## THE "OLD COUNTRY" MEETS THE INTERNET

Websites from Eastern Europe to help with your genealogical research

Presentation by Denise Kolesar
SGGEE Seminar "Grow Your Family Tree"
August 16-18, 2019

2019 SGGEE Seminar "Grow Your Family Tree" presentation by Denise Kolesar

We have a number of really great sites here in Canada and the US. Library and Archives Canada (<a href="http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/Pages/home.aspx">http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/Pages/home.aspx</a>), and Manitoba Vital Statistics (<a href="https://vitalstats.gov.mb.ca/Query.php">https://vitalstats.gov.mb.ca/Query.php</a>) and Alberta Vital Statistics at the Provincial archives there are great local sites with a lot of information. For more global sites - FamilySearch.org (<a href="https://www.familysearch.org/">https://www.familysearch.org/</a>) is great, it is free and they have great source records. If you have a subscription to Ancestry (<a href="https://www.ancestry.com/">https://www.ancestry.com/</a>) or <a href="https://www.ancestry.com/">https://www.ancestry.com/</a>) or <a href="https://www.ancestry.com/">https://www.ancestry.com/</a>) or <a href="https://www.ancestry.com/">https://www.ancestry.com/</a>) are other great sites.

One thing to mention up front – I will not be showing you the EWZ records (Einwandererzentralstelle). The SGGEE has some great resources for this, among others. This series includes personal information on more than 2 million individuals processed by the Immigration Center, a central German authority for the immigration and naturalization of qualified ethnic Germans for Reich citizenship during the period 1939-1945

Now on to some housekeeping before we start!



Get an anti virus program – I cannot stress this enough. Just like you wouldn't go to on a trip without locking your house, don't go web browsing in eastern Europe or anywhere for that matter without your antivirus. Trust me on this! Here are 2 good free ones, but there are others like AVG and Zonealarm.

BitDefender Free - https://www.bitdefender.com/solutions/free.html Avast AntiVirus Free - https://www.avast.com/en-ca/free-antivirus-download

## BACKUP YOUR FILES!!! and make sure you keep backing them up

- · Google drive, iCloud and dropbox are not backups
- Purchase an external drive and ensure you backup your hard drive and detach it from your PC. This way if you get infected with a virus or worse, you still have your files. For smaller drives, just use a USB drive
- · Backup your phone as well

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I use a Western Digital hard drive, but Seagate and others are good as long as you use it They are always on sale somewhere – a good 1TB drive will cost you around \$60 or \$70. On average, a 64gb flash drive can hold 2000 photos along with 2 hours of video and still have room for the 30,000 person database from your genealogical program

Detach the drive from your PC as soon as your backup is done, s if you catch a virus your backup drive will get the virus as well. While you are at it, backup your phone to your computer and then include that in your backup.

I subscribe to a 3-2-1 backup or a grandfather backup for us genealogists. This means you have a current backup, a last before current backup and another one stored off site. This is an ideal backup situation.

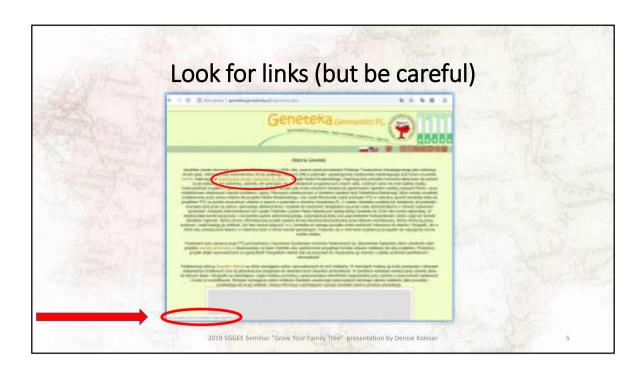
## WATCH YOUR EMAILS AND LINKS!!! don't open everything you see .

- The Tsar's 6<sup>th</sup> times removed cousin and his family do not need your help. That goes for Nigerian princes, soldiers from Afghanistan, etc, etc.
- If a person you know sends you an email you are not expecting, use your mouse to hover over any links in the email to ensure it is valid or send them a new email asking if they sent you a file.

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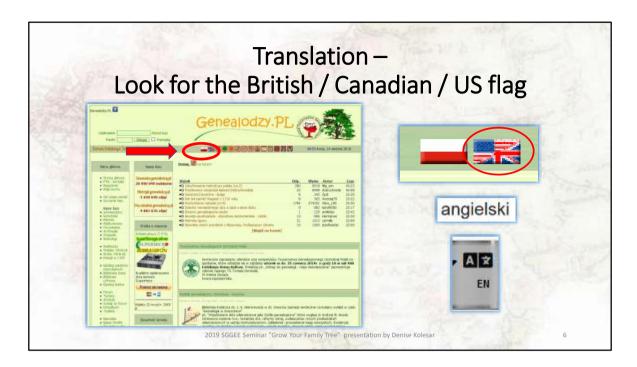
ives can he

Watch for emails that are unsolicited. Even emails from friends and relatives can be hijacked so hover over the links to ensure you are going to the correct sight.



Instead of just clicking on a link, hover over it with your mouse, look at the explanation and at the lower left to see where that link will take you. If you are not sure, open a new web page, and into the search box, type in the web page - to see what your search engine says about the webpage.

This goes for all websites, not just ones from Europe. If you hover over a link that says it is taking you to ancestry.ca and at the bottom it says the link is to "givemeyourmoney.org" I wouldn't click it and I would not go on the website where that link was found again.



Quite a number of websites have an english "button" which is usually a British or US or Canadian flag or sometimes the local word for english as in 'angielski" or just EN may appear.

In some websites the "english" button is only for the first page and you will have to muddle and translate your way through the website – this is where a web page translator is really helpful. Also sometimes when you use the 'English' button, the website does not have the same information or links. So be mindful of this.

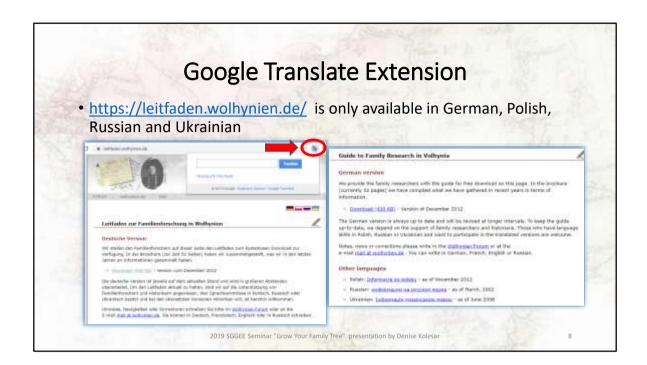


For some of us that are not fluent in our ancestor's tongue (myself included) we have to rely on translators. There are a few out there on the internet, they do not take the place of a human translator. They might not pick up on the idioms and other terms that humans use. Do not use this to write a letter to a relative you may say some unfortunate things that you do not mean to. If you have no choice to use this for letter writing, make sure you mention that you are using an online translator and apologize for any mistakes it makes.

Google Translate (<a href="https://translate.google.com/">https://translate.google.com/</a>)
Bing Translate (<a href="https://www.bing.com/translator">https://translate.google.com/</a>)

Sometimes the language will be picked up automatically but you may have to .help it along and tell it that the language is German or whatever.

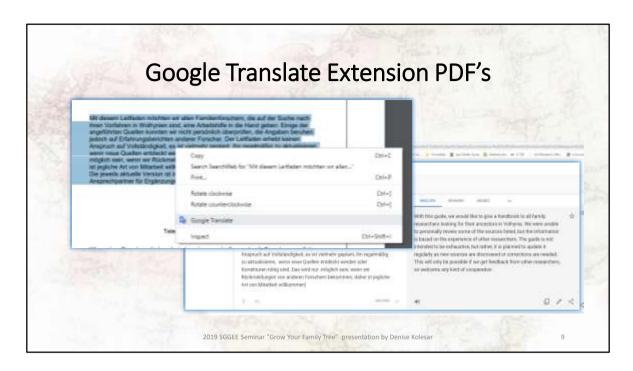
I will be using Google for most of the translations in this presentation.



When you reach a page, instead of copying word for word into the translate page, use Google Translate Extension—highlighted in the left picture and you get the information on the right. This is not a definitive translation and I would NOT use this to replace an experienced translator. But it should give you the general idea of what the website is about.

Just a note – translate this page does not work on pdf files, you have to use the google translate extension or copy the text to a translation website for that.

To install the Google translation extension just google "google translation extension" and follow the directions

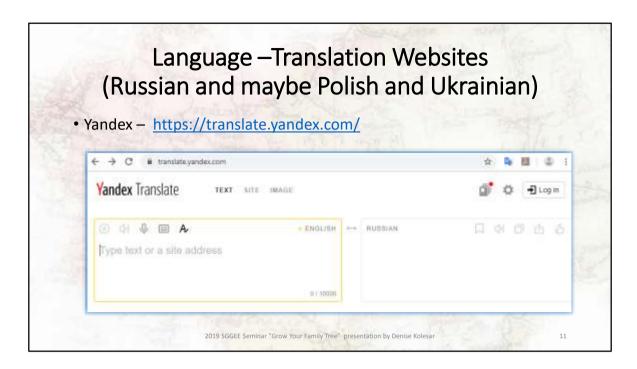


Once you install the google translate extension, when you have a pdf file that opens up in Google, highlight the text you want to translate and then right click. Select Google Translate and you will get a new page open up with your translation.



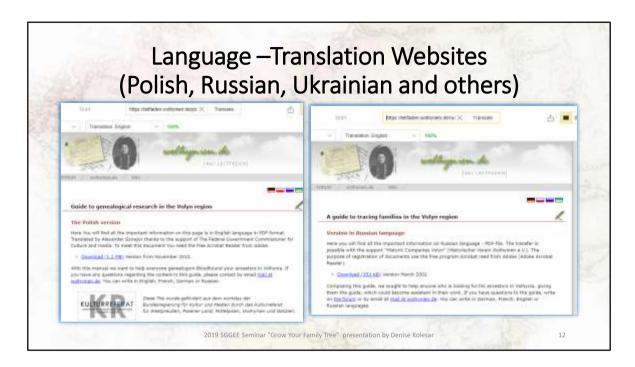
For German I have used https://en.pons.com/translate for translations

This will give me the meaning of the text, not just a word by word translation. Online translators can be tricky, so use two translators and compare the information if you want a better than average translation.



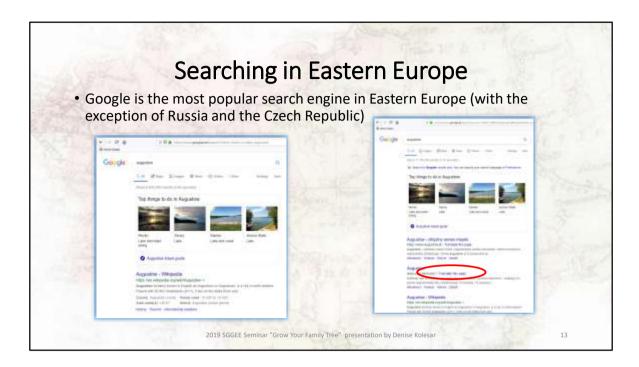
For Russian especially and perhaps Polish and Ukrainian use Yandex

Yandex is a Russian web search and translation site so just be aware of that if you use it for searching.



Going back to the example of the Family Research in Volhynia page. https://leitfaden.wolhynien.de/ I have used Yandex for this translation.

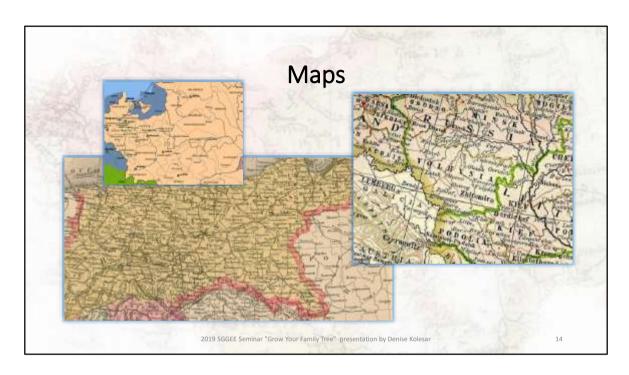
Note the different wordage on each of the sites, you will see this on many sites where the different language pages will give you different information, sometimes using the "English'" button will be missing some key information. Also watch for the dates of the web pages, sometimes the web pages for different languages have older information that may no longer be relevant.



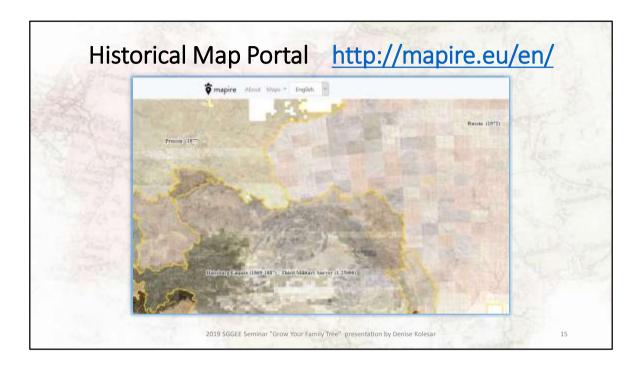
In Russia, a search engine called Yandex is popular and in the Czech Republic Seznam (means 'list') is popular. Take into account Yandex is a Russian site I wouldn't use passwords or credit card information on this site.

We mostly see .com or .org (example sggee.org) at the end of an address. Just as .ca is the country code for Canada, .pl is for Poland, .ru is Russia, .ua is Ukraine and .de is for Germany, Lithuania is .lt, you get the idea.

Each country has its own 'google'. So Poland has google.pl. As you can see in the above picture the links from google.pl are different from google.ca. So if you are searching for a particular town, village, or name and cannot find it in Canada, search for it in Poland. Again you can always go back to google translate to get the gist of a website if it is not in english



If you have already found your ancestral village or know the general area, using old maps can assist with narrowing down your search or helping you to fill out the family history.



**Mapire** is a historical map portal and uses maps of the Habsburg and Russian empires and uses Google Maps, Google Earth and OpenStreetMap.

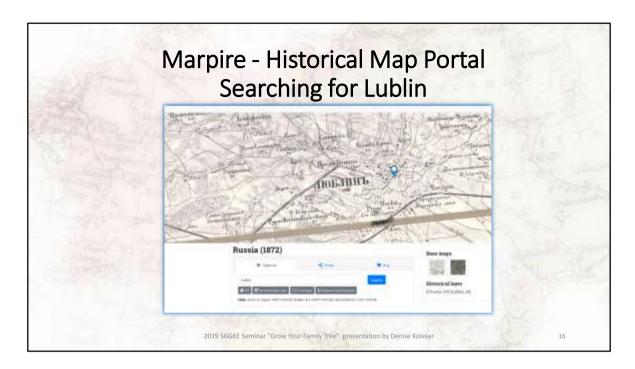
Some of the maps they have:

**Russia** – 1872

**Prussia** – 1877

**Habsburg Empire (1869-1887) - Third Military Survey** The third military mapping survey was initiated by order of Austrian Ministry of War in 1868, and took place before and during the first years of the first World War, starting in the years 1869 to 1887. Map sheets were produced at various scales,

Cadastral maps are also found here and were made in all the territories of the Habsburg Empire during the 19th century, although not all of them are online at this time



From the Russia 1872 map, if I search for Lublin, I can get a close up of this map and area.

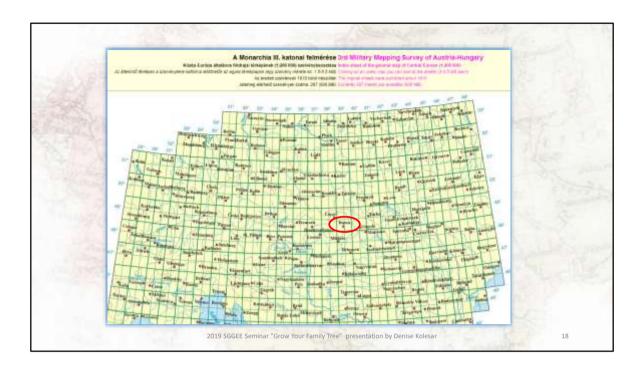
This is the direct link:

https://mapire.eu/en/map/russia-1872/?layers=14&bbox=2492286.4121991843%2C6659882.051892884%2C2528651. 328405857%2C6671347.606135661

| Austro-Hungarian Monarchy (1910)  |
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| Austria-Hungary (1910)  |
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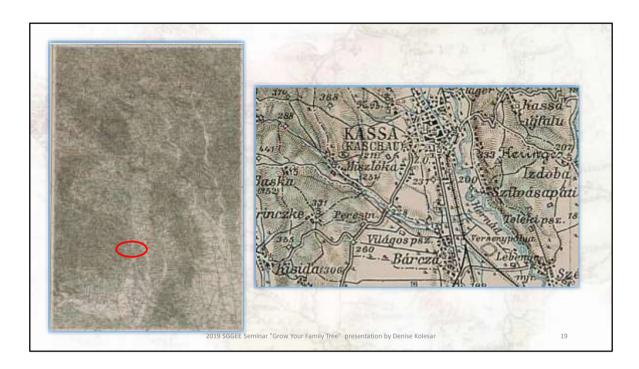
Another great site is from the Department of Cartography and Geoinformatics, Eötvös University based in Budapest

I have highlighted the 3<sup>rd</sup> military mapping survey of the Austro-Hungarian empire



As you can see they have the  $3^{\rm rd}$  military mapping survey of the Austro-Hungarian empire published around 1910

This is an interactive map so you can click on any of the map squares and that map will appear. if I click on Kassa . .



I get the entire map section. These are the maps that the East European Genealogical Society has housed in the map room at the University of Winnipeg.

If I zoom in on Kassa, I can see all the towns around this city. Kassa today is called Kosice and is in Slovakia



Let's go on to the websites



This is the website of the Polish Genealogical Society – in their own words "for lovers of genealogy and seekers of family roots. It contains a discussion forum, a lot of interesting background information and databases useful to genealogists". This is from the English translation.

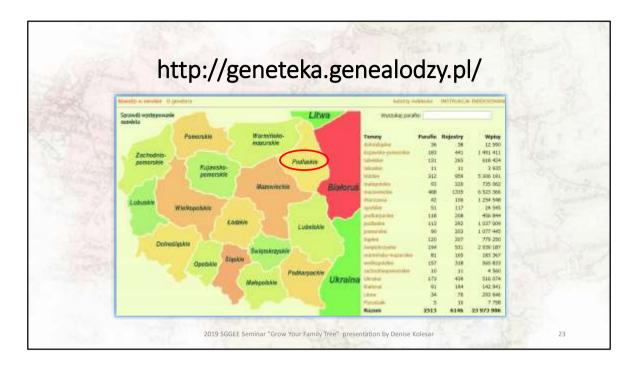
I will only highlight a few of their many databases.



If you click on your translate this page button you can jump to the databases. As you can see I pressed the English button but only the databases are anglisized and they are a different list than the Polish site. In this case it would be better to use translate instead of clicking on the English version.

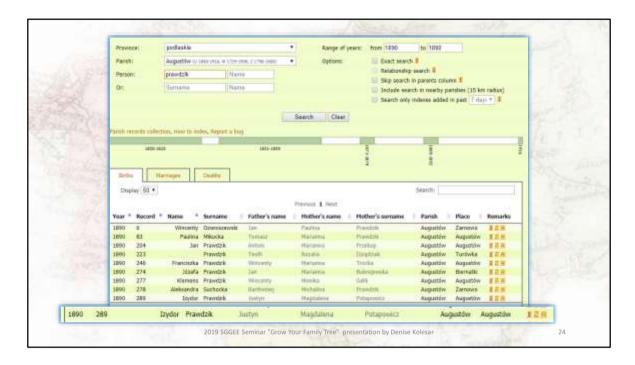
I selected Genetika (which literally translates to genetics). These are the indexes for the records and has data for which scans and photos are not available or are difficult to verify.

Metryki indexes are closely related to the images of source documents



I am taken to a new page with an interactive map. I have selected Podlaskie as an example.

Choose the region you are interested in (you can click on map or the list to the right).



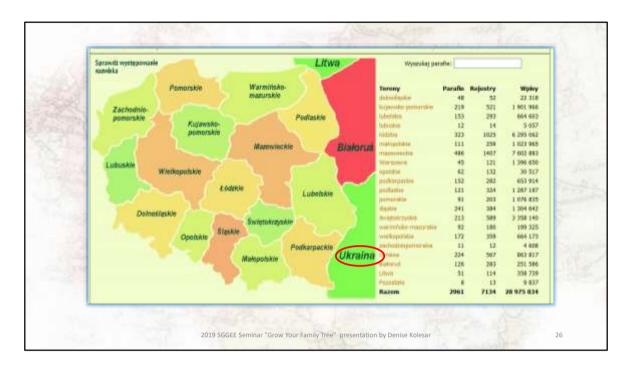
Once there I click on the drop down box and select the parish of Augustow and type in the surname I want to search for along with any dates I want to narrow my search to.

At the bottom is the record of a child of my great – great grandparents.

For clarification, U - births, M - marriages, Z - deaths



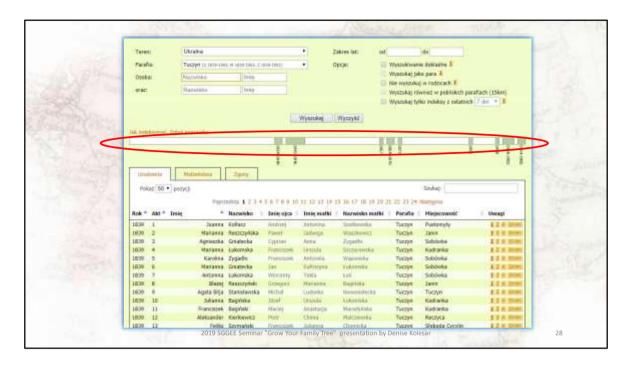
The Births from the year I selected with the surname I typed in are listed and on the far right if you click on the i, you see the date of birth 4.12.1890 (day – month then year)



Going back the Geneteka map, if I select Ukraine this time . .



I can use the drop down list to see if my village is listed. Unfortunately it is not, but if you are lucky to have ancestors that come from Tuczyn. You can see that they have birth records (u) from 1769 to 1905, marriage records (m) from 1839 to 1903 and death records (z) from 1839 to 1901

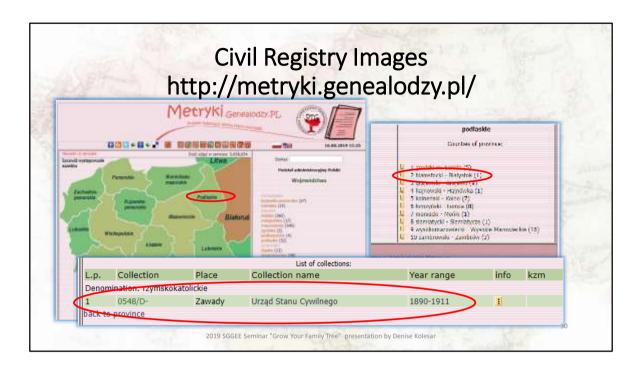


Looking at the bar above the listing, you can see that they have birth records in the listing (u) from 1839 to 1905 but in actual fact they do not have all of those records. They have from 1839 to 1840, then from 1842 to 1846 then it jumps to 1867, you get the idea.

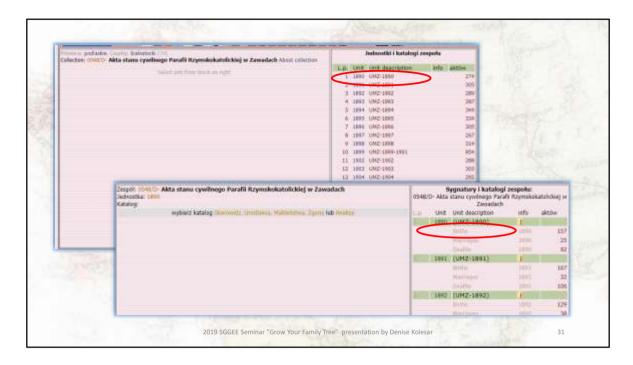


Jumping back to the main genealodzy page, this time I selected Metryki  $\,$ 

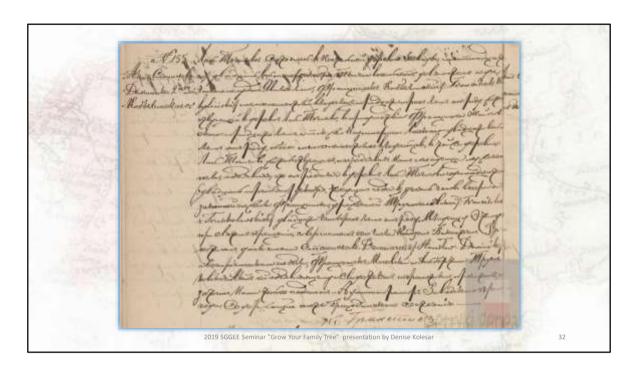
Metryki are the actual records and there are less of them.



Once again I selected Podlaskie and then Bialystok. From the list of collections I select the urzad stanu cywilnego, which is the civil registry office.



From there I select the correct year -1890, then click on births.



This will eventually get you to the parish records for that town.

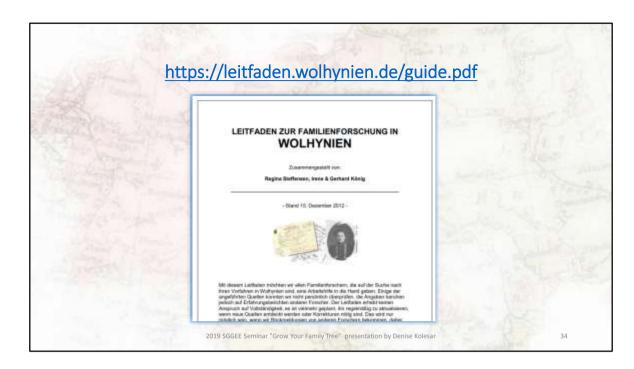
Google translate will NOT translate this for you.



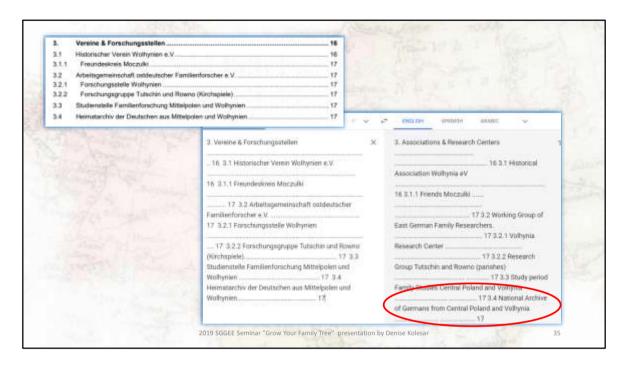
Let's go back to the Volhynian Genealogical site I showed you in the translation section and click on the pdf file

Note the dates of the PDFs for each of the languages

I am selecting the german version of the pdf as that is the most recent pdf file.



https://leitfaden.wolhynien.de/guide.pdf

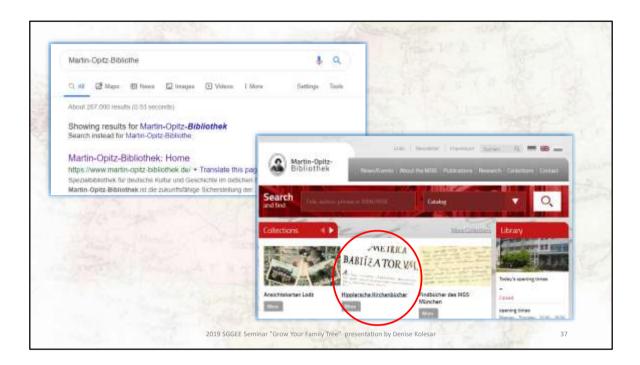


I just highlighted the text, and kept translating until I came to something interesting. I select 3.4 to look into and came up with the following interesting chapter.



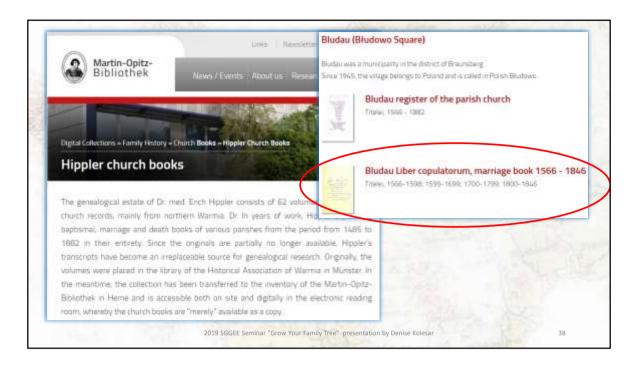
Went down to section 3.4 in the pdf, highlighted it and this is what I got.

So this looks promising, ...



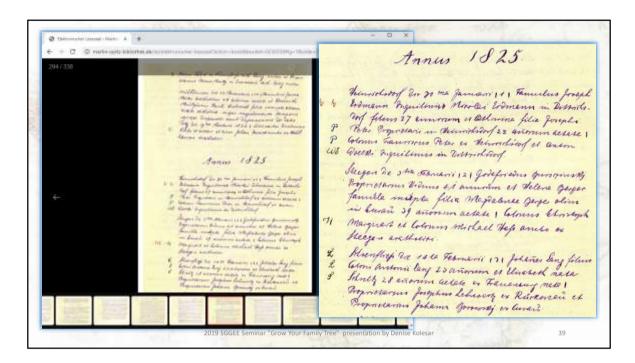
So I googled (and yes that is a verb) the Martin-Opitz Bibliothek in Herne.

I notice in the middle section they have church records, so I clicked on that link,



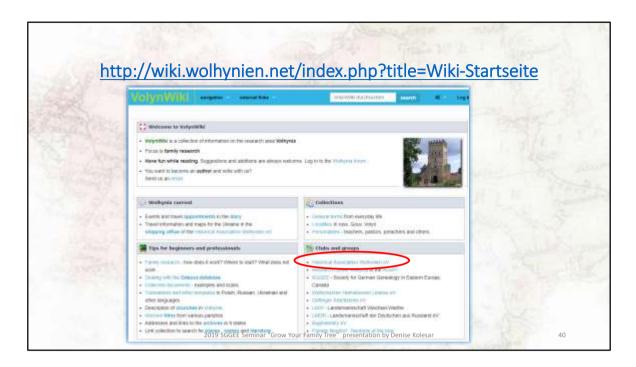
And it shows a listing of the records that are in the collection.

I select one of the first records....

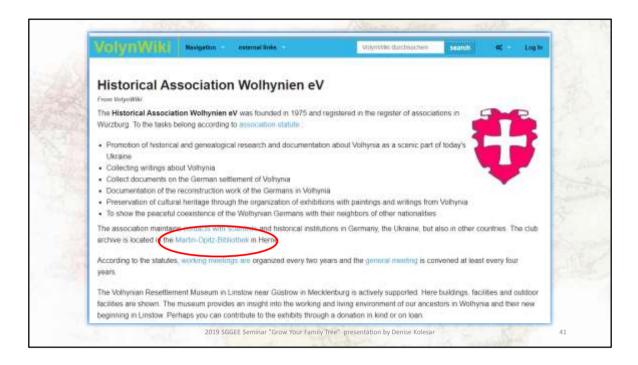


Up pops the church records that are in this collection.

I have just selected 1825 as an example.



Let's go back to the Volhynian Genealogical site and this time select Wiki. I have translated the page and come up with this. From here you can view the collections they have along with any information and tips.



I selected the Historical Association of Volhynia and lo and behold, the Martin-Opitz-Bibliothek appears again. If this is your area, this website should be something you need to take a more indepth look at



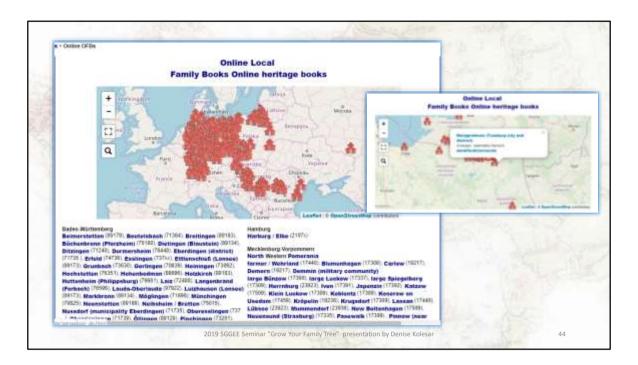
Founded in 1989. This German genealogical website has digital and paper publications and maintain links to numerous databases. Their wiki pages are quite informative and have many links and tips. From their main page, I select Recherchieren (or the English translation "Do Research") and then selected Gen-Wiki

You can also select Meta-Suche (meta search). Meta search means that they will search all their databases at once. This may sound like a great thing, but if your name is Friesen – you will see that there are 1000's of entries



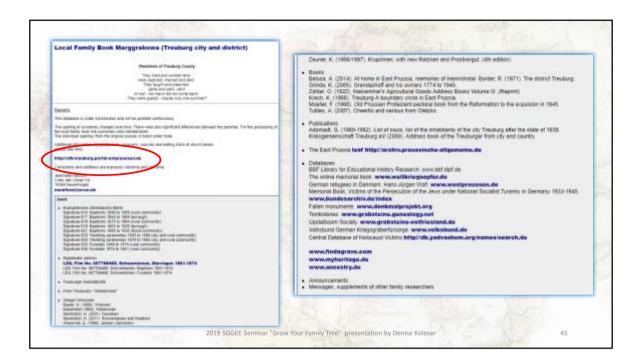
From the site's explaination — "The aim of **GenWiki** is a encyclopedia of sources. GenWiki is **give and take**. Each genealogist has very specific and specific knowledge of his area of research over time. GenWiki thrives on the willingness of its authors to make this knowledge easily available to all other interested parties. Everyone benefits from the knowledge of others."

I selected databases, and then local heritage books as an example.



You can zoom in on the map, and select any house icon.

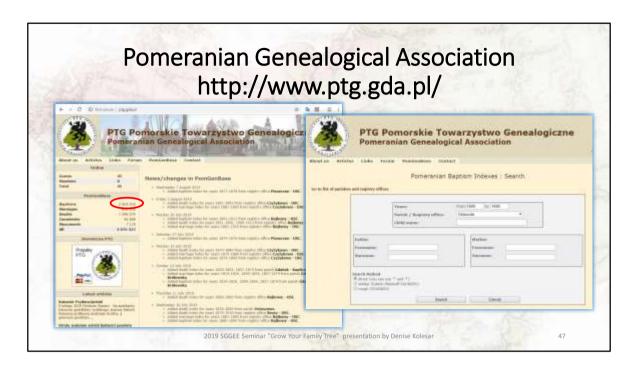
I selected Treuburg city and district. You can see the organizers email address if you want to get in touch with them.



This is the information available. Not all heritage areas are like this, sometimes it is only one book with pictures of the town, but it is growing. For this site I noticed that there is a web page. If I click on the link.....

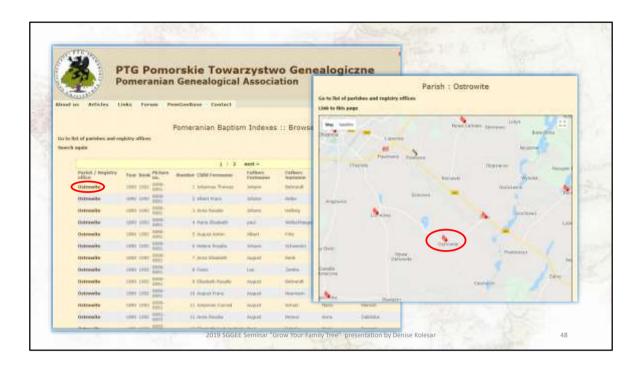


This is the information available. From here you can search their surname or indexes.



This is the webpage of the Pomeranian Genealogical Association. Pomerania was a province in Prussia. Situated on the Baltic Sea it stretched from about Denmark to just past Gdansk.

You can see there are over 2.6 million baptismal index records and if I click on that link, a search page appears



As I do not have relatives in this area, I just selected a town. Note that this is just the index. But if you are looking in a particular area, this is very helpful.

If you click on the record you want to see an interactive map shows up and you can then click on the town....

| Pomeranian Metrical E    | A AMARITMAN   | Books Inde  | xes                     |   |                                 |  |                         |     |
|--------------------------|---|---|-------------------------|---|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------|-----|
| Parish / Registry effice |   | Baptisms Marriages                                    |                         | Deaths  |                                 |  |                         |     |
| Barcine - USC            | Avadable  | 1674-1884,<br>1893-1912                               | 1873-1884,<br>1893-1913 | 1875-1880, 1887-1912                          |                                 |  |                         |     |
|                          | Industri  | Industrial 1874-1884, 1875-1899<br>1893-1912 1900-191 |                         | 1875-1880,<br>1887-1912                       |                                 |  | 12613                   |     |
| Barkowo - USC            | ind   | trowite   |                         | Available                                     | 1710-1913                       | 1675-1814,<br>1816-1849,<br>1832-1837  | 1759-1912               |     |
| Bertužno                 | Ino Ino Ind   |   |                         | Indexed 1716-1719,<br>1752-1754,<br>1816-1912 |                                 | 1675-1702,<br>1704-1711,<br>1713-1710,<br>1723-1736,<br>1740-1761,<br>1610-1838, | 1759-1820,<br>1831-1912 | 100 |
| Berložno - USC           |   |   |                         |   |                                 | 1848-1849,<br>1852-1924,<br>1926-1937  |                         |     |
| Hamowo - USC             | Activities of the party party and the party |   |                         | 1014-1010                                     |                                 | Harry Carr   | 1004 1011               | 1   |
|                          | -   | 1874-1915   | 1874-1930               | 18  | 74-1934                         |  |                         |     |
| Batterown - ewanget.     | Avalides 1795-1800,<br>1882-1804,<br>1896-1874  |   |                         |   | 19-1800,<br>22-1804,<br>16-1874 |  |                         |     |
|                          | Indeed  |   | 1798-1874               |   |                                 |  |                         |     |
| Będziechowo – USC        | Available   | 1874-1899   | 1675-1890               | 18  | 75-1899                         |  |                         |     |
|                          | The second second second second   | 1874-1899   | 1875-1899               | 18  | 75-1899                         |  |                         |     |
| Biafogant - USC          | Available   | 1874-1914   | 2074 2014               |   |                                 |  |                         |     |

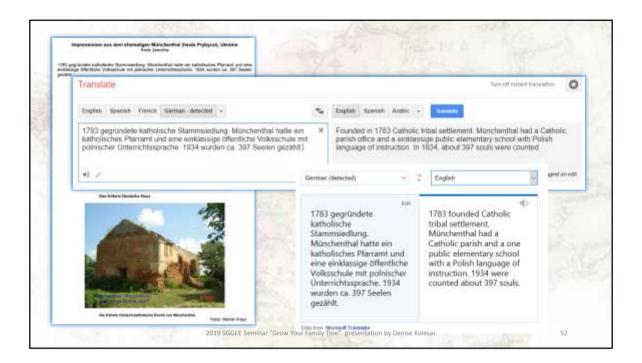
From this town link, you can see that there are no images (actual records) just the indexes you saw in the previous slide



This group is to be commended, not only have they been around since 1946, they have restyled themselves from assisting galician german refugees after the war to assisting descendants of those galician germans to re-visit their ancestors villages. They are a remarkable group of people.



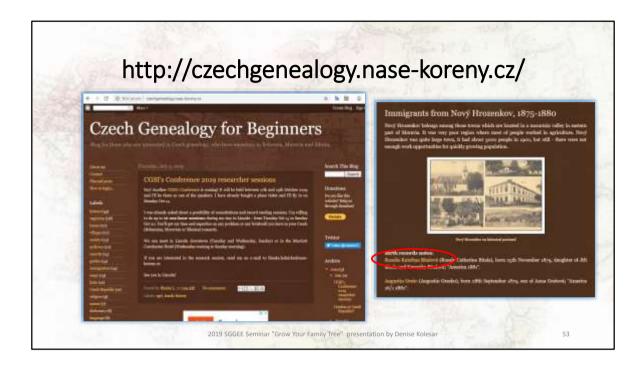
From the left hand menu tree I have selected Galician villages and you can see that a number of people have taken pictures of these villages



You can see what pictures they have on the village. You can also see that the text is in german.

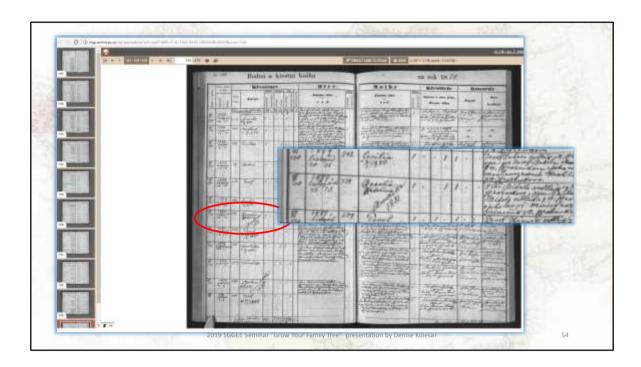
So over to my handy translator google and this is what I get – not very good is it?

So I try another translator – Bing. This translation looks better.



This is a blog for those who are interested in Czech genealogy, meaning those who have ancestors from Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia. They have an incredible amount of information for free

You may not think a blog or beginners is helpful, but let's look at a recent posting on Immigrants from Novy Hrozenkov. If you click on Read more, you can see that there are birth records notes - if you click on Rosalie Katerina Bitalova . .



You will be linked to the digital archives of Opava - and her birth record. Now you can see Rosalie's record. One more thing – you can also see when Rosalia emigrated to America.

And you have gained another link . ..

http://digi.archives.cz/da/permalink?xid=be87fd86-f13c-102f-8255-0050568c0263&scan=120

http://digi.archives.cz/da/permalink?xid=be87
fd86-f13c-102f-82550050568c0263&scan=120

http://digi.archives.cz

The link you were directed to - http://digi.archives.cz/da/permalink?xid=be87fd86-f13c-102f-8255-0050568c0263&scan=120, is the web page of that particular document, if you remove the document portion, you are left with a link that you can see what other bits of information they have.



And here is that link – this is where I stalled because I started reading about the witch trials, very interesting.

Now you are at the Digital Archives of the Regional Archives in Opava which for those of you who have Moravian ancestry should be quite interesting

This website has archival fonds and collections of the Regional Archives in Opava.

And once again you have gained yet another link – circled is a link to all the other digital archives in the Czech republic



This is one of the archive links, the webpage of the digitized archives of southern Bohemia. If I click on parish records I can see what they have.



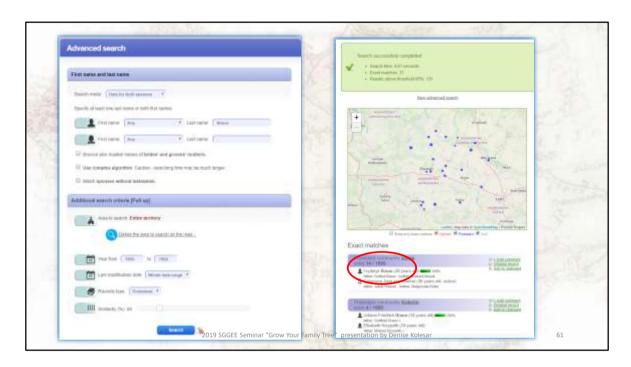
This is one of them, the webpage of the digitized archives of southern Bohemia. If I click on parish records I can see what they have.



And here is the parish register for Adamov.



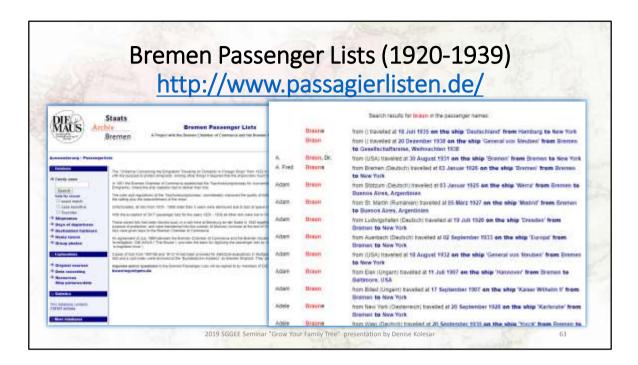
Poznan is in west central Poland and this is the website for the Poznan project. You can see their main page has a great explanation of their site. If you notice, the links button will take you to even more sites



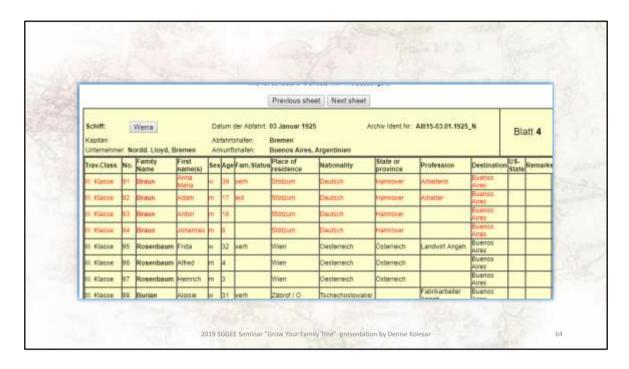
If I try an advance search for Braun from 1850 to 1852, these are the records that came up.



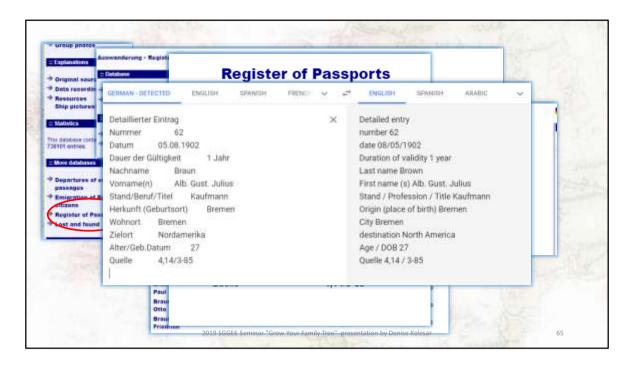
Now I have an address to write to for further information



If you have relatives that left Bremen between 1920 and 1939 you can search for them here. Notice that there are other records listed that are outside of theses dates. The explanation for this is on their main website page.



If I search for Braun again, these are the people that emigrated during this time.



If you have relatives that left Bremen between 1920 and 1939 you can search for them here. Notice that there are other records listed that are outside of theses dates. The explanation for this is on their main website page.



There are many excellent volunteers in eastern Europe that are photographing cemeteries and posting these pictures online. These are just a few of those sites.

This site above had the tombstone for Agatha Grunwald that I used in my translation slide



## This is another great resource

This explanation is from their website "This public, non-commercial gravestone project was set up in 2007 by a small group of researchers. The trigger for this was a report in a daily newspaper about "removed gravestones" from cemeteries where the period of plot occupancy had expired (mostly after 25 years). Relatives of the deceased were sought who would be interested in taking possession of the gravestones. Otherwise the gravestones were broken up and used in the foundations of road construction. It was clear that we, as a group of family researchers, would not be able to keep the original stones. But at least we would be able to save the family details of the deceased on the stones by photographing them. It will be future generations who will learn to value this work once the largest part of the gravestones have been removed from the cemeteries, following the expiry of the plot occupancy. This project will preserve the data and memory of the departed."



If I select one of the towns from the previous slide, it lists the headstones that they have pictures of.

I just selected one to show you what the headstone pictures look like.



## Final Tips:

If you can afford it, please donate to these organizations. If you are wary about using your credit card on line – go to your bank and get a pre-paid / reloadable visa or mastercard and put a set amount on it. Every year, replace the card.

If you need to sign up to any of these websites, use a good passcode – one that is different from your email passwordl

## Thank you