



Veterans of the Polish Second Corps who came to London, Ontario, Canada after WWII

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Polish Combatants' Association, Branch 2

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Introduction

On May 7, 1945, Germany officially surrendered to the Allies, bringing an end to the European conflict in World War II. In July 1945, in accordance with the Yalta and Potsdam Agreements, the Allies withdrew their support for and recognition of the legitimate Polish Government in Exile in London. On July 9, 1947, the Polish Armed Forces in the west were officially dissolved and General Wladyslaw Anders transferred responsibility for the protection of the Polish Military Standards to the Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum in London, England. As of that date, the Polish Armed Forces in the West ceased to exist and the men and women in those forces found themselves with a very uncertain future.

Approximately 600,000 Poles from the Polish Armed Forces, Polish civilians who travelled with General Anders' Army, children from camps in India and Africa, political and cultural refugees, Poles from German forced labour camps, Poles from German prisoner of war camps—including those who surrendered after the Warsaw Uprising—and Poles from German concentration camps could not or would not return to a Communist Poland. Some of them knew that if they returned to Poland, they faced possible arrest and further imprisonment in Siberia.

Realizing that the Polish Government in Exile in London now had limited authority and very limited ability to act, these Poles understood that they were going to have to rely on their own resources. These people faced a very difficult situation. They had fought for almost six years on many fronts only to discover that their country was not free and that they would not be able to go home again. Many questioned what exactly they had fought for and why all the sacrifices had been made. Polish soldiers asked themselves, "Why did so many of our comrades die in vain?" While most allied soldiers could not wait to go home, Polish soldiers faced a very uncertain future, in foreign lands and far away from home.

At the end of the war, members of the Polish Armed Forces were spread across every country in Western and Southern Europe. The Polish Resettlement Corps was formed by the British Government in 1946 as a holding unit for members of the Polish Armed Forces who had been serving with the British Armed Forces and did not wish to return to a Communist Poland after the end of the Second World War. It was designed to ease their transition from military into civilian life and to keep them under military control until they were fully adjusted to British life. For Polish soldiers, the Corps was a necessary evil but it also underlined the fact that they were no longer part of the Polish Armed Forces. In order to give themselves some direct control over their futures, Polish soldiers, as early as 1946, began to form associations of Polish Combatants.

Wherever there were groups of Polish soldiers, units of the Polish Combatants' Association sprung up. A meeting of all these separate units was called in August 1947 in London, England, for the purpose of uniting these groups into one large organization. The purpose of this organization in the immediate future was to assist Polish Veterans with resettlement on every continent on the planet and, in the longer term, to maintain and realize in every Polish immigrant community and in every country the idea of an independent and free Poland. For many of these soldiers the war was not over. The struggle for an independent Poland continued.

In the fall of 1946, in accordance with agreements between the Governments of Great Britain and of Canada dealing with the resettlement of war immigration, the Canadian government decided to accept Polish Veterans as replacements for the departing German prisoners-of-war who had worked on farms and in lumber camps while in Canada. The first group of 1,691 Polish soldiers of the Polish Second Corps left from the Falconara Camp, near Ancona in Italy, on their way to Canada. The first meeting of the Stowarzyszenie Polskich Kombatantow/ Polish Combatants' Association (SPK), Canadian Branch, took place on November 3, 1946, in Italy before the soldiers boarded the SS Sea Robin, which would take them to Canada. When the first two groups of Polish soldiers landed in Halifax on November 23, 1946, the first executive of SPK Canada also stepped off the ship. The second ship, the Sea Snipe, left Italy with 1,185 men on board. Between 1946 and 1947, some 4,527 Polish ex-servicemen were resettled in Canada out of a total of 261,000 immigrants who were accepted in Canada during the same period.

In 1959, the global structure of SPK was changed at a world conference, at which point it was transformed into a federation of independent national organizations.

Polish Veterans and the Government of Canada

In 1945-1946, the Canadian government was reluctant to absorb Polish Veterans and refugees who were stranded in Europe after World War II. The International Refugee Organization and the British government began to pressure the Canadian government to accept more of these people. Canada set up a Senate Committee on Immigration to consider the desirability of admitting more refugees. In July 1947, the Senate Committee on Immigration submitted a report advocating for a substantial increase in immigration.¹

Although the first responses from the Government of Canada and Canadians in general might be described as frosty, it must also be recognized that these relationships began to steadily improve, especially as the Government of Canada began to trust more in SPK in Canada. For example, by 1948 SPK was invited to send a representative to attend an inter-provincial conference of ministries of labour and obtained an official charter officially establishing SPK in Canada.

On November 26, 1950, the Canadian Government adopted a more open immigration policy, and between 1947 and 1951 some 36,549 displaced Poles entered Canada, including those who were forced to flee Poland during the Fascist aggression, or were compelled to work as forced labour for the Germans.

In 1953, a general meeting of the SPK was held in Ottawa where the delegates were addressed by several federal cabinet ministers as well as the commanding officer of the Canadian forces during World War II, General Crerar. By this time, it is safe to say that the Polish Veterans had been accepted in Canada.

Stowarzyszenie Polskich Kombatantow (SPK) in Canada

The first branch of the Polish Combatants' Association, Branch No. 1, was formed in Port Arthur, Ontario, the second in London and the third in Vancouver. In 1948, the first general meeting was held in Winnipeg. The first Executive of SPK Canada was stationed in Winnipeg although the headquarters was soon moved to Ottawa.

In October 1947, there were already 20 functioning SPK branches in Canada. In 1950 there were 23 SPK branches and 1,500 members. In 1958 there were 27 branches. The initial concern included the care and representation of those exploited by unscrupulous employers and aid and advice to members seeking work or accommodation at the completion of their contracts. In 1949, the emphasis shifted to long-term political and cultural matters.²

SPK Canada, as an independent organization, was here to function over the longer term, committed to making a life for Polish Veterans in Canada and encouraging them to obtain Canadian citizenship and to take on the rights and responsibilities of an active life in Canadian society. SPK also became an active supporter of the

¹ See also "Admission to Canada of Members of the Polish Armed Forces." A Brief, Submitted to the Standing Committee of the Senate of Canada on Immigration and Labour by the Canadian Polish Congress, Ottawa, June 25, 1946.

² Henry Radecki, *Ethnic Organizational Dynamics: The Polish Group in Canada*. (Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1979), 83.

Canadian Polish Congress and initiated contacts with the Royal Canadian Legion in order to better facilitate cooperation and support between two like-minded organizations.

Beginning in 1955 and expanding on their work with the Fund to Aid War Invalids, the SPK Branches were encouraged to set up local credit union branches in order to further assist Veterans. At the same time many branches undertook to build their own facilities, with the first one opening in Ottawa, while the SPK Hall in London opened in 1960.

SPK in London

Starting in 1946, approximately 400 Polish Veterans arrived in the London area. The SPK Branch No. 2 in London was formed on January 1, 1947, when the first meeting was held in the hall of the Polskie Stowarzyszenie Narodowe (PSN)/ Polish National Association, under the leadership of Tadeusz Sokolowski, who was elected the first president. On October 5, 1947, a general meeting was called at which 315 members attended. The main issue at this meeting was concerns with living and working conditions on the farms and with the farm contracts. Farm conditions began to improve after this meeting thanks to the ongoing dialogue between SPK and the Canadian government.

The Branch immediately got involved in cultural and educational activities such as dances and commemorations of important military historical events, amateur theatricals, film nights, the creation of a library and, in 1949, the development of a ladies' auxiliary under President Helena Jedrzejowska. SPK also began to put on shows and food booths at the Western Fair.

In the early 1950s many young Polish women and children began to arrive from Polish camps in Africa, India and Germany. In a way this completely changed the dynamics of the membership of SPK Branch No. 2. Now there were many more women involved, weddings took place and young families were formed, and family life and work became an immediate priority for many of the Polish Veterans.



SPK Kolo 2 on parade in London, Ontario, 1960's

A

Adamczyk, Franciszek



Born: October 8, 1915, in the village of Wolica, Gmina Rakow, Woj. Kieleckie, Poland

Died: January 19, 1998 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Brothers, Jozef and Jan

Education: 3 years

Occupation(s): Cook

Married: Irene Stempkowski (Born October 5, 1923, in Czortkow, Poland; Died December 24, 2010); Irene created Irene's Bridal Shop of London

Children: John and Richard (Halina); Grandchildren: Karl, Franc, Renata

Military History: Took part in the September 1939 Campaign in Poland; exiled to the Soviet Union; joined the Polish 2nd Corps, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division; fought at Monte Cassino, Ancona, Bologna

Post-War: Franciszek came to Canada in 1946 and completed a 2-year work contract. After the farm contract he worked as a cook on a hydro camp near London. Later he found factory work at Kelvinator, assembling home appliances.

Adel, Wiktor

Born: December 21, 1885, in Lwów, Poland

Died: May 28, 1964; Buried in St. Peter's Cemetery, London, Ontario, Canada

Married: Wiktoria Karnecka (1852-1930)

Children: Zofia, Julius

Education: From 1903 to 1910 he studied engineering, road building, bridges and railways at the Politechnique in Lwów. He also studied insurance and law in Warsaw.

Military Rank: Captain

Military History: Twice defender of Lwów; From 1914 to 1930 he served as an officer in the Polish Army. In 1939 he was called up for military service and was involved in the defense of Lwów. On March 10, 1940, he was arrested by the NKVD and sent into exile at Tarta-UT obwod Karabas. In October he 1941 he joined Anders' Army and was assigned as commander to the 10th Sappers Company in the Soviet Union. On April 1, 1942, he landed in Pahlevi and later was transferred to Palestine. In Palestine, he was moved into inactive duty probably because of his age. He was 57. Later he was transferred to Witley Camp in England.

Civilian life: From 1930 to 1939 he was an inspector in a Polish Insurance Company.

Post-War: He emigrated to Canada in 1955/56. He joined SPK on March 12, 1961, and served as Secretary (1962, 1963, 1964).

Alaskiewicz, Konstanty



Born: December 12, 1927, Woj. Nowogródzkie, Poland

Died: Konstanty died August 5, 1991; Lucy died November 28, 1996, London, Ontario, Canada

Occupation(s): Final Assembly, GM Diesel

Married: Walentyna (Lucy); Kostek and Lucy met in 1949 shortly after arriving in Canada and they were married on November 4, 1950.

Children: Halina (Ciucka), Richard

Medals: SPK: Bronze

Military Rank: Private

History: During the war Lucy was in a displaced persons camp in Eastern Germany where, being too young to work, she attended school. Kostek followed his brother Wilhelm to join the 6th Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps.

Post-War: When they came to Canada, Lucy worked at Luxside Manufacturing for 2 years and then went on to work at Nortel as a quality control inspector. She was the first woman to be hired at the London plant. Kostek first worked at CN and then moved to GM Diesel for the rest of his career where he helped with the final assembly of Terex earth moving trucks.

Alaskiewicz, Wilhelm (Bill)



Born: April 18, 1924, in Lepin, Poland

Died: September 4, 2007 in London, Ontario, Canada

Occupation(s): Farmer

Married: Jadwiga (Traczewska): Died: June 8, 1987; Daughter of Elzbieta Traczewski; Sister to John, Michael, Jeannette, Emily, Lodzia, Edward

Children: Judy Ann, Edward

Medals: SPK: Bronze

Military Rank: Strzelec

History: Joined the 6th Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Amszej, Genowefa (Kulewicz)

Born: December 10, 1923, in Dolha, Poland (now Belarus)

Died: Died: July 22, 2012 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Adam Kulewicz, died in Siberia following an accident. Prior to being taken to Siberia, he was involved in local politics as a Sołtys [elected chair of a village council].

Mother, Emilia. She died in the 1990s. Siblings: two infant brothers who died in Siberia; two brothers who survived Siberia – Henryk who died in the 1980s, and Witold. Her sister, Jadwiga, survived Siberia and died in 2010.

Education: Finished elementary school

Occupation(s): Genowefa worked at various cleaning jobs. She cleaned offices, did housework for people. She worked as a cleaner until her retirement, which most likely took place in the late 80s/early 90s.

Married: Konstanty

Children: Mark (September 12, 1965); Peter (July 16, 1970); Peter is a Catholic priest.

Military History: Genowefa Amszej spent six years in Siberia where she worked as a maid /housekeeper. She remembered the lice and the bugs and she spoke of hearing bears in the distance as she walked home from work in the woods at night. She got out of Siberia after the war, when she was in her early 20s.

Post-War: She returned to Poland from Siberia and, when she came back, the parish priest made an announcement asking his parishioners to help out the newly returned young woman. Genowefa settled in Odrzychowice in the Southwest of Poland where she worked at a linen plant. She stayed in this village until 1963. Genowefa Kulewicz grew up in the same area as Konstancy Amszej. They reconnected later in life. They married in Poland on April 14, 1963. Genowefa was almost forty at the time. Konstancy returned to Canada and started the process of bringing his wife to Canada. Genowefa left Poland in November of 1963. In Canada, she first lived in an apartment on Egerton Street with her husband. Genowefa worked at various cleaning jobs. She cleaned offices and did housework. Because Genowefa wanted to live closer to the Polish parish, the family moved to 177 Colborne Street in 1966, when their son, Mark, was six months old. Genowefa lived there until December 2011, at which time she sold the house and moved to Polonia Towers, where she lived for about seven months.

Amszej, Konstancy

Born: February 14, 1913, in Pacowiszczyna, Woj. Nowogródzkie, Poland

Died: August 15, 1984 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Józef Amszej; Mother, Michalina. Józef worked in the building trade, most likely in either masonry or cement work. Józef was married three times and widowed twice. Konstancy was a child of the first marriage. Konstancy had half siblings. Konstancy was raised in an area that is now part of Belarus. After his mother died, Konstancy was sent to be raised by an aunt in Dolha, the village where his future wife, Genowefa Kulewicz, was born and raised.

Education: Completed elementary school

Occupation(s): Farmer, road-builder, worked on a road near Kiev. In Canada he studied welding and other trades

Married: Genowefa Kulewicz in Poland on April 14, 1963

Children: Mark (September 12, 1965); Peter (July 16, 1970)

Military Rank: Sergeant

Military History: Served with the 2nd Corps. He went through the Middle East and participated in the Battle of Monte Cassino. He was involved in communications – relaying messages to planes during bombing missions. He gained a background in electronics from his experience in Monte Cassino.

Post-War: After the war, he remained in Italy for about a year, running an officers' dining area. Later, Konstancy went to England. Konstancy came to Canada on a farm contract in 1947. He was placed on a farm near London for his two-year labour term. In London, he worked in a factory, and later as an orderly at Westminster Hospital. Konstancy retired in the late 1970s.

Andronowicz, Aleksy



Born: February 13, 1908, in Łosińce (Łachwa), Drohiczyn, Woj. Poleskie, Poland

Died: June 25, 1973, in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Gierasim Andronowicz (Born May 1882 in Poland); Mother, Uliana Maruszko (February 10, 1882, in Poland – December 7, 1974, in London, Ontario)

Married: Eufrozyna Krawczuk on May 25, 1928, in the Roman Catholic Parish Church of Subot, Subot, Drohiczyn, Woj. Polesie, Poland

Children: Władysław Andronowicz (February 13, 1929 – March 16, 2015, London, Ontario); Anastazja Chwiećko (March 18, 1934)

Military Rank: Corporal (Army # 42/A/1908/III)

Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Walecznych, Medal Wojska, Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino, Cross of The Deported to Siberia; British Medals: 1939-45 Star, Italy Star, Defense Medal, War Medal 1939-1945; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver

History: It was the night of February 10, 1940, when the Soviets arrested and deported the family by cattle-car train to Nuchto Ozierskoi Lesopunkt – Arkjangel'sk Oblast, USSR and then to Siberia. Aleksy was assigned to cut trees in the forest. Eufrozyna was ordered to clear the snow off the railroad tracks. Later they were sent to Uzbekistan and onto Kazakhstan.

After the amnesty was signed, they left Nuchto Ozierskoi Lesopunkt, USSR, on November 12, 1941, and landed in Jangigajzat, USSR. The Polish consulates in the USSR issued in-land temporary passports for those being evacuated. These had to be presented at the border crossings in order to proceed. On August 8, 1942, they travelled by train

to Krasnovodsk, a port on the Caspian Sea, and embarked on a ship to cross the sea, arriving at Pahlavi, Iran, on August 20, 1942. On August 29, 1942, Aleksy enlisted in the Polish army, joining the 2nd Corps. He served as a truck driver delivering ammunition. Aleksy also served at the Battle of Monte Cassino (May 1944), where he was wounded. After WWII, he left Italy for England, arriving on September 26, 1946, where he found work and lived near the resettlement camp. He was honourably discharged from the army on June 19, 1947.

Post-War: Meanwhile, his wife and children and his mother resided in a camp in Lusaka, Africa, for six years. Aleksy learned that his family had come from Africa and were now in England. The family lived in a temporary camp near the village of Duglinward, England. After many years of absence and separation, Aleksy was finally reunited with his family on April 24, 1948.

On April 20, 1951, they departed Southampton, England aboard the diesel motorship "M.V. Georgic" owned by Cunard White Star Ltd. They landed in Halifax on April 28, 1951, went on to Toronto and eventually settled in London, where he worked on farms in several day jobs. Later he worked on tobacco farms. Aleksy later worked in construction, building homes on Baseline Road in London. He was very proud of his work there. Aleksy finished his working career at Westminster Hospital (now LHSC – Victoria Hospital), where he was employed in the maintenance/sanitation department. He also built his own home on Emery Street West in London, where he enjoyed the rest of his life. Aleksy joined SPK and helped build the SPK hall and Our Lady of Czestochowa Church and often volunteered at the hall.

Andronowicz, Eufrozyna (Maruszko)



< Aleksy and Eufrozyna Andronowicz 1954

Born: February 15, 1909 in Łosińce (Łachwa), Drohiczyn, Woj. Poleskie, Poland (now part of Belarus)

Died: August 18, 2004, in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Joakim (Eufrozyna Krawczuk in Poland); Mother, Uliana Maruszko – Born February 10, 1882, in Polesie, Poland, died December 7, 1974, in London, Ontario); Sister, Elżbieta Tarasiuk (1914 – January 5, 1998, Poland)

Married: Aleksy Andronowicz on May 28, 1928, in the Roman Catholic Parish Church of Subot, Subot,

Drohiczyn, Woj. Polesie, Poland

Children: Władysław Andronowicz (February 13, 1929 – March 16, 2015); Anastazja Chwiećko (March 18, 1934 -)

Medals: Cross of the Deported to Siberia

History: On February 10, 1940, the Soviets arrested and deported the family by train to Siberia, USSR. After two cold, hard winters, the whole family went into exile. Later they were sent to Uzbekistan. After the amnesty, they left the USSR and eventually arrived at Pahlavi, Iran, on August 20, 1942. Meanwhile, Aleksy joined the 2nd Corps, and was separated from his family from August 28, 1942, until April 28, 1948. On August 28, 1942, the family sailed to the central west coast port of Beira, Mozambique, Africa, and then proceeded inland to a large camp in Lusaka, North Rhodesia (now Zambia), in Africa. The camp was filled with square houses. Black Africans lived in round houses. Cooking was done in a common kitchen. "Whatever made it into the pot had to be eaten, and if you didn't eat, you died." They lived in the Lusaka camp (Africa) from 1943 – 1948, and then they sailed to Southampton, England, landing on April 21, 1948. The sea voyage took several weeks, and Eufrozyna contracted malaria, becoming very ill. Her husband Aleksy came to England in 1946, and in 1948 they eventually were reunited as a whole family again.

Post-War: On April 20, 1951, they departed Southampton and landed in Halifax on April 28, 1951. They eventually settled in London, Ontario, where they resided for the remainder of their years.

Eufrozyna joined SPK, helped build the SPK hall and Our Lady of Czestochowa Church and helped in the SPK kitchen.

Andruszko, Kazimierz

Born: March 4, 1917, in Bojkiewiczze, Woj. Białostockie, Poland

Died: March 20, 2013 in London, Ontario, Canada

Married: Genowefa (March 18, 1924 - January 15, 2009)

Children: None

Medals: SPK: Bronze

Military History: Lancer, 2nd Corps

Post-War: He had a farm. When it was sold, they moved to Chesley Avenue in London.

Andrykowski, Witold

Born: February 17, 1924, in Świecie (Bydgoszcz,) Woj. Pomorskie, Poland

Died: December 24, 1991 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Franciszek; Mother, Marta

Married: Cecylia; Children: Son

Military Rank: Private, 5th Sanitary Company

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Bronze Krzyż Zasługi z Mieczami; Medal Wojska; British Medals: 1939-1945 Star; Italy Star; Defense Medal

Military History: 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 2nd Corps; Served in Italy at Monte Cassino, Ancona, Bologna.

Post-War: He came to Canada in December 1946

Arent, Zofia (Kuczyńska)



Born: October 16, 1930, in Karpiówka, Powiat Sarneński, Woj. Wolyńskie, Poland

Family: Father, Feliks Kuczyński, was a forester and worked in the state forests and they lived in a forester's cottage; Mother, Maria [Kadłubowska]; Siblings: Longina, Apolonia, Zofia, Teresa, Weronika, Mieczysław

Education: Completed two elementary grades before being exiled to Siberia; Zofia went to school in India and finished elementary school and 3 years of high school in the refugee camp in Valivade, India

Married: Zenon Arent (Died 2003)

Children: Daughters born in England – Irena (September 23, 1954) and Stella (April 1959)

Military Medals: SPK Medals: bronze, silver, gold.

Military History: On October 10, 1940, the Russians came to their house and told them to dress. It was terribly cold. They were taken to the train station and then loaded onto boxcars. No less than 50 people were in a unit and they were occasionally given something to eat (oatmeal) and drink. They went to a place called Gorkow. The Soviets then took them to a settlement, called Dorowatka,

which had about 5 barracks that were located in the midst of a very dense forest. There were nine families assigned to each barrack that had only boards for beds. There were two Soviet soldiers that were in charge of their settlement. Right away, everyone who was eligible had to report to work, which involved logging in the forest. Her father, her brother, who was 17 years old, and her sister Longina, who was 15 years old, worked at cutting down trees. This was difficult, especially during the winter when the snow was knee deep. Zofia was too young to work but she did have to attend Russian language lessons taught by a young Russian girl.

The younger sister, Weronika, was born in this settlement. Mother had been seven months pregnant when taken from their home. Because there were so many people in the barrack and there was no privacy, after going into labour mother went behind the barrack where there were a lot of shrubs to give birth without telling anyone. One of the ladies of the camp took water and, praying, baptized the baby with the name Weronika. Because of a lack of proper hygiene and such close contact with all the people living in the barrack, there was a constant battle with lice and blood sucking bedbugs that would come out at night and attach themselves to everyone.

Food was very limited. There was only a bit of bread for each family and Zofia was the one that usually stood in line for it. A small amount of money was paid to the workers. This helped them to buy some small fish from a barrel, if they happened to be available. You could also buy soup that was very watery and had a couple of pieces

of cabbage floating in it at a canteen. During the warm months, they gathered berries and mushrooms in the forest to try to supplement their diet.

When Germany invaded the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, the exiled Poles were granted "amnesty". A Polish-Soviet agreement was signed by General Władysław Sikorski in London, UK, that allowed the Poles to leave the gulags and also allowed them to join the Polish Army being formed in the Soviet Union. Civilians, women and children, who could not join the army, also left the Soviet Union by accompanying the army.

Zofia's settlement organized some cattle cars for transportation south to Uzbekistan. Again, the conditions were terrible. The train would often have to wait on sidetracks, because of other trains using the track. Sometimes, while the cars stood there, people went in search of food and water, and the train would depart, leaving them behind. They finally got to the station at Bukhara, Uzbekistan and spent the night outside at the station. The Soviets made leaving the Soviet Union difficult for the newly formed army and for the newly released civilians. While waiting to leave, the Soviets sent them to work on collective farms. They lived in mud huts, with no windows and a dirt floor. There was a metal stove and a big pot for cooking. Zofia's parents had to dig irrigation ditches and her sisters, Longina and Apolonia, worked in the fields. They were paid with a handful of grain that they had then to grind into flour. After a while, they were given nothing because all of the grain was being sent to the Soviet Army. For food they would go out in the fields and gather clover and pigweed, which they cooked and ate. Weronika died first. She was 14 months old. They buried her on a sandy mound in a shallow grave, wrapped in a shawl from Poland. Later, Apolonia joined the youth organization "Junaczki," hoping that this would save her. Her little sister Teresa was sent to a shelter, organized by Poles to try and save at least one child from each family. By this time her parents were very sick with dysentery and hunger. Her brother Mieczysław had joined the Polish Army.

One day, for some reason, a young Russian came to their hut. He could not believe the conditions they were living in. He told Zofia to come to the nearby town, where he was giving out ration cards for bread. He told her to wear a white kerchief on her head so he could recognize her and give her a ration card. Zofia got 200 grams of bread but as she started back to the hut, she saw a group of children walking and they were speaking Polish. She recognized one of the girls who had been in the same settlement they had been sent to by the Soviets. The girls said that they were going to their shelter and there were seven children in this group. Zofia walked along with them. Zofia wanted to see her little sister Teresa who was in the shelter. The awful thing was that neither her parents nor her sister Longina knew what had happened to her and there was no way she could send word. The conditions in the shelter were not very good as food and hunger were a constant problem. Her sister was diagnosed with advanced tuberculosis. She was buried in a shallow grave, with a white handkerchief over her face and a small cross made of branches tied together to mark her grave.

Her sister Longina had been left with her parents, who were very sick. She somehow got them to the hospital where at first they did not want to admit them. Finally, when they saw that each parent was running a fever, they let them stay but, because of lack of space, they were put on mats out in the garden. Mother died first. A week later father died. People who died in the hospital were buried in a mass grave. Longina somehow made it to the same shelter that Zofia was in. They finally left that shelter to continue on to the port city of Krasnovodsk where they crossed the Caspian Sea on an overcrowded boat and landed in Pahlavi in Persia, which is now Iran. In the camp in Pahlavi, they were quarantined and disinfected. Although conditions had much improved, many people continued to die. Longina was very sick, and they took her and many other people to a hospital in Tehran. Later, Zofia along with many of the other orphaned children, were taken to Camp No. 3. There were three camps for all of the Polish refugees. After a short while, they were taken to a different camp in Ahwaz, also in Persia. Everyone in this camp slept on the floor, one beside the other in a big hall. They were moved again to a place called Malir, where the conditions were a bit better. Next, they were moved to India (now Pakistan) to a transit camp made of tents. From there they continued to their final destination, which was in a camp called Valivade, near Kolhapur, India. They were there for five years. This camp in India had some very good memories for Zofia. Over time this camp turned into a little Poland for them. They had a church, a hospital, elementary and secondary schools, a lyceum and a cinema run by the local Hindus. The Scouting movement was also very important. They enjoyed Scouting jamborees, campfires and other events. There were 5,000 Polish refugees at this camp. Zofia, Longina and Apolonia were in an orphanage with 360 children.

Post-War: In 1947, India regained its independence from Britain and the camp was closed. At that time, Zofia's brother was in England, so the sisters traveled there. England was not what they expected. They were moved around to many different transit camps and, as they were 18 years old, they had to go to work. Zofia's first job was

in a textile factory. Zofia had artistic talents so she painted and designed medals. Her daughters were born in England. Life in England was not satisfying with the constant rain and some people's attitudes towards foreigners. So, after 20 years, they decided to immigrate to Canada. They knew some people, and one of Zofia's friends from the orphanage, Helena Janik, lived in London, Ontario, along with her husband Rudolf. In 1968, they moved here. They first lived at the Janik house. Despite Zofia's work experience in England, she had to take on work in a factory which made telephones. It was hard on her hands and arms, which caused permanent damage, and she had to leave that job after 10 years, in 1981. Zofia joined SPK in 1969 and Zofia took on the responsibilities for decoration and displays. Zenon and Zofia organized Polish displays for Cavalcade and Panorama, London-based multicultural festivals.

Augustynowicz, Maria (Makowski)

Born: August 28, 1921, in Loveling, Germany (Her father had gone to work in Germany when she was about 2 months old. Her family moved back to Poland and lived near Wroclaw.)

Died: March 21, 2010 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Franciszek Makowski (farmer); Brother, Jozef

Education: Completed elementary to grade 4

Married: Stanisław Augustynowicz at St. Mary's Church, London, ON in February 1950

Children: Caroline (May 28, 1950); Edward (August 7, 1955); Ted (April 18, 1960); John (August 19, 1961)

History: When the war broke out, Maria was taken by the Germans at age 16 by truck to work in a munitions factory. In Germany she made ammunition and dug trenches. Everything she had was lost because the camp was bombed. It was a women's camp. They were sent to different factories to work. There was little to eat.

Post-War: From the camp in Germany, she went by ship to Canada in 1948. Maria received a pension from Germany. She landed in Halifax and then travelled to a farm near Goderich. She had to sign a farm contract. Maria worked on a poultry farm near Zurich from 1948 to 1950. The farmer's name was McKenley. One day a farmer gave Maria an extra penny to mail a letter and then deducted it from her pay. After the two-year contract Maria moved to London. In London she worked at various jobs such as cleaning, on the assembly line at Pepsi, at Welwyn – making wires, and at John's Box and Labelling. Maria retired around 1986.

Augustynowicz, Stanisław



Born: May 5, 1917, in Kuźmiszki, pow. Wilejski, Woj. Wileńskie, Poland

Died: April 30, 2000 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Feliks; Mother, Karolina; Siblings Tadeusz, Czeslaw, Albina

Education: Completed elementary school

Occupation(s): Auto mechanic; orderly, barber

Married: Maria Makowska (August 28, 1924-March 21, 2010) at St. Mary's Church, London, ON on February 15, 1950; they met when he went out to meet the girls working on the local farms

Children: Caroline (May 28, 1950); Edward (August 7, 1955); Ted (April 18, 1960); John (November 18, 1950)

Military Rank: Corporal

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Zaslugi z Mieczami; Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-1945 Star; Italy Star; Defense Medal; War Medal 1939-1945; SPK Medals: Silver, Gold

Military History: Before 1939 he was a private with the 3rd Division Light Artillery, Wilno. In 1940, the Russians came one night and took his father and all the horses. That was the last time he saw his father. Stanislaw was taken to Siberia and after the amnesty joined the 2nd Corps on September 8, 1941. He advanced to the rank of Corporal with the 17th Lwow Infantry Battalion, 6th Brigade, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division. Stanislaw took part in the Battle of Monte Cassino and served through to Bologna. After Monte Cassino he was transferred to the 6th Supply Company, 5th Wilno Infantry Brigade.

Post-War: He came to Canada from Italy by ship in 1946 and completed a 2-year farm contract in the Strathroy area. He moved to London after the farm contract in 1948. In 1950 he contracted TB and spent two years in the London Sanatorium. He worked at McClary's, General Steel Wares and at Westminster Hospital as an orderly and as a barber. He loved the work there. He was known as "Stan the Barber." He retired in 1972.

Stanislaw joined SPK on March 2, 1947. Stanislaw was a founding member of SPK Branch No. 2 and remembers their first meetings held in the Aeolian Hall. He helped to build the SPK hall and Our Lady of Czestochowa Church and served as Vice-President (1953, 1957, 1962, 1966, 1968).

B

Babiński, Bronisław



Born: September 1, 1924, in Chojnice, Woj. Pomorskie, Poland

Died: May 10, 2012 in St. Thomas, Ontario, Canada

Family: Mother, Józefina Babińska (he went by his mother's name)

Education: Completed elementary school

Married: August 20, 1949, to a Canadian girl whom he met at a picnic

Children: Irena (Born June 2, 1950, in Montreal); Richard (Born September 1, 1955, in Windsor)

Military Rank: Private

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-45 Star, Italy Star, Defense Medal; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold

Military History: In 1938 Bronislaw served in the Polish military. In 1939 he was captured by the Germans. He escaped but was captured again and beaten, only to escape again. He made it to the Italian border and crossed by water and joined the fighting Poles in the 2nd Corps on May 9, 1944. He was assigned to the 11th Signals Battalion and fought at Monte Cassino and Bologna.

Post-War: Bronislaw came to Canada in 1946 and worked on a two-year farm contract. In Montreal he worked for a chocolate factory and later an aircraft factory. He moved to Windsor where he worked for Ford, and then to St. Thomas and worked as a machinist at Weatherhead for 35 years.

Babińska, Olga (Pianko)

Born: May 7, 1927, in Różan, Woj. Białystockie, Poland

Family: Grandmother lived in the village of "Dołki," Grandfather in the village of "Zachalicyz;" the whole family lived in the area; Father, Aleksander Pianko, was active during WWI and quite wealthy. He was arrested by the Russians and sent to Siberia. He had exchanged his gold for paper money which was quite useless when he returned. He was arrested again and was never seen again (1892?); Mother, Tania [Achramienie] – (1892-?), seamstress

Siblings: Żyna (May 30, 1923); Władysław (November 29, 1932) who got soaked and cold in the woods and caught rheumatic fever when he was 12 and died in a hospital in Minsk

Education: Completed elementary school

Married: Bronislaw Babinski on August 20, 1949

Children: Irena (June 2, 1950, in Montreal); Richard (September 1, 1955, in Windsor)

History: In May 1943 the Germans came and took her away. Her Mother asked the Germans to take the older sister instead of Olga. They said that they would come for her later. Olga was loaded onto a truck and taken to Wołkowysk where a committee decided where they would be sent to work. Olga was sent to work for a farmer who had a daughter, Agnes. Olga was to look after the daughter. The farmer planted beets and potatoes. At that time Olga was 16 but looked like 12. She often had nosebleeds from the heat. She had never worked like this before. The German woman liked Olga and told her to rest when Agnes was resting. The Germans had a large farm, with a river flowing through it and they had three sons. Their house had 12 rooms. Olga worked there until the end of the war. The German family had relatives in Ichstein Wiesbaden, where the children were sent before the Russians took over that part of Germany. The Americans were already in that part of Germany and Olga was put in a camp. She was not allowed to stay in Germany even though the German family wanted her to stay.

Post-War: Olga went to Canada because she had an aunt in America. A man came from Quebec to Ichstein looking for girls to work in his factory. Olga went together with her friend Lucy. Olga flew from Ichstein to Canada in 1947. The girls were on three planes with 33 people per plane, and they flew to Newfoundland and then to Montreal.

One hundred girls lived in a monastery in the town of St. Georges de Bus. The older girls wrote to priests and the priests nullified their work contracts and they were allowed to go wherever they wanted. Olga's aunt in America lived in New Haven, Connecticut, and she wanted Olga to come to her and came to Montreal for her. Olga worked in a stocking factory for a Pole (Mr. Groszowski). They lived two girls to a room and they earned \$15 a week. Bronislaw, her future husband, came to Montreal in 1946; they met in a park at a picnic. A friend had introduced them. Bronislaw was still in his uniform. It was hard to find housing and they lived with a Ukrainian in Montreal. When she moved to St. Thomas she worked as a seamstress and in an automobile factory.

Balawejder, Jozef

Born: February 12, 1914, Woj. Rzeszow, Poland

Family: Father, Michael

Education: Lawyer in Poland

Medals: Krzyz Walecznych

Military Rank: Kapral podchorazy

Military History: Military Police Squadron, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: Came to Canada in June 29, 1947; worked nine months on a dairy farm; bought a farm in Canada. He was 1st Vice-President of SPK Branch No. 2 in 1948.

Balinski, Adam

Born: October 3, 1912, in Noglowice, Jędrzejów; Woj. Kieleckie, Poland

Occupation(s): Driver Mechanic

Military Rank: Corporal

Military History: Dowodctwo Dywizji, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Bandrowski, Władysław Piotr



Born: July 31, 1919, in Wojutycze, Woj. Lwowski, Poland

Died: March 3, 1999 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Mother, Aniela

Occupation(s): Plasterer

Married: Helena (1922-October 12, 2011)

Children: Andrew (March 25, 1951); Basia (October 26, 1954); Anna (January 19, 1961)

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-1945 Star; Italy Star, Defense Medal, War Medal 1939-1945; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver and Gold; Krzyz Kombatancki

Military History: A member of the 2nd Corps in the 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 5th Heavy Machine Gun Battalion and fought at Monte Cassino, Ancona, Bologna

Post-War: Wladyslaw joined SPK and served as Vice-President (1957, 1970, 1972) and President (1957, 1958, 1963, 1966).

Baran, Piotr

Born: December 27, 1922, Woj. Poleskie, Poland

Occupation(s): Farmer

Military Rank: Private / Strzelec

Military History: 8th Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Bednarek, Józef

Born: March 10, 1911, Warsaw, Poland

Died: November 24, 1997 in London, Ontario, Canada

Married: Janina (1919-2006)

Military Rank: Private First Class

Medals: SPK: Bronze, Silver

Military History: 3rd Polish Armoured; 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: He was employed by General Motor Diesel in London, Ontario. He served on the board of SPK, Branch No 2.

Bętkowski, Franciszek



< Bętkowski, Franciszek & Józef

Born: September 9, 1902, in Pradła, District Włoszczow, Woj. Kieleckie, Poland

Family: Father, Waclaw (died in Harytonow in Siberia in 1941)

Died: June 18, 1965 in London, Ontario, Canada

Married: Stanisława (Socha) (1911- January 2, 1997)

Children: Jozef (oldest), Stanisława (born in Africa in 1943, died 1972); Jan (born 1937), Eugenia; Teresa (1932-2012); Krystyna

Military Rank: Strzelec / Rifleman

Military History: On February 10, 1940, the Bętkowski family was arrested and deported to Harytonow in Siberia. Here Franciszek worked in a sawmill and his wife loaded sand into box cars. Three families lived in the same house with three rooms. They didn't have to work if the temperature fell below 40 degrees Celsius. After the amnesty they left and sailed to Kotlas and then on to Uzbekistan to join the newly formed Polish Army. They

crossed the Caspian Sea to Persia. In Persia, Franciszek, his wife and two daughters and a son were sent to Africa where they remained until the end of the war. Franciszek was called to join the Polish forces in Africa and was transferred to Egypt with the infantry of the 2nd Corps.

Post-War: After the war he was transferred to England and was re-united with the family in a civilian camp in Trint in England in 1947. Franciszek worked on construction. They sailed for Canada in 1954/5 and landed in Halifax. Their son, Jozef, arranged for them to come to Canada. In Canada he worked on construction.

Bentkowski, Józef



< Bentkowski, 2nd from the right

Born: January 31, 1930, in Belweder, Pow. Lucki, Woj. Wołyńskie, Poland

Family: Jozef was the oldest of four children. There were 12 people in their house, 6 in the immediate family, the grandfather on the father's side, the grandparents and uncle on the mother's side and one other couple. Father, Franciszek (1902-1965). He was a land-owning farmer. Mother, Stanisława (Socha), (1911-1977). She was also a land-owning farmer. Grandmother on his mother's side: Józefa (1884-1977).

Siblings: Teresa (1932-2012); Krystyna (1935-); Jan (1937-); Eugenia; Stanisława, born in Africa (1943-1972).

Education: In Poland, Jozef completed three grades of elementary school which he attended from 1937 to 1939. In Russia he went to school for half a year from 1940 to 1941, then again for a year from 1941 to 1942. He completed a three-year mechanical school program in Palestine and then three years of mechanical high school, from 1942 to 1947. He passed his final school exam in 1947 and received his secondary school certificate.

Married: Leokadia (Wiercińska). He met his future wife at a Polish dance party. The wedding took place in London on December 10, 1955.

Children: Henry (November 20, 1956); Wanda (December 29, 1958)

Medals: SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold

Military History: On Saturday February 10, 1940, at around 2 a.m., we heard a pounding on the door and voices telling us to open the door. My father opened the door and Soviet soldiers came into the house. They ordered the men to go into one room and told them not to move. They told the women to pack some things and that we were being moved to another province. They failed to mention that we were to be taken to Siberia. I was 10 years old. They had horse drawn sleighs waiting to take us away. We could only take what we could carry. Eventually, the Soviet soldiers allowed the men to help with the packing and allowed us to hitch our own sleigh. By the time we loaded our things on the sleigh, there was only room for the youngest children and the older people to sit. Everyone else had to walk to the train station, which was about 30 km away. When we finally arrived, we were told that only my immediate family and my grandfather on my father's side were on the list. My grandparents and uncle from my mother's side and the other couple were sent back. When we looked around, we found that our whole village was at the station along with people from all of the surrounding villages.

We were loaded into boxcars. There were wooden boards for bunk beds, a wood stove and a hole in the floor for a toilet. After about three weeks, we arrived in Kotlas, a town on the banks of the Vychegda River. We were given one room in a barrack. After a few weeks we were moved across the river and about 100-150 km to the north to a sawmill settlement called Harytonovo. We and three other families were put in a house with three rooms. We had one small room for 7 people. There were no cooking facilities but eventually one family was moved out and our room was enlarged and a cooking stove was built. I was sent to school. I finished two school years including 1940-1941. About this time, conditions began to deteriorate. We had to start selling everything we had to buy food. My father worked in a sawmill while other men worked in the forest cutting trees. My mother worked at loading sand on rail cars. The sand was used as a base on which to lay railway tracks. If during the winter the temperatures went below minus 40 degrees Celsius, the people did not have to go to work.

I did not go to school for the 1941-1942 school year. My job was to make sure that we got enough bread to feed the family even though the bread was rationed. I had to stand in line, usually starting at about 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning and temperatures were minus 20 degrees Celsius to 30 degrees Celsius in the winter.

In our settlement, there were two stores and a diner. There was not much to buy in the stores, other than bread. During the summer months, we would go into the forest and pick blueberries and cranberries, which I would then sell to the river- boats that stopped by for supplies when sailing up the Vychegda River. My grandfather died in Harytonovo.

After Germany invaded the Soviet Union, the Polish government-in-exile in London England, made an agreement with the Soviets. An "amnesty" would be declared for all of the Polish prisoners of war and the deportees and a new Polish Army was to be formed in the southern areas of the Soviet Union. We started our journey south to Kuybyshev. First, we took a boat to Kotlas. Once there we boarded a train that was transporting ex-war prisoners and deportees who were going south to join the Polish Army. We never reached Kubyshev, but ended up in Uzbekistan.

We were moved from one collective farm to another. We worked on cotton farms, and also at preparing rice paddies. This was the worst time for us, as we had no food. Often, we ate livestock fodder, as this was all that was available. One day after eating the livestock fodder, I became very sick. For three days I could not eat anything and was sick to my stomach. Going to the hospital was like signing your death sentence so I stayed with my family. After I got better, I was very weak and could not walk for about a week.

In late spring of 1942, we left the farm at night and took the train to Kermine, Uzbekistan, where there was a Polish Army Camp. Here, I joined the Polish Army Cadets (Junaks). Shortly after, the Cadets were moved to the nearby town of Narpaj where we were to start school.

Later that summer all of the Polish soldiers and their families were evacuated to Persia (now Iran). I stayed with the Polish Army Cadets in Uzbekistan until we were also evacuated to Persia. My family left the Soviet Union on the last ship that transported Poles across the Caspian Sea from the Soviet Union to Persia.

When I arrived in Persia, I got to see my family before my mother, father, two sisters and brother were moved to Africa, where they stayed until the end of the war. When our group of Cadets arrived in Pahlavi from the Soviet Union, we stayed there for a few weeks and then we were transported to Tehran. From Tehran, we traveled through Iraq and arrived in Palestine, where we attended school. I attended a mechanical school and was stationed at Rafah and Beit-Nabal. In 1945, I received my certificate in general mechanics and was transferred to a Secondary Mechanical School in Kiriya-Motzkin.

Post-War: After the 1947 school year, we were moved to England. I left the army and spent 5 years in England working at a number of different jobs. On February 29, 1952, I left England on board the ship "Atlantic" and came to London, Ontario. We were never compensated for all of our possessions that we left in Poland, including: farmland, house and buildings, livestock, farm machinery, furniture, etc. Once in London I worked at several jobs including an auto-body shop, which I bought in 1957. I then worked for a Volkswagen dealership as a supervisor in auto-body repair. Finally, I joined Ford in Oakville and then in St. Thomas, where I was a supervisor until I retired on July 31, 1989.

Jozef joined SPK in 1952 and served as treasurer (1954), secretary (1964, 1965, 1973, 1977), "gospodarz"/ host, vice-president (1991, 1993), and on the audit committee. He served on Our Lady of Czestochowa building committee and on the building committee for Polonia Towers. He was also a member of the Parish Council at Our Lady of Czestochowa Parish for many years often carrying out the responsibilities of the president as well as an active member of KPH, i.e., Friends of Polish Scouting, to which his children belonged.

Bera, Jan Piotr

Born: June 6, 1924, in Slupia Nowa, Pow. Kieleckie, Poland

Died: December 20, 2009 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Mother, Marianna

Married: Genowefa

Children: Richard, Alice, Janice and Chester (twins)

Military Rank: Private; In 2002 he received the rank of 2nd Lieutenant from the Polish Government.

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Czynu Bojowego na Zachodzie; British Medals: Italy Star, France and Germany Star, Defense Medal, War Medal 1939-1945; SPK Medals: Bronze

Military History: In 1942 he was taken to Germany from where he escaped to France in 1944 and then was sent to Italy where he served with the 2nd Corps, 5th Kresowa Division, 17th Lwow Infantry Battalion. He fought at Bologna and Koleza. He was assigned to officer's training in 1945 with the 16th Pomeranian Infantry Brigade.

Post-War: Jan came to Canada on November 19, 1946, and worked on a 2-year farm contract near Springfield.

Blin, Boleslaw

Born: April 5, 1917, in Lebedziew, Pow. Wileńskie, Poland

Died: April 27, 1997 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Jozef; Mother, Michalina; Brother, Peter

Married: Marianna (October 12, 1920-June 13, 2008)

Military Rank: Private First Class

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Walecznych, Medal Wojska, Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino. British Medals: 1939-45 Star, Italy Star; War Medal 1939-1945

Military History: Boleslaw joined the 2nd Corps in the Soviet Union in 1941 and took part in the Italian Campaign, including involvement on the Sangro River, Monte Casino, Ancona, Gothic Line, Apennines. He served with the 3rd Carpathian Infantry Division, 5th Rifle Battalion. He was wounded twice. He finished officer's training school in Italy.

Post-War: Boleslaw came to Canada in March 1, 1986, from the United States.

Bobako, Pawel

Born: 1915

Military Rank: Plutonowy

Military History: 18th Supply Company, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: He was an Executive Member of SPK, Branch No. 2 in 1948

Bogacki, Bolesław



Born: July 16, 1911, in Czerwona Góra, gm., Mlynów; pow. Dubno, Woj. Wołyńskie, Poland

Died: March 23, 1998 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Dominik; Mother, Sabina

Education: Agricultural Technician trained in Lublin

Occupation(s): Farmer

Married: Henryka (1911-December 28, 1990)

Children: Danusia

Military Rank: Corporal

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyż Walecznych; Medal Wojska, Krzyż Kampanii Wrzesniowej 1939, Krzyż Pamiątkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-1945 Star; Italy Star. SPK: Bronze, Silver, Gold

Military History: Bolesław served in the September 1939 Campaign in Poland and was taken prisoner by the Russians. He joined the Polish Forces in the Soviet Union after the amnesty and went on to serve in the Middle East and was assigned to the 3rd Carpathian Rifle Division,

2nd Brigade, 4th Battalion. He took part in the Italian Campaign, beginning with Monte Cassino through to Ancona and Bologna.

Post-War: He came to Canada on November 11, 1946, and worked on a farm contract (St. Stana) near Thorndale. He joined SPK on August 15, 1946, in Italy and served Branch No. 2 as President (1979) and Vice-President (1981).

Bogdan, Antoni

Born: June 11, 1917, in Dobrymin, pow., Mielecki, Woj. Krakowskie, Poland

Education: Completed elementary school and 3 professional courses

Occupation(s): Automotive Mechanic/Driver

Military Rank: Ogniomistrz / Sergeant of Artillery

Military History: 1st Carpathian Light Artillery Regiment, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: Came to Canada November 10, 1946, and worked on a farm contract (Howard Neet) near Stratford in 1947

Bratkowski, Antoni

Born: June 6, 1899, Tapin, Jarosław, Woj. Lwowskie, Poland

Education: Grade 4

Married:

Military Rank: Plutonowy / Lance Sergeant

Military History: 18th Supply Company, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: Came to Canada March 22, 1948

Brzozowski, Henryk Julian

Born: July 16, 1918, in Lopienie Rzycki, pow. Wysokie Mazowieckie, Woj. Białostockie, Poland

Died: June 25, 2007 in London, Ontario, Canada

Occupation(s): Farmer

Military Rank: Private First Class

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyż Walecznych (twice), Medal Wojska, Krzyż Pamiątkowy Monte Cassino. British Medals: 1939-1945 Star, Italy Star, Defense Medal, War Medal 1939-1945

Military History: Henryk served in the 6th Carpathian Rifle Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Infantry Division, 2nd Corps. He went on to serve in the Middle East and in the Italian Campaign at Monte Cassino, Ancona and Bologna. He finished the Non-Commissioned Officers School in Italy.

Post-War: Henryk came to Canada in 1947 from England.

Buchlak, Henryk**Born:** May 20, 1914, in Kumelszczyzna, Woj. Wileńskie, Poland**Occupation(s):** Labourer, Canadian National Railways**Married:** Marysia**Children:** Krystyna (May 3, 1953); Wiktor (February 12, 1955)**Military Rank:** Strzelec / Rifleman**Medals:** SPK: Bronze**Military History:** 3rd Carpathian Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps**Burczyk, Stanisław Wincenty****Born:** November 28, 1916, in Długie, pow. Sanocki, Woj. Lwowskie, Poland**Died:** October 17, 2004 in London, Ontario, Canada**Family:** Father, Wincenty; Mother, Franciszka**Occupation(s):** Farmer**Married:** Barbara (Joined SPK Ladies' Auxiliary 1967; Died November 20, 2000)**Children:** Daughter, Danuta Kaczmarczyk**Military Rank:** Served as a Corporal and later was promoted to 2nd Lieutenant**Military Medals:** Polish Medals: Medal Wojska, Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino. British Medals: 1939-1945 Star, Africa Star, Italy Star. SPK: Bronze, Silver and Gold**Military History:** In 1940 Stanislaw and his family were exiled to Siberia. After the amnesty he joined the 2nd Corps. In 1941 he was assigned to the 5th Kresowa Division, 5th Sappers Battalion. After landing in Italy, he took part in the battles at Monte Cassino, Ancona and Bologna.**C****Chelchowski, Bolesław****Born:** June 10, 1925, in Adampol, Woj. Nowogródzkie, Poland**Died:** March 25, 2009, in London, Ontario, Canada**Family:** Father, Stanislaw Chelchowski; Mother, Felicja (Niesen); Brothers, Janek, Bronislaw & Zigmund; Sister Stanislaw (Szmajter) & Post war - half siblings Czeslawa & Zdzislawa (Skarbacz)**Education:** He finished Grade 8 in Adampol, Poland, and after being freed from the Soviet Union in 1942, he joined the P.L.P Boys for 2 years of secondary school while training for the army in Iraq for 2 years under British command. After the war in 1946, he went to school in Leicester, England where he learned the stone and masonry trade.**Occupation:** Brick/Stone Laying Mason**Married:** Teresa Kowal in Leicester England on Oct 28th, 1950**Children:** Dorota (Nov 27, 1952, Nottingham, England) and Richard (May 15, 1954), Derek (Sept. 8, 1955), Joseph (April 7, 1960) & Ted (July 16, 1963) in London, Ontario.**Military Rank:** 30047252 Private to Lance Corporal**Military Medals:** Polish Medals: Virtuti Militari, Krzyz Walecznych, Wyborowy

Kierowca (Army Metal) & Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-45 British Star, Italy Star, Defence Medal, War Medal 1939-45; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver & Gold

Military History: His father passed away in a construction accident in 1931 when he was 8 years old. His family was arrested by the invading Russian Army on the night of Feb 10th, 1940, and was sent on horse driven sleds to Baranowicze, Belarus, where they were forced to board the trains that took them to Siberian Gulag camps near Velsk, Russia, where they were forced to cut trees to survive. They all battled with typhus. The youngest children died in Siberia. After the amnesty with Russia in 1941, Janek, his oldest brother, joined the Polish army, his mother, sister and youngest brother were sent to Africa and Bolek joined, along with his younger brother Bronek, the Junaks (Polish Cadets) for training on July 11, 1942. With Bronek, he was then transferred to the Middle East on Aug 15th, 1942, where he was diagnosed with tuberculosis (TB). He was very grateful to a particular Tehran native

of Iran who fed him pigeon soup to help him recover from his illness. To receive more training and education, he was posted to the H.Q. Junak School, M.E. on Oct 11/1942. He began his military service with the 2nd Corps under British Command on Sept 18/1943 where he served with the 1st Krechowicki Lancer Regiment, 2nd Warsaw



Armoured Brigade as a tank driver and radio operator. He served in the Middle East until being transferred to Italy on May 15, 1944, where he took part in the Italian operations and fought at the famous "Battle of Monte Cassino," where he suffered wounds to his right side and hand when his tank was hit with explosives.

Post-War: He was stationed in Italy with the Polish Resettlement Corps until he was honourably discharged on December 4, 1948, following which he travelled to England where he was reunited with his surviving family and friends. He had fought alongside Stanislaw Kowal, who became his best friend during the war and then they became brothers-in-law when they returned to England in 1948 and Bolek married Stan's sister, Teresa, in 1950. Bolek went to trade school to become a bricklayer and after his marriage and the birth of his daughter Dorota, he applied for a visa to come to Canada to work as a mason. He took his wife, baby and one suitcase and arrived in London, Ontario, in June 1953. He joined SPK in 1953. Boleslaw helped to build the hall and served as President (1967,

1978, 1992), Vice-President (1961, 1962, 1965, 1972, 1973, 1987), Treasurer (1963, 1978, 1984, 1992, 1993), Secretary (1980).

Chelchowski, Bronisław



Born: May 2, 1927, in the village of Adampol, Woj. Nowogródzkie, Poland

Died: July 29, 2020 in Brantford, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Stanislaw Chelchowski; Mother, Felicja (Nyesin); Brothers Janek, Boleslaw & Zigmund; Sister Stanislaw (Szmajter) & Post war - half siblings Czeslawa & Zdzislaw (Skrabacz)

Education: Finished Grade 10 in Adampol, Poland and after being released from Russia in 1942, he joined the P.L.P. Boys and attended the Mechanical Company school in Iraq for 2 years under British command and trained as a motor mechanic. He made use of this training later during his service in the war.

Occupation: Licenced Mechanic & Crane Operator

Married: Bogumila Laskowska in Blackburn, England, on March 27, 1951. Bogumila died on February 7, 2014.

Children: Twins Alicja & Zosia (January 2, 1952, Blackburn, England) and Janusz (John) (July 3, 1958, London, Ontario).

Military Rank: Lance Corporal

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Medal Wojska, Wyborowy Kierowca; British Medals: 1939-45 Star, Italy Star; SPK Medals: Bronze & Silver

Military History: Bronislaw's father passed away in a construction accident in 1931 when he was 6 years old. His family was arrested by the invading Russian Army on the night of Feb 10th, 1940, and was sent on horse driven sleds to Baranowicze, Belarus, where they were forced to board the trains that took them to the Siberian Gulag camps near Velsk, Russia, where they were forced to cut trees to survive. They all battled with typhus. After the amnesty with the Soviet Union in 1941, Janek, his oldest brother, joined the Polish army, while his mother, sister and youngest brother were sent to Africa. Bronek, along with his older brother Bolek, joined the Polish Cadet forces (Junaks) for training on July 11th, 1942. With Bolek, he was transferred to the Middle East on August 15, 1942, and received training and education as a motor mechanic. He was posted to Egypt between 1942-44 and was embodied into the Polish Army 7th Division, was promoted to Lance Corporal and was sent to a Company Workshop as a Fitter Auto Mechanic (Majster) and Soldier. In 1944 he began his military service under British

Command and was transferred to Italy where he served as a master mechanic until the war ended. At that time, he voluntarily joined the Army Police to serve until the Company demobilized in 1946.

Post-War: By 1948, he was in England and was re-united with his surviving family and friends; there he met and then married Bogumila (Bogusia) Laskowska on March 27, 1951. They had twin girls, Alicja and Zosia, in 1952. In 1954, he decided to follow his brother and sister to North America, first arriving in New York on the ship King George, and finally arriving in London, Ontario, where he and brother Bolek purchased a house together at 18 Childer Street to begin their lives in Canada. Later the family settled in Mount Pleasant.

Bronislaw joined SPK in 1956 where he was an active full-time member who helped to build and raise funds for the hall and to pay off the mortgage as quickly as possible.

Chelchowska, Teresa (Kowal)



Born: May 20, 1931, in Bobiatny, Pow. Rzeszowski, Woj. Lwowskie, Poland

Died: September 5, 2021 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Jozef Kowal; Mother, Anna (Stempak); Brothers, Stanislaw, Felik; Sisters Zofia, Marysia and the very young twins Katarzyna & Franciszek both of whom perished during the invasion and transportation to Russia in 1940. Zofia passed away in a Russian hospital. They all suffered with typhus.

Education: Finished Grade 11 and then studied to become a seamstress during her stay at the Polish camps in Africa from 1941 to 1945, where she was in an orphanage with about 10,000 Polish children. In Canada, Teresa studied English in London at G.A. Wheable and took additional seamstress classes at H.B. Beal secondary schools.

Occupation: Nurses Aid for Senior Homes

Married: Boleslaw Chelchowski

Children: See "Chelchowski, Boleslaw"

Medals: SPK Gold, Silver and Bronze Crosses

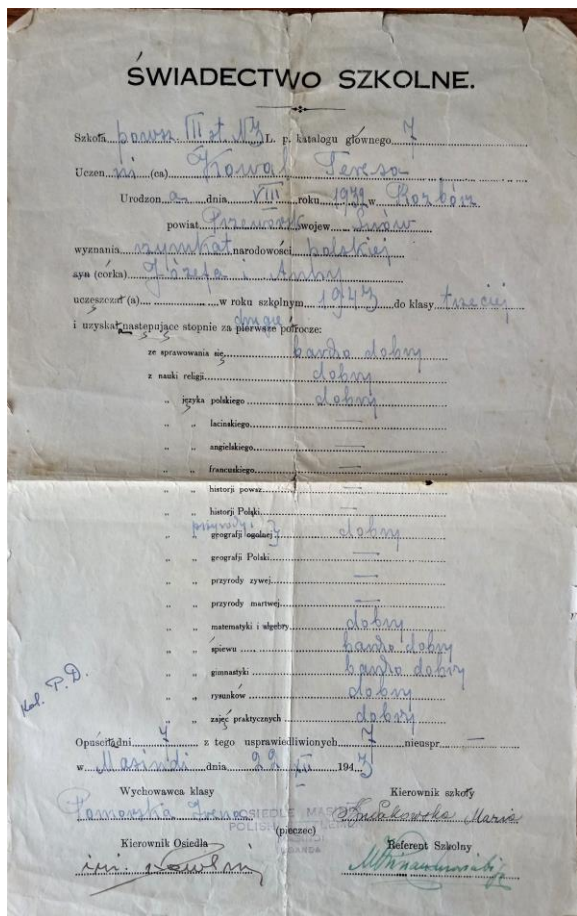
History: In her 9th year, Russians arrived at their house on February 10, 1940, and escorted them on sleds to the trains that took them for days to arrive in camps in Archangelsk (Archangielskaja oblas), a village by a river in northern Russia. The boxcars were very cold and many children and elderly died on the trip. She remembers that they did not freeze because of the duvets her mother brought. The twins died of typhoid fever. They were kept there for 2 years until they were freed because of the amnesty. Afterwards her father and oldest brother joined the Polish army and Teresa with her surviving siblings (Mary & Feliks) were taken under British care and sent to the Polish Camps of Massindi, Uganda, Africa. Her mother had to remain in Russia until 1946. Teresa had fond memories of the African people who took care of them as they slept in the jungle under trees and in tents, while the African men guarded them with spears to ward off the animals. She got to ride



on an elephant. She lived in the orphanage for six years. After being transferred to a different camp in Kenya, she joined the Polish girl guides.

Post-War: When the war ended in 1945, they started closing down the orphanages and she and her siblings were sent by ship to Plymouth, England, where eventually they were reunited with their brother Stan and mother. She never heard what happened to her father. As promised by her brother Stan, he introduced Boleslaw to his sister Teresa during an Easter family celebration and they ended up getting married on October 28, 1950, in Leicester in a small Polish church built by the local community. She worked as a seamstress in the city of Leicester until the birth of her first child, Dorota, and then one year later Bolek applied for a job in Canada and with a baby and one suitcase in hand, they left for Canada, arriving by train in London in June of 1953.

Teresa joined SPK in 1955 where she was a mainstay in the kitchen over the first 40 years. She served as President of the Women's Auxiliary (1975), Vice-President (1974, 1980, 1981, 1998, 1999), Secretary (1969, 1970, 1982).



< Teresa Kowal, Report Card, Africa, 1943

Chmielewski, Czesław

Born: July 7, 1925, in Pomirki-Lubawa

Military Rank: Gunner

Military History: Czeslaw served in the 2nd Corps, 5th Kresowa Division, 5th Kresowa Anti-tank Regiment.

Post-War: He came to Canada on August 23, 1951, from England. Later he moved on to British Columbia.

Chodasewicz, Zygmunt (Changed name to Chodas)



Born: May 6, 1916, in Lubowo, Woj., Wileńskie, Poland

Died: September 16, 2000 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Wincenty; Mother, Bogumila (Jarmakowicz)

Occupation(s): Farmer, musician

Married: Laura Jean (March 26, 1923- January 5, 1995)

Children: Pawel (Paul Winchester Chodas), Sylvia, Antoni

Military Rank: Corporal

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Brazowy Krzyż Zasługi z Mieczami, Medal Wojska, Krzyż Pamiątkowy Monte Cassino. British Medals: 1939-1945 Star, Italy Star, Defense Medal, War Medal 1939-1945; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver

Military History: Zygmunt took part in the September 1939 Campaign as part of the Border Protection Corps, 5th Battalion, Luszki. He was captured and interned in Latvia from 1939 to 1940. He was arrested and shipped to the Soviet Union in 1940-41. After the amnesty, he joined the 2nd Corps on April 1, 1942, in the Soviet Union. He took part in the Italian Campaign with the 5th Kresowa Division and served at Monte Cassino, Predapio, Faenza, Forli and Bologna.

Post-War: After the war he immigrated to Canada and lived for a while in Manitoba before moving to London. He joined SPK in 1950 and served as Secretary (1958, 1963, 1967, 1968, 1969) and President (1959).

Chodzinski, Bronisław

Born: May 4, 1921, in Rudnia, Pow. Łucki, Woj. Wołyńskie, Poland

Died: May 31, 2013 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Piotr; Mother, Julia

Married: Helena (Gradowska) (1930-2016)

Children: Julia, Czeszek

Military Rank: Leading Aircraftman (RTO/LAC), Squadron 315 Deblin

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Medal Lotniczy; British Medals: Defense Medal, War Medal 1939-1945; SPK Medals: Bronze

Military History: Bronislaw was exiled to Russia in 1940 and joined the Polish forces after the amnesty in 1942. He was assigned to the 7th Division, 1st Sapper Company. He was sent from Iraq to England to join the Polish Airforce where he served from 1942-1948 with the 315th Deblin Fighter Squadron.

Post-War: In 1948 he worked in London, UK, until 1956 when he left for Canada. He worked for 35 years at McCormicks.

Choinski, Aleksander

Born: August 15, 1917, in Poland

Died: 1976 in London, Ontario, Canada

Occupation(s): Carpenter, Canadian National Railways

Married: Wanda

Children: Jan (January 14, 1962)

Medals: SPK: Bronze

Military Rank: Starszy Szeregowiec / Lance Corporal

Military History: Served with the 2nd Sanitary Company, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Chojnowska (Marzec), Maria



Born: Maria Marzec was born August 3, 1923, in Burdykowszczyzna, Poland, now in Belarus.

Died: April 1, 2003 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Piotr Marzec; Mother, Anna; eldest of 7 children (Bronislaw, Janina, Antoni, Tadeusz, Stanislaw and Ludwig)

Married: Marian Chojnowski

Children: Elizabeth Latuszak, Adam Soboczynski

Military Rank: 2nd Lieutenant

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino. British Medals: 1939-1945 Star, Italy Star, Defence Medal, War Medal 1939-1945. SPK Medals

Military History: On February 10th, 1940, the Marzec family along with other Poles were forcibly deported to Siberia. They were lined up against the wall at gunpoint, given 30 minutes to pack their belongings and sent to Baranowicza where they were loaded onto boxcars of freight trains like cattle. For two weeks they traveled without stopping with no food or water until they reached the end of the line.

When the train finally stopped, they had to continue travelling by foot and sleigh for another 100 kilometers through uncharted brush until they reached the forced labour camps at Archangielsk in Siberia on February 29, 1940. Hard labour, lack of food and disease were common. Maria fell deathly ill and was unconscious for an extended period of time and was not expected to recover when, by a miracle and medicine smuggled into the camp, she opened her eyes to rejoin her family.

On September 11, 1941, 1 1/2 years after deportation, when the Amnesty opened the borders, the Marzec family left. Not knowing how long the Amnesty would last, all the deportees made an exodus as soon as they could. The Marzec family was given an old horse and wagon from the stables and followed the collective survivors along the frozen river as there were no trails through the forest. The family took turns helping the horse pull the wagon, as

the horse was too old and fragile to make the journey on its own. It was a total of 2 months of travel by means of wagon, train and boat, across the Caspian Sea until they arrived in Iran. Here they were cleaned, fed and clothed. A Sheik had opened his gardens to use as a camp for the war refugees in Tehran. This is where Maria volunteered and then joined the Polish army led by General Anders in May 1943. Maria under the 2nd Corps Women's Army Auxiliary Service (WAAS), also known as P.K.S.K in Polish, worked in the hospital as a nurse, caring for all the very sick victims of Soviet deportation.

Her Mother, brothers and sisters carried on to a camp in Tengeru, Africa, that had been set up by the British for the refugees. Her father and oldest brother had also joined an army. In 1944 The WAAS was transferred to the 2nd Corps in Italy. As part of the 316 Transport Company serving the battlefields from Monte Casino to Bologna, Maria drove the heavy supply trucks during the Italian Campaign. These supply trucks provided the troops with food, ammunition and other battle related supplies for the 1st battle lines.

Post-War: After the war, Maria and a large majority of soldiers remained in exile and were transported with the company to camp Witley in Britain to settle. There is where she met the love of her life, Antoni Soboczynski, and they were married 1948. It was on that day that her mother and siblings found asylum in England and landed by ship in Southampton, England. After years of being separated, Maria and her husband reunited with her family at the refugee camp. This was the start of a difficult new journey: new camp, new culture and still food was rationed. Eventually, this camp closed and the family moved to Redditch, England, looking for work and shelter.

In July 1957, Maria, with her husband and 2 children, Elizabeth and Adam, made the decisions to move to Canada and decided to start their new life in Brantford, Ontario. Shortly after, on December 18, 1960, Antoni Soboczynski died of a massive heart attack. Heartbroken by the loss, Maria decided to move to London, Ontario, to be closer to her sister. She proudly became a Canadian Citizen in 1963. In 1964, Maria met Tadeusz Tabaczek and remarried. They were together for 18 years and, after a long heart illness, Tadeusz died June 6, 1981.

In 1964, Maria Joined the Women's Auxiliary, which merged into SPK in 1999. In 1990, Maria married Marian Choinowski. After several years of heart illness herself, Maria died of a massive heart attack on April 1, 2003. Maria was a brave, inspirational and compassionate lady who spread love wherever she went and left a mark on the hearts of everyone she met. She was an integral part of the Polish community and lived for spending time with her family, especially her grandchildren, who were her life.

Chwiećko, Anastazja (Andronowicz)

Born: March 18, 1934, in Łosińce (Łachwa), Drohiczyn, Woj. Poleskie, Poland (now in Belarus)

Died: November 7, 2020 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Aleksy Andronowicz (February 13, 1908 – June 25, 1973); Paternal Grandfather (Gierasim Andronowicz – Born May 1882 in Poland) was a forester; he survived the war, got sick and died two weeks later. Paternal Grandmother (Uliana Maruszko – Born February 10, 1882, in Poland – December 7, 1974, in London, Ontario); Mother, Eufrozyna (Krawczuk) (February 15, 1909, in Łosińce, Drohiczyn, Polesie, Poland – August 18, 2004, in London, Ontario) was a housekeeper; Brother, Władysław Andronowicz (February 13, 1929, in Łosińce, Drohiczyn, Polesie, Poland – March 16, 2015, in London, Ontario)

Education: Completed grade 10

Married: Anastazja was introduced (by her brother Władysław) to her future husband, another Władysław. They were married one month after her 19th birthday on April 18, 1953, at St. Mary's Catholic Church, London.

Children: Ryszard Andrzej Chwiećko (August 16, 1955); Henryk Christopher Chwiećko (May 20, 1962); Barbara Suzanna Leslie (October 9, 1968)

Medals: Cross of the Deported to Siberia

History: On February 10, 1940, the Soviets arrested and deported the family by train, taking them eastward to Siberia. Anastazja was 5 years old at that time. After two very harsh winters, the whole family went into exile. Later, they were sent to Uzbekistan, where there was a lot of poverty, sickness, and many died from typhus. Mother did not want to talk about this time – "Somehow God saved us." After the amnesty was signed, they left the USSR and eventually arrived at Pahlavi, Iran (a port on the SSW coast of the Caspian Sea), on August 20, 1942. On August 28, 1942, they sailed to the coastal port of Beira, Mozambique, Africa, and proceeded inland to a large camp in Lusaka, Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia). Anastazja joined the girl guides in the Lusaka camp. Meanwhile, on August 29, 1942, father (Aleksy) enlisted in the Polish army, joining the 2nd Corps, which was part of the British Army forces. The family lived in Lusaka camp (Africa) from 1943 – 1948. Leaving the Lusaka camp in the spring of 1948, the family was moved to a port on the Eastern coast of Africa, sailing through the port of

Durban, South Africa, aboard the "Empire Trooper" ship, landing in Southampton, England on April 21, 1948. This seafaring took about a month as they stopped at several ports along the way to pick up soldiers. Then they arrived at a temporary camp near the village of Duglinward, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, England, where they lived for about three years. Father was eventually reunited with his family in England on April 24, 1948. The whole family was finally together again.

Post-War: On April 20, 1951, the family departed from Southampton, England, and immigrated to Canada on April 28, 1951, making it to London, Ontario. The family got work on tobacco farms in the area. Anastazja eventually got full time employment at McCormick's Canada, where they made cookies and candies. The work was hard and hot, but one had a job. She also worked at Continental Can Company (assembling boxes), and at McClary Manufacturing (assembling stoves).

Anastazja joined SPK and helped build the SPK hall, Our Lady of Czestochowa Church, and she also helped in the SPK kitchen.

Ciechanowicz, Stefania (Ochrym)



< Stefania, India 1946

Born: March 21, 1928, in Warez, Poland

Died: April 19, 2005 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Stefania had a difficult childhood and came from a big family. Father, Antoni Ochrym; Mother, Rozalia (Zinko); Siblings: Michal, Jozek, Katarzyna, Piotr (Junak, died in Uzbekistan), Ania, Zosia, Romana (died in India), Marynka (oldest)

Education: Some elementary education, although often interrupted; attended school in Kuliczkow; studied sewing and was trained as a seamstress while in India

Married: Stefania married Aleksander on June 20, 1959. They met through friends at the Polish Hall.

Children: Two daughters from her first marriage – Janet (1950), Wanda (1953), and a son, Tadeusz (September 4, 1960)

History: On February 10, 1940, the Russians took them in the middle of the night. They were loaded into cattle cars on trains and left the next day. It took three weeks to arrive in Siberia. When they got on the train it was Stefania's 12th birthday. They



travelled by sleigh and on foot to a small camp called Czary. They were used as slave labour in a logging camp. They were there for a year and a half. Several of the family died there. They left Siberia after the amnesty in 1941. They went to Uzbekistan, where there was a lot of disease – typhoid and cholera. Their father died of dysentery. Zosia died of disease. Piotr joined the Junaks (cadets) and died in Uzbekistan. Ania, the younger sister, made it across the Caspian Sea but died in Iran. Rozalia, Stefania and Romana made it to India. Romana died in India of Malaria. They were in India for four years.

Post-War: Stefania left India for Lebanon with her mother and then came to Canada in 1949. They arrived in Halifax and then travelled to London. Rozalia had stayed behind and Stefania brought her to Canada later. Stefania worked at St. Joseph's Hospital, in the kitchen. The nuns were good to her. Later she worked as a seamstress at Kayser-Roth, a women's clothing factory. There were other Polish women there. She worked there for thirty years and retired in the late 1980s.

< Stefania & Aleksander Ciechanowicz 1959

Citko, Stanisław

Born: 1918

Military Rank: Starszy Strzelec / Lance Corporal

Military Medals: Krzyz Walecznych

Military History: Served with the 6th Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: In Canada in 1947

Ciućka, Jan



Born: Born December 2, 1914 in Sopotnia Mala, Poland.

Died: May 20, 1996.

Married: Stanisława Drozd; Born April 4, 1920, Zywiec; Died April 20, 2011. Stanisława had been forced into labouring at an Austrian farm and then a German munitions factory, was released at war's end. She made her way down to Bari in Italy and joined the 2nd Corps' women's auxiliary where she met up with Jan whom she had known in Zywiec. They married in Grottomare in early 1946 and became parents later that year.

Children: Mirosław

Military Rank: Sierżant / Sergeant

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyż Walecznych, Krzyż Zasługi, Krzyż Pamiątkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: Africa Star, Italy Star, War Medal 1939-1945

Military History: When war broke out, Jan had completed his compulsory military service as well as his carpentry apprenticeship and had begun his future as a carpenter. Soon after the Germans began rounding up young men

especially those with military training, Jan was picked up and put on a north bound train but he and two friends jumped off and hitched a ride on a train heading south. So began perilous trip through Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania and Jugoslavia all the while evading Nazi sympathizers and police.

Eventually they reached the Middle East where Jan served with Independent Carpathian Brigade in the Libya campaign where and spent most of his service detecting mines. Later he was assigned to the 3rd Carpathian Sapper Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps and saw service in Italy, Monte Cassino and finally Bari, Italy.

Post-War: Jan left for England shortly after he married Stanisława in Italy. He immediately found employment. Stanisława and the child joined him later. A quonset hut on a vacated army base was provided as a home. Here they spent the next 4 years. In the winter of 1951, after rejecting emigration to Argentina, the family sailed to Canada travelling by train from Halifax to London. There they took up residence with Jan's army friend for a couple of years before purchasing their own home. Work on the Fanshawe dam was his first job followed by other construction jobs including Our Lady of Częstochowa church, ending his career at the University of Western

Ontario. After retirement Jan spent the next 22 years reading and walking with his dog and relaxing up north with Stanisława, son Mirus, and daughter-in-law Halina.

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Szefostwo Duszp. Kat. 2 Korpusu
BIURO METRYKALNE
(Nazwa Urzędu Duszpasterkiego)

METRYKA ZAWARCIA MAŁŻEŃSTWA

Na podstawie księgi zawartych małżeństw 2 Korpusu tom II str. poz. 895 stwierdza się
 urzędowo, że dnia 23 lutego 1946 r. t.j. słownie: dnia dwudziestego trzeciego
 miesiąca lutego roku: tysiąc dziewięćset czterdziestego... szóstego
 w kościele parafialnym kaplicy obozowej w Grottomare, Włochy został pobłogosławiony według obrządku Rzym. Katol.
 związek małżeński między następującymi osobami:

Rodowód:	Małżonek:	Małżonka:	Świadkowie ślubu, ich zawód i adres:
Nazwisko i imię: CIUĆKA JAN	DROZD STANISŁAWA		sierni. Szosygiel Jan st. sap. Redyas Roman
Zawód i przydział: sierżant			
Wyznanie: Rzym. Katol.	Rzym. Katol.		
Stan: ** wolny	wolna		
Dzień i rok urodzenia: 2 grudnia 1914 r.	4 kwietnia 1920 r.		
Miejsce: Sopotnia	Zywiec		
Powiat: Zywiec			
Województwo: Krakowskie	Krakowskie		
Imiona rodziców i nazwisko panienskie matki: Michał i Maria	Wojciech i Antonia		Ks. Proboszcz Janiec Józef na mocy deleg. Ks. Dziek. Ciesielskiego Włodzimierza Wlk. Gen. L. On. z dnia 19. II. 1946 r.

O ile miejsce zawarcia ślubu nie jest siedzibą hrabstwa (shire) wówczas obok nazwy miejscowości ślubu umieścić (w nawiasie) nazwę hrabstwa.
 ** Przy wdowcach podać imię i nazwisko zmarłej (go) małżonki (ku) i datę śmierci.
 (W braku miejsca można te odnośniki umieścić na odwrotnej stronie).

KIEROWNIK BIURA METRYK.
 16 marca 1946 r.
 Ks. Jędrzej Ksiazka Kapłan, Wskł., Kpl.

SZEFOSTWO DUSZPASTERSTWA KATOLICZNEGO
 BIURO METRYKALNE
 2 KORPUSU

SW-2542/43

Czajkowska, Janina (Marcinkiewicz)

Born: April 20, 1911, in Zaostrowiecze, Woj. Nowogródzkie, Poland

Died: November 21, 1993 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father; Aleksander, Mother; Olimpia

Married:

Military Rank: Volunteer Nurse

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Medal Wojska, Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino. British Medals: 1939-45 Star, Italy Star, Defence Medal

Military History: Janina volunteered with the 2nd Corps as a nurse with the 3rd Military Hospital. For health reasons she transferred to HQ Polish 2nd Corp and worked in the Field Post Office.

Post-War: She came to Canada on December 8, 1951, from England.

Czajkowski, Mikołaj

Born: July 8, 1919, in Losiecz, Woj. Tarnopolskie, Poland

Occupation(s): Farmer

Military Rank: Szeregowy / Private

Military History: Served with the 3rd Battalion, Iliczn (?), 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: He was in London, Ontario, in the late 1940s

Czerkawski, Emil („Smiały”)

Born: September 11, 1925, in Tarnowskie Góry, Woj. Śląskie, Poland

Died: January 17, 2013 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Szymon

Occupation(s): Professional Engineer, Electrical

Children: Mark, Barbara

Military Rank: Sergeant

Military Medals: Krzyz Narodowego Czynu Zbrojnego, Warszawski Krzyz Powstancy, Krzyz Armii Krajowej, Krzyz Partyzancki

Military History: From 1942 to 1943 Emil was an Officer Cadet of Infantry in Warsaw. In 1943 he was assigned to the Defense Command Company in Warsaw, which was involved in capturing arms. In 1944, as part of the Polish Home Army, he took part in the Warsaw Uprising and was involved in capturing the main post office and in the battles in Wola, Srod miescie-Polnoc. In command of the 2nd platoon, 1st company Chrobry II, he was in charge of the defense of the train station on Aleje Jerozolimskie. From 1944 to 1945 he was a Prisoner of War in Stalag Lamsdorf near Opole. He escaped but was arrested by the Gestapo in Czechoslovakia and sentenced to the concentration camp in Buchenwald from January 1945 to April 11, 1945, at which point he was liberated by the American 3rd Army under General Patton. Upon liberation he was assigned to the 2nd Corps in 1945 and sent to an officer's training school in Gallipoli. Upon completing this training, he was assigned as Sergeant to the 7th Lublin Lancers Regiment in Grottamare, near Ancona, Italy. In September 1945, the regiment was transferred to England and stationed at Livermere Camp, near Bury St. Edmonds, Suffolk.

Post-War: While in England he attended the Polish University College and later Woolwich Polytechnic, University of London.

Człowiekowski, Ignacy Jan



Born: June 17, 1916, in Jasło, Woj. Krakowskie, Poland

Education: Master of Laws at the university in Lwow; PhD in Administrative Law from the University of Fribourg

Occupation(s): Professor at the College of Christ the King, London, Ontario (King's University College); Professor, Department of Economics, University of Lethbridge 1968-1981.

Married: Zofia (Adel)

Children: Teresa (October 24, 1948); Tadeusz (October 24, 1953)

Military Rank: Corporal Ensign

Military History: Ignacy was with a unit that escaped to Switzerland after the fall of France. The unit was interned there. Ignacy was given the opportunity to attend university while there. He wrote: "L'économie de guerre britannique 1939-1941" with Mieczyslaw Epstein, Buchdr. Effingerhof A.G, 1943, and "Influence de la guerre actuelle sur le marché de la main-d'oeuvre d'après L'expérience allemande 1939-1943." This was his doctoral thesis completed at the University of Fribourg in Switzerland. Later he was assigned to the Culture

and Press unit of the 2nd Corp.

Post-War: Ignacy came to Canada and took up positions as a professor of economics at the University of Western Ontario and at the University of Lethbridge. He published widely in the area of economics. He was also involved in a Polish quarterly – Dialogi (Kwartalnik) put out by Kongres Polonii Kanadyjskiej (KPK), Alberta.

"Adel was famous (notorious?) around the university for the fact that in winter he would walk to the university. The Whoop-up Drive bridge had not yet been built, and the University was the only building on the west side of the river. Adel had to walk down and across the frozen Oldman River, then up to the main building. This was obviously dangerous, but Adel did it routinely, seemingly unconcerned about the possibility that the ice on the river might give way."

Czuma, Hanna

Born: January 2, 1926, in Bydgoszcz, Poland

Died: January 5, 2018 in London, Ontario, Canada

Children: Wojciech, Catherine, Marek

Military Rank: Private

History: Hanna served in the Polish Home Army from May 1942 to August 1944 and took part in the Warsaw Uprising, after which she was held as a prisoner of war in Zeithem. In July 1945 she joined the 2nd Corps in Italy.

Post-War: From October 1946 she was in England. She came to Canada from England on September 25, 1958.

D

Dąbrowski, Jan

Born: January 25, 1925, in Dąbrowica, pow. Sarneński, Woj. Wołyńskie, Poland

Died: December 3, 2016 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Antoni, Father, Marianna, Mother

Died: December 3, 2016

Married: Ruth

Military Rank: Private First Class; promoted to 2nd Lieutenant in 1999

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Walecznych, Medal Wojska, Krzyz Partyzancki, Krzyz Armii Krajowej, Krzyz Polskich Sil Zbrojnych na Zachodzie; British Medals: War Medal 1939-45

Military History: Jan served with the Polish Home Army and as a partisan under the pseudonym "Apostol" in 4th Company, 2nd Battalion within the 3rd Infantry Regiment under "Szary" Major Antoni Heda from 1943 to 1945 in the Swietokrzyskie Mountains. He was arrested in Konskie in February 1945 but managed to escape. He served from 1945-1947 in the 2nd Corps in Italy and was assigned to the 2nd Warsaw Armoured Division, 64th Pomorski Infantry Battalion.

Post-War: He came to Canada on May 5, 1947, from Great Britain. In 1954 he joined the Canadian Army, Royal Canadian Regiment, London, where he served for 22 years. He joined SPK in 1948 in Winnipeg. Jan was a founding member of Our Lady of Czestochowa Church.

Dębicki, Andrzej Wiesław

Born: July 27, 1920, in Kraków, Poland

Died: July 16, 2018 in London, Ontario, Canada

Married: Patricia Janet Wilson, Hanka (1st wife)

Children: Barbara

Family: Father, Roman; Mother, Modesta (Dumnicka); Sister, Krystyna

Military Rank: 2nd Lieutenant (Artillery); promoted to Captain 1990; promoted to Major 2002

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Virtuti Militari, Krzyz Walecznych, Krzyz Zaslugi z Mieczami, Medal Wojska

Military History: Andrzej took part in the September 1939 Campaign in the 5th Division Horse Artillery Oswiecim. He and his family were deported to Siberia and after the amnesty he joined the 2nd Corps. He fought at Monte Cassino, Ancona and Bologna with the 6th Lwów Light Artillery Regiment, commanding the 1st battery. He served in England until 1947. Andrzej described his life in a book entitled *Pamiętaj Wnuku: Wspomnienia z lat 1920-1955*.

Post-War: He immigrated to Canada in 1952

Delanowski, Zbigniew (Peter)



Born: April 28, 1923, in Styj, Woj. Stanisławowskie, Poland

Died: December 21, 2013 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Jozef, Mother, Helena; Sisters: Waleria, Gizela, Leokadia

Occupation(s): Machinist

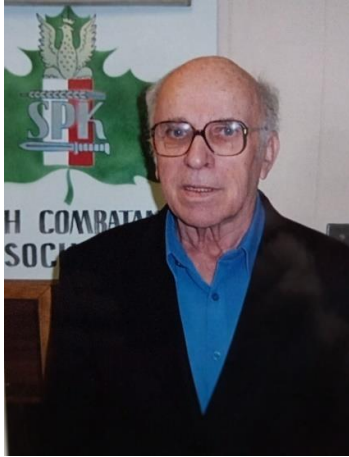
Married: Helena Matecki

Children: Jolanta (Joanne), George, Tadeusz (Ted)

Military Medals: Polish: Krzyz Walecznych, Krzyz Zaslugi z Mieczami, Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino, Krzyz Czynu Bojowego; British Medals: Africa Star, Italy Star, Defense Medal, War Medal 1939-1945; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold; Zloty Znak Federacji Swiatowej

Military Rank: Tank Commander

Military History: Zbigniew lived with his parents and 3 younger sisters. In 1940, at the age of 14, his mother and all 4 children were taken from their home, put on a freight car and taken to Kazakhstan. His father had been captured earlier and throughout the war his whereabouts were unknown. From Kazakhstan, Zbigniew joined the Polish forces being formed in 1942 in Totskoye after he lied about his age and added 2 years. He was assigned to the Reconnaissance within the 6th Infantry Division. He was with the 2nd Corps under General Anders in Teheran, Iran, where he was sent for armoured training. In 1943 he undertook formal Military Training in Egypt (Tell-Elkabir) for eleven months, after which he was assigned to the 6th Children of Lwow Armoured Regiment. He was in Italy in 1943, and was a tank commander at Monte Cassino in 1944 and also served at Ancona and Bologna.



Post-War: In 1945, at the end of the war, he was sent to Austria to assist with the repatriation of Poles. Zbigniew met his wife, Helena Matecki, while in Austria. They were married in April 1946 and rejoined the Polish Army in Italy after the wedding. From there, they were relocated to England, where he continued in the Army. The family moved to Canada in 1962.

Zbigniew knew several families in England which had immigrated to Canada and settled in London a few years earlier. After selling their belongings in England, the family moved to London, Ontario, with no job, no address, just the trust in God that everything would be alright. Zbigniew had already learned a trade as a machinist in England, so when he arrived in London, he was contacted by one of his friends who worked at Ex-ce-llo in London. They needed someone with his skills. He was hired and worked at E-ce-llo until they closed down, shortly before he reached full retirement age and then took early retirement.

Zbigniew joined SPK in 1962 and served as Vice-President (1990, 1991, 1993, 1996, 2002), and as treasurer, and managed the bar on special occasions

Devenczuk (Deven), Konstanty

Born: March 8, 1923, in Borysowszczyzna, Poland

Died: April 16, 1995

Family: Father, Jan; Mother, Tekla

Military Rank: Private

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Walecznych, Medal Wojska, Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino. British Medals: Africa Star, Italy Star, Defence Medal, War Medal 1939-1945

Military History: Konstanty joined the Polish Army in Buzuluk, USSR, on June 5, 1942, and was assigned to a reconnaissance unit. He journeyed from Russia to Iran in Iran, then to Iraq, where he was assigned to the Carpathian Lancers Regiment, 2nd Corps, in which he served from Iraq to Libya, to Egypt and on to Italy. He took part in the whole Italian Campaign, including at the River Sangro, Monte Cassino, Ancona and Bologna.

Post-War: He came to Canada in 1957 from England.

Drużyński, Leopold

Born: March 25, 1918, in Wilno, Woj. Wileńskie, Poland

Died: December 13, 1987, in Windsor

Education: Completed elementary and gardening school in Wilno

Occupation(s): Gardener, Canadian National Railways

Married: In 1961 he married a widow, Zofia Sobera. Her first husband was active in the Polish Home Army and was killed in a battle with the Germans at Czestochowa.

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino. British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver

Military History: In 1939 Leopold was called to the Polish Army as a runner with the Command of the City of Wilno. As a prisoner he was interned in Camp Polaga in Lithuania. In 1940 he was exiled to Siberia and later joined the Polish Army in Tatishchevo on September 28, 1941, and served in the 5th Kresowa Division, 2nd Corps. He served with the 15th Poznan Lancer Regiment and later with the 25th Wielkopolski Lancers. He served in North Africa and in Italy.

Post-War: At the end of the war he was in Camp "Canada" in Cezena, Italy. He boarded the "Sea Robin" (the first Polish military transport) in Naples and left Italy for Canada and arrived in Halifax on November 12, 1946. He worked on contract for 2 years on a farm near Woodstock.

He joined SPK on the ship sailing to Canada in 1946. Leopold helped with the building of Our Lady of Czestochowa Church. They moved to Windsor in 1965. In Windsor he was a member of the Polish Alliance of Canada, Polish People's Home Association, Royal Canadian Legion Branch 437, and the Polish Seniors' Club.

Dubowski, Kazimierz**Born:** April 3, 1923, in Bałtruciszki, Woj. Wileńskie, Poland**Occupation(s):** Turner / Lathe operator**Military Rank:** Szeregowy / Private**Military History:** Served with the 3rd Carpathian Signals Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps**Post-War:** He was in St. Thomas, Ontario, in 1947 on a 2-year contract and was a member of SPK.**Duda, Grzegorz****Born:** September 9, 1917, in Humniska, Woj. Tarnopolskie, Poland**Occupation(s):** Chauffeur**Military Rank:** Private, 5th Kresowa Signals Battalion, 2nd Corps**History:** He was in London, Ontario in 1947**F****Ferenc, Maria Magdalena (Izydorczyk)****Born:** June 14, 1921, in Leszno, Poland**Died:** July 30, 2015 in London, Ontario, Canada**Family:** Brother; Leon; Sister; Aniela**Married:** Witold Ferenc**Step-Children:** John, Mary**History:** Maria lived through the Nazi occupation of Poland and came to Canada in 1966.**Ferenc, Melania (Kordek)****Born:** January 4, 1923, in Rydzyna, near Leszno, Poland**Died:** April 1, 1963 in London, Ontario, Canada**Family:** Father, Jan Kordek; Mother, Joanna Ziemba; Siblings: Alfons; Krystyna**Married:** Witold Ferenc**Children:** John (June 29, 1960); Mary (March 14, 1962)**History:** Melania lived through the Nazi occupation of Poland and came to Canada in 1959**Ferenc, Witold****Born:** August 10, 1919, in Szczęsnówka, (Kisielówka), Horochów, Woj. Wołyńskie, Poland**Died:** November 25, 1993 in London, Ontario Canada**Family:** Father, Tomasz; Mother, Feliksa (Piotrowska); Siblings: Helena, Jadwiga, Wacław, Stanisław, Marian, Bolesław, Józef, Tadeusz**Education:** Completed Elementary School**Occupation(s):** Carpenter**Married:** In 1959 he went to Poland and met Melania Kordek and married her the same year in Poland. Melania died April 1, 1963. They had two children – John (June 29, 1960) and Mary (March 14, 1962). Witold remarried in 1966 to Maria Izydorczyk.**Children:** John (June 29, 1960) and Mary (March 14, 1962)**Military Rank:** Saper**Polish Medals:** Krzyz Walecznych; Medal Wojska; Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; Krzyz Czynu Bojowego Polskich Sil Zbrojnych na Zachodzie.**British Medals:** 1939-1945 Star, Italy Star, Defence Medal, War Medal 1939-45**SPK Medals:** Bronze, Silver, Gold**Military History:** The family, Tomasz and Feliksa along with their children, Jadwiga, Wacław, Marian, Józef, Tadeusz and Witold, and Feliksa's sister, Waleria Piotrowska, were arrested by the Russians at night on February 10, 1940. Helena and her family and Stanisław and his family were not deported. They were not residing at the same

location as they had their own houses and families. Bolesław was missing in action from the September 1939 defensive campaign. The family was deported to Specposiolek Kuklovo in Archangielsk Oblast (close to Niandoma) in the Soviet Union for forced labour. The forced labour consisted of cutting down trees and sawing them into logs. After the amnesty in 1941, the family travelled to join the Polish army, which was forming in the south, travelling from Specposiolek Kuklovo to Tockoje, Buzuluk, Guzar, Dzalal-Abad, where Waclaw and Witold joined the Polish Armed Forces. Waleria Piotrowska, Marian, Tadeusz and Józef Ferenc died along the way south. Tadeusz is buried in Guzar. What remained of the family was then evacuated with the Polish Armed Forces and attached civilians to Pahlavi in Persia via Krasnovodsk. His father, Tomasz, died in Teheran of typhus and is buried in the Polish Cemetery. Witold trained with the Polish Army, first assigned to the 3rd Rifle Company, 17 Infantry regiment 6th Infantry Division while in Iran. Then he was transferred to the 6th Company, 5th Engineers Battalion, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 2nd Polish Corps, 8th British Army. Witold served in the Middle East (Iran, Iraq, Palestine, Egypt) 1942-1944 and in Italy 1944-1946. In Italy he saw battle in all the major engagements, including action on the



rivers Sangro and Rapido/Southern Apennines, Battle for Monte Cassino, Gustav-Hitler line, Battle for Ancona/Goths line, Northern Apennines, River Senio and the Battle for Bologna/Lombardy Plain. He was wounded in action at Monte Cassino. His brother Waclaw was transferred to the 1st Armoured Division under General Maczek. His mother, Feliksa, and sister Jadwiga were first sent to Karachi, India, and then to Morogoro Camp. in Tanzania, Africa. Stanisław's wife and children were brutally killed by the UPA (Ukrainian Insurgent Army) in Kisielowka. Stanisław and Helena, along with Helena's son Henryk survived the war and were resettled to the Hrubieszów area.

Post-War: After the war, Feliksa and Jadwiga joined Waclaw in settling in England. Witold immigrated to Canada from Italy, sailing aboard the SS Sea Robin and disembarking in Halifax on November 12, 1946. From there he travelled by rail to St. Thomas. He completed a two-year farm contract in Walkerton, which was required by Polish veterans in order to obtain landed immigrant status in Canada. He then moved to London to find employment and to join the larger Polish community here. He worked on construction and retired

in 1983/85.

He was a founding member of SPK Branch No. 2 in London and helped build the SPK Hall and Our Lady of Czestochowa Church. He served as Vice-President in 1961.



< Waclaw and Witold Ferenc
1946 in Italy

Fiedorec, Włodzimierz

Born: March 10, 1924, in the village of DuBoj, Woj. Poleskie

Died: December 4, 1988

Married: Kathleen (Hoare)

Children: John Fielding, David Fiedorec, Stefan Fiedorec, Ryszard Fiedorec, Shannon Fiedorec

Military Rank: Strzelec / Rifleman

Military Medals: Krzyz Walecznych

Military History: 1st Carpathian Rifle Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Infantry Division

Fijak, Michał

Born: September 12, 1914, in Zarzecze, Pow. Żywiecki, Woj. Krakowskie, Poland

Died: November 11, 2003 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Karol; Mother, Katarzyna

Education: Elementary plus 3 years of trade school

Occupation(s): Journeyman

Married: Leonarda (Born March 3, 1927, in Porysk-Wlodzimierz, Poland)

Military Rank: Corporal

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Walecznych; Krzyz Zaslugi z Mieczami; Medal Wojska; Krzyz Kampanii Wrzesniowej 1939; Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino. British Medals: 1939-1945 Star; Italy Star; Defence Medal; SPK Medals: Gold, Silver, Bronze

Military History: Michał saw active service in 1938-1939 in 4 Pułk Strzelców Podhalańskich/ 4th Highlanders Rifle Regiment, Cieszyn. He completed officer cadet training in Cieszyn. He was exiled to Russia and joined the Polish Army being formed in Russia, serving with the 2nd Corps, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 13th Armoured Battalion. He fought at Monte Cassino (San Angelo, Pesco-Camberale), Ancona and Bologna.

Post-War: He left Italy on November 24, 1946, for Canada and was in London by April 13, 1947; he worked on 2-year farm contract near Mt. Bridges.

Frydrychowicz, Jan Piotr

Born: June 12, 1904, in Dragoszcz, Woj. Pomorskie, Poland

Married: Januta Marja (Mrozejewski)

Military History: In 1939 he served with the 7th Horsed Riflemen Regiment, Army Poznan. He spent 5 ½ years as a Prisoner of War. Near the end he joined the 2nd Corps in Italy.

Post-War: He came to Canada from England in 1950 and was in London in 1991.

G**Garlicki, Andrzej Marian**

Born: July 16, 1923, in Szulhanówka, Pow. Czortkowski, Woj. Tarnopolskie, Poland

Military Rank: Plutonowy Podchorazy / 2nd Lieutenant Artillery

Military History: Served with the 3rd Carpathian Light Artillery Regiment, 3rd Carpathian Infantry Division, 2nd Corps

Gaś, Jan

Born: May 18, 1913, in the village of Ruptawa, Pow. Rybnik, Woj. Śląskie, Poland

Military Rank: Private, 13th Wilno Rifle Battalion, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 2nd Corps

Gawor, Janina



Born: November 18, 1931, Wolyn, Poland

Died: June 26, 2009 in London, Ontario, Canada

Married: Mieczyslaw Gawor (1927-1980)

History: Janina was exiled to Siberia and then spent time in West Africa during the war where she had joined the Polish Girl Guides.

Post-War: She came to Canada from England in 1950. She joined SPK and served as President of the Ladies Auxiliary in 1966.

Gawor, Mieczysław

Born: October 15, 1927, in Stanisławówka-Sokale, Woj. Lwowskie, Poland

Died: February 16, 1980 in London, Ontario, Canada

Married: Janina

Children: Anna (January 14, 1958), Krystyna (December 22, 1952), Piotr (May 28, 1959)

Military Rank: Private

Military History: Served with the 319 Maintenance Unit, probably with the Independent Carpathian Rifle Brigade, Egypt

Gnidec, Teodor



Born: February 8, 1917, Kamionka Wołoska (Lipnik), Pow. Rawski, Woj. Lwowskie, Poland

Died: September 16, 1995 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Piotr (1888-1971); Mother, Anna Zyhailo (1890-1965); Siblings: Michał (1911-1994), Parana (1921- n.d.), Ivan (n.d.), Dimitri (n.d.) and Vasil (1934-)

Education: Completed elementary school and up to the 10th grade. In mid-April 1945, he underwent officer training at an army school in Italy and became a Lance Corporal. After the end of WWII, Mr. Gnidec attended school for six weeks in Modena. During the war, soldiers were given lessons in Italian and English.

Occupation(s): Builder (carpenter by trade)

Married: Gnidec met his future wife, Viktorija Rijavec, at a New Year's Eve dance at the PSN Hall on Hill Street on December 31, 1951. Their engagement took place in February 1952, and they married on August 16, 1952.

Children: Arnold (born 1953, died from leukemia in 1956 the day after his third birthday); Dr. Adrienne Gnidec; Dr. Elliott Gnidec; Dr. Anatoly Gnidec; Yvonne Gnidec.

Military Rank: Lance Corporal

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Medal Wojska; Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-1945 Star; Italy Star; SPK Medals: Gold, Silver, Bronze

Military History: On a December Sunday in 1939, Gnidec and some others were arrested by eight men in a Soviet truck. He was detained in a prison in Rawa Ruska for two weeks. Later he was transported to a hard penitentiary in Brigitki Jail (Lwow). They slept on 4'8' slabs of wood and were not permitted to step outside. He stayed there until mid-April 1940, when he was transported to Kiev by train. He was held at a railway station in an open field for two weeks before being taken to Kharkov, where he stayed in a jail located in a former monastery, where he was "tried" and interrogated from midnight to 2:00 a.m. He was continuously asked "why were you spying" and

consistently maintained that he had only gone to see the girls in the neighbouring village. The food rations in the Kharkov jail included 20 g of sugar daily.

On September 1, 1940, Gnidec and other prisoners were transported by train to Arkangelsk and then by coal boat to St. Maran. There were about 450 men, of which about 250 were Polish. The others were Russians, Germans, Hungarians and Romanians. They took an open barge out of St. Maran and sailed along the Peczora River.

On October 28, 1940, they were forced to stop their journey due to the fact that the river had frozen over. Two weeks later, once they were certain that the water was frozen over, the men were forced to walk across the ice for four days and three nights. In the middle of December 1941, they arrived in a work camp 40 km from Vorkuta.

They were forced to build a railroad from Kotlas to Vorkuta. They received 60 g of sugar per month as part of their food rations, which was not nearly enough, since Gnidec was hospitalized for malnutrition for four to five weeks in the summer of 1941. He also traded his new boots for some fish at the food reserve.

This cost him dearly because two guards caught him cooking the fish and accused him of stealing them. He refused to get dressed when they ordered him to do so, and they then ordered him to run barefoot in minus 40 C weather to the guard post, where he was locked up in an unheated room. The room that Gnidec was kept in may have been unheated, but it was next to the guard's room, and, luckily, the stove stood against the shared wall of the two rooms. Gnidec sat beside the wall which had the stove on the other side of wall in the guard's room to keep warm. In 1941 the Polish government-in-exile in England signed an agreement freeing the prisoners and allowing the creation of a Polish Army on Soviet territory. On September 1, 1941, they released Teodor and 29 others from the Vorkuta camp. Gnidec received 300 rubles and enough food rations to last three days. He walked for six to eight hours to the train station, picking and eating blueberries along the way. Two weeks later he was allowed to report at any of the main train stations.

He took the train to Buzuluk, where he stayed for two weeks before taking another train to Tatishchevo, where he arrived during the first week of October 1941. Polish General Anders organized a training camp in Tatishchevo. In March/April 1942, Gnidec left Tatishchevo for Blagovsgsenko, Uzbekistan, a village known for its cotton plantations. Because of the harsh conditions in Uzbekistan, the Polish Commanders requested that their Army be transferred to the Middle East. In the spring of 1942, some 100,000 Poles left the Soviet Union. They travelled through Persia to Africa where the British 8th Army was located and where the 2nd Corps was formed. The troops took a boat from the Krasnovodsk port across the Caspian Sea to Tehran to the port of Pahlevi. From Iran, they took trucks driven by experienced drivers from Tehran through the mountains to Kanagin, Iraq, outside of Kirkuk, where they stayed from January to August 1943. There, they trained in temperatures ranging from 16 F by day to below freezing by night. They continued their training from September to mid October 1943 in the mountainous region of Lebanon.

They took a truck out of Lebanon to Palestine, where they could tour Bethlehem and Jerusalem and to relax before the upcoming hardships.

In December of 1943, they moved to Egypt, where Gnidec took the opportunity to tour Cairo and see the pyramids and other sites. They took boats to the port in Taranto, Italy, at the beginning of February 1944. At the end of the month, they were stationed at Campobasso.

They took over the French Army's position at San Giovanni a few days before Easter of 1944.

Their net stop was Castrocaro [sic], near Cassino, where they trained in mountain and bush terrain (5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 13th Wilno Rifle Battalion). They arrived in Monte Cassino on May 5/6, 1944, and stayed in the trenches until May 11. On that day, some 16,000 artillery pieces began bombarding the Germans at 1:00 PM; the battle began. Gnidec lost consciousness when a grenade exploded near him. He came to at 6:10 AM on May 12. During this battle, he was wounded in his left arm, left thigh and the back of his head. He was transported to the hospital, where he stayed for six weeks. During the battle, forty-six members of Gnidec's company died and forty-eight were wounded. They attacked Monte Cassino again on May 18th. This time, they were successful: they captured Monte Cassino and opened the gateway to Rome. Three days after Gnidec returned from the hospital, the Corps captured Ancona.

On August 1 or 2, 1944, the Polish soldiers participated in the King George VI parade in Ostro.

At 3:30 PM, on August 31, 1944, Gnidec was once again wounded, this time severely, in the right arm, while carrying a dead fellow soldier. He was hospitalized and received skin grafts.

Gnidec rejoined the Corps in Galiata in the middle of November 1944. They spent Christmas and New Year's near Bologna, a city they captured in April of 1945. In the middle of April 1945, Gnidec achieved the status of Lance Corporal after officer training at the army school.

Post-War: At the end of the war, Gnidec stayed in Italy. He studied for six weeks in Modena. Next, the Corps relocated to Naples. In August of 1946, Canadian diplomats came to Italy looking for 6,000 healthy, unmarried men to work on farms. Many of the Polish soldiers chose this option over returning to the now Communist Poland. In November of 1946, Gnidec left Italy for Canada with the first group of Polish soldier immigrants. He sailed on the second boat from Naples to Halifax. Each immigrant had to sign a two-year contract to work as a farm labourer. Many filled farm labourer positions previously held by German prisoners of war who had returned to Germany when the war was over. In Halifax, the immigrants were distributed to the farms. Gnidec was sent to St. Thomas, Ontario, and worked on tobacco farms in Mount Brydges, from 1947 to 1949.

He moved to London in June 1949. He lived on the third floor and paid 5 cents a week to his landlords, the Atkinsons. This floor had four bedrooms, a common bathroom and a cooking area. He shared the floor with a fellow Pole, a pharmacist and a worker for Dion Movers. Gnidec received his Canadian citizenship in 1951/early 1952. The Atkinsons were his witnesses. His first job in London was rebuilding the roof of Bishop Cronyn Anglican Church for an hourly wage of eighty-five cents. Later he worked as an orderly at Westminster Veteran's Hospital until he injured his back. After that he worked as a carpenter. In 1978, he and his sons established the E&A Gnidec Bros. General Construction Company.

In London, Teodor joined SPK, Branch No. 2, where he was a founding member. He was a proud and active member and felt strongly affiliated with the organization. He was involved with building both Our Lady of Czestochowa Church and the SPK Hall.



< Teodor and Viktorija Gnidec, August 1952

Gnidec, Viktorija



Born: March 27, 1925, in Montespino, Italy, near Trieste

Died: August 10, 1999 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Franc Rijavec; Mother, Ivanka (Bobnar); Her father was a landowning farmer and her mother was a historian and a poet. Siblings: Lidija (died in 2012), Viktorija, Silvan (died on December 31, 1995, on the dance floor at a New Year's Eve dance in London Ontario), Franc (died 1982), Stanislav (died 1969) and Marija (died soon after birth).

Education: Began her education in Italy. She was in high school when World War II broke out, interrupting her education.

Married: Viktorija met her future husband Teodor Gnidec, at a New Year's Eve dance at the PSN hall on Hill Street in London, Ontario on December 31, 1951. Their engagement took place in February 1952, and they married on August 16, 1952.

Children: Arnold, Adrienne, Elliott, Anatoly

History: During World War II Viktorija lived in Italy. During this time, the borders were shifting between Italy and Yugoslavia.

Post-War: Viktorija left Italy and chose Canada, arriving in 1949. Her sister Lidija, who

was sponsored by a relative in Pennsylvania, USA, moved to Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and then settled down in Denver, Colorado. There, Lidija met and married a Polish man named Władysław Ulatowski. Viktorija's eldest sister Ida moved to Canada in 1954.

Viktorija moved to Lunenburg, Nova Scotia where she worked for a Consul and his family, and later she moved to Windsor where she worked in the kitchen at a convent. Finally, in 1951, she moved to London where she worked as a nurse's aide. After raising her children she worked in sales for the World Book Encyclopedia Company, as a dietitian at the London Psychiatric Hospital and finally as a school crossing guard. When Mrs. Gnidec's youngest brother Stanislav died (December 1969) in former Yugoslavia (now Slovenia), leaving his wife alone with three young daughters, the Gnidec family decided to adopt the middle daughter in 1975; she was 11 years old. Viktorija received an award for volunteer work with the Polish Catholic Women's League in London.

Gogol, Kazimierz (Charlie)

Born: November 1, 1911 in Zalysze, Woj. Poleskie, Poland

Died: August 4, 1997 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Antoni; Mother, Paulina

Occupation(s): Farmer

Married: Maria (February 11, 1919-November 11, 1982)

Children: Edward, Barbara (Forem)

Military Rank: Private

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Walecznych; Medal Wojska; Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-1945 Star; Defense Medal; War Medal 1939-1945; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver

Military History: He served in the September 1939 Campaign and then later with the 5th Signals Battalion, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 2nd Corps. He fought at Monte Cassino, Loretto, Ancona, and Bologna.

Post-War: He was in London by April 2, 1947, where he joined SPK. He served as Vice-President of Branch No. 2 in 1962, 1963, 1967, 1968, 1971 and 1972.

Gorczyca, Jan Kazimierz

Born: December 15, 1916, in Wierzbno, Woj. Krakowskie, Poland

Married: Maria

Military Rank: Plutonowy / Lance Sergeant

Military History: Served with the 1st Light Artillery Regiment, 3rd Carpathian Infantry Division, 2nd Corps

Górski, August



Born: December 8, 1919, in Zaleszczyki (Zalesie), pow. Borszczowski, Woj. Tarnopolskie, Poland

Died: January 30, 2015, in his 96th year in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Emil; Mother, Antonia [Toczyński]; Siblings: Róża, Tadeusz, Władysław (the oldest), Adol (the youngest), Józef, Milko [Bir – half-brother]

Education: Completed Elementary School; 5 years in Zalesie and 2 years in Germakówka; Agricultural School, Cadet (Junak), Rifleman – everyone who finished grade 7 had to join the army and learn to shoot

Married: Janina Rajner (January 17, 1927 - April 16, 1998)

Children: Ted (Yvonne), Wanda (Szabo)

Military Rank: Corporal

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Walecznych; Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; Odznaka Pamiatkowa Samodzielna Brygada Strzelcow Karpackich - Tobruk. British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Africa Star; Italy Star; Defense Medal; War Medal 1939-1945: SPK Medals



Military History: The family was living near Zalesie when the war broke out. They lived near the border so they were there when the Russians attacked. There were quite a few Russians living in Zalesie since Poland allowed in a certain number of Russians because of the general poverty in the Soviet Union. In 1939 the brother was wounded by the Russians. The Russians beat his mother. He knew where his father kept a rifle and ammunition. He shot two Russians and then hid the rifle. He was 16 when he joined the Polish army. He was a rifleman because he knew how to shoot. He started as a private and later was promoted to Corporal. In 1939 he escaped to Romania through the mountains and never saw his parents again. He hid on a ship sailing for Turkey in a group of six Polish

soldiers and then went on to Syria. The Independent Carpathian Rifle Brigade was being formed in Haifa, Palestine and in Syria. Two brigades were formed and were sent on to Libya, so that in 1940 he was at Tobruk with the 6th Company, 1st Rifle Regiment. During the Battle of Tobruk he was put on an airplane along with 20 soldiers and was dropped off behind the German lines, which they attacked. He was wounded during this encounter. He was enrolled in an officer's training program in 1942 in Palestine. Later he sailed to Taranto in Italy with the 5th Rifle Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Infantry Division, 2nd Corps and on to Sangro, Casteldisandro and Monte Cassino. At one point he took a German officer prisoner but the officer resisted so August threatened him with his revolver. He was wounded twice, but continued on from Monte Cassino to Ancona to Bologna. After Bologna, in Urbino, he was assigned to the 12th Military Police Squadron.

Post-War: From Italy he sailed to England and enlisted in the Polish Resettlement Corps until he sailed for Canada. He arrived in Halifax in Canada in 1946. He was looking for work and they sent him to Toronto. He knew a Canadian soldier who advised him to come to London and that his father would give him a job. He worked on Bet Madill's farm for one year and then went to work for General Steel Wares. From 1976 to 1998 he was in real estate.

He joined SPK, Branch No. 2 and served as President, Vice-President (1956, 1992), Treasurer (1949), Secretary (1973, 1974). He also served on the church building committee for Our Lady of Czestochowa Church.

Grabarczyk, Józef

Born: November 2, 1911, in Garno, Pow. Radomskie, Woj. Kieleckie, Poland

Education: Completed elementary school

Military Rank: Sierżant / Sergeant

Military Medals: Virtuti Militari

Military History: Served with the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: Came to Canada June 31, 1947

Grabowski, Stanisław



Born: February 1, 1921, in Ostrow, pow. Kostopolski, Woj. Wołyńskie, Poland

Died: November 11, 2009 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Lukasz, Mother, Klara

Married: Margaret (Amos)

Children: Susan, Jane, Karl and Carey (died)

Occupation: Forester

Military Rank: 2nd Lieutenant

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Walecznych; Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; Defence Medal; SPK Medals: Silver, Gold

Military History: In 1939 Stanislaw and his family were deported to the Soviet Union. Following the amnesty, he joined the Polish armed forces being formed by General Wladyslaw Anders and was assigned to the 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 14th Wilno Rifle Battalion. He travelled through Iran and Iraq to Palestine for training and then on to

Italy. He took part in the Battle of Monte Cassino, where he was wounded in his leg, and at Ancona and Bologna.

Post-War: He came to London in 1960 and joined SPK. He served as President of Branch No. 2 in 1968 and 1982.

Gregalis, Jan I.



< Jan Gregalis and Anna Maria Anders

Born: March 28, 1921, in Warszawice, District of Garwolin, Woj. Warszawskie, Poland

Died: November 8, 2020

Family: Father, Ignacy

Education: High School

Military Rank: 2nd Lieutenant

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Walecznych (twice), Brazowy Krzyz Zaslugi z Mieczami, Medal Wojska, Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; Italian Medals: Al Valore Militare

Military History: In 1940, Jan, his father, mother, 3 sisters and a younger brother were all arrested and sentenced to five years of hard labour in the gulag. They were deported to the area near the White Sea in northern Russia. They were given saws and told to build themselves shelters. First they just built rough

shelters using branches and later they built log houses. After the amnesty, they were advised to leave and to go south towards Buzuluk. When they arrived in Buzuluk, they found it was full to capacity so they were advised to go further south. At some point Jan was assigned to the 4th Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Infantry Division, and was sent for officer's training. By the time he was in Italy he was a 2nd Lieutenant. He fought at Monte Cassino and Ancona. Somewhere in the Apennines he was hit by artillery fire and lost an eye.

Post-War: He left Italy for England and then came to Canada on a two-year farm contract. While working on a farm he almost lost the other eye, but a good doctor said that he could not return to the farm. Jan moved to Toronto in 1949 and worked for DeHavilland for almost 30 years. In 2018, he was living at the Wawel Villa Retirement Residences in Mississauga.

For an interview with Jan Gregalis see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eSQaQ0Zqaw8>

Grodzki, Hieronim

Born: February 8, 1908 (1905?) in Godlewo-Gudosza, Woj. Bialystockie Poland

Died: March 29, 1987 in London, Ontario, Canada

Married: Maria (1916-1960)

Children: Stefania

Military Rank: Strzelec / Rifleman

Military History: Served with the 3rd Heavy Machine Gun Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Grzywacz, Kazimierz

Born: July 7, 1924, in Lida, Woj. Nowogródzkie, Poland

Military Rank: 2nd Lieutenant

Military History: Kazimierz joined the Polish Army in the USSR and travelled with the army to the Middle East. After reorganization he was assigned to the 3rd Carpathian Infantry Division, 2nd Rifle Brigade, 6th Battalion, and served in the Italian Campaign. In England he was part of the Polish Resettlement Corps.

Post-War: He came to Canada on December 15, 1986, from the United States.

Grzywnowicz, Adam

Born: December 17, 1916, in Budzyn, pow. Miechów, Woj. Kieleckie, Poland

Died: 2008 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Wojciech, Mother, Franciszka

Education: Completed grade 6

Occupation: Farmer

Married: Albina (1924-1978)

Children: Helena (February 12, 1955), Henry (November 14, 1956), Wiktor (September 31, 1961)

Military Rank: Private First Class

Military Medals: Krzyz Zaslugi z Mieczami, Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino, Krzyz Kampanii Wrzesniowej 1939; British Medals: 1939-45 Star, Italy Star; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold

Military History: He served in the September 1939 Campaign with the 8th Infantry Regiment Lublin (Heavy Machine Gun unit). Later he served in the 2nd Corps, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 5th Heavy Machine Gun Battalion in Italy from the River Sangro, Monte Cassino, Ancona and Bologna.

Post-War: He was demobilized in Predappio, Italy, on December 15, 1946, and came to Canada on November 11, 1946, to work on a 2-year farm contract with M. Dewan, Ingersoll. He joined SPK on October 20, 1946, in Italy. He served as Vice-President of Branch No. 2 in London in 1982.

H

Hardyko, Antoni



Born: December 14, 1917, in Pronczejkowo, pow. Molodecki, Woj. Wileńskie, Poland

Died: June 30, 1995 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Aleksander; Mother, Paulina; Antoni's father died while he was very young;

Education: Grade 4

Occupation(s): Farmer

Married: Kornelia, whom he met in Poland in 1959-1960

Children: Beata/ Betty (March 31, 1961) Peter Lueddeker, Janet (November 11, 1962) Joseph Kopacz

Military Rank: Private

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Walecznych; Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino. British Medals: 1939-1945 Star; Italy Star; War Medal 1939-1945. SPK Medals: Gold, Silver, Bronze

Military History: Antoni was taken prisoner by the Russians as a Polish soldier at the beginning of the war. He was put in a POW camp by the Russians and rejoined the Polish army after the amnesty. He served in Iraq and Palestine with the 2nd Corps, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 2nd Company, 5th Kresowa Heavy Machine Gun Battalion, and fought at Monte Cassino, Ancona and Bologna.

Post-War: He came to Halifax from Italy on November 11, 1946, and worked on a two-year farm contract near Port Stanley and later near Arva (Belton, John Bent). He felt that he was treated as a slave by the Canadian farmers. They lived in cow sheds. They protested to the government and as a result were not required to return to the farms. Later he worked in a mine and in the northern woods but did not earn enough to make a living. Antoni felt that since the war didn't get him, he would die from the work here in Canada. He came to London and worked for the city at many different jobs.

Hardyko, Kornelia (Przetakiewicz)

Born: March 30, 1925, in Zieluń nad Wkrąg, pow. Zuromin, Woj. Mazowia, Poland

Died: December 24, 2020 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Daniel (baker/candy-maker); Mother, Helena [Zarembaska]; Siblings: Maria (oldest), Zofia, Jadwiga, Adam (died before the war), Irena. Kornelia was the youngest.

Education: Completed Elementary in Zieluniu; finished school in June and was planning to return but war broke out

Education: Completed elementary school

Married: She met her husband Antonii Hardyko, in Poland in 1959/60. They wrote letters to one another. They had met through friends and he came to Poland at Easter to meet her. They had a civil marriage in Poland and a church marriage in London at Our Lady of Czestochowa Church.

Children: Beata (March 31, 1961), Janet (November 11, 1962)

Military Medals: SPK medal: bronze

History: Her sister, Irena was taken to Potsdam in Germany. Kornelia remained with her parents, but before the winter she too was taken to Germany to dig bunkers, trenches and was back home for Christmas. In Zielunia she was required to work in the kitchen for the Germans with no pay. They had several Italian and French slaves in this kitchen. When the war came to an end, she was still in Poland. She left Poland in 1961 and flew to join her husband in London.

Hładki, Bolesław

Born: March 10, 1914, in Przysynek / Stucka, Woj. Minsk, Russia

Education: Trained as a teacher; Gardener

Military Rank: 2nd Lieutenant, Reserves

Military Medals: Virtuti Militari; Krzyz Walecznych (2)

Military History: Served with the 9th Carpathian Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: He came to Canada on November 11, 1946. He joined SPK on January 1, 1947, and served as the first Secretary (1947, 1948) and President (1949) of Branch No. 2. Later he moved to Toronto where he was very active in Polish scouting (ZHP).

Hołomek, Władysław



Born: August 1, 1924, in Golezow, Pow. Cieszyński, Woj. Śląskie, Poland

Died: September 23, 1981 in London, Ontario, Canada

Education: Completed elementary school

Occupation(s): Steam Fitter, Canadian Comstock Company

Married: Bronisława (Miszkiwicz) [Born January 23, 1919- in Drohobycz, Poland] (Lost 6 children; died August 13, 2011)

Children: Barbara (September 4, 1953)

Military Rank: 2nd Lieutenant

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Walecznych (for Monte Cassino); Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino. British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; War Medal 1939-1945; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver and Gold

Military History: He was conscripted into the German army and sent to the front in Africa. He deserted from the German Army and joined the Polish forces and served at Monte Cassino.

Post-War: After the war he went to England and came to Canada in 1953. He joined SPK and served as Vice-President (1958).

Hulanicka, Bronisława (Chwiećko)



Born: April 17, 1926, in Czerebasówka, Pow. Łuniniecki, Woj. Poleskie, Poland
Family: Father, Jan Chwiećko (October 17, 1897 – February 23, 1988); Mother, Maria (Kostkiewicz) (March 15, 1895 – June 28, 1985); Siblings: Władysław (1st brother was named Władysław 1922-1928), Helena ‘Hela’ (1924), Władysław (2nd brother also named Władysław 1928-2006), Walentyna ‘Lucy’ (1934-1996), Czesław (Chester) (1936 - 2015).

Education: Went to 2nd level gimnazjum (high school); school in Lachwa was burned down

Married: Met her husband Teodor Hulanicki in 1948 and they were married on August 12, 1950, in Saint Mary’s Catholic Church, London, Ontario

Children: Danuta (1952), Czeslaw (Chester) and Halina – twins (1955), Edward (1959 – 2010)

Medals: SPK: Silver

History: The family was on a list to be deported to Siberia but somehow God spared them. They were taken to Germany in the spring of 1943, taken like cattle in a train. Bronisława made grenades in an ammunition camp during the

day, while at night they dug bunkers. Her whole family survived the war.

Post-War: Bronisława came by herself from the D.P. camp in Solingen, Germany, to Pier 21 Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, aboard the “USS General Stuart Heintzelman” on September 23, 1948. Maria (Augustynowicz) and Emila (Gudowska) were also on the ship. Bronisława wanted to go to Toronto but she was brought to London, Ontario. She worked for a year at Brescia Hall Ursuline College of Arts for Women in London, serving the nuns, preparing their dining room tables for meals and cleaning. Bronisława lived at Brescia Hall at that time. Next, she got a job at McCormick’s Canada for 2 years; there, many of the workers were Polish. She was able to save enough money to bring over to London her older brother Władysław and younger sister Walentyna (Lucy) from the D.P. camp in Solingen, Germany. Later she was able to bring over her mother Maria, father Jan and youngest brother Czesław (Chester). When Bronisława became pregnant with her first child, Danuta, she had to take a leave but returned to McCormick’s. She also worked for a while at O-Pee-Chee Limited in the candy packaging department. Her final job was at Northern Telecom (Nortel), where she worked for over 25 years. Bronisława retired from Northern Telecom.

Bronisława helped with the building of the SPK hall and volunteered in the SPK kitchen.

Hulanicki, Teodor



Born: November 9, 1918, in Ulaniki, Pow. Łucki, Woj. Wołyńskie, Poland; was baptized in the parish Church in Torczyn, District of Łuck

Died: January 6, 2008 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Szczepan; Mother, Helena (Wadowicka); both farmed; Siblings: Adam (oldest), Halina, Cezary, Stanisława, Marian

Education: Grade 5 in Ulaniki, Poland

Occupation(s): Farmer

Married: Bronisława Chwiećko at St. Mary’s Catholic Church in London, Ontario, on August 12, 1950

Children: Danuta (1952), twins - Czeslaw (Chester) and Halina (1955), Edward (1959 – 2010)

Military Rank: Private, Communications

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyż Zasługi z Mieczami; Medal Wojska; Krzyż Pamiątkowy Monte Cassino; Krzyż Zesłanców Sybiru; Pro Memoria Medal; British Medals: 1939-1945 Star; Italy Star; Defense Medal; War Medal 1939-45; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold.

Military History: He was deported from Poland in 1940 to the Soviet prison camp “Uchta Gazostroje” in Siberia, where he spent more than a year. After the amnesty in 1941, he joined the Polish Armed Forces on October 3, 1941, and was assigned to the 17th Infantry and served with them in Iran. He joined the 2nd Corps (August 15, 1942- November 20, 1946) where he was assigned to the 17th Lwow Rifle Battalion, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division. Teodor served in the Middle East (1942-44) and in Italy (1944-46) at Monte Cassino, Ancona, Bologna, St. Croce, Brizigiella, Fillitrano, and St. Sofia. He was honourably discharged from the army on November 20, 1946.

Post-War: Teodor came to Pier 21, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, on November 24, 1946, from Italy. In order to gain landed immigrant status, he worked a two-year contract on a farm in Listowel, Ontario, for a young farmer named Willie Scott. Willie’s farm was across the road from his parents’ farm and he was a good farmer for Teodor to be placed with. He was invited to attend the Scott family daughter’s wedding. At the wedding, Teodor asked the orchestra to play “Tango Milonga,” a tango he loved to dance to. When his farm contract was up, he went to work at Medland Cartage, a furniture moving business in Listowel, for a period of six weeks. The senior Mr. Scott drove Teodor around to places like Kitchener and told him a lot of Polish people lived there. Teodor stayed in Kitchener for a while and found out there were a lot of farmers in the London area, so he came to London. He obtained a job in April 1949 at McClary Manufacturing on Nelson Street at Adelaide Street, London, as a sprayer and pickle machine operator in the enamel department. McClary became General Steel Wares Ltd. (G.S.W.), and later Camco Inc. Teodor retired in December 1983. He enjoyed his retirement years working on his son-in-law’s farm in St. Thomas and on the Shore farm on Shore Road in West London, cutting and splitting wood to sell, farming, gardening and fishing.

In 2002, by decree of the President of the Republic of Poland, Teodor was promoted to an officers’ rank of “2nd Lieutenant Retired.” A year later he received the “Veteran of the Struggle for Freedom” certificate from the Republic of Poland.

Teodor joined SPK in 1947; he helped with building Our Lady of Czestochowa Church and the SPK hall and often volunteered at SPK.



Szkola Podoficerska Mehaniczna
Vittorio Veneto
Monastery in the background
Standing from the right:
Stanislaw Augustynowicz
Teodor Hulanicki
Jozef Piatek

J

Jackiewicz, Konstanty

Born: 1922

Military Rank: Bombardier / Lance Corporal

Military Medals: Krzyz Walecznych

Military History: Served with the 1st Carpathian Light Artillery Regiment, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: He was in London, Ontario on October 10, 1947

Jacznik, Tomasz**Born:** February 2, 1914, Świla, Pow. Dzisna, Woj. Wileńskie, Poland**Education:** Grade 4**Occupation(s):** Farmer, Forester**Military Rank:** Private First Class**Military History:** Served with the 17th Lwow Rifle Battalion, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 2nd Corps.**Post-War:** He came to Canada on November 11, 1946, and worked on farm contract (W. Neal) near Denfield/Munro, Ontario.**Janik, Helena (Brucka)****Born:** May 15, 1928, in Struga, Pow. Stoliński, Woj. Poleskie, Poland**Died:** November 28, 2013 in London, Ontario, Canada**Family:** Father, Antoni; Mother, Anastazja**Education:** High School**Married:** Rudolf**Children:** Alicja, Renata, Maria, Edward (1962), Helena (1968)**History:** My parents were landowners and I remember a very joyful though not elaborate childhood. I had two younger brothers, Walentyn and Edward. We lived in a house on the outskirts of the village. We were happy and had plenty of space to play. There was a beautiful old orchard, gardens, fields and meadows. We were surrounded by greenery and flowers.

Normal life as we knew it was interrupted by war. Hitler invaded Poland on September 1, 1939. Then, on September 17 the Russian Red Army invaded the eastern borderlands of Poland.

A partitioning agreement was reached between Russia and the Third Reich on September 28. They divided Poland between themselves. The Soviet

Union began its "sovietization" of Poland. Arrests and mass deportation of Poles to the inner depths of Russia followed: to concentration camps in Siberia and even further, to the far North.

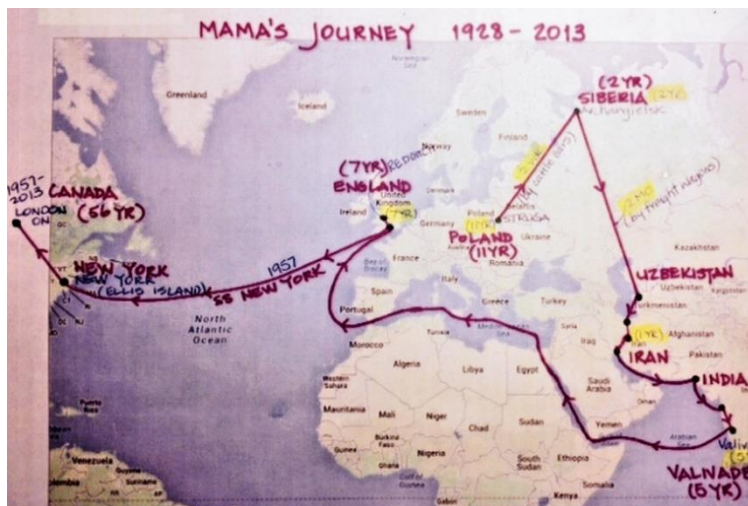
Among the deported were the intelligentsia, army officers, professors, foresters, gamekeepers, military settlers and the like. Because we were landowners, we belonged to that group of people they wanted to turn into paupers. The first of such deportations began on February 10, 1940. That winter was frightful, with a terrible biting frost. One morning we heard a loud banging on the door. Several Russian soldiers poured into our home, ordering us to pack our belongings on the spot. My father wasn't home and my mother was alone with three small children. Her pleas fell on deaf ears. The frost outside was brutal. We were packed onto big sledges and taken to the local school, which served as a collecting point. Once we were all gathered, we trudged in column formation to the train station. Cattle cars were already waiting for us. We were loaded onto them and then shipped off -- to where, no one knew. We journeyed for two weeks, in atrocious conditions, cold and hungry. Finally, we arrived in Arkhangelsk in Russia and from there we travelled again by sledge to a camp in Zaozierie in Siberia. Here, we were placed in barracks. Each family was given a room which contained bunks for sleeping and a stove in the middle of the room for heating.

These barracks were built by the Ukrainians, whom Stalin had deported earlier. Some of them had died here, while others were moved elsewhere. The camp was surrounded by forests full of berries and mushrooms, as well as dangerous animals. Next to it, a river flowed. Here, the men and women toiled in the forests, felling trees, while in the spring, half submerged, they drove those logs down river. My brother, Walek, and I attended school. I learned to read and write Russian (I don't remember any of it now).

My father joined us after a year, after much effort and difficulty in finding us. It was an incredible joy to be reunited with him. Finally, my mother was not alone. Life at the camp was very difficult. One had to wait in line for a long time for a mere piece of bread. This was my job for the family. After working all day, my mother would go to the canteen to fetch some soup for dinner. And so we survived like this in Siberia for almost two years -- hungry and battered physically and spiritually. We prayed constantly to the Lord for bread and for freedom.

Finally, word reached us that after various political arrangements, we were granted amnesty. We were free. We could leave the camp, but no one knew how. We were on our own. To depart the camp a boat was needed

because of all the nearby large lakes. I don't know how he managed it, but my father got his hands on one. We were among the first to leave the camp but it was a long time before we arrived at a train station. We set off for Uzbekistan. The journey was very tedious. We found ourselves again on the freight train wagons, jostling around in them for almost two months. Once in Uzbekistan we encountered the Polish Army which was forming under the command of General W. Anders. Our hearts rejoiced at seeing our Polish soldiers. Suddenly we felt real hope for something better. Life here was hard -- the change of climate, the lack of food -- people were dying of various diseases such as typhoid, malaria and dysentery. My mother became very seriously ill; we didn't think she'd survive. I prayed and cried that she might live and the good Lord heard -- my mother recovered. When we were to be transported to Persia, my father fell ill and was taken to the hospital. My mother chose not to go, as she refused to leave his side. So they remained with my brothers, Walek and Edek, while I was taken by a young officer, who assured them that I would be safely delivered to the Cadet division of the Polish Army. With this group, the "Junaczki," I travelled to Persia. From Krasnovodsk in Turkmenistan we sailed across the Caspian Sea in a packed freighter, ultimately reaching Pahlavi in Iran. Finally, we stood on free land -- happy that the Russian experience was behind us. We stayed in tents as we travelled and after a few weeks of mountainous terrain we reached Tehran, still in Iran. We lived in military blocks outside the city. Here, a primitive school was organized for us, divided into classes. I was in the fifth grade. Our daily Cadet routine consisted of waking up, morning exercises, drills and a review of the blocks before we left for lessons which were held outside under the trees. After a few months we were sent to Isfahan. Here, there were large clusters of Polish children, located in 20 camps. The "Junaczki" were housed in camp number 6. Conditions here were very different -- humane -- we had beds, linens, tables, bathrooms, a chapel and a school. It was here that I finished 6th grade. We went on supervised excursions into the city, to visit beautiful shrines, places of worship and parks. There was a lot to see, we just lacked the time. Once again, we were informed that we were leaving ultimately for India. We were transported to Ahwaz, Iran and from there by train to the port where we boarded a ship to Karachi in Pakistan. We settled quickly into a routine -- as always, gathering for prayers, gymnastics, lessons, meals. Here in the night we could hear the shrill howling of jackals of which I was greatly afraid.



So far, we had never stayed in one place for very long and this time was no different. Soon we were on the road again, this time to Malir, Pakistan. Here we encountered the U.S. army and met some soldiers of Polish origin. They were overjoyed to come across some Polish girls. In Malir, our Cadet uniforms were taken from us. We cried we were so sad to be parted from them. In return, we were issued white blouses with grey skirts on suspenders. We ceased being Cadets and became wards of the war department under the name of Gen. W. Sikorski and ultimately placed in the orphanage there. There were children of all ages, both boys

and girls. Malir also had to be left behind when we travelled by ship to Bombay, India. From Bombay, we had another long journey by train to Kolhapur and lastly to Valivade. This would be our longest extended period of residence in an exile camp -- about 5 years (1943-1948). We were housed in apartment buildings in halls of 35 girls each. We were under the care of a teacher, who was always available for advice or help; always willing to listen. We were charged with keeping the hall in order. Next to the housing blocks, there was a dining room, showers, lounge, and further away a church to which we walked every Sunday. We were given a few rupees as spending money.

In Valivade, an education system was developed for us. Schools were built: elementary, middle and high schools as well as vocational schools. There was also a theatre and religious organizations. It was here that I began high school and successfully graduated.

The Scouts organization, to which I belonged, played a big role in the upbringing of children and young people in the orphanage. There was a large group of us: almost 500. Every year, we left for camps that were held in the picturesque mountain area of Panhal. These were beautiful moments and our stay in India remained forever in my heart and memory. Friendships formed here have survived to this day. We were happy and life treated us well, even though conditions were primitive.

Post-War: In Europe, the war ended in May 1945 and a peace agreement was signed. We got news that families were to be reunited. The camp in Valivade was to be disbanded. But confusion and uncertainty arose. Soldiers who had left for England were demobilized and entered civilian life. They were deeply disappointed feeling greatly betrayed by the Allies. They had fought for freedom, theirs as well as that of the Allies, but in the end they didn't receive a free homeland.



In August 1947 India received independence. We rejoiced along with her citizens.

I was in the last transport to England, which left Bombay on February 23, 1948. We had a pleasant journey on the ship Asturias through the Red Sea, the Suez Canal, Mediterranean Sea, and Gibraltar. We landed in Southampton on March 12. From that port we travelled to the transition camp of West Chilmington. We were placed in "Barrels of Laughter." In my "barrel" were 6 girls from the orphanage. We had fun-filled and cheerful times here. England made a very good impression on me. The people were kind and things were orderly. As it was the beginning of spring, everything was green and beautiful. Tulips, daffodils and rhododendron bloomed. We went for walks and dances were held twice a week.

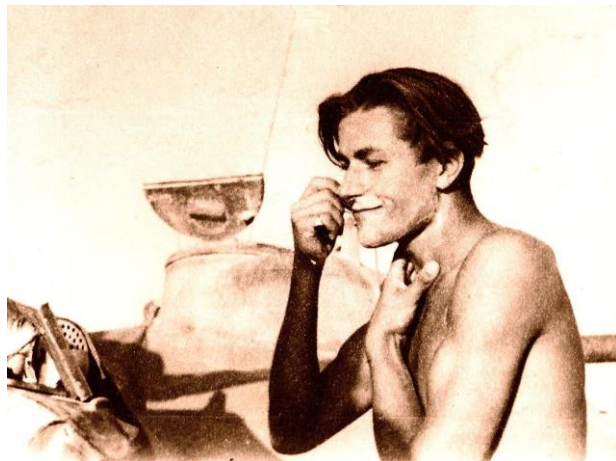
It was at this transit camp that I met my future husband, Rudolf. It was love at first sight. We got married in 1951. We settled in Redditch and had three daughters, Alicja, Renata and Maria. At the end of 1957, we immigrated to Canada for a better life. We landed in Peterborough and stayed with a girlfriend from India for a few months. From here we moved to Hamilton,

then to London, and then Sarnia, where our son Edward was born in 1962. Sarnia did not appeal to us. My husband was dissatisfied with his job and I longed for my friends, so we moved back to London, where in 1968 our daughter Helena was born. So we had 5 children to raise. It was a lot of work, but it brought us a lot of joy and satisfaction. This was our biggest achievement.

Life fell into place nicely. But misfortune hit us in 1992. My husband died unexpectedly of a heart attack. What a shame -- it was a bit too soon. He didn't get to enjoy his retirement or his grandchildren. Such is life; it's not always fair. I live with my daughter Maria and we look to the future of which not much remains.

Helena joined SPK, the Ladies Auxiliary and served as President (1971), Vice-President (1969, 1973), and Secretary (1975 to 1979).

Janik, Rudolf



Born: July 25, 1922, in Wisła, pow. Cieszyn, Woj. Śląskie, Poland.

Died: April 29, 1992, while fishing near his home in London, Ontario, Canada

Education: Trade School

Occupation(s): Rudolf worked as a millwright at Wolverine Tube (London), Fibreglass (Sarnia) and Unifin (London) where he retired.

Married: Helena

Children: Three daughters in England: Alicja (May 23, 1952), Renata (September 13, 1953) and Maria (December 11, 1955); Two children in Canada: Edward (May 28, 1962) and Helena (May 21, 1968).

Medals: SPK: Silver

Military History: Rudolf enjoyed his boyhood in the

Carpathian Mountains where he excelled at mathematics. He was captured by the Nazis and for two years was forced to labour in a German factory. Somehow, he escaped and joined the Polish Army. In Egypt, he was an instructor who trained soldiers to drive and manoeuvre armoured vehicles across sandy terrain.

Post-War: At the end of World War II Rudolf ended up, along with many other Polish soldiers, in the transit camp of West Chilton, England. There he met his wife, Helena, and they married in 1951, settling down in Redditch, UK. Rudolf apprenticed as a millwright, successfully earning his trade papers. The family immigrated to Canada in 1957, ultimately settling in London, Ontario. Here he worked at Wolverine Turbo Company as a locksmith. He was a fervent Polish patriot who enjoyed his years with the SPK and he served as Vice-President (1967, 1975). His fondest pastimes were playing the accordion, listening to his children play the piano, fishing and playing bridge.

Janiszewski, Bolesław

Born: September 10, 1916, in Białystok, Poland

Military Rank: Private, 3rd Carpathian Infantry Division, 2nd Corps

Jarek, Franciszek

Born: February 15, 1923, in Baranowicze, Woj. Lubelskie, Poland

Family: Father, Stanislaw

Education: Grade 6

Occupation(s): Farmer

Military Rank: Private, 12th Podolian Lancers, 2nd Corps

Post-War: Came to Canada November 11, 1946

Jaskóła, Stanisław

Born: December 15, 1908, in Rodaki, pow. Radziechow, Woj. Tarnopolskie, Poland

Occupation(s): Farmer

Military Rank: Szeregowy / Private

History: Served with the 13th Supply Company, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: In London, Ontario on March 2, 1947

Jędrzejowska, Emilia (Mila)

Born: June 18, 1914, in Starosiele, Woj. Poleskie, Poland

Died: October 13, 1996

Family: Father, Boleslaw; Mother, Weronika

Occupation(s): Nurse

Married: Tadeusz

Military Medals: British Medals: Italy Star; Defense Medal; SPK Medals

Military History: Emilia was sent into exile in Kazakhstan. After the amnesty she joined the Polish army in January 1943 in Lugowoye and started to work in nursing care. She was sent to take nursing courses in Rewski (Centre for military training in Iran) and then worked in the 3rd Military Hospital in Iran. She was transferred to Italy, to Cassamasima, to the 3rd Military Hospital (later 5th Military Hospital), 2nd Corps.

Post-War: She came to Canada April 17, 1950, from England. Emilia joined SPK in 1946 in England.

Jeż, Roman Franciszek

Born: November 20, 1921, in Zukowice Stare, pow. Tarnowski, Woj. Krakowskie, Poland

Died: July 20, 1999 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Mother, Agata

Married: Helen (May 15, 1921)

Children: Mary, Michael

Occupation(s): worked at Victoria Hospital

Military Rank: Private

Military Medals: British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; France Star; SPK Medals: Gold, Silver, Bronze

Military History: Roman served as a Private in the 65th Infantry Battalion. He joined the Polish Army in France on April 29, 1945, and was assigned to the 2nd Corps, 66th Pomorski Infantry Battalion, 2nd Warsaw Armoured Division in Italy.

Post-War: He was in England from 1946 and 1947 and then volunteered to come to Canada as a farmer. He arrived in Canada on June 15, 1947.

K

Kaduszkiewicz, Romuald

Born: March 18, 1913, in Plawoczy Most, Poland

Died: October 9, 1991, London, Ontario, Canada

Married: Mieczysława (served with the Ladies Auxiliary of SPK), Aniela 1914-1984

Military Rank: Captain

Military History: He fought with the Polish Army in Poland in September 1939, and was deported to the Soviet Union. After the amnesty he served with the 3rd Carpathian Infantry Division, 1st Anti-aircraft Regiment, 2nd Corps.

Post-War: He came to Canada in 1948 from England.

Kalisz, Stefan

Born: 1916

Died: 1983

Married: Stefania

Military Rank: Starszy Ułan

Medals: Krzyz Walecznych. SPK: Bronze

Military History: Served with the 12th Podolian Lancers, 2nd Corps

Kaminski, Father Mieczysław S.

Born: January 3, 1930, in Bujniewicze, Woj. Nowogródzkie, Poland

Family: Father, Andrzej; Mother, Zofia (Ciasnochy)

Education: Was in Grade 4 when the war broke out.

Military Rank: Chaplain

Medals: SPK: Złota Honorowa Odznaka (Gold Medal)

History: His mother along with her sons were arrested by the Soviets on February 10, 1940, and deported to Siberia. After the amnesty, Mieczysław, his mother and sister made it to Tehran in Persia. Eventually he made it to Valivade in India to a camp for Polish refugees. There he was heavily involved with scouting.

Post-War: After the war he was brought to the Polish seminary in Orchard Lake in the United States. He completed his theological studies at Holy Redeemer College in Windsor and was ordained on June 22, 1958. After serving at several parishes in Ontario he was assigned as pastor to Our Lady of Czestochowa in London.

Kaptur, Andrzej

Born: February 17, 1915, in Szaury, Gmina Brasław, Woj. Wileńskie, Poland

Died: April 3, 2001 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Mother, Julia

Education: Completed elementary school in Braslaw

Occupation(s): Furniture maker

Married: Teodozia (1923-1970)

Children: Daughter and Son

Military Rank: Private

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Medal Wojska; Krzyz Kampanii Wrzesniowej 1939; Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: Italy Star, War Medal 1939-1945; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver and Gold

Military History: After the Soviet forces entered Poland, he was arrested as a dangerous element and after a year in jail was sentenced to 12 years hard labour in Vorkuta. His family was exiled to Siberia. After the agreement between Stalin and Sikorski, he was released from jail and he joined the Polish Army. He was assigned to the 7th

Division in Kermina under Colonel Okulicki and was engaged as a driver [Polish Army Ordinance Corp]. He was transferred with the 2nd Corps to Italy and served from Monte Cassino (wounded) to Bologna.

Post-War: He left Naples, Italy, for Canada November 12, 1946, and completed a two-year contract on a farm in Alberta.

Karbowski, Stanisław

Born: 1923

Military Rank: Plutonowy Chorazy

Military Medals: Krzyz Walecznych

Military History: Served with 3rd Heavy Machine Gun Battalion, 3rd Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: He served as Vice-President (1970) on SPK, Branch No. 2.

Karolak, Kazimierz

Born: February 26, 1902, in Czyżewo, Woj. Białostockie, Poland

Died: 1971 in London, Ontario, Canada

Occupation(s): Butcher. Farmer (Dutton)

Military Rank: Starszy Strzelec

Military History: Served with the 5th Carpathian Rifle Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Kaszowski, Roman

Born: July 28, 1913, in Pow. Przemyskie, Woj. Lwowskie, Poland

Died: January 28, 1988 in London, Ontario, Canada

Occupation(s): Electrician

Married: Anna (Marianna) Born August 16, 1922, in Poland – December 12, 1973

Children: Emil (October 9, 1950), Edward (November 16, 1951), Krystyna (November 2, 1954)

Medals: SPK: Bronze, Silver

Military History: He was exiled to Siberia and later joined the 2nd Corps and served in the Middle East and Italy.

Post-War: He joined SPK and served as Treasurer (1965, 1973) and Secretary (1970)

Kaszowski, Jan Ferdynand

Born: May 29, 1918, in Nizankowice (Malchowice), Pow. Przemyskie, Woj. Lwowskie, Poland

Died: July 3, 2003 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Wladyslaw; Mother, Ludwika (Onyszkiewicz)

Occupation(s): Tailor, Spotwelder

Married: Hannah (October 1, 1916-March 31, 1997)

Children: Dianna (July 21, 1950), Joan (March 14, 1953), Laddy (May 5, 1958)

Military Rank: Lance Corporal

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Medal Wojska, Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; Defense Medal; War Medal 1939-1945;

Military History: Jan saw active service from August 20, 1939, through the September 1939 Campaign with the National Defense Battalion. He was deported to the Soviet Union in 1940. Once the Soviet-Poland agreement was settled, he joined the Polish Army on September 9, 1941, and was evacuated to Persia. With the re-organization of the Polish Army in the Middle East he was assigned to the 7th Horse Artillery Regiment, 2nd Warsaw Armoured Brigade, 2nd Corps and served in Iran, Iraq, Palestine and Egypt. He took part as bombardier in the Italy Campaign, including Monte Cassino, where he was wounded, Fillitrano, Ancona, Brizigiella, Loreto and Bologna.

Kiełb, Jan

Born: February 6, 1912, in Studzian, pow. Przeworski, Woj. Lwowskie, Poland

Died: April 21, 1990 in London, Ontario, Canada

Married: Maria (May 12, 1921-December 8, 1994)

Military Rank: Starszy Strzelec / Private

Military History: Division HQ, 3rd Carpathian Infantry Division, 2nd Corps

Kloc, Alfred Stanisław**Born:** November 22, 1928, in Kobierzyn, Woj. Krakowskie, Poland**Died:** November 3, 2007 in London, Ontario, Canada**Married:****Children:** Michael, Charles, Alethea, Stefania**Military Rank:** Lancer**Military Medals:** British Medals: Italy Star; SPK Medals: Bronze Cross**Military History:** He joined the Polish Army in France after the Normandy Invasion in 1944 and was sent for training to the 12th Podolian Lancers, 3rd Squadron.**Post-War:** He came to Canada from Italy in November 1946 and worked in Saskatchewan until 1950. He came to London and worked at London Life until 1989.**Kłoskowicz, Franciszek****Born:** October 9, 1896, in Rzeszów, Woj. Lwowskie, Poland**Married:** Anna**Military Rank:** Colonel, Quartermaster, 2nd Corps**Medals:** SPK: Silver**Kobarda, Wiktor****Born:** January 23, 1923, at Lawajkudy, Pow. Wileńsko-Trocki, Woj. Wileńskie, Poland**Died:** December 6, 2017 in London, Ontario, Canada**Family:** Father, Adam - his family lived on a farm within 7-10 miles of Wilno. Mother, Anna (Koltan) died in 1928. Siblings: Anna, who married Jan Koronowicz. She was 5 years younger than Wiktor.**Education:** High School**Occupation:** Farmer**Married:** Krystyna in 1947 in England (March 17, 1928-June 25, 1992)**Children:** John (November 10, 1957), Andrew (February 4, 1965). John Kobarda, Wiktor's son, had a daughter, Kelly, who visited Monte Cassino. She visited it because she remembered that her grandpa had fought there.**Military Rank:** Lance Corporal**Military Medals:** Polish: Krzyz Zaslugi z Mieczami, Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British: 1939-45 Star, Italy Star, Defense Medal, War Medal 1939-1945: SPK Medals: Bronze**Military History:** Wiktor was 17 when the war broke out. He enlisted in the Polish Army. The Russians moved into Wilno and Wiktor ended up in a POW camp in Northern Russia. The camp was called Vladivostok Camp and it was north of Moscow. In winter it was -70 degrees Celsius. There were no fences. They were allowed to leave because they would die if they did. There was not much food and they had to work hard. Sometimes they risked their lives for food. Wiktor threatened to kill a Russian soldier with a shovel but spared his life when the Russian told him that he too believed in God. After the amnesty Wiktor was released and joined the Polish Army under Gen. Anders in 1941; this became part of the British 8th Army commanded by Gen. Montgomery. He travelled through Iran, Iraq and Jerusalem as he was training. He served with the 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 6th Lwow Rifle Brigade. The Polish Army was deployed to Italy and they fought their way to Monte Cassino. Wiktor was not in the first wave of attack. After he was ordered to attack, Wiktor ended up in a bomb crater and a bomb can hit the same place twice. A piece of shrapnel killed the soldiers beside him. Wiktor was wounded by a piece of shrapnel and was taken to hospital. Wiktor spoke fondly of the war because of the friends he had made there. He enlisted as sniper and courier at one point.**Post-War:** After he was discharged on June 2, 1947, Wiktor moved to England. He wanted to go back to Poland, but his parents said, "There's nothing to come back to." In England he ended up in Leeds. He had also lived in Rotterdam, Holland, for 1 year, where he worked for a company that made electric motors. Wiktor moved back to Leeds, where he met wife and got married in 1947. They lived there for eight years. They took a ship to Montreal and then moved to Winnipeg, where they stayed for 6-8 months. They came to Canada in 1954 and Wiktor had a

hard time finding a job. He was in contact with a friend from school. He had 2 brothers in London and ended up moving to a farm in Mt Bridges. The Kobarda family moved to London. Mrs. Kobarda got a job at a laundry. Wiktor worked for 38 years for Baldwin Garments, which was later bought by Canadian Linen. In London he joined SPK and served as Vice-President (1981). He ran the bar upstairs and his wife also joined and helped in the kitchen.

Kochan, Stanisław

Born: November 25, 1922, in Pniaki, Woj. Stanisławowskie, Poland

Died: February 29, 2012 in London, Ontario, Canada

Education: Completed Elementary

Occupation(s): Farmer

Military Rank: Kapral / Corporal

Medals: Krzyz Walecznych; SPK: Bronze

Military History: Served with the 3rd Carpathian Rifle Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: He came to Canada on November 12, 1946, and completed a two-year farm contract near Aylmer.

Kolberg, Tadeusz Oskar

Born: October 24, 1927, in Warsaw, Poland

Military Rank: Private First Class, 9th "Bolonski" Carpathian Rifle Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Infantry Division, 2nd Corps

Koniar, Michał

Born: September 12, 1926, in Niedzwiedzic, Woj. Tarnopolskie, Poland

Died: March 30, 2016 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Jozef; Mother, Aniela

Married: Irene Pelkey (October 31, 1919-January 10, 2020)

Military Medals: British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; Defense Medal; War Medal 1939-1945

SPK Medals: Silver

History: Michał served with the 2nd Corps at the Battles for Ancona and Bologna. In 1945 he was assigned to the 16th Pomorski Infantry Brigade, 66th Infantry Battalion, 3rd Infantry Company.

Post-War: He came to Canada from Germany. He joined SPK on March 2, 1949, and served as Treasurer (1960).

Konicki, Józef

Born: May 25, 1910, Woj. Stanisławowskie, Poland

Died: March 22, 1990

Occupation(s): Railway Fireman

Military Rank: Plutonowy / Lance Sergeant

Medals: Krzyz Walecznych; SPK: Bronze, Gold

Military History: Served with the 4th Carpathian Rifle Brigade, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: He was in London, Ontario, by January 25, 1948

Konop, Wincenty

Born: 1908, Woj. Kieleckie, Poland

Occupation(s): Farmer

Military Rank: Sapper

Military History: Served with the 3rd Carpathian Sapper Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: He was in London, Ontario by March 2, 1947

Kostrzewa, Piotr

Born: May 15, 1896, in Sulmersyce, Woj. Łódzkie, Poland

Military Rank: Starszy Strzelec / Lance Corporal, Reinforcement Battalion M.E. 316 Company

Military History: Served with the 3rd Carpathian Rifle Brigade, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: Lived in Wingham, Ontario

Kowalewski, Bonifacy

Born: October 14, 1922, in Mermolino, gm. Lrewo, Woj. Wileńskie, Poland

Military Rank: Kapral Podchorazy

Military History: Served with the 3rd Carpathian Rifle Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: In London, Ontario by March 2, 1947

Kowalewski, Stefan (Steve)

Born: April 7, 1921, in Wólka Karwowska, pow. Szczuczynski, Woj. Białostockie, Poland

Died: 1992 in London, Ontario, Canada

Married: Emilia Czajguckaja [Born June 26, 1918, in Zascianek, Poland; Died May 13, 2013]

Medals: SPK: Bronze, Silver, Gold

Military Rank: Private, 17th Lwow Rifle Battalion, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 2nd Corps

Kowalski, Alojzy Stanisław

Born: August 15, 1923, in Sienkiewiczówka, Woj. Tarnopolskie, Poland

Died: December 16, 1997 in London, Ontario, Canada

Children: Irene Lowry, Janina Wright, George Kowalski.

Military Rank: Private First Class, 9th Supply Company, 2nd Warsaw Armored Division, 2nd Corps

Medals: SPK: Bronze, Silver

Post-War: Alojzy arrived in Canada in 1947. He lived first with his parents in Brantford, Ontario, then moved to London a couple of years later. He spent his working career in London with the Towland Construction Company, retiring as a Superintendent. He joined SPK on January 14, 1970, and served as Secretary (1990).

Kozłowski, Michał

Born: March 4, 1920, in Papiernia, pow. Lidzki, Woj. Nowogródzkie, Poland

Occupation(s): Farmer

Military Rank: Starszy Strzelec / Lance Corporal

Military History: Served with the 6th Carpathian Rifle Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post War: He was in Stratford, Ontario, by March 2, 1947

Krasowski, Michał

Born: August 18, 1909, in Wotkolotkie, gm. Buclaw, Woj. Wileńskie, Poland

Died: 1982 in London, Ontario, Canada

Married: Leokadia (1912-1994)

Education: Grade 3

Occupation(s): Farmer

Military Rank: Private, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division

Post-War: He came to Canada on November 11, 1946, and completed a two-year farm contract (Ryan) near Ailsa Craig.

Kraszewski, Jan

Born: July 29, 1903, Zapole, pow. Nieswiez, Woj. Łódzkie, Poland

Military Rank: Captain

Military History: Mechanics Training Centre, 2nd Corps

Krawiec, Jan

Born: May 5, 1919, in Przeworsk, Woj. Lwowskie, Poland

Occupation(s): Farmer

Military Rank: Strzelec / Private

Military History: Served with the 3rd Heavy Machine Gun Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: He was in London, Ontario, by July 20, 1947

Kretowicz, Bolesław

Born: March 20, 1921, in Przem browka, pow. Krzemieniecki, Woj. Wołyńskie, Poland

Died: September 19, 2007 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Piotr; Mother, Franciszka

Occupation(s): Farmer

Military Rank: Private

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Brazowy Krzyz Zaslugi z Mieczami; Medal Wojska; Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; SPK: Bronze

Military History: Boleslaw was deported to Kijow in the U.S.S.R. in 1940. In 1941 he joined the Polish Army being formed in Tatishchevo in the U.S.S.R., where he was assigned to 13th Regiment, Heavy Machine Guns. In the Middle East he was assigned to the 13th Battalion Mortar Platoon of the 13th Wilno Rifle Battalion and with this unit served in Italy at Monte Cassino (wounded August 8, 1944), Ancona and Bologna. He was demobilized in Italy at Predappio on November 20, 1946.

Post-War: He came to Canada from Italy in 1946.

Król, Jan

Born: February 2, 1910, in Piekelnik, Pow. Nowy Targ, Woj. Krakowskie, Poland

Military Rank: Gunner, 7th Anti-tank Regiment, 2nd Corps

History: He was on a farm near Mt. Bridges, Ontario in 1960

Krukowski, Adam

Born: September 18, 1919, in Lesniewicze, Woj. Nowogródzkie, Poland

Education: Completed Elementary School

Occupation(s): Farmer, Truck Driver

Military Rank: Strzelec / Private

Medals: Krzyz Walecznych; SPK: Bronze

Military History: Served with the 4th Carpathian Rifle Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: He came to Canada on November 16, 1946, and completed a two-year farm contract (Frank Moore) near Belmont.

Krupiak, Michał

Born: October 14, 1916, in Razn, Russia

Education: Completed Elementary School

Occupation(s): Farmer

Military Rank: Kapral / Corporal

Military History: Served with the 3rd Carpathian Anti-tank Regiment, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: He came to Canada on July 1, 1947, and completed a two-year farm contract (Ale Coulthard) near Glencoe, Ontario.

Kruszas, Maciej

Born: September 6, 1914, in Szklary, Woj. Bialostockie, Poland

Occupation(s): Farmer

Military Rank: Plutonowy / Lance Sergeant

Military Medals: Krzyz Walecznych

Military History: Served with the 4th Carpathian Rifle Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: He was in London, Ontario by 1947

Krzyżowski, Kazimierz



Born: November 17, 1914, in Jelesnie, pow. Zywieckie, Woj. Krakowskie, Poland

Died: September 21, 1986 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Wojciech; Mother, Maria

Married: Longina (October 28, 1919-July 20, 1986)

Children: Christina (1951-), Edward (1962-); Grandchildren: Joanna, Mark, Jacqueline, Scott & Jeff

Military Rank: Corporal

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Zaslugi z Mieczami, Krzyz Kampanii Wrzesniowej 1939, Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-45 Star, Africa Star, Italy Star

Military History: Kazimierz served with the Polish Independent Carpathian Rifle Brigade at Tobruk in Africa. He went on to serve in Italy with the 29th Ambulance Company, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 2nd Corps.

Post-War: He joined SPK and served as Secretary (1951, 1952, 1953). He also joined PSN (Polish National Association), initially established in London in 1920, where he served as President in 1958 and 1959. He supported and was one of the founding

members of Our Lady of Czestochowa Church in London. Never forgetting his Polish heritage, and having a strong sense of community, he always supported all Polish organizations, events, businesses and individuals whenever he could.

Kuchmistrz, Kazimierz

Born: February 16, 1915, in Świrz, Woj. Tarnopolskie, Poland

Married:

Military Rank: Private First Class, 4th Company, 15th Wilno Rifle Battalion, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 2nd Corps,

History: Lived near Blyth, Ontario

Kucy, Michał

Born: January 17, 1919, in Chatki, pow. Podhajecki, Woj. Tarnopolskie, Poland

Died: June 11, 1996 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Jan; Mother, Patronela

Married: Zofia

Military Rank: Szeregowy / Private

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Kampanii Wrzesniowej 1939; Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; Defense Medal; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver

Military History: 2nd Sanitary Company (P.A.M.S.), 2nd Corps; Served at Monte Cassino, Ancona and Bologna

Post-War: He worked on a farm contract in Glanworth (John Collins) and was a member of SPK.

L

Łabanowski, Jan



Born: April 13, 1919, in Kukucie Wołkowysk, Woj. Białostockie, Poland

Died: February 22, 1992 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Piotr; Mother, Zofia

Education: Grade 4

Occupation(s): Farmer

Married: Helena (February 7, 1927 – August 14, 2004)

Daughter: Zosia (April 6, 1960), Richard (January 28, 1962);

Grandson: Adam

Military Rank: Starszy Strzelec / Lance Corporal

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Walecznych, Krzyz Zaslugi; Medal Wojska; Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino

British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; Defense Medal; War Medal 1939-45; SPK Medals: Bronze

Military History: Jan was deported to Siberia in 1940, to a work camp. After the amnesty in 1942, Jan was evacuated from the Soviet Union with the Polish Army under General Anders via Krasnovodsk to Pahlevi, Iran. Once in Palestine he was

assigned to the 4th infantry company, 6th Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Infantry Division, 2nd Corps. He served in the Italian Campaign from Monte Cassino through to Bologna.

Post-War: He came to Canada on November 11, 1946, and completed a two-year farm contract (Robinson) near St. Mary's.



< Jan Łabanowski in Syria

Łapkowski, Dionizy Szymon

Born: November 7, 1924, in Drusiewski Zaścianek, pow. Braślawski, Woj. Wileńskie, Poland

Died: June 24, 1998 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Szymon; Mother, Teofilia

Education: Grade 5

Occupation(s): Worked at CNR for 38 years

Married: Mary (July 22, 1931) Glace Bay, Nova Scotia

Children: Peter (December 20, 1963), Teresa (September 23, 1954), Paul

Military Rank: Private

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Medal Wojska; British Medals: Italy Star; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold

Military History: He was taken by the Germans for forced labour in Germany. At the end of the war he made it to Italy and joined the 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 2nd Corps. He completed driver training and was assigned as a driver to a communications company. He did not take part in any actions since he joined the army on April 30, 1945.

Post-War: He came to Halifax from Italy on November 24, 1946, and completed a two-year farm contract.

Lenkiewicz, Jan Konstanty

Born: August 19, 1917, in Łosokin, Woj. Nowogródzkie, Poland

Family: Jozefa

Military Rank: Bombardier

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Medal Wojska; Krzyż Pamiątkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; Defense Medal

Military History: Jan joined the Polish Army in the Soviet Union in 1941 and was assigned to the 2nd Carpathian Light Artillery, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps. He served in Persia and then in Italy at the River Sangro, Monte Cassino, Gothic Line, Ancona and Bologna. He was demobilized in Predappio, Italy October 15, 1946.

Leoszek, Piotr

Born: 1906 in Wilijka, Woj. Wileńskie, Poland

Military History: Sapper, 36th Rescue Unit, 2nd Corps

Lewandowski, Stefan

Born: April 17, 1915, in Woj. Warszawskie, Poland

Occupation(s): Farmer

Military Rank: Plutonowy / Lance Sergeant

Military Medals: Krzyż Walecznych

Military History: Served with the 7th Lubelski Uhlan Regiment, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: He completed a two-year farm contract (Wilmer Hardy) near Goderich, Ontario.

Lidzbarski, Bolesław (Ben)



Born: January 1, 1924, in Dobrzewino, pow. Morski, Woj. Pomorskie, Poland

Died: December 27th, 2016 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Franciszek, Mother, Emilia (Mazur); Brothers: Jan, Leon, Stanislaw, Brunon, and sisters Wanda and Klara

Education: Completed grade 5. Education was cut short by the outbreak of WWII.

Occupation(s): Bell Canada employee of 34 years

Married: Olga 1951 (Born July 30, 1924, in Bachow, Poland; Died: March 18, 2014)

Children: Edward, John

Military Rank: Starszy Ułan / Private First Class

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Złoty Krzyż Zasługi z mieczami; Medal Wojska; Krzyż Kampanii Wrzesniowej 1939; Krzyż Kampanii Włoskiej; British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; War Medal 1939-1945; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold

Military History: Bolesław Lidzbarski recalled, "As a boy growing up near Gdynia, I have fond memories of spending my leisure time fishing and picking mushrooms." He served as Private First Class, in an attack platoon, 2nd Squadron, 12th Podolian Lancers, 3rd Carpathian Infantry Division, 2nd Corps. From 1944 to 1946 he served

on the Italian Front. His major campaigns included the Battles of Monte Casino, Ancona & Bologna. He was demobbed at Predappio, Italy on October 10, 1946.

Post-War: After the war ended, heartbroken about not being able to return to a Free Poland, Bolesław Lidzbarski chose to immigrate to Canada. In November 1946, he arrived in Halifax from Italy aboard the military transport ship S.S. Sea Snipe. He worked as a farm labourer in La Chute, Quebec (near Montreal) on a 2-year contract. After the farm contract, he took various jobs that were available before landing a full-time job in 1950 with Bell Canada, where he was responsible for emergency power generation maintenance across Southwestern Ontario. He was



very proud to obtain his Canadian Citizenship in 1954. He retired after 34 years at Bell Canada (1950-1984). Boleslaw Lidzbarski was also involved in numerous Polish Organizations in London including SPK (Treasurer in 1987) PSN (Polskie Stowarzyszenie Narodowe), Parish Advisory Council, Polonia Towers, Polish School, Polish Scouts, Polish Dance Group "Cracovia" and the Knights of Columbus (3rd Degree).

Lisowski, Władysław



Born: September 10, 1901

Died: July 9, 1990

Married:

Children: Janusz (John), born March 16, 1948, in England

Military Rank: Kanonier / Gunner

Military History: Wladyslaw served from 1932 to 1933 with the 86th Infantry Regiment. From 1934 to 1936 he was with the Reserves. He participated in the 1939 September Campaign. From 1942 to 1945 he was with the 1st Carpathian Light Artillery Regiment, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps.

Post-War: Wladyslaw joined SPK and served as President (1957)

Luczak, Józef

Born: January 8, 1911, in Jaroszewicze, pow. Kominwaj, Woj. Poznańskie, Poland

Died: December 28, 1989 in London, Ontario, Canada

Married: Bronislawa

Military Rank: Private, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 4th Supply Company, 2nd Corps

M

Mach, Antoni Tomasz

Born: June 14, 1918, in Budy, pow. Lancut, Woj. Lwowskie, Poland

Military Rank: 2nd Lieutenant

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Walecznych; Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino

British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; Defense Medal; SPK Medals; Bronze

Military History: In 1940 Antoni and his family were deported to the Soviet Union. Following the amnesty, he joined the Polish Forces being formed by General Wladyslaw Anders and was assigned to the 3rd Carpathian Division, 3rd Battalion, in 1942. After serving in Iran and Iraq he was transferred to Italy, where he took part in the Battle of Monte Cassino, Loretto, and at Ancona and Bologna. He was demobbed at Predappio on October 10, 1946

Machowski, Tadeusz**Born:** November 10, 1917, in Jasio**Military Rank:** Podchorazy/ CorporalMilitary History: Served with 12th Podolian Lancers / 6th Sanitary Company, 2nd Corps**Post-War:** He joined SPK in London, Ontario and served as President (1952)**Macugajło, Klemens****Born:** July 10, 1920, in Pogorzelec, Pow. Suwalski, Woj. Białostockie, Poland**Died:** May 15, 2009 in London, Ontario, Canada**Family:** Father, Jan, Mother, Maria (Jakubowska)**Occupation:** Carpenter**Married:** Karolina Rudnicka in 1951 [Born August 12, 1922, in Debowa Gora, pow. Sarny, Wolyn, Poland; Died June 11, 2012]**Children:** Anna and Lidja**Military Rank:** Private First Class**Military Medals:** Polish Medals: Krzyz Walecznych; Order Polonia Restituta, Medal Wojska, Krzyz Kampanii Wrzesniowej 1939; Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino, Krzyz Czynu Bojowego (1999); British Medals: 1939/1945 Star, Italy Star, Defense Medal; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold; Krzyz Kombatancki**Military History:** His childhood was hard because of the destruction wrought in his part of Poland during WWI. He trained to be a carpenter and joiner. When war broke out he was at home with his parents. On April 15, 1940, he was arrested by the Russians under the false accusation that he was a dangerous person. He was

deported by the Russians from Poland to the USSR in April 1940 until 1942, to work on building railroads near Vorkuta (Murmansk Area). He was released upon the announcement of the amnesty and was paid 300 rubles. He had food for 6 days and a pass to join the Polish forces being formed in Buzuluk. He was sent to Guzar and there joined the Polish Forces (19th Infantry Regiment) on February 17, 1942. After crossing the Russo-Persian border, he came under British command in the Middle East on April 1, 1942. From Tehran he was transferred to Palestine and assigned to the 3rd Carpathian Rifle Division. He was posted to the 7th Rifle Battalion on June 4, 1942, and the 1st Rifle Battalion on November 10, 1942. He landed in Italy on December 13, 1943, and was sent to the Sangro River front. He took part in the Battle of Monte Cassino, where he was in front-line action. On May 12, 1944, he was wounded. While he was being carried down the mountain, they were hit with mortar fire so the stretcher bearers left him and ran for cover. He asked them to at least put him behind some rocks and out of harm's way. They did so and that saved his life. He was taken to a hospital near Campobasso and eventually by hospital train to a Canadian hospital in Naples, and then after 5 days transferred to a Polish hospital at Cassamassima. He was in hospital for 6 weeks. On November 1, 1944, he was wounded for a second time. He rejoined his unit on January 1, 1945, at Ossimo and took part in the battle for Ancona. He took part in the operations till May 2, 1945, including in the Emilian Apennines. He continued his service in Italy until September 1946, when he was transferred to the United Kingdom. He served with the Polish Resettlement Corps and was discharged on emigration to Canada.

Post-War: He immigrated to Canada from England in June 1947. He landed in Halifax and then went to Kingston to a transfer camp and then on to London. In London he was taken to an employment office, where farmers were waiting. He came to Canada with the understanding that he would work first on a two-year farm contract. Some of the farmers checked out the soldiers, how muscular were they etc., to see if they were suited for farm work. Many found this process unhuman and not suited to allied soldiers. Klemens did get work with a farmer who treated him well. He was on a two-year farm contract at \$45 a month plus room and board. The days were long, running from 6 am to 9 pm. He was expected to milk cows, which he had never done before. Even though he was shown how, he was not good at it and the cows grew impatient. Luckily the farmer decided to use milking machines and Klemens was spared this work. After two months he was given a \$15 a month raise and he did his two years on the farm. After the contract he moved to London. He worked for Ainslie Construction Ltd., in Lambeth, Ontario.



He was also active in the Canadian and global SPK in various capacities and received numerous awards. He was proudest of being named a Kawaler Orderu Odrodzenia Polski, received in 1990. He was also a founding member of Our Lady of Czestochowa Church, and instrumental in establishing Polonia Towers, where he served as president for two terms. Klemens was a founding member of SPK, Branch No. 2 in 1947. He served as President (1959, 1960, 1962, 1970, 1987, 1998), Vice-President (1964, 1980). During his terms as President, the Combatants Hall and the Combatants Monument was built.

Mądry, Jan

Born: October 29, 1911, in Suchostaw, Pow. Kopyczyniecki, Woj. Tarnopolskie, Poland

Died: April 12, 1999 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Pawel; Mother, Pelagia

Education: Completed Elementary School

Married: Amalia (Ragusa) (November 18, 1920 - September 23, 1999)

Children: Ted, Rosemary, Jean

Occupation(s): Shoemaker; health care worker, Westminster Hospital, London

Military Rank: Private

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Walecznych z Mieczami; Medal Wojska; Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; War Medal 1939-45

SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver

Military History: Served with the 5th Signals Battalion, 5th Kresowa Division, 2nd Corps at Monte Cassino, Padowa River and Bologna.

Post-War: He came to Canada on June 11, 1947, and completed a two-year farm contract near Ilderton.

Madzia, Michał

Born: September 4, 1922, in Wisła, Katowice, Woj. Śląskie, Poland

Married: Vera

Military Rank: Lance Corporal, 23rd Transport Company, 2nd Corps

Majski, Walter



Born: December 30, 1919, Lwów, Poland

Died: December 26, 2003 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Mother, Katarzyna; no siblings

Education: Completed elementary

Occupation(s): Jeweller and Watch Repairer

Married: Nadia Logusz on October 8, 1948

Children: Irene (October 18, 1959), John (May 20, 1966)

Military Rank: Private, 3rd Carpathian Infantry Division, 19th Supply Company

Post-War: He arrived in Canada at the port of Halifax in May 1948, from Germany. He worked on a farm in Palmerston, Ontario, as part of his required one-year work permit following his immigration to Canada. He then moved to London, Ontario, and opened his own business as a jeweller and watch repairer in April 1955, called "Walter's Jewellery." He later obtained his Ontario Labour Certificate of Qualification in the trade of jeweller and watch repairer on April 6, 1966. Walter worked as the sole proprietor in his jewellery business until his retirement.

Makarewicz, Teofil

Born: December 13, 1905, in Czeloska, Woj. Warszawskie, Poland

Occupation(s): Farmer

Military Rank: Szeregowy / Private

Military History: Served with the 13th Supply Company, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: Teofil came to Canada in 1946 and was admitted to Queen Alexandra Sanatorium in London as a TB patient in 1948. In 1949 he was discharged from the hospital.

Makaś, Wincenty

Born: May 1, 1916, in Iwieniec (Near Minsk)

Military Rank: Corporal, 5th Supply Company, Polish 2nd Corps

History: Lived in Strathroy

Makowski, Bolesław (William)



Born: December 24, 1924, in Pińsk (Kobryń), Woj. Poleskie, Poland

Died: October 8, 2012

Family: Father, Lucjan (asadnik wojskowy, właściciel działki położonej w osadzie Horyce, pow. Kobryn, woj. Polesie; Mother, Aleksandra (Dabrowska, died 1931) Sister, Maria Osicki (Born 1922; lived in Winnipeg), Janina Jagodzinski (Born in 1928; lived in Chicago); In 1935 Lucjan married again and had a second son, Ryszard, in 1936.

Education: High School, University

Occupation(s): Teacher, writer, historian

Married: 1953

Children: Jadwiga, Lucjan, Kazimierz

Military Rank: Bombardier

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Virtuti Militari V Klasy, Krzyz Walecznych, Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-45 Star, Italy Star, War Medal 1939-1945

Military History: On February 10, 1940, when he was sixteen, he was arrested by the invading Soviets along with his step-mother, two sisters and his step-brother, and they were deported to a labor camp in the Archangelsk region of Siberia. His step-mother and step-brother died there. After the amnesty the four children made it to

Uzbekistan. Richard died here and Boleslaw and his two sisters were forced to work on a kolkhoz. On February 10, 1942, an eighteen-year-old Boleslaw joined the Polish Army in Kiermina. His two sisters went to a Polish orphanage. In April 1942, Boleslaw and his regiment, the 7th Heavy Artillery, landed in Pahlevi and later moved to Kirkuk in Iraq for further training. In 1944 the 10th Heavy Artillery Regiment landed in Taranto, Italy. As part of the 2nd Corps in Italy, he served from Monte Cassino to Bologna.

Post-War: He came to Canada on November 21, 1946, on a two-year farm contract near London, Ontario. He completed a Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of Montreal and later did post-graduate work at McGill University. From 1955 to 1959 he worked as a set decorator for a television station. In 1956 he became the first secretary of the Canadian-Polish Research Institute. From 1959 to 1986 he was head of the department of geography at Lakeport High School in St. Catharines. He retired in 1986. He published several books including: *Emigracja Polska w Kanadzie z predmowa Melchiora Wankowicza*, *History and Integration of Poles in Canada*, *The Polish People in Canada – A Visual History*, *The Uprooted / Wyrwani z Korzeniami*, *Powojenne Wiatry*. He joined SPK, Kolo No. 2 and served as 1st Vice-President in 1949.

Malak, Father Edwin J.

Born: 1912

Military Rank: Ksiadz Kapelan / Chaplain

Medals: Krzyz Walecznych; SPK: Silver, Gold

Military History: 3rd Carpathian Rifle Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: He served as Chaplain to the Polish Combatants' Association of Canada and as pastor at Holy Cross Church in Woodstock, Ontario.

Matyszka, Antoni

Born: August 15, 1909, in Germany

Married: Wanda

Children: Son, Richard

Military Rank: Kapral / Corporal

Military Medals: Krzyz Walecznych

Military History: 3rd Battalion Heavy Machine Guns, 3rd Carpathian Infantry Division, 2nd Corps

Marzec, Józef

Born: September 18, 1910, in Wilkolaz, Woj. Lubelskie, Poland

Education: Grade 4

Occupation(s): Carpenter

Military Rank: Strzelec

History: He joined the Polish Army in the Soviet Union in 1942 and served with the 2nd Carpathian Rifle Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps.

Post-War: He came to Canada on November 5, 1946, and completed a two-year farm contract (Jas. R. Patience) near Thamesford.

Matias, Mieczysław Michael



Born: August 15, 1929, in Kobylaki, pow. Wołkowyski, Woj. Białostockie, Poland

Died: January 3, 2010 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Józef, forester; Mother, Malwina [Nielubowicz]; Siblings: Waclaw (oldest – fought at Monte Cassino), Jadwiga, Bolesław (died in Russia), Teresa and Janina (twins)

Education: He was going to school when he was deported to Siberia. He was 11 and joined the 'Junaks' (cadets). He served in the Junaks together with Joseph Bentkowski. Later in England he attended a course intended to prepare soldiers for civilian life and of course, he was trained during his time in the army as well.

Married: Zofia Choja; He met his future wife in London in May 1952. She was working at the Melody Restaurant. His brother had taken him to show him around town and they dropped into the restaurant for a Ginger Ale. Zofia Choja was 15. She was a girl guide. They danced together and he started to drop around to visit. Every Saturday they went to the dances at

the Polish Hall, which was always full to the breaking point. They became engaged on October 20, 1955, and were married on July 21, 1956.

Children: Danuta Janina (November 28, 1960), Krystyna Halina (July 24, 1962), Antoni Joseph Martin (October 7, 1971)

Grandchildren/Great Grandchildren: As of 2022 there were 10 grandchildren and 7 great grandchildren

Medals: SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold; Złota Odznaka Honorowa Federacji Światowej

History: On February 10, 1940, he and his family were deported to the Soviet Union. The Russians came at night and took them on sleighs to the train station. They took everyone who was in the house. Jadwiga was in another village helping her aunt with childbirth. Jadwiga remained behind by herself in the family home, got married and eventually had three sons. From the train station, Mieczyslaw and family were sent to Siberia. They were in box cars on a freight train with a hole in the floor for a toilet. Some froze to death in the box cars. When the tracks ended, they continued on in sleighs. So that they didn't freeze, father tied them to the sleigh and made them run alongside just to keep from freezing. In Siberia they lived in wooden buildings. They were there for two years. Father and Waclaw were taken into the forest to cut trees. Mother and the children remained in the camp. Many families were in each building, each being assigned their corner.

After the amnesty, they were sent out on transports. Boleslaw died on the road to Uzbekistan. The poverty was incredible. Father and Waclaw joined the newly forming Polish Army and went with them to Iran. As an under-aged person, Mieczyslaw, with the request from his father, was assigned to a cadet school (Junak) in the Middle East. Mother and his sisters were sent to an orphanage in India. From 1942 to 1948 Mieczyslaw (Mietek) was in Palestine.

Post-War: In 1949 everything was shut down and the boys were sent to England. He was in England for four years from 1948-1952. He worked for a company that surveyed and widened roads. In England Mietek was reunited with his father, mother and sister in Hemsworth. In April 1952 he sailed by ship to Canada, landing in Montreal, then by train to London. At the train station he waited til morning, then phoned his brother. In 1952 his brother Waclaw Matias was getting married in Canada. Mietek was his best man. Zofia was his Maid of Honor. When he came to London he worked at the Victoria Hospital for 5 years, then at Westinghouse, where he worked until his retirement. In 1990, Mietek along with his wife Zofia made the first trip back to his homeland Kobylaki. It was the first time he saw his sister, Jadwiga and her family in 40 years.

Mieczyslaw joined SPK in 1952 and served as Secretary (1962), Vice-President (1963), President (1965, 1969) and Treasurer (1968) and was involved in the construction of the new SPK building and Our Lady of Czestochowa Church.

Matias (Matjas), Waclaw Józef



< Jozef, Jozef & Waclaw Matias

Born: February 17, 1922, in the Parish of Kobylaki, Pow. Wołkowyski, Woj. Białostockie, Poland

Died: September 15, 1981 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Józef (1896-1977) Forestry; Mother, Maria (1899-1965); Siblings: Jadwiga (exact date of birth is unknown -1996) (Jadwiga and Waclaw may have been identical twins, Mieczysław (August 15, 1929 – January 3, 2010), Teresa (1931-) and Janina (1929-December 27, 2009), Bolesław (date of birth unknown; he died on the train from Russia to Uzbekistan in 1942)

Education: Completed elementary

Occupation(s): Taxi driver, factory worker and maintenance staff at the UWO

Married: Maria Czesław Dynarek

Children: Teresa Janina Matias

Military Rank: Gunner / Kanonier, 8th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment, 2nd Corp.

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Zaslugi z Mieczami, Medal Wojska, Krzyz

Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-1945 Star; Italy Star; Defence Medal; War Medal 1939-1945. SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver and Gold

Military History: On February 10, 1940, in the middle of the night the family was awoken. They were given two hours to pack a few items/personal belongings, and then were taken by horse-drawn sleighs to the train station. En route to the train station, they noticed that people in other homes were being treated in the same manner as they were and boarded onto the train. The boxcars contained three layers of bunk beds on each side, no bathroom (hole in floor), no heat, and the windows were boarded up. They traveled day and night to reach their destination camp. Once there, Józef Matias was arrested and placed in jail because of his position with Polish Forestry. Waclaw was sent to the logging camps. The rest of the family was put in barracks made of logs. These camps were in no man's land, there was no place to escape to. Waclaw's brother Mieczysław was allowed to visit him in the logging camp not far away.

In the spring of 1942 amnesty was announced. Waclaw escaped to join the underground. Waclaw's father was released from prison and joined the newly formed Polish army under General Anders. No one in the family knew what had happened to Waclaw. Waclaw's father and Waclaw met up in Iran, where he joined the Polish Armed Forces on August 11, 1942. Waclaw was trained in Palestine and in Egypt with the 22nd Rifle Battalion and later in 1942 was assigned to the 21st Regiment, where he served in communications. Later he was transferred to Italy. He served from 1943 with the 8th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment, with which he served at Monte Cassino. As he was travelling in a motorcycle sidecar, going up the hill at Monte Cassino, a bomb landed in front of him, blowing him and the motorcycle onto a tree on the side of the mountain, where he hung for 2 days with broken legs before he was rescued. His wounds never healed properly. He had sores on his legs until the day he died. Waclaw also fought at Ancona and Bologna. Waclaw served as a gunner with the artillery and he drove reconnaissance on a motorcycle as well as driving officers around in the sidecar of the motorcycles. He was good with vehicles and knew how to fix them.

Post-War: Waclaw's father Józef was the first to arrive in England and then was discharged. Waclaw followed in 1946. In 1947 Waclaw was assigned to the Polish Resettlement Corps. Waclaw was discharged from the army in England on June 11, 1947. It was in England that the family name 'Matjas' was changed to 'Matias'. They stayed there waiting for Mieczysław, his mother and sisters to arrive from India. Waclaw did not like England. He was given the option to come to Canada under contract.

On November 1, 1947, he left Witley Camp, Godalming, Surrey, England. When he was discharged, his commanding officers gave him a full evaluation as a Polish soldier, as were all the Polish soldiers being discharged at that time. Waclaw's evaluation can be summarized as follows:

Intelligence – Average

Discipline and training – very good

Service loyalty – very good, a good Pole

Good features or bad – friendly and sociable, showed a lot of initiative

General evaluation – good to very good

In Canada he was on a farm contract near Ingersoll for 2 years (Howard McCall)/Charles Clark in Mount Elgin. He had a “fantastic experience.” The farmer Waclaw was assigned to treated him with respect. He enjoyed the work on the tobacco farm. He drove tractor and he was a mechanic working on all the farm machinery. At the end of the contract, the farmer offered Waclaw land to stay on and farm with him.

Waclaw moved to London and started working for Aboutown Taxi Service, in which he later owned shares. Every Saturday night he would pick up the other Polish boys who were still working on contracts and bring them to the Polish Hall on Hill Street to have a Polish meal and a few drinks. They would have fun. It was like being back in Poland and it brought them together. It was on one of these Saturday nights that he met his future wife, Maria Dynarek.

Waclaw drove taxi from 1949-1955, including the cross-border runs from London to Detroit. He then went to work at Canada Calver, operating heavy equipment for making steel and concrete tubes for sewage. Later he applied for a job at the Teacher’s College in the maintenance department, looking after the boilers, and assisted in janitorial work. Waclaw took courses in stationary engineering and became a stationary engineer, fourth and third class. He worked at Althouse, Eldon College and at the Weldon Library where he submitted the paperwork for his retirement, but passed away before it was approved, at the age of 59.

Waclaw joined SPK on March 21, 1948; he was a founding member and helped to build the SPK Hall on 80 Ann Street because they wanted a piece of Poland to call their own. They couldn’t go back to Poland because they were regarded as traitors by the communists and their homes were no longer located in what was once Poland. He was involved with fundraising for the Polish Church. He made the very first trolley that was used to collect dishes for the women in the kitchen.

Mazur, Władysław

Born: February 11, 1920, in Chymow Stary, pow. Kozienice, Woj. Kieleckie, Poland

Died: October 22, 1977 in London, Ontario, Canada

Married: Regina 1925-2010

Occupation(s): Farmer

Military Rank: Private, 17th Lwow Rifle Battalion, 6th Brigade, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 2nd Corps

Melech, Bohdań

Born: September 4, 1909, in Pińsk, Woj. Poleskie

Died: 1981

Married: Wanda

Children: Ewa-Joanna

Military Rank: Lieutenant, Officer Quartermaster, 490 Camp Pozejsc (Base Camp, 2nd Corp)

Post-War: Lived in Sarnia in 1953

Michmiewicz, Jan

Born: May 5, 1923, in Międzyzlesie Wickie, Woj., Poleskie, Poland

Occupation(s): Farmer

Military Rank: Strzelec / Private

Military History: He served with the 5th Carpathian Rifle Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: He was in London, Ontario by March 2, 1947

Miedzinski, Tadeusz

Born: May 29, 1919, in Dajnowo, Woj. Nowogródzkie, Poland

Occupation(s): Forestry worker

Military Rank: Szeregowy / Private

Military History: Served with the 13th Supply Company, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: He was in London, Ontario, by March 2, 1947

Miś, Paweł**Born:** January 15, 1926, in Makoszowach, Woj. Śląskie, Poland**Occupation(s):** Farmer**Military Rank:** Strzelec / Private**Military History:** Served with the 7th Carpathian Rifle Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps**Post-War:** He was in London, Ontario, by April 2, 1947**Mitoraj, Klemens****Born:** November 16, 1918, in Szerzyny, pow. Jasło, Podkarpackie, Woj. Krakowskie, Poland**Died:** January 31, 2006 in London, Ontario, Canada**Family:** Father, Adam; Mother, Katarzyna (Sowizral)**Education:** Completed Elementary**Occupation(s):** Farmer, Orderly**Married:** Zofia**Children:** Edward, Sylwia, Richard (died in an automobile accident)**Military Rank:** Corporal**Military Medals:** Polish Medals: Brązowy Krzyż Zasługi z Mieczami; Medal Wojska; Krzyż Pamiątkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Africa Star; Italy Star; SPK Medals**Military History:** He and his family were deported to Siberia. Klemens joined the Polish forces in the Soviet Union on August 27, 1941, and the 2nd Corps April 1, 1942. At first, he was assigned to the Heavy Machine Gun Company, 14th Wilno Rifle Battalion and later to the Mortar Company. He served at

Monte Cassino and took part in the assaults on Widmo to St. Angelo, and at Place del Canone and Bologna.

Post-War: He came to Canada on the "Sea Snipe" on November 24, 1946, to work on two-year farm contract. He later worked at Westminster Hospital in London and for 20 years he was with the Canadian Corps of Commissionaires in London.

He joined SPK in 1946 and served as an Executive member (1949), Vice-President and President (1950).

Mysior, Piotr Paweł**Born:** February 1, 1916, in Kawczyce (Busko Zdroj), pow. Stopnica, Woj. Kieleckie, Poland**Died:** April 13, 2015 in London, Ontario, Canada**Family:** Father, Piotr, Mother, Bronislawa**Married:** Betty Jean [Born February 11, 1930, in Stratford, Ontario; Died November 22, 2012]**Children:** William, Bronia, Mary Lynn, Perry (Died 1991)**Occupation:** Farmer**Military Rank:** Private First Class, 5th Kresowa Heavy Machine Battalion**Military Medals:** Polish: Medal Wojska, Krzyż Pamiątkowy Monte Cassino; British: 1939-45 Star, Italy Star**Military History:** From March 1, 1939, Mysior served with the 4th Legion Regiment in Kielce and took part in the September 1939 Campaign. They retreated from the German invasion towards to East until they ran into the Russian invaders, when they were attacked by Ukrainian soldiers anxious for revenge on the Poles. Piotr was taken prisoner by the Russians and transferred to Nowo Grod in Wolyn, where they waited cold and hungry. He was sent to Zaporozia on the Dniepr River. After the amnesty he joined the 2nd Corps and was assigned to the 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 6th Mortar Company. He fought at the River Sangro, Monte Cassino, Ancona and Bologna. He was demobbed at Predappio on October 15, 1946, and was in London, Ontario, by 1947.

N

Nowak, Jan

Born: March 22, 1921, in Grzewczyna, pow. Przeworsk, Rzeszów, Woj. Lwowskie, Poland

Military Rank: Bombardier

Medals: SPK: Bronze

Military History: Served with the 3rd Heavy Machine Gun Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Nowicki, Jan

Born: June 5, 1925, in Połoneczka, Woj. Nowogródzkie, Poland

Married: Joan Phyllis

Military Rank: Private

Military History: Jan joined the Polish army in June 1942 in Błagowiszczanka in the Soviet Union and was assigned to the 5th Kresowa Infantry Division and served in the 14th Wilno Rifle Battalion, 1st Company. Later he was transferred to an armored unit. He served in Iraq, Palestine, Egypt, Italy and England.

Post-War: He came to Canada from England on October 31, 1962.

O

Obierska, Józefa (Kwolek)



Born: October 20, 1925, in the village of Warszawka, pow. Brodski, Woj. Tarnopolskie, Poland

Died: November 1, 2019 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Józef Kwolek – farmer; Mother, Karolina Kwolek [Biedka];

Siblings: Eugenia (Died January 2021), Edward (lives in Sault Ste. Marie)

Education: Finished 6 grades, up to grade 4 in Warszawka, grades 5 and 6 in Brodach and in 1939 she started high school in Brodach

Occupation(s):

Married: Jozef Obierski

Children: Zdzislaw (Gerry), Andrzej (November 28, 1950), Teresa Bronisława (March 2, 1952)

Military Medals: SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold

History: My name is Józefa Obierska nee Kwolek. My family was deported from Warszawka on the night of February 10th, 1940, by the Soviets. I was then 14 years old. On that day 250,000 persons were deported to Siberian work camps, including most of the residents of Warszawka.

My mother told me that the family was given about twenty minutes to gather their things and leave the house. She told me that the Soviets said that we would not be gone for long. No one knew where we were going, so no one was sure what things should be taken. I was away at school on the day it happened. I was in my first year of “gimnazjum,” or high school, in Brody, a nearby town. When I came home after school, a young man who had not been arrested came and told me that my parents were at the train station and that they asked him to tell me to go to them. Other members of my family, cousins, aunts and uncles and my grandparents were also deported that day.

We were packed into rail cars, about 30 or 40 people in each. We were locked into these cars for the duration of the trip. There were small windows along the top of the car with metal grates over them. The rail cars had some boards that formed beds or benches along the sides. There was a small stove and some coal for heat. There was a hole in the floor that was used as a toilet. The only food we had was what we managed to bring with us from home.

It took two weeks to get to the work settlement of “Sincibino,” in the oblast of Arkhangel’sk in the northern Soviet Union. We were lucky as this settlement had barracks that had been built by two previous groups that had been deported from the Ukraine approximately 5 and 10 years before. Some of these people were still there. The barrack that we were allocated to had two rooms and a kitchen with a large stove. A family was allotted to each

room including the kitchen. We were not allowed to communicate with the people that were already living in the settlement. The Soviets had spies who would stand at the window or come and sit inside, sometimes all day, to observe us.

The day after we got there, the commandant of the camp called a general meeting. He told us that we were to forget about Poland. That we would likely die here. He also told us that we must work in order to eat. Everyone who was 16 years of age and older was put in a work brigade.

Every week, the work brigades walked 12 km to the location where they had to cut down trees. There, they stayed in a large barrack, men, women and teens all together. The brigades worked from sunrise until sunset. At the end of the week, they walked 12 km back to the settlement. There was a quota for the amount of wood that was to be cut each day. Soviet supervisors counted the logs and placed a mark on the end of each log. During the winter, the logs were piled by the river's edge. It was hard work and many times, to make the quota, after the supervisor had marked the log, the end was cut off and burned along with all of the branches. The log was then presented again as part of the quota. When, in the spring, the number of logs by the river didn't add up to the number that was noted as being cut, questions were asked, but of course no one knew anything about it.

Those under 16 years old stayed in the settlement. My brother, sister and I stayed in the settlement. We were allotted 600 grams of bread each day and nothing else. Sometimes we had to wait in the bread line for a long time and many times we got nothing. After a year, we were allowed to join our parents at the camp 12 km away. The large barrack had been partitioned into small units so families could be together.

In June of 1942, we found out from one of the Ukrainians who was a previous deportee that Hitler had invaded the Soviet Union. This gave us a measure of hope regarding our own fate.

Then, by some miracle, we got word that we were free and that the Polish Army was being formed in various locations throughout the Soviet Union. I think it was the same Ukrainian that told us of Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union. It was the end of September or early October. We didn't know what to do. It was going on winter and we thought that maybe we should stay until spring. Then, on December 31, the decision was made for us. The commandant of the camp told us that we were all leaving tomorrow. A train would be at the Konoshy station and that would be our only chance to get out.

On January 1, 1942, my family and I began the long journey south. We were lucky. My entire immediate family survived - my parents, my sister, my brother and myself. My grandparents died there. We were told by the commandant that we could not go back to Poland and we could not travel in the general direction of Poland. We headed south to where we heard the Polish army was being formed.

Our journey south from Siberia took about two months. We traveled by rail car, only this time the cars were not locked - although the conditions were not much better. From the journey out of Siberia, the thing I remember most is that when we left the settlement and got to the first large train station in Vologda, which I think took about a week, we received orders to evacuate the railcars. We had nowhere to go except out into the open area around the station. It was January and it was very cold.

The station was filled with Poles trying to get to the locations where the Polish army was being formed. We saw my cousin in the crowd, but we could not go to speak with her. The Poles were sitting and lying, tightly together, half-alive. What these people lived through only God knows. We had no time to speak with anyone. The men had to report to the office and we had to try and find shelter and a place to sleep, hopefully under a roof, but there was no guarantee that we would find anything.

We did find an empty cattle car on a sidetrack that had been used to transport animals. The cars were dirty but at least offered a roof over our head and would get us out of the snow and cold. Again, we had to report to the office to get permission to occupy the cars. Once permission was granted, whoever had a bit of strength helped to clean out the car.

Typically, at every station in Russia, hot, boiling water (kipiatok) was available. We did not require anyone's permission to get this water. As some of us cleaned the car, others would get the water, while still others tried to find some stoves, coal and boards for beds. The boards we found came from other rail cars. Everyone else spent their time walking and jumping around, trying to keep warm so they would not freeze.

In the evening, we moved into the relatively clean and warm railcars. Every family occupied a spot where they could get warm from the stove. Near midnight, the railcars were jolted, once, twice and then a third time. Then a miracle: a train was traveling south from Siberia carrying other Poles and our wagon was attached. In this way we continued our journey south.

During the train journey, I do not remember many dates. It was January and there were many snowstorms. One time the train had to stop because the tracks were filled with snow and it stood in the open field for about a week. During the journey, at one station, I don't remember where, we were asked to separate so that we could bathe. The women and children went to one side and the men to the other side. While we bathed, our clothes were taken away and were disinfected. When we were finished bathing, we found that all of our clothes had been thrown into a large pile and everyone, naked, had to look for their own clothes.

We then arrived in Ashabad in Turkmenistan in southern U.S.S.R. near the Persian (now Iranian) border. This was one of the locations where you could sign up for the Polish Army. It was a very happy time for us. My father was accepted into the Polish Army, my brother was accepted to the Junaki as a cadet. My mother, my sister and I registered to be evacuated from the Soviet Union.

From Ashabad we traveled by passenger train to Krasnovodsk, a port town on the Caspian Sea. When the train began to leave the station everyone began to cry and sing "Pod Twą Obronę" (Under God's Protection) and it felt as if the rhythm of the train kept time to the hymn as we sang. There was joy because we were leaving the boundaries of the Soviet Union. This was and is an unforgettable time in my life. One thing I remember is that, at Krasnovodsk, we were served rice soup made from fish heads, with some of the heads still in the soup. From Krasnovodsk, a boat took us across the Caspian Sea to Pahlavi in what was then Persia and is now Iran. The trip took about a day and a half. We were packed into the boat like sardines. The waters were very rough and many people got seasick. In Pahlavi, we were given thorough baths and were disinfected. This was a transit camp where we lived in tents and tried to get our health back. From Pahlavi, we were taken by trucks through the Alborz Mountains to Camp No. 2, near Tehran, Persia (now Iran). Again, we stayed in tents and had an outdoor kitchen. After five months, we went by train to another transit camp just outside of Karachi, Pakistan. During that time the teenagers got together and put together a show. I remember we danced the Polonaise and also some Gypsy dances. The show was for some American troops stationed in Karachi. We were starting to have a bit of fun again. After a month, we left by boat over the Indian Ocean to Eastern Africa to Tanganyika, now Tanzania, to a camp called Tengeru. This was around the end of 1942.

A time of intensive work began. Schools were organized for us but there were no books. The teaching staff dedicated a lot of time to prepare lessons. Children and teenagers, recognizing the hard work of the teachers, applied themselves to their lessons, and tried to make up for the lost time spent in the work camps. A scouting movement was started. There were scouting events, jamborees and many organized activities and field trips. We lived in round huts with banana leaf roofs. Because our faith is very important to us, everyone volunteered to build a church. The church still stands today and is used by the local people. Many of the friends that were made during this time are still friends today. We still keep in contact although we are now scattered all over the world.



< Józef and Józefa Obierski

Post-War:

When the war ended, the Polish Army was moved from Italy to England. The reunification of families began. In 1948, my mother, sister and I left Tanganyika for England to reunite with my father and brother. My mother's brother had been in Canada since 1913. My mother asked him to help us immigrate to Canada. After a number of months, we received papers allowing us to travel to Canada. After all of the formalities were complete, we boarded a boat for Canada. It was January 1949. We settled in Sault Ste. Marie. Jozef and Karolina died in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. Teresa passed away in January 2021. Andrzej, my brother, still lives in Sault Ste. Marie but is now afflicted with Alzheimer's. I joined SPK and served on the Ladies Auxiliary, volunteered in the kitchen and as a server, and worked on the Cavalcade multicultural festival and with the Cracovia dancers.

Ochnik, Marian Henryk



Born: March 17, 1921, in Okrzeja, Woj. Lubelskie, Poland

Died: November 16, 2012 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Stanisław (miller), Mother, Feliksa [Kiełczynowska], Siblings: Feliksa (older sister), Marian, Julia, Jan, Marysia (youngest); there was one other sister

Education: Completed elementary school; when he was 14 he was sent to Junak (cadet) school in Okrzeji, which is where he was when the war broke out; he was there for 4 years until he was 18.

Married: Stefania (Miskiewicz) on July 26, 1949, in England; Stefania was in Africa during the war (1922-2012)

Children: Zbigniew was born in England on June 10, 1950, and was baptized on June 30, 1950, in St. Joseph's Church, Newton Abbot, Devonshire. He died in 2011.

Military Rank: 2nd Lieutenant / Podporucznik

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Walecznych (for the Battle of Monte Cassino); Medal Wojska, Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals:

1939-45 Star; Italy Star; War Medal 1939-45; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold

Military History: When the war broke Marian was a member of the 11th Battalion 'Junaks' (Cadets) Work Unit, and they built defensive positions along the Narew River. When the Russians invaded, they were captured and sent to Siberia. The cadets were assigned to build roads in Siberia. The officers were drowned in the sea. They had to break rocks and they received one piece of bread each day and drank rainwater. In 1941 after the amnesty, they were released and Marian joined the 6th Infantry Division, 17th Regiment. They were shipped out in cattle cars, first to Kazakhstan and then to Palestine (1943) and to Egypt. In Italy he was assigned to the 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 6th Lwow Infantry Brigade, 2nd Corps. His father wrote about his experiences and the text is in the Polish archives in London (UK). He served at Monte Cassino, Fillitrano, Ancona, St. Sofia, Brizigiella and Bologna. He was wounded during the Battle of Monte Cassino and sent to a hospital in Italy.

Post-War: After the war he went to England, where he worked in an automobile factory (Opel). In 1952, Marian and Stefania left England and arrived in Halifax on February 9, 1952. They came straight to London by train. Marian got a job at the Western Fair racetrack, where he worked in the horse stables. Later he was hired as a custodian with the Catholic School Board, first at St. John's, then at Pius 10th and later at St. Francis School. He worked there until he retired.

He joined SPK in 1960. Marian was a member of the SPK Colour Party and served on the committee assigned to visit the sick.

Ochnik, Stefania (Miśkiewicz)

Born: December 25, 1922, in Lipowiec, Pow. Drochobycki, Woj. Lwowskie, Poland

Died: December 5, 2012 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Jan Miśkiewicz, farmer; Mother, Anna (Andrzejowska); Siblings: Bronisława (January 23, 1919), Stefania, Jan, Michał (stayed in England), Marysia (stayed in England), Hanka (1916, stayed in Russia, married a Ukrainian)

Education: Completed elementary school in Drochobycz

Married: Marian Ochnik

Children: Zbyszek

Medals: SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold

History: In 1941, the Russians came to the house and told them they could take only what they had on. They were loaded into boxcars and travelled for 2 weeks to Siberia near Kazakhstan. They gathered wood for the army for heating. They lived in dugouts, which they themselves had dug. They were not allowed to attend school or to speak Polish. After the amnesty her brother Michael, who was of age, left the family and joined General Anders' army. The family (father, sisters) travelled through Tehran to Africa. Mother froze to death in Siberia, although officially she died from typhus. In Africa, Stefania looked after some English children and learned English while her aunt Bronia sewed. They worked alongside Africans. In 1945-46 they left Africa for England. They travelled with Polish soldiers and their father was with them. There were three sisters and a brother, and they all married in the

same week; Bronia married Wladyslaw Holomek; Stefania married Marian Ochnik; Michael married Zosia; Marysia stayed in England as she was not well.

Post-War: Stefania came to Canada on February 9, 1952. Emigration was very hard; they had to find their own accommodation and work. She worked at McCormicks, making cakes.

Stefania joined SPK and served on the Women's Auxiliary. She volunteered in the kitchen and served on the committee tasked with visiting the sick.

Odecki, Józef

Born: January 1, 1925, in Leźniewicze, pow. Wołóżyński, Woj. Nowogródzkie, Poland

Died: February 20, 2015 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Jozef, Mother, Anna (Ryzejew)

Military Rank: Kanonier

Military Medals: Polish: Krzyz Zaslugi z Mieczami, Medal Wojska, Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British: 1939-45 Star, Italy Star, Defense Medal, War Medal 1939-1945

Military History: Jozef was deported to the USSR in 1940. After the amnesty he served with the 2nd Corps from April 1, 1942, to October 24, 1946, in the Soviet Union, Iran, Middle East, Italy and through to England. He served in the 3rd Anti-Aircraft Artillery Regiment, 3rd Carpathian Infantry Division.

Post-War: He came to Canada on June 30, 1947, from England.

Oko, Jan Józef



Born: March 6, 1920, in Podleszany, pow. Mielecki, Woj. Krakowskie, Poland

Died: May 16, 2005 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Jozef; Mother, Katarzyna Halat

Married: Wanda Ludkiewicz

Children: Mary, Julia, Ryszard

Military Rank: Gunner

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Medal Wojska, Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; Defense Medal; War Medal 1939-1945; SPK: Bronze, Silver, Gold

Military History: In 1940 he was deported to Siberia to work in logging camps. In 1942, due to the efforts of General Sikorski, who secured the release of captured Poles by the Soviets under the Sikorski-Mayski agreement, he was able to join and fight with the Polish Army as a gunner providing support to the infantry. The Polish 2nd Corps under General Wladyslaw Anders had Jan fighting with the Allies in campaigns across Iran, Iraq, Palestine, Egypt and finally to Italy. Jan also served with the 8th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment, 3rd

Carpathian Infantry Division, in Italy and fought at Monte Cassino, Ancona, Macerata and Bologna.

Post-War: Once the war ended and as a result of fighting alongside the Allies, Jan was allowed to go to England to



live in a Displaced Persons' camp that was created to handle millions of refugees from Eastern Europe, the Nazi German concentration camps and elsewhere. These were the people who could no longer go home due to fear of persecution. As a result of the post-war refugee crisis, Jan arrived by sea in Canada on May 25th, 1947, at Pier 21 Halifax, on the ship Aquitania. Jan was one of the thousands of Polish veterans who arrived as part of Canada's bulk-labour program for agriculture. Jan was employed by a farmer located in Lethbridge, Alberta, under a state administered labour contract. The contract required that Jan work for two years to fulfill the terms of the contract or risk being deported. For two years, Jan worked on the farm under difficult and sometimes abusive conditions. Jan survived the Soviet Siberian gulags, the battles of the war and Monte Cassino – and he survived and endured this final step to ultimate freedom. He continued finding work in construction in Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia. He eventually moved to London in 1952. London was a welcoming place, with many Polish immigrants settling in the city. Jan worked hard, finding the right opportunity until he landed the job that would take

him to his retirement - working in the kitchens as a cook at Westminster Hospital (now part of Victoria Hospital). Jan was intent on becoming a Canadian citizen, which he achieved in 1954. As a proud Canadian, he helped strengthen the Polish community in London by financially contributing to the building of Our Lady of Czestochowa Roman Catholic Church and the Polish Veterans' SPK Hall. In 1959, with the help of a mail order bride service prominent at the time, Jan found a Polish woman named Wanda Ludkiewicz from the town of Swidwin, in the county of Koszalin. Wanda's family was part of the Polish population who were repatriated when the territory where they were living was taken over by the Soviet Union. They were relocated to the Western part of Poland - territory taken from Germany. Jan and Wanda were married on Dec. 26, 1959.



< Jan Oko

Okoński, Jan

RYSOPIS - SIGNALEMENTS		2	
Rok urodzenia Date de naissance	18.V.1893	Żona - Femme	
Miejsce urodzenia Lieu de naissance	Wieliczka		
Stan État civil	żonaty - marié		
Zatrudnienie Profession	rachmistrz - comptable		
Wzrost Taille	wysoki - haute		
Twarz Visage	okragła - rond		
Włosy Cheveux	c. blond - blond fauve		
Oczy Yeux	szare - gris		
Znaki szczególne Signes particuliers	plama na lewym policzku		
DZIECI - ENFANTS			
Imię Nom	Wiek Age	Płeć Sexe	

3

KONSULAT POLSKI
W BUKARZESZCIE

FOTOGRAFIE - PHOTOGRAPHIES

Podpis posiadacza
Signature/du porteur

Born: May 18, 1893
Died: December 8, 1965
Military History: Served in the 2nd Corps

Omielan, Stanley**Born:** March 12, 1915, in Janiez Mala, Woj. Białostockie, Poland**Married:** Czesława**Children:** Jozef (August 30, 1960), Jan (January 20, 1963), Władysław (May 26, 1964)**Military Rank:** Private First Class**Medals:** SPK: Bronze**Military History:** 6th Lwow Infantry Brigade, 2nd Corps, Headquarters.**Ostapiuk, Albin****Born:** February 26, 1917, in Młoszowa, Woj. Krakowskie, Poland**Family:** Father, Franciszek**Education:** Completed elementary**Occupation(s):** Gardener**Military Rank:** Kapral / Corporal**Military History:** Served with the 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps**Post-War:** He joined SPK on September 9, 1946, in Italy, and came to Canada on June 30, 1947**Ostrowski, Sławomira****Born:** August 22, 1905, in Częstochowa, Poland**Occupation(s):** Gardening Engineer**Married:** Jan**Military Rank:** Major, (P.W.S.K.) Polish Army Women's Service**History:** In London October 5, 1947**P****Paczkowski, Antoni****Born:** March 1, 1918, in Mosorz, Pow. Postawski, Woj. Wileńskie, Poland**Family:** Brother, Jan**Education:** Grade 5**Occupation(s):** Farmer**Military Rank:** Private First Class, 7th Anti-tank Regiment, 2nd Corps**Medals:** SPK: Bronze, Silver, Gold**History:** Antoni came to Canada June 13, 1947, and completed a 2-year farm contract (Joe Nyrz, Strathroy).**Pasierbek, Jan****Born:** November 12, 1922, in the village of Antoniówka, near the town of Żurawno, 60 kms south of Lwow, Woj. Stanisławowskie, Poland**Died:** March 13, 2020 in London, Ontario, Canada**Family:** Father, Józef Pasierbek; Mother, Anna Pasierbek (Jas); Grandfather, Franciszek Pasierbek; Siblings, Stenia, Marysia, Marian, Kazik, Władzia, Helena, Tosiek, Aniela

Jan's father and his uncles, Klimek and Wojtek, fought alongside Józef Piłsudski in 1919

In the 1970s, Jan's brothers, Kazik and Marian, passed away. In 1992 Jan and his five surviving brothers and sisters, Aniela, Stenia, Marysia, Władzia and Tosiek, reunited in Cape Town, South Africa, for the first time since their family was separated during the war (50 years before). As of 2018, Jan and Aniela were the last two surviving siblings.

Married: Jan married Waclawa (nee Choja; June 9, 1928-January 3, 1990) in London, Ontario, in October 1949. They had two children, Krystyna (George) and Henry (Krystyna), four grandchildren, Janene (Philip), Katrina, Megan

and Nicholas, and two great grandchildren, Harriet and Conrad Raven. Wacława passed away in January 1990.

Military Medals: Polish: Krzyż Walecznych (2 Times), Srebrny Krzyż Zasługi, Medal Wojska, Krzyż Kampanii Wrzesniowej 1939, Krzyż Pamiątkowy Monte Cassino; British: Star 1939-45, Africa Star, Italy Star, Defense Medal, War Medal 1939-1945, 3 Stars (for being wounded three times); SPK: Bronze, Silver, Gold; Złota Odznaka Honorowa Federacji Światowej

Military Rank: 2nd Lieutenant

Military History: In 1937 Jan joined the cadet corps in Zurawno at the age of fifteen. He was assigned to a national defence unit after completing his second grade of military training and was later reassigned to the National Defence headquarters in Stryj. In April 1939, Jan was drafted into the Polish Army as a soldier in the 52nd Infantry Regiment.

When Germany attacked Poland on September 1, 1939, Jan's regiment was given orders to pull back towards the Romanian border. However, on September 17th the Soviet Union attacked Poland from the East, and Jan and his fellow soldiers were soon taken as prisoners of war by the Soviet Red Army.

On February 12, 1940, the High Court of the Soviet Union sentenced Jan to five years of hard labour for conspiring against the Soviet Union and the Ukrainian nation. He was 17 years old at the time. Jan and other Polish soldiers were then forced onto freight trains destined for Siberia. The trains stopped in Taigi Nizina on February 26, 1940, and the men then had to travel by foot for sixteen hours to Sosnowska (approximately 3,600 kilometres east of Warsaw). When they arrived at dawn, they were put into barracks that "looked more like dilapidated barns."

Once the Polish prisoners of war built additional barracks, they were put to work in the Voroshilov platinum mine, which was located four kilometers from the camp. Jan worked in this mine for seven months before being moved to work in another area, known as the Lenin mine. Jan and his fellow soldiers laboured every day, under terrible conditions, never knowing if they would ever see their families or homeland again.

On June 22, 1941, Germany attacked the Soviet Union and the Polish nation now found itself allied with the Soviets against their common enemy. On July 30, 1941, the Polish Government-in-Exile based in London, England, and the Soviet Union signed an agreement for mutual aid in the war against Germany. The Soviet authorities granted an amnesty to all Polish prisoners in the agreement. A Polish Army was soon organized by General Władysław Anders, who had just been released from a Moscow prison.

After many months of imprisonment as slave labour in the Soviet Union, Jan and his fellow Polish soldiers were finally released as free men. In October 1941, they marched from the Lenin Mine to Taigi Nizina and boarded a freight train to the Russian city of Sverdlovsk. From there, they continued south to Tashkent, Uzbekistan, where Jan joined the 5th Kresowa Infantry Division in November. Once the soldiers completed their three months of training, Jan, at the age of 19, was assigned as the group leader of the first company of the 14th Infantry Regiment, 5th Kresowa Division. The troops were then transferred to Blagowieszczanka, Uzbekistan, where they began training with their new British weapons.

While Jan was in Uzbekistan, he miraculously reunited with his sister Marysia at his base camp in May 1942. She told Jan that, back in February 1940, their parents and the eight children had been deported from Poland to a labour camp deep in Russia near the Ural Mountains. Sadly, however, their father had been arrested along the way and was never seen again. Since Jan's family was living in a camp only thirty kilometres away, he was able to obtain a pass to visit them. When he finally reunited with his family a few days later, Jan found both his mother and sister, Helena, gravely ill. Within a few days both died and Jan and his siblings had to bury their mother and sister together.

Shortly after, in June 1942, Jan registered his four youngest siblings with an orphanage organized by the Polish Red Cross. Jan was very grateful that Kazik, Władzia, Tosiek and Aniela were now going to be taken care of. They would soon be transported out of the Soviet Union to a Polish orphanage in South Africa, the country that would eventually become their permanent home. Since Marysia, Stenia and Marian were older, they soon joined different Polish service units that were being organized in the Middle East.

In July 1942, Jan's division crossed the Caspian Sea from the port of Krasnovodsk in Turkmenistan and arrived at the Iranian port of Pahlevi. From there they travelled to Kana Kin, Iraq, where the Anders Army officially became the 2nd Corps under the command of the British 8th Army. Jan's battalion, part of the 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, set up camp and was assigned to guard the oil pipelines from Mosul to Kirkutsk and the Kana Kin refinery region.

In July 1943, Jan's division was transferred to Palestine to complete its military training. In February 1944, the Polish soldiers then sailed from Egypt to Taranto, Italy, and Jan's battalion soon established a defensive position

along the Sangro River in central Italy. Shortly after arriving there, Jan was wounded by German gunfire. He spent three weeks recuperating in an army hospital and then returned to his unit in March.



During the 2nd Corps' preparation to attack German positions at Monte Cassino in April-May of 1944, Jan's battalion moved to San Pietro, which is south of Monte Cassino. He was in his company's first front-rank platoon. During the battle of Monte Cassino Jan was wounded in the chest by German gunfire a second time and spent three weeks recuperating in the Third Polish Field Hospital.

In June Jan returned to his battalion, which now occupied a sector by the Adriatic Sea. In July 1944, the Polish soldiers captured Ancona after three days of heavy fighting. They then captured Loreto and moved on to Palacio Del Canone. Their next order in April 1945 was to seize Gaiano, the last German line of opposition south of Bologna. During this battle Jan was wounded by German gunfire a third time and spent three weeks in a field hospital. Shortly after, in May 1945, Germany surrendered.

Following his recuperation, Jan rejoined his unit in Bologna and looked forward to returning to his homeland to help rebuild Poland. However, the Allied powers had shifted the eastern border of Poland 160 miles to the west, which meant that Jan's home town was now in the Soviet Union (present day

Ukraine). To add insult to injury, Poland and other countries in Eastern Europe were now governed by the Communists, who were under the influence of the Soviet Union. The Polish Communist government had become very unsympathetic to the Polish soldiers wishing to return home and even stripped General Anders of his Polish citizenship in 1946. Jan and his fellow soldiers were stunned. They had spent years fighting the war for Polish freedom as well as for freedom throughout the world, and now they were not even welcomed back home. Where were they supposed to go?

Post-War: At this time the British government informed the Polish soldiers that they had a few options: they could return to a "free" Poland, remain in Italy or settle in Great Britain, Canada or Australia. Jan's brother, Marian, decided to move to Australia while his sister, Marysia, returned home to Poland. Jan had long discussions with his close friends, Klimek Mitoraj, Teodor Gnidec, and Antek Sawicki about what they should do. Jan initially wanted to move to England, where his sister, Stenia, now lived and he wrote to her for advice. She, however, informed him that the English people were against additional Polish immigrants because they could now return home to a "free" Poland.

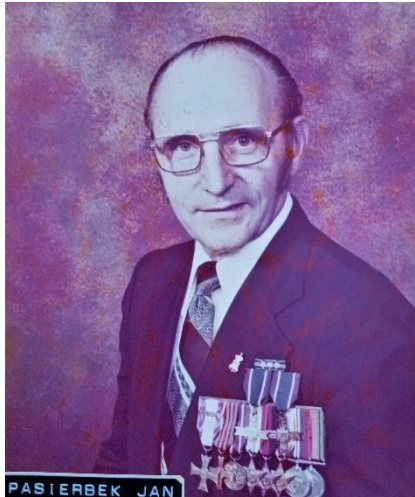
In 1946 the Canadian government agreed to permit Polish ex-servicemen to immigrate to Canada, and Jan therefore decided to leave for Canada along with approximately 4,500 soldiers from the Polish 2nd Corps. Unfortunately, the Canadian authorities placed a condition on their immigration that required each soldier to commit to a two-year labour contract in farming, mining or forestry. This was the price that Jan and other Polish soldiers were willing to pay for freedom and a new life in Canada, and approximately 500 of them agreed to work on farms across southwestern Ontario. Many of these men would be replacing German prisoners of war, who had been freed and sent back home to be reunited with their families.

In the summer of 1946, Jan's group, called 'Camp Canada,' was transported to Cezena, where they took a course in farming. At the beginning of November 1946, the Polish soldiers bound for Canada boarded an old ship, in terrible condition, called the "Sea Snipe" in Naples and sailed for twelve days before arriving in Halifax, Nova Scotia. When Jan disembarked, he had to turn over all of his military belongings with the exception of his uniform, boots, knapsack and one blanket. Jan had three hundred English pounds he received as soldier's pay in his Polish Army bank account, but this money was now frozen by the Canadian government. He was told he would receive a small monthly allowance from his account and that the balance of the money would be returned to him once he completed his two-year contract.

From Halifax, Jan's group travelled by train to Camp Fingal, located southwest of London, Ontario. They then endured fourteen days of quarantine and underwent medical examinations at Westminster Hospital in London. In late November, the men attended a work assignment meeting and this is where Jan first met Andy, the farmer he would be working for in Mount Bridges. Jan signed a two-year contract and his wages were forty-five dollars a month plus food. At the age of 24, Jan now began his new life in Canada.

Jan's first task on the farm was to cut down trees in a nearby bush. Since Jan's only coat was his army uniform, he asked the farmer to take him to a store where he could buy some work clothes. The farmer took Jan to the barn, showed him two black overalls hanging on a wall with the letters WP (War Prisoner) and told him he could wear these instead. Jan became quite upset and told the farmer that he wasn't going to wear some left-over German POW hand-me-downs. The farmer replied that the German boys had worn the overalls without complaining. Jan became quite angry and reminded the farmer that he wasn't a German prisoner but a free man. The next day the farmer took Jan to a store in Strathroy, where he purchased some work clothes.

Soon after Jan signed up for an English language course taught at a school in Mount Brydges. Although he had to walk four miles each way, Jan was eager to improve his English and to meet some of his friends, who were also working on other farms in the area. Unfortunately, Jan's work schedule soon made it impossible for him to continue with this class. He started working early in the morning and finished late in the evening, twelve hours a day, seven days a week. Even when Jan had some free time, the farmer often sent him out to help neighbouring farmers with their ploughing and other farming tasks. Although Jan was grateful for the opportunity to live in Canada, the farmer was clearly taking advantage of Jan's situation. Eventually Jan went to the Work Bureau office in London and expressed his concerns regarding his working conditions to an office manager. Within a few days Jan noticed that the farmer's attitude had changed for the better and the food had even improved somewhat. Throughout it all, Jan kept a positive attitude and worked hard until his two-year contract ended in November 1948. When he left the farm for the last time and headed for a highway bus stop, Jan had some time to reflect on



his life - past, present and future. In Jan's words:

"It was a lovely day. I could feel a light wind blow through my hair as I approached the bus stop on Christina Road. My thoughts returned to the past eight years of my life. I had wandered the earth because of events and circumstances that were beyond my control. I had no opportunity to go to school or learn a trade. I very much wanted to learn English but had to change my plans. I tallied the last eight years of my life: two years spent in Russian captivity and hard labour, four years of service in the army fighting for independence and two years on the farm. I was also feeling so thankful for the kindness of strangers. Standing there at the bus stop I truly felt free and independent for the first time in my life. From that moment on, I would make my own decisions and choices. The future lay just beyond the horizon. It would be a future of my own making."

In 1948 Jan moved to London and began working as a carpenter building passenger train cars at the Canadian National Railroad (CNR) car shops that were located across from the Western Fair.

In early 1949 Jan met Waclawa Choja at a dance at the Polish Hall. Waclawa came to Canada in 1948 and was working with her sister, Marysia, at the Byron Sanitarium (CPRI today). In October, 1949, Jan and Waclawa were married at St. Peter's Cathedral.

Jan left the CNR car shops a few years later and began working in the home renovation business. He would buy and renovate older homes and then resell them. He was a "house flipper" before it became a popular occupation. Jan eventually purchased an apartment building in the early 1960s that kept both Jan and Waclawa quite busy until they built their retirement home in 1973. Jan always enjoyed skiing, golfing and playing chess whenever he had some spare time.

Jan was a skilled wood craftsman who greatly enjoyed creating many intricate wood carvings and figurines. In 1967 Jan picked up an artist's brush for the first time in his life and realized that he had a hidden artistic talent. Within a few years his paintings were being purchased by many Londoners who admired Jan's picturesque landscapes. Waclawa sadly passed away in 1990 at the age of 61. In 1992 Jan was very happy to be able to reunite with his five surviving brothers and sisters in South Africa for the first time in 50 years.

Jan was a founding member of the London branch of the Polish Combatants' Association (SPK) and served as branch president for many years. He was also a founding member of Our Lady of Czestochowa Catholic Church and helped to build the church in 1952. In fact, Jan built all sixty church pews during his spare time while he was employed at the CNR car shops (with the company's permission). Between 1988 and 2000 Jan was a member of

the board of directors for London Polonia Towers, a non-profit apartment and townhouse organization that provided affordable accommodation for many members of the Polish community.

In 2006, at the age of 84, Jan wrote an autobiography about his life growing up in Poland before the war and his military experiences as a young Polish soldier. His book entitled *My Journey Into the Unknown: 1939-1948* is a fascinating historical record of Jan's life that can now be passed on from generation to generation.

Pasławski, Stefan

Born: December 18, 1921, in Wola Gnojnicka, Pow. Jaworowski, Woj. Lwowskie, Poland

Family: Father, Michal; Mother, Ksenia

Education: Grade 6

Married: Wanda

Children:

Military Rank: Private

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Zaslugi z Mieczami; Medal Wojska: Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; Defense Medal

Military History: Served with the 95 W.B.P / Warsaw Armoured-Motorized Brigade during the September 1939 Campaign. Later he served with the 2nd Corps, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 5th Wilno Infantry Brigade, Headquarters. He landed at Taranto, Italy, and took part in battles on the Sangro River, San Angelo, Presco-Camberale, Monte Cassino, Ancona and Bologna. He was demobilized on October 15, 1946, in Predappio, Italy.

Post-War: He came to Canada on November 11, 1946, and completed a 2-year farm contract near Dorchester. He joined SPK on January 1, 1947, and served as President (1951) and on the Executive (1952, 1953).

Pawlina, Mieczysław

Born: October 10, 1923, in Żółkiew, Woj. Lwowskie, Poland

Married: Jean

Military Rank: Private

Military History: He joined the Polish Army, parachute battalion, in Russia and later joined the 2nd Corps and was transferred to 15th Poznan Lancer's Regiment, 14th Wielkopolska Armoured Brigade.

Post-War: He came to Canada from England in June 1957 and moved to British Columbia in 1985.

Pawłowski, Piotr



Born: July 2, 1916, in Wiazma-Tomsk, Russia

Died: December 8, 2003 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Michal; Mother, Ewa

Education: Completed elementary

Married: Genowefa [Born July 5, 1925; Came to Canada in 1952 from England; Died August 3, 2011]

Children: Witold, Ted, Mary, John

Military Rank: Private First Class

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Medal Wojska; Krzyz Kampanii Wrzesniowej 1939; Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Africa Star; Italy Star; Defense Medal
SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver

Military History: In 1939 he served with the 3rd Battalion Sappers in Wilno. He was taken prisoner by Russian forces and after the amnesty joined the 2nd Corps, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 6th Kresowa Field Engineers Company. He served in Iraq, Palestine, Egypt, Italy and England, including at the battles at

Monte Cassino (radio-operator--telegraph) through to Bologna.

Post-War: He joined SPK in 1946 and served as Treasurer (1961)

Pęczak, Tadeusz

Born: July 6, 1923, in Bortnica, Dubno, Woj. Poleskie, Poland

Military Rank: Private, 5th Kresowa Signals Battalion (Sapper's Company), 2nd Corps

Pietluch, Józef



Born: March 16, 1920, in Wólka Pełkińska, Pow. Jarosławski, Woj. Lwowskie, Poland

Died: October 17, 2015 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Jozef, Mother, Agnieszka

Education: Completed elementary and three years of high school (Gimnazjum) in Calabria, Italy

Married: Maryanna (Mary) [Born April 11, 1923, in Biala Podlaska, Poland; Died December 22, 2011]

Children: Robert (August 30, 1959), Elizabeth (March 20, 1961)

Military Rank: Private

Military Medals: Polish: Krzyz Walecznych, Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino, British: 1939-45 Star, Italy Star, Defense Medal, War Medal 1939-1945; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold

Military History: Jozef was deported with his family on February 10, 1940, to the forests of the Ural Mountains in the USSR. After the amnesty he joined the Polish forces in Uzbekistan in 1941. He served with the 2nd Corps, 5th Kresowa

Infantry Division, 6th Lwow Infantry Brigade, 17th Battalion in Iran and in Italy at Monte Cassino, Fillitrano, Ancona, St. Sofia, Brizigiella, Mount Rado through to Bologna. He was discharged on October 16, 1946.

Post-War: He came to Canada on January 11, 1946, on a 2-year farm contract (Kimball, Hyde Park). He worked at the military hospital (Parkwood) in London. He joined SPK in 1947 and served as Treasurer (1950, 1958) and on the Audit Committee.

Pietrkiewicz, Franciszek

Born: June 13, 1913, in Molodylow-Tlumoc

Died: 2007 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Wojciech, Mother, Maria

Married: Stefania (1921-1974)

Military Rank: Kapral / Corporal

Military Medals: Polish: Krzyz Zaslugi z Mieczami, Medal Wojska, Krzyz Kampanii Wrzesniowej 1939, Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino, British: 1939-45 Star, Africa Star, Italy Star, War Medal, SPK Medals: Silver

Military History: Franciszek served with the 3rd Carpathian Infantry Division, 2nd Corps, and fought at Monte Cassino (wounded), Ortona, Ancona and Bologna. He volunteered with the 1st Sanitary Company (stretcher-bearers) on Hill 593. He was discharged on April 14, 1948.

Piotrowicz, Romualda (Rudnicka)



Born: July 15, 1930, Edebowa Gora, pow. Sarny, Woj. Wolyn, Poland

Died: April 28, 2004 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Brother, Nikodem Rudnicki

Married: Witold Piotrowicz

Children: Krystyna Belusic, Stanislaw

Medals: SPK Medals: Silver, Gold; Zloty Krzyz Zaslugi

History: As a young girl she was deported to Siberia in 1940. After the amnesty, she was sent to Africa.

Post-War: She came to Canada from Africa on August 12, 1949. She served as President of the Ladies' Auxiliary in 1964

Piotrowicz, Witold



Born: March 23, 1923, in Trosiejki, Woj. Nowogródzkie, Poland

Died: June 25, 1990 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Witold; Mother, Stanisława

Married: Romualda (July 15, 1930-April 28, 2004)

Children: Krystyna (February 28, 1952); Stanisław (March 10, 1993)

Military Rank: Strzelec / Rifleman

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyż Walecznych; Medal Wojska; Krzyż Pamiątkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold

Military History: He was deported to Siberia in 1942. He took part in the Italian Campaign and served with the 4th Carpathian Rifle Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps, and fought at Monte Cassino, Ancona and Bologna until demobilized in Predappio, Italy.

Post-War: He arrived in London in 1946 on a 2-year farm contract. He joined SPK and served as Secretary (1958), President (1964) and as a member of the SPK colour party. He was employed at the University of Western Ontario, London.

Piotrowski, Józef

Born: 1921, Woj. Tarnopolskie, Poland

Military Rank: Strzelec / Rifleman

Military Medals: Krzyż Walecznych

Military History: Served with the 4th Carpathian Rifle Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: He was in London, Ontario, by March 2, 1947

Pluta, Monsignor Franciszek Jan



Born: December 24, 1905, in Kocina, Woj. Kieleckie, Poland

Died: January 23, 1990

Family: Father, Jan; Mother, Marianna (Dyn); Siblings: Anna (1898-), Józef (1900-), Stanisław (1902-1970), Andrzej (1910-1969), Katarzyna (1914-1994), Genowefa (1917-2001)

Education: Completed elementary and high school in Kocina and Pinczowo; Attended the Seminary in Luck and studied sociology in Lille, France. He was ordained on January 29, 1933.

Occupation(s): Chaplain

Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyż Komandorski III Klasa; Order Polonia Restituta, Krzyż Komandorski z gwiazdą II Klasa; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold

History: Before the war Father Pluta served in a parish in Rowne in Wolyn, then was a pastor at a new parish in Janów Dolnej. He was arrested by the Soviets on October 7, 1939, and was put in jail and sentenced to death, which was later changed to 15 years of hard labour.

He spent two and a half years in Russian prison camps. After the amnesty in 1941, he was released, joined the Polish Army in Buzuluk and was assigned as chaplain to the 9th division. Later he was assigned as chaplain to Polish orphans who had been evacuated to Balachadi-Jamnagar, India.

Post-War: In 1946 Father Pluta went to the United States, trying to find a home for the orphans, and he established the Chicago Association in Care of the Polish Orphans in India. He managed to have some of the children in India sent to the United States, England and to camps in Africa. The group sent to Africa eventually

made their way to Canada. The stress of his efforts left him in hospital in 1948. Later he was assigned as pastor in Lincoln, Nebraska, U.S.A. In 1953 he moved to London, where he was involved with the building of Our Lady of Czestochowa Church and parish. In 1959, Pope Pius XII appointed him as a prelate. Father Pluta was the chaplain of the Polish Combatant Association of Canada as well as Vice-President of the Canadian Polish Congress. In 1973, at the age of 70, he entered retirement but continued to work at St. Teresa's Church, Etobicoke.

Pluzak, Stanisław



Born: May 1, 1919, in Mlynisko-Debina, pow. Wielun, Woj. łódzkie, Poland

Died: November 20, 2002 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Franciszek; Mother, Marianna

Married: Krystyna (Born 1925; Served with the Ladies' Auxiliary, Treasurer 1968)

Children: Maria Krystyna (March 26, 1951), Ryszard Stanislaw (October 18, 1953), Anita Halina (June 26, 1956), Barbara Teresa (October 15, 1959), Stanislaw Romuald (April 2, 1962)

Military Rank: Private

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Walecznych; Krzyz Zaslugi z Mieczami; Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; Defense Medal; War Medal 1939-45; SPK Medals: Silver, Gold

Military History: In the Soviet Union he was assigned to the 14th Infantry Regiment. Later he served with the 14th Battalion, 5th Wilno Infantry

Brigade, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 2nd Corps.

Post-War: He was on a 2-year farm contract in Thorndale. By January 2, 1948, he was in London, Ontario, where he joined SPK. Stanislaw served as Secretary (1949, 1959), Treasurer (1960 - 1970), President (1949, 1951). He served on the SPK National Executive (1959). He was employed at the Department of Zoology, University of Western Ontario, London.

Pogorzelski, Józef

Born: March 18, 1915, in Ujazd, Poland

Married:

Military Rank: Corporal, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division

Powolny, Jan

Born: December 13, 1917, in Tonia, Poland

Died: April 20, 1987 in London, Ontario, Canada

Married: Romana

Military Rank: Plutonowy / Lance Sergeant

Military Medals: Krzyz Walecznych

Military History: Served with the 3rd Heavy Machine Gun Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps, and was in France and at Monte Cassino, in Italy.

Post-War: He came to Canada from Italy on November 11, 1946.

Poznar, Władysław

Born: April 7, 1912, in Polana, Pow. Leski, Woj. Lwowskie, Poland

Died: May 4, 1996 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Pawel; Mother, Katarzyna

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Walecznych; Krzyz Zaslugi z Mieczami; Medal Wojska; Krzyz Kampanii Wrzesniowej 1939; British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; Defense Medal;

SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold

Military History: After landing in Italy, as a soldier of the 2nd Corps, 11th Signals Battalion (11 Batalion Laczności), he served at the River Sangro, San Angelo, Presco-Camerale, Monte Cassino, Ancona, Forli and Bologna.

Proczek, Wincenty**Born:** September 27, 1908, in Wiatka, Russia**Education:** Completed elementary school and three years at the State Industrial School in Krakow**Occupation(s):** Road building engineer**Married:** Divorced**Military History:** Served with the 2nd Corps.**Post-War:** He joined SPK in July 1946, in Italy. He came to Canada from Italy on June 12, 1947, on a 2-year farm contract.**Przewięda, Tadeusz****Born:** August 2, 1924, in Nowa Grobla, pow. Rohatyński, Czeremchów, Woj. Stanislawowskie, Poland**Died:** May 17, 1976 in London, Ontario, Canada**Education:** Completed Grade 6**Occupation(s):** Driver**Married:** Zofia**Children:** Barbara (January 30, 1961), Teresa (December 15, 1962), Lucy (August 17, 1964)**Military Rank:** Private**Military Medals:** Polish Medals: Medal Wojska; Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold**Military History:** He was deported to Siberia in 1940. After the amnesty, he joined the 2nd Corps in 1942 and served in the Middle East and in Italy as a Private with the 5th Signals Battalion.**Post-War:** He came to Canada on November 12, 1946, and worked on a 2-year farm contract near Strathroy. He joined SPK on February 27, 1947. Tadeusz served as Secretary (1951, 1966) and was a member of the Friends of Polish Scouting.**Przywięda, Władysław (Walter)****Born:** July 22, 1922, in the village of Hrehorów, Pow. Rohatyński, Woj. Stanislawowskie, Poland**Died:** July 22, 2013 in London, Ontario, Canada**Family:** Father, Antoni; Mother, Józefa (Ciągła); Siblings: Wacław (oldest), Tadeusz (1924), Stanisław, Mieczysław, Janina (died during the war)**Education:** Completed elementary school**Married:** Peggy (see Pelagia Przewieda, March 8, 1924 – August 26, 2009)**Children:** Ted (November 24, 1950 – December 25, 1954), Dana (Died February 1952), Dawna (September 13, 1953-), Ted (November 18, 1955-) Mark (November 24, 1962-)**Military Rank:** Private**Military Medals:** Polish Medals: Krzyz Walecznych, Medal Wojska, Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; Defence Medal; War Medal 1939-1945; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver**Military History:** Wladyslaw was taken to Siberia in February 1940. The Russians came to his home in the night and loaded the family onto sleighsand later onto trains. His family did not return from Siberia. They were put in a camp, where Wladyslaw had to cut wood. His sister Janina (May 1941) and his mother Jozefa (April 1941) died from typhus. The conditions were terrible. Wladyslaw often said that "Stalin was worse than Hitler." After the amnesty he joined the Polish Armed Forces on January 23, 1942. He served with the 5th Kresowa Signals Battalion and served from Monte Cassino to Bologna. He was demobilized on November 13, 1946.**Post-War:** Wladyslaw left Naples in 1945 and came to Halifax in Canada on November 12, 1946, on the Sea Robin. He worked near Timmins, in Northern Ontario, in a lumber camp and in 1947 he worked on a farm near Lucan.**Occupation(s):** In London, Wacław worked at General Steel Wares and later at John Labatt's as a machine operator in the bottle department; he worked there for 36 years and retired at 65 in 1982. Wladyslaw was a founding member of SPK in London and helped to build the hall on Ann Street. He served as the hall manager and on the audit committee.

Przybyło, Michał**Born:** November 5, 1913, in Dymitrow-Duży, Woj. Lwowskie, Poland**Occupation(s):** Farmer**Military Rank:** Plutonowy / Lance Sergeant**Military Medals:** Krzyż Walecznych**Military History:** Served with the 3rd Carpathian Rifle Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps**Post-War:** He joined SPK, Branch No. 2, and served as the first Treasurer (1947) and Vice-President (1948)**Puklicz, Tadeusz****Born:** 1922**Died:** January 28, 1975**Married:** Alida**Children:** 4 sons, 2 daughters**Military Rank:** Bombardier**Military Medals:** Polish Medals: Krzyż Walecznych; Medal Wojska; Krzyż Pamiątkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: Africa Star, Italy Star, War Medal**Military History:** Served with the 1st Carpathian Light Artillery Regiment, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps**Post-War:** Tadeusz organized and was President of SPK in Polonia in Utrecht, Holland.

In London, Ontario, he served as President (1973) and as secretary of SPK.

Pupiński, Julian**Born:** January 1, 1917, in Lawykuny, Woj. Wileńskie, Poland**Died:** April 19, 2004 in London, Ontario, Canada**Family:** Franciszek; Mother, Jozefa**Married:** Girzelta**Military Rank:** Corporal**Military Medals:** Polish Medals: Krzyż Brazowy Zasługi z Mieczami; Medal Wojska; Krzyż Kampanii Wrzesniowej 1939; Krzyż Pamiątkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; Defense Medal; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold**Military History:** During the September 1939 Campaign he served with the 3rd Heavy Artillery Regiment, Wilno. Later he served as a Corporal, 2nd Battery, 11th Heavy Artillery Regiment, 2nd Corps, and was in Italy from Monte Cassino, Ancona through to Bologna.**Post-War:** He joined SPK on April 10, 1960.**R****Rawski, Jerzy****Born:** May 22, 1924, in Lwów, Poland**Military Rank:** Served as a Private with the 13th Infantry Battalion, 5th Wilno Infantry Brigade, 2nd Corps.**Post-War:** Joined SPK on December 13, 1970.**Rzeczycki, Józef Michał****Born:** November 17, 1913, in Kolonia Buda, gmina Korłowska, Pow. Postawski, Woj. Wileńskie, Poland**Died:** February 24, 1995 in London, Ontario, Canada**Family:** Father, Władysław; Mother, Emilia**Married:** Helena (1919- April 20, 2000)**Children:** Anna (September 20, 1948)

Military Rank: Private

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Medal Wojska; Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino;

British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; Defense Medal; War Medal 1939-1945;

SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold

Military History: Served as a Driver with the 2nd Corps, 26th Supply Company (Kompania Zaopatrywania), at Monte Cassino, Ancona through to Bologna.

S

Sawicki, Jan

Born: August 15, 1914, in Pojechebic, Woj. Nowógrodzkie, Poland

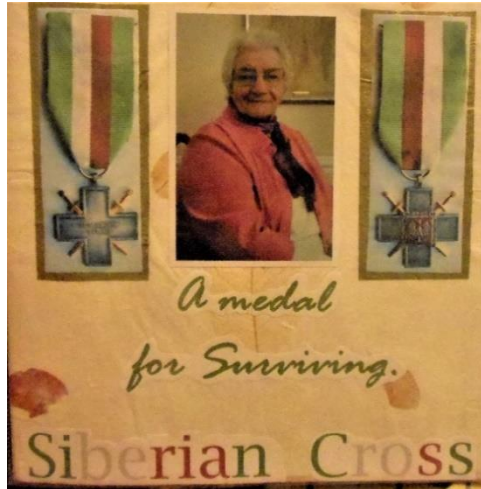
Occupation(s): Farmer

Military Rank: Starszy Szeregowiec / Lance Corporal

Military History: HQ (Ozt?), 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: He was in London, Ontario, by March 2, 1947

Sawicki, Katherine (Katarzyna Tuczyńska)



Born: November 29, 1929, in Suszno, Woj. Tarnopolskie, Poland

Family: Father, Jan Tuczyński; Mother, Maria (Goj Jaworska);

Siblings: Franciszek (eldest), Hanna, Stanisław, Adam, Katarzyna (youngest), half siblings: Marian Jaworski, Jozefa Jaworska Mazur

Education: Katherine was about six years old when she began school and was in third or fourth grade when the Russians deported her, along with her whole family and community, to Siberia. She resumed her schooling at refugee camps in Persia, Karachi, Uganda and England, 1942-1949.

Occupation(s): In Saskatoon, Katherine worked as a seamstress. In Ontario, Katherine first worked in Simcoe on a tobacco farm for three years. In the spring of 1964, she and her family moved to London, where they lived on Grey Street. Katherine worked for Lac-Mac industries, where she sewed uniforms for hospitals. Later, in the 1970's she worked in the dietary department at Westminster Hospital, where her husband also worked.

Married: Waclaw Sawicki (New Year's Eve, 1949 in Saskatoon)

Children: Wanda (1951), Henryk (1954-1961), Stanisław (1956), Marysia (1958) – all born in Saskatoon

Medals: In 2009, Katherine received the Siberian Cross from the Polish Government at their consulate in Toronto for surviving the 1940-1942 Siberian deportation and labour camp, and for upholding forgotten Polish history. She also received a certificate for contributing her survivor testimony to the Virtual Museum of the Kresy-Siberia Organization. The text on the certificate reads as follows: "The Kresy-Siberia Virtual Museum Survivor Interviews project extends deepest appreciation to Katarzyna Tuczyński Sawicki for her courageous and generous participation in preserving the history of the forgotten heroes of WWII, the citizens of Poland's Kresy region."

Katherine also received the SPK Gold Cross as well as the SPK Monte Cassino Pamiatkowy Krzyz.

History: On February 10, 1940, the Russians deported the entire family to Siberia. They came early in the morning with guns and woke the family, giving them only 10 minutes to gather belongings. At the time, her family lived on a large farm in the Bobiatyn Settlement in Tarnopolski province. The Russians took them and other families to the train station and packed them into boxcars, in which they rode for about two weeks to Siberia. They spent two years in Werużonowskiej Posiołek-Ustiański region, Archangelsk, where they were forced to labour in work camps under very difficult conditions.

When the amnesty between the exiled Polish government and Russia occurred, all the imprisoned Poles were freed and allowed to leave Siberia but the departure was very difficult as they had to make their own way out.

Katherine's family had to pull one of the brothers on a makeshift sleigh, as he had badly injured a leg. Those with family members who joined the Polish Army were permitted to travel with them on transport trains, and they

spent two months in boxcars making their way southward toward army gathering points and the border. The Tuczyński family was accepted onto one of the trains. Katherine's mother, Maria, died a day before they reached the border. The train could not wait. The family did not have time to bury their mother and her body was left at the Czok Pak station near Krasnowodzk. An officer told the family that the Red Cross would handle the funeral, as with many others who had died the same way. They reached the Caspian Sea, and sailed to the Persian port of Pahlevi along with thousands of other Poles. A Polish escort and the Red Cross led them off the ship and to a gigantic tent on the shore, where they were told to take everything off. They showered with soap and received new pyjamas and blankets. Their old clothes were burned for the purpose of disinfection. Katherine along with her father and sister came on the first transport and lived in tents in a Polish camp in a suburb of Tehran. Her brothers left to join other Poles in the Allied army. She was twelve years old at the time. From Tehran, she, her father and her sister Hania were sent to Karachi in India, to an area that now belongs to Pakistan. They lived in tents there for four to six months before being sent on to the Koja refugee camp on Lake Victoria in Uganda, Africa. There, Katherine joined the Polish Girl Guides (as a Cub in Tehran and a Girl Guide in Uganda). Katherine's best memories come from Uganda, where she lived in the refugee camp with her father, sister, and thousands of other Poles for almost five years.

Post-War: From Uganda, Katherine, her father, and her sister Hania sailed to England, where they lived for a year. In 1948, Katherine sailed to Canada from England along with her father, Jan (their father's sister was in Saskatoon; she had left Poland in 1929). Hania had married a Polish soldier and they stayed behind in Edinburgh. Katherine and her father sailed to Halifax by ship; from there they reached Saskatoon by train, spending three weeks in third class train cars. They lived in Saskatoon, where she met her husband, Waclaw Sawicki. He had a two-year contract to work on a farm to pay back the cost of his migration to Canada, as did many other soldiers. Katherine's brother Frank also went to Saskatoon, where he too worked on a farm.

When they moved to Ontario, Katherine worked on a tobacco farm near Simcoe. In the spring of 1964, they moved to London, where she worked at Lac-Mac, sewing uniforms for hospitals. Later she worked in the dietary department at Westminster Veteran's Hospital.

Katherine joined SPK in 1967 and volunteered in the SPK kitchen. She was also involved with the Polish Girl Guides and the Catholic Women's League.

Sawicki, Waclaw / Walter



Born: February 14, 1918, in Nowa Wola, pow. Sokólski, Woj. Bialostockie, Poland

Died: March 3, 2008 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Stefan, Mother, Waleria (Sutula)

Married: Katarzyna Tuszynska (1949)

Children: Wanda, Henry (-1962), Stanley, Mary

Military Rank: Bombardier, Promoted to 2nd Lieutenant by the Polish Government in 2005

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Walecznych; Krzyz Zaslugi; Medal Wojska; Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Italy Star, Defense Medal; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold

Military History: In 1940, Waclaw and his family were deported by the Russians to Siberian work camps in Murmansk (Krasnojarsk) and Kamchatka, in the Soviet Union. After the amnesty, those who survived the work camps were freed and most joined the newly forming Polish Army in Uzbekistan in February 1942. Waclaw was assigned to the 2nd Light Artillery Regiment, 3rd Carpathian Rifle Division, 2nd Corps, under General Wladyslaw Anders. He made his way with the army through Tashkent,

Krasnowosk, Camp Khanaqin, and then to Iraq for special training. In 1943, he was moved to Palestine and then Egypt before moving on to Italy and the front on the River Sangro. In April 1944, he served at the Battle of Monte Cassino, and later on the Gothic Line, the Gustav Line, Ancona and Bologna. He was discharged in Predappio on October 10, 1946.

Post-War: Waclaw came to Saskatoon, Canada, in 1946 on a 2-year government farm contract. There he met his future wife, Katarzyna Tuczyńska. He moved to Ontario in 1960. He worked as a tailor at Adelman's Clothing and Tip-Top Tailors. In London, Ontario, he also worked as a tailor in a dry-cleaning plant, and later in the dietary department in Westminster Hospital, now part of Parkwood Hospital. He joined SPK on March 16, 1964.

Sieczynski, Bronisław**Born:** May 8, 1919, in Gmina Złotniki, Pow. Podhajecki, Woj. Tarnopolskie, Poland**Died:** 1991 in London, Ontario, Canada**Married:** Senta (1920-2015)**Military Rank:** Private, 6th Lwow Infantry Brigade, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 2nd Corps.**Post-War:** He joined SPK on March 23, 1963**Siedlecka, Apolonia****Born:** Janowszczyzna, Pow. Sokólski, Woj. Białostockie, Poland**Military Rank:** Corporal, 316th Transport Company: Women's Auxiliary Service, 2nd Corps**Post-War:** She joined SPK on May 24, 1967.**Sierechon, Paweł Piotr****Born:** August 19, 1917, in Szczuczyn, [Gillelapka, Grodno] Woj. Nowogródzkie, Poland**Died:** September 5, 2007 in London, Ontario, Canada**Family:** Father, Jozef; Mother, Michalina**Married:** Jolanta / Julia (June 17, 1924 – November 29, 2015)**Children:** Cathy, Richard**Military Rank:** Sergeant**Military Medals:** Polish Medals: Medal Wojska; Krzyz Pamiatkowy Kampanii Wrzesniowej 1939; Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; SPK Medals: bronze, silver, gold**Military History:** Pawel fought in the September 1939 Campaign in the 2nd Anti-Aircraft Division, Grodno. He joined the Polish Army being formed in the Soviet Union, and in 1943 he finished officer's training in Iraq and obtained the rank of Sergeant First Class. He was assigned to the 8th Medium Anti-Aircraft Regiment of the 2nd Corps and took part in the Italian Campaign from Monte Cassino, Ancona to Bologna.**Post-War:** He lost everything in a fire while living in Manitoba c. 1948. He joined SPK on March 2, 1947; served as Vice-President (1955), President (1956) and on the Polish church building committee.**Siniowski, Michał****Born:** October 2, 1923, in Sałasze, Woj. Lwowskie, Poland**Died:** March 23, 1987 in London, Ontario, Canada**Married:** Krystyna (June 17, 1935 -)**Military Rank:** Private, 7th Lancer's Regiment (Lubelskich), 3rd Carpathian Infantry Division**Military History:** Michael was deported to Siberia in 1940 and joined the 2nd Corps after the amnesty. He served in the Italian Campaign.**Post-War:** He joined SPK on January 12, 1964.**Sokołowski, Eugeniusz****Born:** July 24, 1924, in Ulanowice Rowne, Woj. Wołyńskie, Poland**Occupation(s):** Farmer**Military Rank:** Starszy Strzelec / Lance Corporal**Military Medals:** Krzyz Walecznych**Military History:** Served with the 3rd Carpathian Rifle Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps**Post-War:** He was in London, Ontario, by March 2, 1947.

Sokołowski, Tadeusz**Born:** 1914**Military Rank:** Porucznik/ Lieutenant**Military Medals:** Krzyz Walecznych**Military History:** Served with the 3rd Carpathian Rifle Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps**Post-War:** He came to Canada on a 2-year farm contract and was assigned to a farm near Stratford (Howard Neeb). Tadeusz called the first meeting, which led to the creation of SPK, Branch No. 2, on January 1, 1947; the meeting was held in the Polish hall on Hill Street in London. He served as President (1947, 1948).**Soszka, Stanisław****Born:** August 6, 1913, in Miastkow-Stary, Woj. Warszawskie, Poland**Education:** Grade 5**Occupation(s):** Farmer**Military Rank:** Ułan / Lancer**Military History:** He served with the 7th Lubelski Lancer Regiment, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps**Post-War:** He joined SPK on October 20, 1946, in Italy. He came to Canada November 11, 1946, on 2-year farm contract (O. Negowan, Blyth).**Sroka, Michał****Born:** November 27, 1918, Woj. Lwowskie, Poland**Died:** 1976 in London, Ontario, Canada**Occupation(s):** Farmer, Driver**Military Rank:** Private First Class, 6th Lwow Infantry Brigade, 2nd Corps**Medals:** SPK: Bronze, Silver**Post-War:** He came to London, Ontario in 1947.**Stuzienny, Szczepan****Born:** September 8, 1914, in Konstantynówka, Woj. Tarnopolskie, Poland**Married:** Eugenia**Military Rank:** Private, Transport and Supply, 2nd Corps**Post-War:** He joined SPK on April 11, 1961.

Subocz, Jerzy



Born: February 7, 1916, in Wilejka, pow. Glinne, Woj. Wilno, Poland

Died: 1991

Education: Completed elementary school

Occupation(s): Farmer

Married: Franciszka

Children: Irene (January 28, 1953); George (March 2, 1954)

Military Rank: Private First Class

Medals: SPK: Bronze, Silver, Gold

Military History: He served with the 2nd Corps through the Italian campaign.

Post-War: He came to Canada from Italy on November 11, 1946, on a 2-year farm contract (Carl Hodgins, near London). He joined SPK on January 1, 1947, and served as Secretary (1949).

Szafinski, Jan

Born: 1906

Military Rank: Sierzant

Military History: Served with the 3rd Carpathian Signals Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: He joined SPK, Branch No. 2, in London, Ontario, served as Treasurer (1953) and was a Member of the SPK Building Committee in 1958.

Szczepulski, Leon

Born: February 20, 1920, in Woj. Lwowskie, Poland

Occupation(s): Painter

Military Rank: Starszy Ułan / Lance Corporal

Military History: Served with the 12th Podolian Lancers, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps. He was part of Kazimierz Gurbiel's patrol, which first entered the Monastery on Monte Cassino on May 18, 1944.

Post-War: He was in London, Ontario, by August 17, 1947.

Szpyt (Szpit), Mieczysław

Born: September 9, 1918, in Młodow, Poland

Military Rank: Strzelec / Private

Military History: Served with 5th Carpathian Rifle Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Infantry Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: He came to Canada in 1955 from England. He joined SPK on April 10, 1980.

Szwed, Antoni

Born: September 15, 1918, in Kurki, Woj. Nowogródzkie, Poland

Occupation(s): Farmer

Military Rank: Strzelec / Rifleman

Military Medals: Krzyż Walecznych

Military History: Served with the 4th Carpathian Rifle Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: He was in London, Ontario by March 2, 1947.

Szychta, Jan

Born: September 16, 1919, in Świącany, pow. Jasielski, Woj. Krakowskie, Poland

Education: 5th Grade

Occupation(s): Farmer

Military Rank: Kapral / Corporal

Military Medals: Krzyz Walecznych

Military History: Served with the 4th Carpathian Rifle Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: Jan came to Canada on November 11, 1946, on 2-year farm contract (Hillsie, Hilton Grove).

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Taczynski, Zygmunt

Born: November 22, 1925, in Sitno, Bydgoszcz, Woj. Poznańskie, Poland

Military Rank: Private, 12th Battalion, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division

Post-War: He joined SPK on January 16, 1972.

Talkowski, Leon

Born: May 28, 1909, in Chelmza, Woj. Pomorskie, Poland

Died: September 20, 1995

Family: Father, Pawel; Mother, Leokadia

Education: 5th year of high school (Gimnazjum)

Occupation(s): Bookkeeper as owner of a tax office; owned a butcher shop in Aylmer

Married: Cecilia (Kandulska) (Died 1976)

Military Rank: Corporal

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Medal Wojska; Krzyz Kampanii Wrzesniowej 1939; Odznake Pamiatkowa 2-go Korpusu; British Medals: Italy Star, War Medal 1939-45; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold

Military History: Leon completed officer's training with the Military Police in Grudziadz.

He served in the 2nd Corps at Monte Cassino, with the 17th Military Police Squadron, which was responsible for traffic control. He was taken as a prisoner of war by the Germans. In March 1945 he reported to the American Forces as an escaped POW. He became a Private First Class in the reserves, where he was promoted to Corporal. In England he was in command of a military police unit in Carlisle.

Post-War: He came to Canada to Saint John on March 5, 1952, and then on to London in May 1952. He joined SPK in Italy on October 10, 1946; Leon served as Secretary (1953, 1954), Treasurer (1955, 1956) and Vice-President (1978, 1993). He trained a Soccer Club sponsored by SPK for two years and won the cup in 1954. He served on the initial church building committee, worked to have Father Pluta assigned as pastor to a new parish and worked on the building of a new church. He was the head accountant at the Polish Credit Union and served on its executive.

Tebinka, Stanisław

Born: February 8, 1922, in Dobromil, Woj. Lwowskie, Poland

Education: Completed elementary school

Occupation(s): Farmer

Military Rank: Kapral / Corporal

Military Medals: Krzyz Walecznych

Military History: Served with the 3rd Carpathian Rifle Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division 2nd Corps

Post-War: He joined SPK in Italy on October 20, 1946. Stanisław came to Canada on November 11, 1946, on 2-year farm contract (Robert McMillan, New Hamburg).

Teper, Kazimierz (Casey) Jan



Born: February 1, 1923, in Rabka-Zdroj, pow. Nowy Targ, Woj. Krakowskie, Poland

Died: May 31, 2013 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Brothers, Stanislaw, Franciszek, Wawrzyniec, Jozef, Jan; Sisters, Helena, Adela

Married: Teresa [Born August 12, 1932, in Belweder, Poland; Came to Canada from England in February 1952; Franciszek Betkowski was her father; from 1943-1948 she was in Africa] / Rosie J (Ferris) Gemmell-Teper [1929-]

Children: Richard (August 23, 1953), Anne (September 2, 1954), Yolanda (August 8, 1958)

Military Rank: Private

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Kampanii Wrzesniowej 1939; Polish World War II medals; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold; Krzyz Federacji Swiatowej

Military History: In 1939, he was in air training school in Bydgoszcz. He participated in the Polish Scouting movement. He took part in the September

1939 Campaign and was taken as a prisoner of war. He served in the Polish 2nd Corps in Italy, including at the Battle of Monte Cassino, with the rank of Lance Corporal in Headquarters, Supply Company.

Post-War: He was demobbed on February 3, 1949. He worked in the Post Office Saving Bank in London, England. He came to Canada on February 16, 1952, landing in Halifax and then went on by train to London. In 1953 he was appointed as the representative of the Polish National Treasure for Branch No. 2, and promoted membership in London and area. In 1954 he was one of the founding members of the "Our Lady of Czestochowa Polish London Credit Union," which later became the "Polish London Credit Union." In 1958 he was a director and treasurer of the Polish Credit Union. In 1961-1970, he chaired the Parents' Committee for the Polish School named after Stanislaw Staszic in London. From 1980 to 1990 he was Chair of the Cavalcade Committee for SPK Branch No. 2. He joined SPK in England in 1946. Kazimierz served as Secretary (1970, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1981, 1984), Vice-President (1971, 1972, 1979, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1989), Executive member (1977, 1987, 1988, 1994, 1995), President (1990, 1991, 1996, 1997) and Treasurer (1998, 1999).

Terpin, Bronisław

Born: November 13, 1925, in Wolica, Gmina Poryck, Woj. Wołyńskie Poland

Died: October 10, 2018 in London, Ontario, Canada

Married: Czeslawa (1932-2010) in England in 1952

Children: Teresa, Jadwiga, Dorota, Tadeusz, Stefan

Military Rank: Private

Military Medals: Polish: Medal Wojska, Krzyz Czynu Bojowego 1939-1945; British: Defense Medal; SPK Medals: Bronze

Military History: He was deported with his family on February 10, 1940, to the region of Arkhangelsk. After the amnesty he travelled through Siberia, Kazakhstan, Iran, Iraq and India and spent more than a year in West Africa. He joined the Polish Armed Forces in Egypt in 1944. He trained for the artillery and was assigned to the 14th Wielkopolska Armoured Brigade, 2nd Corps. He arrived in Italy just after the ending of hostilities.

Post-War: He was discharged from the army in England in 1948. He came to Canada from England in 1955 and worked on construction. He joined SPK and served as Secretary.

Toboła, Bronisław

Born: February 24, 1913, in Zadwieja, Woj. Nowogródzkie, Poland

Died: February 25, 1991 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: 2 brothers in Poland

Education: Grade 5

Occupation(s): Farmer

Married: Wanda

Children: Peter (February 26, 1957), Richard (March 22, 1959), Paul (March 27, 1960)

Military Rank: Private First Class, 6th Lwow Infantry Brigade, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 2nd Corps

Medals: SPK: Bronze, Silver, Gold

Post-War: Bronislaw came to Canada on November 23, 1946, on a 2-year farm contract (Denzil Patterson, Belton). He joined SPK on January 1, 1947.

Tomasik, Tadeusz

Born: January 23, 1907, in Sadkowa, Gmina Jasło, Woj. Krakowskie, Poland

Married:

Military Rank: Private First Class, 2nd Rifle Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Infantry Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: He joined SPK on February 19, 1963.

Traczuk, Irena (Czyżyńska)



Born: June 29, 1928, in Poland

Family: Irena was the third of five children. The oldest and youngest were boys. Genowefa (Gienia) was the second born, and Ola, the fourth. Sadly, Irena's biological mother died when she was a small child. Her father remarried.

Married: Włodzimierz Traczuk

History: Hitler attacked Poland on September 1, 1939, and on September 17, the Russian Red Army invaded the eastern borderlands of Poland. In the winter of 1940, Russian soldiers came to Irena's home and forced her entire family out of their home and into cattle cars bound for labour camps in Siberia. Irena's three-year-old brother died in her arms during the weeks-long journey in the coldest of winters. Her elder brother died in the labour camp. Her step-mother also perished that winter.

Ola and Irena were too young to work in logging on the nearby river. However, Gienia toiled daily, waist high in the freezing dangerous river in the midst of floating logs.

Amnesty for the Poles in Siberia was negotiated in 1942 and the three sisters and father were set free. The father joined the Polish Army but caught typhus and died in hospital in Guzar. The sisters made their way southward and were sheltered with other Polish orphans in Persia until the end of the war.

Married: Irena met and married Virtuti Militari hero, Włodzimierz Traczuk, in England on December 26, 1949.

Children: Their first child, Tadeusz, was born in England in on February 3, 1951. Richard (April 6, 1952-), Barbara (July 13, 1953-), and Stanley (August 29, 1959-) were born in London, Canada.

Post-War: The family settled in London, Ontario in 1952. They were staunch supporters and founding members of the Our Lady of Czestochowa Church and the Polish Combatants' Association, Branch No. 2. Irena joined the SPK Ladies Auxiliary and served as President and Secretary (1960). Tadeusz (Ted) followed in his father's footsteps with a career in the construction industry. Richard is still a practising optometrist in London. Barbara joined the order of the Sisters of the Precious Blood. Stanley, who is disabled, lives in a group home in Exeter, near London. Irena still lives peacefully in Westmount Gardens in London, surviving her husband, Włodzimierz, and her two sisters.

Traczuk, Włodzimierz (Walter)



Born: June 4, 1920, in Goździec, Kolomyja, Woj. Stanisławowskie, Poland

Died: April 25, 2004 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Jozef fought in WWI in the Austrian army and was in Russia as a POW; Mother, Helena (Krasnodebska); 4 sisters and 3 brothers.

Education: finished elementary school; attended the state school for wood industries (Państwowa Szkoła Przemysłu Drzewnego) in Kołomyja. He finished these courses, received his diploma and was authorized to work in the building trades. He was also enrolled in military training as a sapper.

Occupation(s): Carpenter

Married: Irena Czyzyska on December 26, 1949

(1928-)

Children: Tadeusz (February 3, 1951), Dr. Richard Joseph Traczuk (April 6, 1952), Barbara (July 13, 1953), Stanislaw (August 29, 1959)

Military Rank: Sergeant

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Virtuti Militari Class V; Brazowy Krzyz Zaslugi z Mieczami; Medal Wojska; Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; Defense Medal; War Medal 1939-1945; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold, Krzyz Federacji Swiatowej

Military History: In September 1939, the local police chief nominated Włodzimerz (Wladek) as the head of a new national defense unit, which consisted of scouts and volunteers. They were to patrol roads and guard bridges. The Red Army reached Gwoździec. Youth started to escape to Romania. Wladek and his brother Marian tried to escape into Romania across a river in Keczapy, but they were caught by the Soviets. When Wladek said that he did not betray his country and he was not a Soviet, the Soviets put them in jail, in Kalczapy. After four weeks they were transferred to a jail in Kolomyja and housed in the former Polish barracks where Wladek had received his military training. There were 200 younger boys in the barracks. Each day they received 200 grams of bread and kipiatak (warm water). They were all hungry and bothered by lice. Later they were taken to Stanisławow, to Lwow, to Tarnopol, and to Wołoczysk. They continued on to Odessa and there they were with 21 others in a cell – they ate potatoes with rotten turnips.

Wladek received a sentence of 5 years of hard labour in a rehabilitation camp. He was taken to Charkow and was given rags and put in a cattle car. They went to a transfer camp in Kotłas. In the winter they slept in shelters which they had built. In November 1940 the weather dipped to -35 degrees Celsius. Out of 16,000 people, only 800 remained. Wladek took sick on December 10, 1940, and was taken to hospital. The doctors were Poles – Wojtulewicz, Tomaszewski, Maciejewski, etc. Wladek could not eat because he had stomach problems and he suffered from scurvy due to a lack of vitamins. The NKWD checked the health of the patients so that they could send the healthy ones back to work, so the doctors kept opening Wladek's wounds so that he looked worse than he was.

On June 22, 1941, the prisoners in Workul learned about the outbreak of war between the Russians and the Germans. Captain Tomaszewski organized transport for 3,000 Poles to Tockoje. In Tockoje, the 6th Lwow Infantry Brigade was being formed. There were 70,000 people, not enough food, no tents; they slept under straw. They were sent to Guzar in Uzbekistan. The Uzbeks were good to the Poles. Wladek was given the function of training new recruits. In the spring of 1942, there was a constant flow of transports of civilians from the north. The sappers were trained in Wiewskoje. The training course ran from March to July. From Wiewskoje they went to Krasnowodzka, a port on the Caspian Sea, crossed to Pahlevi in Persia and then by truck to Khanaouin in Iraq. The Polish Army remained there until 1942. The sappers' training school was in Habbanyia. He passed his sappers' test and was promoted to corporal. He was put in charge of one of the sapper units in the 3rd Carpathian Rifle Division. In the summer of 1943, the 3rd Carpathian Division was sent to Lebanon for mountain training. The Lebanese were friendly towards the Poles and at that time Christians and Muslims managed to live in harmony. Wladek's future

wife, Irena Czyżyńska, was living in Lebanon at that time, near Bierut. Later he was stationed in Palestine, where the soldiers had the opportunity to visit the Holy Land, the Sea of Galilee, the Dead Sea, Nazareth, Bethlehem, Jerusalem and the burial place of Christ.

Later, he was sent to Qassassin, a camp near Cairo, in Egypt, where they were to get their equipment. They trained as an armoured brigade. When the training was finished they sailed to Italy, to the port of Taranto. In March, the Poles took over the front on the Sangro River.

On April 17, they were moved to the Gustav line at Monte Cassino, which blocked the road to Rome. The sappers removed obstacles and built shelters and observation posts. The first assignment for the 6th company was to build positions for observers for the mortars and defenses for the artillery. The road to these defenses became known as the road of the Polish Sappers since so many were killed on them. The Poles took Monte Cassino. They had a week to rest and then moved on to the region of Riccia. The 2nd Polish Corps then moved along the Adriatic to Ancona, Pesaro, Rimini, Forti and Bologna. Wladek was wounded. He had crushed ribs, a crushed left hand and tears in his legs. Wladek was taken to a field hospital in Domigliano. He was awarded the Virtuti Militari medal and was promoted to a full Corporal. He was then attached to an artillery brigade in the town of Corinaldo, near Pesaro on the Adriatic, where the Fascists were conducting a fierce defense. In the winter the front moved to the Apennines, where it was cold. The sappers had to disengage mines, build roads and repair roads. Then they headed for Bologna. They decided to build a bridge at the most useful entrance. Wladek directed the building of the bridge. That was the first bridge built during the Bologna offensive. All the Allied forces wanted to reach Bologna first, as that would give them the glory of victory. This was the bloodiest battle that the Polish 2nd Corps had fought since Monte Cassino. This is the location of the fourth and last Polish military cemetery in Italy, with over 1,400 graves. The Poles entered Bologna first. The war in Europe was almost over. Many Polish soldiers were able to finish their



schooling and attend universities and colleges in Italy. New people kept arriving and joining the Polish army. Wladek kept training new units in disabling mines. He then worked for the 8th Army, surveying bridges and identifying them on maps. They also confiscated arms and ammunition that the communists were using to terrorize Italians in Northern Italy.

Post-War: The 2nd Corps was shipped back to England. Several thousand Polish soldiers were sent to Canada on 2-year farm contracts. Wladek left on one of the last transports travelling through Austria, Germany and France to the Colinswood camp near Cheltenham in Gloucestershire, in the south of England, arriving there in June 1946. He met his future wife, Irena Czyżyńska, there. He was transferred to the camp in Chickendon, where he joined the resettlement corp. In July 1951, they sailed from Southampton and two weeks later they were in Canada—a fresh start. He found work in St. Thomas as a carpenter for a firm building schools.

He joined SPK in 1955 and served as Vice-President (1960) and President (1961, 1974).

Troc, George

Born: May 10, 1927, in Tarnowatka, Poland

Married: Wanda

Military Rank: Private First Class

Military History: George was a member of the Polish Home Army (AK) and took part in the Warsaw Uprising, after which he was taken prisoner and placed in Stalag 17. He joined the 2nd Corps in Italy.

Post-War: He came to Canada from England in 1947. He joined SPK on September 18, 1983.

Trybuś, Stanisława (Marzec)



< Antoni and Stanisława, First Communion

Born: August 3, 1934, in Burdykowczynna, Woj. Nowogródzkie, Poland

Family: Father, Piotr (he was a settler on land given to former soldiers by Marshall Pilsudski); that is where he met his wife, Anna (Bajdun), and they raised their family.

Children: Marysia (served in the army); Bronislaw (served in the army); Janina; Tadeusz; Antoni; Stanisława; Ludwig.

Education: Completed school in Kenya and courses to become a seamstress in England.

Married: Paweł Trybuś on July 26, 1952, in Redditch, England

Children: Wiesława Helena, Krystyna, Anna, Peter and Barbara

Medals: SPK Medals - Silver

History: Stanisława was five years old when a group of Russian soldiers came to their house on February 10, 1940. The family was instructed to pack and leave their home in half an hour. They were very frightened and uncertain

about what was going to happen to them. One of the Russians advised Mother to pack warm clothes. When they arrived at the train station, they saw the same thing was happening to their neighbours. Specifically, all the Poles that had served at one time in the army were targeted for this deportation to Russia. Stryjek (an uncle on Father's side), who came from Szedletz (Krakowia area) to help Father work the land was not deported since he had not served in the army.

At that time the children were aged as follows: Marysia - 16; Bronek - 13; Jasia - 12; Tadek - 8; Antek - 9; Stasia - 5; and Baby Ludwig - 2. While waiting at the train station to see what would happen next, Stryjek brought the family a bag of bread. They waited for 3 days before they were loaded onto boxcars and travelled for two weeks to Siberia. An interesting fact was that the rail gauge was different for the Polish tracks than for the Russian ones, so the boxcars had to be modified before they could be sent towards Russia. At Szynuga, Siberia, the people were segregated to different areas of Siberia. The Marzec family was sent to a camp that was 100 km away from Szynuga. There were no roads to this camp, so they travelled by sleigh across the frozen rivers. At the camp, there were only two barracks, so there was extreme overcrowding. If you got up in the night, your place was taken over by the others sleeping on the floor. There were no guards at the camp since there was nowhere to run if you did try to escape. Mother had packed some clothes and these were exchanged for food with the people who lived there.

In Siberia the two older siblings and the parents were forced to cut down trees for lumber. Father cut the trees down, mother pulled up the roots and the two older children dragged the lumber to the river. Jasia looked after the younger siblings and prepared food for the family. They received very little food – 3 potatoes for soup and 200 grams of bread each. Father and Marysia became very sick. They were able to write a letter to their family back in their hometown in Poland, and medicine arrived via mail to cure Marysia. The family survived thanks to mother, Anna, truly a resourceful woman.

During the summer, they picked berries to supplement their meager rations on the advice of a kind Russian woman. She advised mother to pick and dry the berries for winter use. Mother was fluent in Russian so she was able to communicate with her. During the summer, the captives built two more barracks. The family spent a total of two years there.

After the amnesty was declared in 1941 and the Polish Army was being formed, the family was allowed to leave the camp. It was a very difficult decision to leave for the unknown, with small children. The Russian government gave an allowance to families with more than seven children; this allowed the Marzec family the funds to travel out of Russia. They hired a man with a horse and sleigh, since it was early spring, then travelled via train. It was a very glorious day when they had the very first mass said by a priest in the train car. One other passenger in that car had a picture of Matka Boska (the Virgin Mary) that she had kept hidden since she had left Poland. It turns out that they were on the same car as Mieczysław Kaminski (the future pastor of Our Lady of Czestochowa Church) since it was his mother's icon, which he still has to this very day.

While travelling, Tadek had to be left behind in Poludniu, Russia, as he was very sick with dysentery and the family had to move on to the next location.



< Family Photo in Africa

They made it to Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Father and Broniek joined the army at this point. Father had to stay in the hospital until he was well enough to join the army whilst the rest of the family traveled to Tehran via Krasnavotz and Pahlevi. They eventually made it to Tehran, which was a British colony at the time. The Shah opened up his gardens to the refugees. It was truly a paradise after what they

had been through. Marysia worked as a nurse at a hospital. She joined the Polish Army and went to serve in Italy. Mother and the younger children were to keep travelling. They crossed the sea to Mumbai, Pakistan, and from there they went to Camp Tengeru in Kenya.

This refugee camp became their home for six years. They were no longer hungry as bananas and fruit were plentiful. There was a vibrant Polish community, which built a church and schools. They lived in mud huts with grass roofs. After three years Tadek was located by the Red Cross and rejoined the family at this point. He had survived! It was nothing short of a miracle that the entire Marzec family had survived the war.

Post-War: From Kenya they travelled to England and arrived on July 10, 1948, where the whole family was reunited in Camp Mepal, outside Redditch. Stanislawa was re-acquainted with her father after being separated from him for eight years. In Camp Mepal, conditions were difficult after the war and everything was rationed. Her sisters, Jasia and Marysia, met their husbands at the camp. Broniek was living in Scotland, where he met Pawel Trybus. He invited Pawel to come to Camp Mepal to spend Christmas with the family since he was all alone. This is how Stanislawa and Pawel first met. They were married in 1952, in Redditch.

A few years later, in 1957, Pawel came to Canada for employment. Stanislawa and their two daughters, Helena and Krystyna, arrived soon after. She insisted on stability for their children as she did not have that during her own childhood. They lived in Brantford for approximately two years and then moved to London. Stanislawa worked at Northern Electric, where they made telephones. She later worked at Child and Parent Resource Institute (CPRI) as a dietary aid until she retired.

Stanislawa and Pawel raised a family of five children, Helen (Andrzej), Krystyna (Henry John), Anna (Nick), Peter (Yoko) and Barbara. They had ten grandchildren, David, Krystyna, Janene (Philip), Katrina, Megan, Nick, Elizabeth, Catherine, Amy, and Kohana, and one great grand-daughter, Harriet.

U

Urbanowicz, Jan

Born: December 21, 1922, in Wiele, pow. Chojnice, Woj. Pomorskie, Poland

Died: September 6, 1997 in London, Ontario, Canada

Married: Stefania [Born February 5, 1922, in Poland, Came to Canada in September 1957 from England]

Children: Aleksander (September 26, 1949), Henryk (May 28, 1955)

Military Rank: Private

Military Medals: British Medals: War Medal 1939-1945; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold

Military History: He attended military cadet school in Gdynia. He was 16 when the German navy started to shell Gdynia and Sopot. He was caught by the Germans sniping from a local church steeple. His father somehow

managed to get him out of prison. Later he made it to Italy and served with the 15th Supply Company (15-tej Dywizyjnej Kompanii Zaopatrzenia), 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 2nd Corps from Ancona to Bologna in Italy.
Post-War: He joined SPK on March 20, 1960.

Usewicz, Bronisław

Born: March 17, 1914, in Polarzy, Poland

Family: Brother, Jan

Military Rank: Corporal, 13th Wilno Rifle Battalion, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 2nd Corps

W

Watras, Stanisław

Born: January 28, 1918, in Stara-Wies, pow. Lubartow, Woj. Lubelskie, Poland

Family: Mother, Bolesława

Education: Completed elementary school

Occupation(s): Carpenter

Military Rank: Private

Military History: Served in a signals' unit with the 17th Lwowski Rifle Battalion, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 2nd Corps.

Post-War: He came to Canada on a 2-year farm contract (G.J. Kaiser, Lambeth). He joined SPK on January 1, 1947.

Wiącek, Tadeusz



Born: March 1, 1922, in Szubków, pow. Rówieński, Woj. Wołyńskie, Poland

Occupation(s): Mechanic

Military Rank: Starszy Szeregowiec / Lance Corporal

Military History: Served with the 13th Supply Company, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: He was in London, Ontario, by November 2, 1947.

Wicki, Władysław

Born: June 9, 1924, in Tuchlinko, Woj. Pomorskie, Poland

Education: Elementary school

Occupation(s): Farmer

Military Rank: Strzelec / Private

Military History: Served with the 7th Carpathian Rifle Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: Władysław came to Canada on November 20, 1946.

Wieckowski, Antoni

Born: March 5, 1913, in Lwow, Poland

Died: April 13, 1987

Married: Janina

Military Rank: Private First Class, 2nd Corps

Post-War: Joined SPK on February 19, 1960.

Więckowski, Antoni**Born:** September 19, 1907, in Wielkie-Zozulinca, Poland**Died:** April 14, 1987**Military Rank:** Kapitan / Captain**Military Medals:** Krzyz Walecznych**Military History:** Served with 3rd Carpathian Heavy Machine Gun Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Infantry Division, 2nd Corps**Wieckowska, Natalia (Busko)****Born:** Mir, Pow. Stołpecki, Woj. Nowogródzkie, Poland**Died:** 1995**Family:** Father, Dymitr; Mother, Anna (Jermakowicz)**Married:****Military Rank:** Subaltern (ATS), Polish Forces, September 25, 1942, to May 6, 1947**Military Medals:** Polish Medals: Medal Wojska; Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino**British Medals:** 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; Defense Medal; War Medal 1939-45**Military History:** Natalia was deported by the Russians to the USSR in 1940. After crossing the Soviet-Iranian frontier, she joined the Polish Women's Auxiliary Corps and came under British command. She served in the Middle East, 1942-1944, Italy, 1944-1946, and the United Kingdom, 1946-1948, until finally she relinquished her commission on emigration to Canada. She took part in the Italian Campaign from April 26, 1944, to May 4, 1945.**Wieczorek, Felicjan****Born:** December 24, 1917, in Sarnowiec, Woj. Kieleckie, Poland**Military Rank:** Lieutenant**Military History:** Fought in the infantry, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps, at Monte Cassino**Post-War:** He was an early member of SPK and was on a two-year farm contract. He lived near Parkhill.**Wiśniewski, Jan****Born:** March 1, 1913, in Goslawice, Pow. Nieszawa, Woj. Warszawskie, Poland**Died:** October 3, 2005 in London, Ontario, Canada**Family:** Father, Andrzej; Mother, Regina**Education:** Completed elementary school**Married:** Anna [Born November 11, 1921, in Kosow-Poleski, Poland; came to Canada from Germany on May 7, 1949; Died August 22, 2019]**Military Rank:** Plutonowy / Lance Sergeant**Military Medals:** Polish Medals: Krzyz Walecznych; Medal Wojska; Krzyz Kampanii Wrzesniowej 1939; Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Africa Star; Italy Star; Defense Medal; War Medal 1939-45; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold**Military History:** In 1936-1937 he served as a Private First Class with the 14th Infantry Regiment in Wroclawek. After officer training he was assigned to the Border Defense Guards. He took part in the September 1939 campaign and then escaped through Romania, Greece, Turkey and on to Syria, where he served with the Independent Carpathian Brigade (4th Rifleman's Batalion) and fought in the Libyan Campaign and the Battle of Tobruk in 1941. He was a Corporal at Monte Cassino with the 4th Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Infantry Division. He served in the Italian Campaign at the River Sangro, Monte Cassino, Ancona (Gothic Line), Apennines, Senio River to Bologna.**Post-War:** He came to Canada on April 30, 1947. Upon arrival in Canada, he worked at St. Peter's Seminary. He joined SPK on August 20, 1946, in Italy. In London he served on the church building committee and as SPK Vice-President (1977).

Wiszniowski, Philip**Born:** July 5, 1921, in Śniatyn, Woj. Stanisławowskie, Poland**Married:** Pauline**Military Rank:** Bombardier, 10th Heavy Artillery Regiment, 2nd Corps**Post-War:** Philip came to Canada on a 2-year farm contract near Mossley, Ontario. He joined SPK on March 6, 1961.**Witkowski, Józef****Born:** August 24, 1919, in Nowy Antonin, Woj. Lubelskie, Poland**Occupation(s):** Farmer**Military Rank:** Strzelec / Private**Military History:** Served with the 2nd Carpathian Rifle Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps**Post-War:** He completed a 2-year farm contract in Massey, Ontario.**Wołczyk, Michał****Born:** May 28, 1919, in Białohusza, Pow. Stolin, Woj. Poleskie, Poland**Died:** October 1, 2012 in London, Ontario, Canada**Family:** Father, Filip, was a forester working for Count Potocki; Mother, Anna / Helena (Polkoszko); Siblings: two sisters; Alicja was the youngest, Jakub**Education:** Finished elementary school in Polesie**Married:** Rozalia (1949; March 29, 1924-)**Children:** Danuta (November 17, 1951), Janusz (December 16, 1952), Maria (May 7, 1962), Stanislaw (February 6, 1965)**Military Rank:** Starszy Ulan / Private**Military Medals:** Polish: Krzyz Walecznych, Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British: 1939-45 Star, Italy Star, Defense Medal; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold**Military History:** Michał and his family were deported to Siberia on February 10, 1940, perhaps because the father worked for the Potockis. He was sent out by train in which a stove in the middle of the boxcar provided the only heat and a hole in the floor served for a toilet. They lived in a camp in the woods. He knew Russian. The Russians treated everyone in the same way - 300 grams of bread.

After the amnesty he went to Dzabat in Uzbekistan and joined the Polish army in 1942. With the army he travelled to Tehran in Persia. He served at Monte Cassino as a lancer with the 12th Podolian Lancers in the Polish 2nd Corps. He was involved in scaling Monte Cassino to get at the Germans who were on top of the mountain, shooting down on them. He served throughout Italy and on to Ancona and Bologna. Later he was assigned to the 7th Lublin Lancers.

Post-War: In 1946, he went to England, where he lived in a camp at Bowerwood; this is where he met his future wife. They lived in "beczki smiechu" or barrels of laughs, and were discharged on January 16, 1948. In 1953, Michał and his wife Rozalia left England for Canada along with their two children. They came to London and lived on Sanders Street. Michał's father's sister already lived here. Mieczyslaw Gawor, Rozalia's brother, also lived here. Michał worked for 35 years in a factory that made cardboard boxes.

Joined SPK: 1954; Michał was here for the opening of the SPK hall and served as a standard bearer for 30 years.

Wolczyk, Rozalia (Gawor)



Born: March 24, 1924, in Kolonia Stanislawówka, pow. Sokalski, Woj. Lwowskie, Poland

Died: February 9, 2020 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Franciszek Gawor; Marianna (first husband died - Struzik) Gawor (nee Camot)

Children from the 1st marriage: Franciszek, Aniela, Wladyslaw. From the 2nd marriage: Jozef (oldest), Rozalia, Mieczyslaw (youngest), Stanislaw (Jan was a twin but he died at 6 months)

Education: Grade 6 in Stanislawowce; in Africa, the British Red Cross offered classes and she studied to become a tailor. She completed 12th grade English at Wheable Collegiate in London and took a 4-month course in translation for Poles at Western University.

Married: See "Wolczyk, Michał"

Children: See "Wolczyk, Michał"

SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold

History: On February 10, 1940, the Russians took millions of Poles to

Siberia. A second round-up took place in April, at which time the family was sent by train to Archangelsk. The last 200 km were on foot through the forest. In the boxcar on the train there was a small stove and a hole in the floor for a toilet. They travelled for three weeks to reach the station at Rowdzin. There were 75 boxcars in the train and in each box car there were about 50 people. They were starving. People were dying like flies. Rozalia's two sisters, Zosia and Kasia, died on the train. The dead bodies were thrown out of the boxcar.

In the woods they had to make shelters out of wood, and that is where they lived. They burned wood for heat. At night you could see the shining eyes of wolves in the forest. The wolves were afraid of the fire, and Rozalia's father scared them away. There were already some buildings at their final destination. They had been built in 1935 to house Ukrainians. Only two Ukrainian men survived. There were 100 people in each building, and they slept on the floor since there were no beds. Later the Poles made beds out of grass.

They worked every day. Her brother cut wood. There was a lot of snow and you had to dig out the lower branches to cut them. They had to throw the branches in the huge bonfires in the forest. Rozalia was only 16 and did not have the strength for the work. They all came down with smoke blindness. They spent three years in Siberia with 30 grams of bread for those who worked and nothing for those who did not. After three years they learned that they were being set free and could return home, except most had no homes to return to. Those who wanted to stay, could do so. Again Rozalia, her father, mother, brothers and sisters travelled 200 km to the train station. Her brother Wladyslaw had cancer and died. He was buried in his own grave under a tree, rather than in a mass grave. Michał, the husband of her sister Aniela, joined the Polish army. Her brothers joined the 'Junaks' – cadets. Brothers Jozef and Franciszek joined the Polish Army and fought at Monte Cassino. Franciszek was a sapper.

At the train station there was a huge hall where they could warm up. It was wall-to-wall people. Some even slept outside, up against the wall. Down the tracks they found an old boxcar. They put a stove inside it. The Gawor family moved into the boxcar. They tried to kill off the lice by boiling their clothes. They couldn't get onto any trains because these were all full of Russian soldiers on their way to the front. After a while their boxcar was attached to a train and they travelled to Uzbekistan. There they were sent to work on farms. They had to carry manure in bags to the fields. They did this all day long. They didn't get paid; they just received some food. They lived in mud huts. Their father went to join his sons who were in the army. They crossed the river Bystra. They arrived at Dzalabat, where the Polish army was being formed. There was no running water, just a stream. They needed someone to wash clothes. Rozalia volunteered. The soldiers travelled to Egypt with the army. Franciszek worked in a cotton factory and got a ration book, which allowed him to buy bread. They crossed the Black Sea and went to Pahlevi in Persia. There they had to throw their old clothes in a fire and have a disinfecting shower. They were given fat lamb to eat. Everyone was sick with dysentery. A lot of them died. A young boy was so sick that he couldn't eat so he gave his share to Rozalia. They lived for a year in Tehran. Not far away there was an American base. They gave them soup.

From Tehran they went to Africa. They were in Africa for 7 years. There Rozalia attended a tailor's school and learned to sew. Life was good in Africa although there was little bread. Africans don't eat bread but eat a lot of

bananas, figs, corn, pineapples and coffee. While in Africa, Rozalia caught malaria. It was so hot that you could not walk without shoes.

Post-War: In 1948 they went from Africa to England. Rozalia was in England for 5 years, until 1953. In 1953 she left England with her husband and two children. In London, Ontario, she went to the employment office and the only available job paid 50 cents per hour. She took the job and right away earned a dollar at Lac-Mac, where she worked as a seamstress. She worked there for 26 years.

Rozalia helped to raise money for the SPK building. In 1961 she was the first President of the Ladies Auxiliary. Rozalia and her husband also helped build the Our Lady of Czestochowa Church in London, Ontario.

Woszczyński, Tytus

Born: May 13, 1894, in Kamieniec Podolski, Woj. Podolia, Poland

Education: Business school

Occupation(s): Bookkeeper

Married: His wife was in the Polish Women's Corps, 2nd Corps

Children: His son was in the Polish navy and studied at Nottingham University. When he came to Canada he had to work on farms, earning about \$3.00 a day.

Military Rank: Staff Sergeant, 2nd Corps

History: His family had been exiled to Siberia and he joined the 2nd Corps after the amnesty.

Post-War: Tytus came to Canada in August 2, 1948, along with his wife and son. He came under a farm program sponsored by Canadian Pacific Rail. With the help of the CPR, he acquired a farm near Blyth, Ontario. He and a few friends bought the farm for \$6,000 and a loan of \$2,500. There were no other Polish families near the farm, but they were welcomed by the local Catholic parish and their pastor. They visited and brought preserves, potatoes and other essentials. With their help he was able to sponsor several other families from the Polish 2nd Corps in England.

Z

Zablocki, Bohdan Antoni

Born: April 12, 1911, in Warsaw

Military Rank: Lieutenant, 22nd Transport Company (Artillery Supply Company), 2nd Corps

Post-War: He joined SPK on July 1, 1960.

Zaborowski, Kazimierz

Born: January 20, 1916, in Wanagiszki, Gmina Plusy, Pow. Braślowski, Woj. Wileńskie, Poland

Died: 1999 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Kazimierz; Mother, Albina (Zdzierug)

Married: Georgina (1914-1981)

Military Rank: Private

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Brazowy Krzyz Zaslugi z mieczami; Medal Wojska; Krzyz Kampanii Wrzesniowej, Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; Defense Medal; War Medal 1939-45; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver

Military History: In 1939, Kazimierz served with the 85th Infantry Regiment and was involved with the defense of Piotrkow. His unit was wiped out at Radom. He was deported by the Soviet Security Police (NKVD) to do slave labour in the USSR from 1939/40. After the amnesty, he joined the Polish forces at Buzuluk, then travelled to Tashkent, Krasnovodsk, Tehran and Kirkuk. He crossed the Soviet-Iranian frontier with the newly formed Polish forces and served in the Middle East (Iran, Iraq, Palestine, Egypt) from 1942-1944. In Italy he served with the 16th Lwow Rifle Battalion, 6th Lwow Infantry Brigade, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 2nd Corps from February 2, 1944, to May 2, 1945. Kazimierz saw action on the River Sangro and River Rapido, Monte Cassino, the Gustav-Hitler line, Adriatic Coast, Ancona, Gothic Line, Northern Apennines, River Senio, Bologna and on the Plain of Lombardy.

Post-War: He immigrated to Canada on November 11, 1946, on a 2-year farm contract. On February 25, 1999, Kazimierz Zaborowski sent a letter from Parkwood Hospital to SPK with the following request: "Since I have no immediate relatives in the London area and knowing that it is a common custom of the Combatants to be pall-

bearers at a member's funeral, I am sending you this letter to let you formally know that it is my wish that you do so, and to thank you beforehand."

Zadrożny, Zbigniew

Born: September 9, 1922, in Warsaw, Poland

Family: Father, Boleslaw, Mother, Wanda

Married: Veronica (Matthysse)

Military Rank: Corporal

Military Medals: Krzyz Walecznych, Medal Wojska, Krzyz Pamiatkowy Armii Krajowej; Krzyz Powstanczy; Krzyz Partyzancki

Military History: Zbigniew served in the Polish Home Army (AK) from 1943 to 1944 and took part in the Warsaw Uprising in 1944 (pseudonym "Tajmir") as a member of the Motorized Company "Iskra." When he was wounded, he was taken prisoner and spent from October 1944 to April 1945 in a prisoner of war camp – Stalag 318 VIII F, Lansdorf. After liberation he served in the 16th Lwów Infantry Brigade, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 2nd Corps until March 1948.

Post-War: He came to Canada from Venezuela on February 10, 1991.

Żankowski, Tadeusz

Born: August 28, 1918, in Śniatyn, Woj. Stanisławowskie, Poland

Family: Mother, Katarzyna (lived in Boston, U.S.A.)

Education: Completed elementary

Occupation(s): Blacksmith, Farmer

Military Rank: Bombardier

Military History: Served with the 3rd Carpathian Light Artillery Regiment, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: He joined SPK on July 20, 1946, in Italy. Tadeusz came to Canada on November 11, 1946, on a 2-year farm contract (McKinley). He may have moved to St. Catharines, Ontario in May 1969.

Zarucki, Emeryk

Born: May 21, 1919, in Rokitno, Borowina, Woj. Wołyńskie, Poland

Died: May 25, 1992 in London, Ontario, Canada

Family: Father, Piotr; Mother, Aniela

Married: Mary (1929-)

Military Rank: Private First Class

Military Medals: Polish Medals: Krzyz Walecznych; Medal Wojska; Krzyz Pamiatkowy Monte Cassino; British Medals: 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; War Medal 1939-1945; SPK Medals: Bronze, Silver, Gold

Military History: Emeryk served with the 4th Carpathian Rifle Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Infantry Division in Italy from the River Sangro to Monte Cassino, Ancona, Gothic Line, Apennines; River Senio and Bologna.

Post-War: Joined SPK: February 23, 1959; Emeryk served as Vice-President (1968, 1969, 1977, 1978)

Zawadzki, Jan

Born: May 15, 1908, in Delejów, pow. Wojew, Woj. Stanisławowskie, Poland

Family: "Father, Mother, Brother, Sister – don't know where any of them are now."

Education: Grade 4

Occupation(s): Bricklayer, Driver, Mechanic

Military Rank: Private First Class, 6th Lwów Infantry Brigade, 2nd Corps

Post-War: Jan came to Canada in November 1946 on a 2-year farm contract (Parkhill). He joined SPK and served as Librarian (1951, 1952, 1953, 1954).

Zmudczynski, Władysław

Born: October 4, 1924, in Komorsk, pow. Swieckie, Woj. Pomorskie, Poland

Education: Completed elementary school

Military Rank: Private, 3rd Carpathian Rifle Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: Wladyslaw came to Canada October 10, 1946, on a 2-year farm contract (Parkhill). He joined SPK in 1946.

Zolotar, Piotr

Born: January 18, 1909, in Wasilewszczyzna, Pow. Wołóżyński, Woj. Nowogródzkie, Poland

Education: Completed elementary school

Occupation(s): Carpenter

Military Rank: Plutonowy / Lance Sergeant

Military History: Served with the 3rd Carpathian Signals Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division, 2nd Corps

Post-War: Piotr came to Canada on November 12, 1947, on a 2-year farm contract (Milton Watson, St. Thomas).



Monument to Polish Veterans, London, Ontario, Canada