGE singular outcropping just in front of it ... the Club of Hercules. The "Club" (right) a natural rock formation 25 meters high looks just like a club. Narrow at the base and getting progressively wider as the formation gets higher and then abruptly narrow again. What I later learned was that this rock formation was first climbed successfully to the top in 1932. We parked on the shoulder and posed magnificently in front of this formation.



But we did not linger long here, we drove a short distance farther and soon we parked the car at the base of the Castle (\$2 US please). In short order we were maneuvering our way to the top by means of a narrow paved walkway. The morning air was still and cool. A delightful beginning to a tour. In ten minutes we reached the top, approached the entrance to the Castle and purchased our tickets (\$4 US each please). With a few other visitors in sight we planned our tour ... first we see the Art Collection and then we walk the grounds. We enter the outer court and are greeted by the sight of the observation loggia with its clock tower and to the right the impressive gothic Tower. Behind us the two bastions are huge and imposing. We make our way to the eastern wing of the castle and walk through the entrance gateway into the arcaded courtyard. Flanked by numerous outbuildings and terraced balconies we make our way to the second floor and enter the Museum complex. First order of business before you are allowed in is to don some "slippers" (left) over your street shoes. This is the only way the Museum can protect the pristine wooden floors from the scuffle and scratches of thousands of shoes. Having donned the slippers, we

are advised that photography is allowed but without "flash". OK by us.



For the next 60 minutes we walk from chamber to chamber, arcade to arcade, admiring the treasures on display. A lot of them cannot be adequately described nor explained but all of them give a glimpse into the lifestyle of royalty and persons of wealth during the 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Finishing our tour we exit onto the arcaded courtyard and admire the numerous relief masks (right) that abound around the perimeter of the courtyard. Each courtyard on each level is unique and flawless in its design and symmetry. We

spend extra time here just walking around them individually. In time we descend to the main ground level, inspect the water-well faithfully preserved and make our way back to the outer courtyard. We stop by the sidewalls of the courtyard and admire the panoramic view of the valley below. The "Parterres" below us are now a sculpted garden where former stables and the coach house stood. We felt that this portion of our day trip was adequate and we elected to leave Pieskowa Skala and move to the National Park itself. We descended the same way we came up, lingered at the parking lot to eat some snacks and congratulated Iwona for her timing because tour bus after tour bus descended on this castle.



After snacking we left for the main road and drove south to the Grota Krakowska (Krakow Grotto). Along the way we stopped at an interesting church by the side of the road. Built in 1901, this chapel was constructed on pillars spanning a river because they were not given land for the church. Called "Chapel on the Water" (right) it is dedicated to St. Joseph the Worker. By now the crowds are thickening so we make plans to hasten our drive to the Grotto. A few kilometers up the road we meet up with a virtual gridlock. Finding a parking space some distance from our intended start we shuffle



along, dodging cars and busses along the way. Soon we are at a point where we can enter the main walking route into the forest and onto the Grotto. Tourist and locals alike crowd this narrow lane as we walk briskly uphill. We pass cafes and hostels, private residences and fish farms and eventually locate a cut-off that leads further uphill to the Grotto. The hike to the Grotto is long and arduous (right), for it is uphill on a path that is boulder strewn and uneven. Not like hiking the backcountry of New Mexico. For 45 minutes we hike, huffing and puffing, stopping every so often to admire the views (and rest our lungs). Foot traffic was light but when we reached our destination, the medium sized crowd awaiting entry into the Grotto was a mild disappointment. Buying our tickets we found our place at the end of the line (left) and waited for the gates to open. The wait was short as we were herded (yes, herded) into the narrow opening (cleft) that led into the underground Grotto. In actuality this was nothing more than a limestone

characteristic features that would impress a visitor that has seen, for example, Carlsbad Cave (NM) or Mammoth Cave (TN). Still, it was wondrous to the locals who have little opportunity to experience something of this magnitude. The cave is damp and dark. You are always subject to a "cave kiss" (a water droplet falling on your head). The footing is slippery and treacherous in spots. The tour guide speaks soft English and the group is raucous. Interesting cave features are few ... if you have been in as many caves as I have. In all a 45-minute tour that was more of an interesting diversion for us than a learning experience. Exiting the cave into the bright light of day we did not linger much here except that Dolores had to have her visit to a WC (1 zloty please, 25 US cents). The walk downhill was speedier but we still had to navigate the boulders on the paths. Retrieving our car we drove off to Skala and turned south towards Krakow. The afternoon traffic was moderate and we did lose our way momentarily. We dropped off Iwona who would take the bus home as Wieslaw deposited us at the hotel.

[Continued in Section 11](#)