

# Wielka Rodzina Firkowskich



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Version Française

## Wake up!

### Lukasz Firkowski



My Dear! Wake up! Don't sleep! Soon we will meet again. I hope that you are anticipating our next meeting as much as I do! I hope that even more Firkowskis will attend the next family reunion. I already have several ideas on my mind, how to make it even more attractive. Do you have any ideas? All your suggestions and remarks concerning the reunion are welcome. And if anyone would like to help with organizing the reunion, it would be just great... Soon, I hope, our Firkowski discussion forum will revive and together we can discuss this great gathering.

Already now, we must book the weekend in August... and order the good weather... I am sure that the sun will again shine over Sielpia and in our hearts....

Also, think about updating and supplementing your data on our great family tree. Hopefully, you shall find some time to do this on those long, winter evenings. Photos are also welcome. Already now start thinking how will your part of the family tree look and if you will not feel stupid that it is full of question marks?

This year's newsletter features many articles written by you. It is nice. I hope it will encourage others to write about their roots for next year.

## Une année 2005 bien chargée !

### Tim Firkowski



Il s'est écoulé maintenant une année depuis la merveilleuse expérience de la première réunion de famille des Firkowski et plus de 3 ans depuis que j'ai rencontré Lukasz. Trois merveilleuses années d'amitié !

Baucoup de nouveaux membres de la famille Firkowski ont été identifiés. Nous comptons actuellement près de 1900 personnes. Je suis sûr que lors de la prochaine réunion de famille, en 2006, nous aurons atteint les 2000 personnes grâce aux récents résultats de nos recherches. Nous avons localisé des membres de la famille en Argentine, et obtenu plus de preuves tangibles de l'origine Ukraino-russe du nom Firkowski. Nous avons aussi localisé la proche famille de mes parents qui nous ont ainsi permis d'identifier beaucoup de gens dans la photo inconnue que nous avions mis dans le premier numéro de la Newsletter des Firkowski.

Nous avons été très enthousiasmés. Cela a été une année bien chargée par les recherches familiales. Nous avons travaillé dur dans ces investigations tout en menant de front, pour ma part, les travaux sur mes terrains, tandis que Lukasz achevait sa scolarité puis partait en voyage au Tibet. Les souvenirs de notre visite en Pologne sont restés très ancrés dans ma mémoire

et dans celle de mon père. Il ne s'est pas passé une semaine sans que mon père et moi ayons parlé ensemble de cette merveilleuse expérience en Pologne. Nous voulons tous deux vous adresser individuellement nos REMERCIEMENTS les plus chaleureux.

Nous organiserons à nouveau une réunion de famille l'année prochaine. Cette seconde réunion de famille est prévue au cours d'un week-end dans le courant du mois d'août 2006. L'année dernière il y avait tellement de personnes présentes que je n'ai pas eu la possibilité de parler suffisamment avec chacun. J'espère vivement avoir plus de temps pour chacun d'entre vous lors de cette prochaine réunion.

Nous avons eu une expérience agréable avec ceux qui nous ont accueillis et ont agi comme des guides touristiques au cours de nos voyages en Pologne. Vous nous avez permis de voir la Pologne comme jamais nous ne l'aurions vu par nous-même.

Enfin, cela aura pris plus d'une année, mais au moment où vous lisez ce bulletin, je crois avoir mis en ligne sur mon site Web presque toutes les 14.000 photos de notre voyage. J'ai également commencé à ajouter les vidéos du voyage. Ces vidéos devraient être toutes en ligne après le Nouvel An.

Oui, cela représente un travail colossal, mais cela en valait vraiment la peine pour éprouver toutes les joies de découvrir et rencontrer une si merveilleuse famille présente dans le monde entier. Je ferais tout cela à nouveau sans aucune hésitation.

## SO YOU THINK YOU HAVE BEEN TO A FAMILY REUNION?

### Eric Firkowski



Just the thought of going back to visit the country of my birth for the very first time in my life was exciting enough but to do it with my oldest son Tim and also attend a "Firkowski" family reunion for the first time in Poland ever! Well, that was the absolute "icing on the cake" as we say in the US!

So many exciting things happened while we were in Poland and I have tried to describe some of these things in my previous article in this newsletter last year. There were so many wonderful moments that a person could write a book and still not cover everything!

Because of Tim and Lukasz Firkowski's excellent efforts over the previous two years, the seed of an idea to have a First Firkowski Family Reunion was born! As more and more people were sending their confirmation to attend the Reunion in Sielpia Wielka, the more excited I got.

I did not know exactly what to expect of Poland after being away for so many years. What would it look like? How would it feel? What would the people be like? I would like to answer these questions with just one word "beautiful"!

Questions came to my mind like, how would I recognize all of the people that would be at the reunion? How would they accept these Americanized "Poles"? What would we say

and talk about? None of these questions would be a problem in the next three days. Because of the love that was poured out by all those we met, these questions were totally irrelevant! We did not have to recognize anybody, we just hugged everybody! None of us ever stopped talking and we were welcomed as lost sons of Poland, which made both of us, feel like we never left. Language barriers appeared to be no problem as we managed to converse in whatever language it took, to get our point across and if all failed we used sign language! No one was a stranger by the time we were done! How absolutely wonderful!

It felt both exciting and strange as we drove into Sielpia Wielka that Friday afternoon. Faces began to appear ahead, on the right and on the left. Some faces we recognized, other faces we did not. Smiles began to appear everywhere, as many of the people attending were also meeting each other for the very first time. Many kisses and hugs were exchanged and it started the thousands of photographs, which were to be taken that weekend. As I ponder these photos today, I am so glad I have them to look at, share with others and make me feel like I have never left. I will not and cannot ever forget the tastes, songs, dances and laughter of our entire group. The beers were most appetizing, the vodka was excellent, the sliwowica was incredible, the food was absolutely delicious and the people, well the people, they were all unforgettable! The atmosphere, which the camp helped to create for all of us, was great fun. The people who shared their experiences on and off stage, the champagne, the campfire, the music, the kielbaski, Sielpia's food, the laughter and the dancing are moments that will never be forgotten by this Firkowski.

As our weekend came to a close with a beautiful and very touching Polish mass for the Firkowski family, arranged by Lukasz on Sunday, I began to think. "I don't believe that I had an opportunity to greet and hug everyone at the reunion" and I started to feel bad that I did not spend more time with all of the people. I wished I could have spent hours with each wonderful family, so I could get to know them better and talk about their families, their stories, where they lived, how they were doing, the things and the people they loved. I would like to have shared of my family and myself, also. How many missing memories could have been connected and brought together, if only we had more time. The opportunity is coming!

So you say you have been to family reunions before? Well not at one that had more than 200 people who took the time to share of themselves, by being there for the very first one, with just a 6 months notice.

Firkowski's unite! Be at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Firkowski Family Reunion in 2006! I am looking forward to meeting all of you again and for those that will be coming for the very first time, you will be glad you came and you will leave with newly found friends and acquaintances, and like myself, you will also leave with a new spot in your heart, that can only be filled by getting together again at the next reunion in 2008, then 2010 then 2012 and the next and the next!

# Retour aux sources

Eric Firkowski



Eric Firkowski, a eu la chance de revenir dans son pays d'origine, la Pologne, en Août dernier. Voilà deux ans que son fils, Tim, effectuait des recherches en généalogie sur leur nom de famille, tentant ainsi de recréer le lien perdu avec les racines de la famille Firkowski. Aidé d'un cousin en Pologne, Lukasz, Tim put retrouver la trace de près de 1400 Firkowski à travers le monde. Ken, Alaina et Andrew, les enfants d'Eric l'ont surpris en lui offrant un billet d'avion pour la Pologne, pour qu'il puisse faire avec Tim ce voyage vers le pays qui l'a vu naître, il y a de cela 62

ans, à Auschwitz (la ville et non le camp). Ils visitèrent notamment Cracovie, Varsovie, Torun, risquèrent une descente de 4h1/2 depuis le sommet d'un mont Alpin, et rendirent visite au neveu d'Eric en République Tchèque. Ils participèrent aussi à un week end improvisé réunissant plus de 2000 membres de la famille Firkowski, venus de République Tchèque, de Suède, de Belgique, d'Allemagne, de France et des Etats Unis. Pour la plupart d'entre eux, c'était une toute première rencontre. "Rencontrer tous ces gens qui nous ont si chaleureusement accueillis

fut le moment le plus touchant du séjour. La rencontre avec Miroslaw Firkowski, détenu au camp Nazi d'Auschwitz fut particulièrement émouvante." Quatre journaux polonais ont traité l'évènement. 17000 photos ont été prises. Tout le monde prévoit de renouveler l'expérience en 2006!

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We intend that the financial matters do not prevent anyone from attending the next family reunion. Thus, in order to possibly decrease the cost of the reunion we turn to all private individuals as well as to companies that may be interested in financially supporting the event. In return, we offer an opportunity of what is generally understood as promotion of a company/product in the form of banners/posters posted at the reunion site, ads on the family web site and on the reunion materials, t-shirts, etc. In case you are interested, please contact us to arrange the details.

## Merci

Nous voudrions remercier tout le monde qui nous a aidés en éditant ce bulletin

### Nous vous remercions !

Zbysniew Firkowski de Pologne  
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## The Found Family

One summer evening I reached for a box filled with old photos that I had kept on the attic. I blew away a thin layer of dust uncovering the lid of the box. I was rarely taking this box out. Yet, that very evening I particularly wanted to spend time browsing through old family photos. I have plenty of them. I know every face; I remember every place and related memories from my childhood and youth time... This melancholy came upon me after a conversation with my brother Marian. In August 2004, Wojciech Firkowski contacted him and told about the Firkowski search performed by Tim and Lukasz Firkowski. I was positively surprised that Tim and Lukasz have made the effort to build the genealogical tree of our family. Owing to them, I found my family from across the ocean. Tim is a grandson of my father's brother. Dad often used to tell us about his brother with whom he kept in touch via mail, and whom he never saw again since his brother had left Poland. It is moving to me that we can all meet and renew the family ties. Together with my sister Barbara and brother Marian we decided to help Tim and Lukasz in collecting photos and news related to our kin. Owing to this, we meet with the family more often. Many people have offered us their help in gathering information concerning Firkowskis. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Aleksander Mrozinski from Bydgoszcz, Janek Mrozinski from Gubin, Elzbieta and Jan Bartoszak

from Slawsko Dolne, Stanislaw Latkowska and her daughter Halina from Markowo, Ewa Lewandowska from Gniewkowo and Teresa Bialka from Torun and many other people I did not listed here for their cordiality.

**Maria Dankowska**

Vous rappelez-vous les photos des personnes inconnues du premier bulletin ? Il y avait une photo d'une fille à elle sa première communion. Aujourd'hui nous savons qu'elle est Maria Dankowska (Firkowska). La fille d'Antoni.

*Hier...*

## Maria Firkowska



*... et aujourd'hui*  
**Maria Dankowska  
(Firkowska)**



## Mémoires de Maria Dankowska (Firkowska)

Notre père, fils de Marcin et Marianna, fut très attaché à sa famille. Il maintint les contacts avec ses sœurs et frères Franciszek et Wladyslaw qui partit aux Etats-Unis. Ils échangèrent des lettres... Je me souviens de lettres, de cartes pour les fêtes, un foulard que notre mère reçut de sa belle sœur et 1 dollar symbolique joint à la carte de vœux. Notre père rendit aussi visite à sa sœur Anastazja (Busia) qui partit vivre en France....

Notre père nous raconta qu'ils furent 14 enfants à la maison et qu'il fut le plus jeune. On l'appela Antek 14. Certains d'entre eux décédèrent et 8 enfants restèrent.

Nous nous rappelons nos voyages avec papa pour aller voir ses sœurs – nos tantes. Nous passâmes nos vacances d'été chez Tata Antonina et oncle Léon à Raduszczyce. Nous habitâmes dans une ville – Torun. Après 2 mois passés à la campagne la rentrée fut difficile. Chez notre tante nous surveillâmes les vaches dans les champs avec d'autres enfants du village, nous cueillîmes des pommes,



aidâmes notre oncle pendant la moisson. Nous nous fîmes beaucoup d'amis avec qui on a gardé le contact même après 32 ans.

Nous nous souvenons aussi de nos visites avec papa chez tante Jagusia (Agnieszka) à Szadlowice. Elle fut très gentille et elle eut 4 filles :



Kazia, Sophia, Stanislaw, Bronia et 1 fils Czeslaw. Nous arrivions toujours en train alors qu'ils regardaient sur la route avec impatience. Ils préparèrent des gâteaux spécialement pour nous et les préférés de notre père. Ils furent très chaleureux.

Papa rendait aussi visite chez son frère Franciszek à Markowo et par la même occasion à la famille de notre maman. Ces moments passés en famille à la campagne, nous nous en souvenons encore aujourd'hui et nous y pensons régulièrement. Notre oncle nous servait des patates à l'huile noire – une spécialité de la région et nous étions ravis de manger ce plat rare.

Avec notre père nous vîmes aussi chez tante Pelagia qui habitait avec son mari et ses 3 enfants (2 filles et 1 fils) près de Janikowo à Dobieszewiczki. Un jour pendant un orage la foudre frappa une maison. Nous nous rappelons aussi que le chemin depuis la gare jusqu'à sa maison fut très difficile pour nous en tant qu'enfants, mais nous étions toujours contents de nous y rendre. Puis notre tante déménagea à Janikowo et nous nous y rendîmes également.

Une autre tante – Hélène habita Rutartow près de Gniewkowo et nous nous y rendîmes en train. Il fallut marcher quelque kilomètres jusqu'à sa maison alors notre père nous porta sur ses épaules. Là bas des conditions de vie étaient très modestes. Il fallait porter l'eau sortie d'un puits, la plupart du temps on vivait dehors. Quand on partait, notre tante nous accompagnait avec ses filles jusqu'à mi-chemin vers la gare. Ce fut joyeux et agréable.

Nous nous rappelons aussi des visites chez Urszula Firkowska à Gniewkowo où notre père se rendait régulièrement sur la tombe de sa mère et notre grand-mère. Nous étions contents de pouvoir allumer les bougies sur les tombes de nos proches car à Gniewkowo reposent des proches de notre mère, sœur Zofia et Frère Jan. Nous nous rendons régulièrement depuis notre enfance avec notre père sur la tombe de grand-père à Jaksice.

## Curriculum Vitae d'Antoni Firkowski

Je suis né le 17 avril 1914 à Krusza Zamkowa, Mairie de Inowroclaw, fils de Marcin et Marianna (née Konopa). Dès l'âge de 7 ans, j'étais l'élève de l'école primaire à Jaksice près d'Inowroclaw.

Après avoir terminé l'école primaire je vécus chez mes parents. Mon père était ouvrier à la propriété de Borkowo, ma mère s'occupait de la maison. Une fois l'école achevée, je travaillai en tant qu'ouvrier jusqu'à mon service militaire, c'est-à-dire jusqu'au 5 novembre 1937.

Du 5 novembre 1937 au 28 Septembre 1939 je fis mon service militaire au sein de l'Armée Polonaise. Du 1<sup>er</sup> Septembre au 28 Septembre 1939, je participai à la défense de la Pologne (début de la II Guerre Mondiale) au sein du 18<sup>ème</sup> Régiment de Cavalerie.

Le 31 Janvier 1937 je me mariaï avec Anastazja Orlikowska. Le 28 Septembre 1939, après la Capitulation de Varsovie, je fus envoyé dans un camp de détention en Allemagne près de la frontière Hollandaise (je ne me souviens pas le nom de la ville).

En tant que prisonnier de guerre je vécus dans un « stalag » 11B, numéro de prisonnier 332.

Après la libération en Novembre 1945 par l'Armée des Alliés, je suis rentré au pays. Dès mon retour je travaillai dans la société de chemin de fer à Torun en tant que serrurier jusqu'en mai 1974. En mai 1974 je suis partie à la retraite. J'ai 2 filles et 1 fils qui ont fondé leurs propres familles. A présent je vis seul avec mon épouse.



Antoni Firkowski

*Antoni Firkowski est mort 10/10/1984 à Torun*

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Głęboki ocean  
Szeroko rozlany  
A za nim tam mieszka  
Nasz Eric kochany.

Mieszka od kilku lat  
Ze swoją rodziną  
A tęsknił za nami  
Tą polską rodziną.

Był dobrze nam znany  
Już od 50 lat  
Bo jego tata słał  
Fotki z dziecięcych lat.

Fotki się przydały  
Gdy Eric znalazł nas  
I dziękujemy za to  
Życząc mu aż 100 lat.

**Author: Maria i Monika Dankowskie**

*Poli - Traduction Française: Ilona Ventura*

# The unwanted visit Alicja Grochowska (Firkowska)

The life of a nine-year-old child could look airy, especially during summer months when relatives and friends used to visit our place in the woods and the youngsters could play around the forest, climb tall trees, pick up from the undergrowth: berries, wild berries, raspberries and wild mushrooms that were growing abundantly in these woods; and were very beautiful. We could see handsome boletus from our yard.



However, living in the woods during the war meant it was common to have short or long "visits" of partisan troops of the Polish Underground Army. Often in the middle of the night, I could hear knocking on a window and then some movement in the house; I pretended I did not hear anything. However, I had to be aware of some matters. The Nazis introduced a compulsory reporting at the county office of all facts concerning the movement of the partisans, especially in the territory of the Lublin region, the Kielce region and the Warsaw district. The Underground Army carried out numerous successful operations against the Nazis, including blowing up trains. Hence, any contact or co-operation with "bandits", as Nazis used to call our brave soldiers, could end with the death penalty.

Facing this prospect my Dad, Alojzy Firkowski, son of Franciszek, a local forester, from time to time faked such notifications, comprised of fictitious data concerning the date, the number of people, the type of weapons carried, etc. All family members had to memorize the content of those false reports like prayers. Anyway, there was always the threat that somebody could not withstand the fear and e.g. facing the rifle's barrel stuck to their head, he or she would tell the truth, as happened in the case of one of my Dad's fellow foresters.

One day brought us a real peril. It was a winter, freezing morning of 1943. The white of the snow was all around. Dad went into the woods to supervise the felling of the trees. Mom was bustling about cooking dinner; incidentally she was cooking rabbit whose nice fragrance was spreading around the cottage. I was laying in bed in the dining room suffering from a cold that I caught very often during my childhood. Suddenly, one could hear a rattle of vehicles and Mom's scream – "Oh, God!". I sprang up to the window and what could I see... Several lorries and fully armed German soldiers jumping off them, surrounding the fence of the house with an iron-like circle; and loud harsh voices of the ones entering the house.

Mom "invited" them into the room where I was laying. They penetrated all rooms, producing inarticulate sounds upon smelling of the baking hare, and when seeing me as "sick" they stepped back just in case. There were over ten of them, they made themselves comfortable in chairs, some around the table. There was an interpreter with them too.

Impatiently they inquire about Dad. Just before their arrival, there had come to our cottage, a forest worker evicted from the Poznan region; and he knew some German, so Mom told them that he could go to look for Dad. They sent him for my Dad, obviously under escort and in the meantime they begun with an interrogation. Mom had self-control, even smiling while responding to the questions. They were not turning to me, they looked at me with some concern because the overwhelming stress and threat, caused me to shiver severely like during an epileptic attack.

The words of a prayer that I used to say with my Grandma rattled in my head – "He who seeks his Lords protection..." (J.Kochanowski). And the fear was truly great... Dad was not returning, time was passing and they were going deeper and deeper with the questions about the partisans. When they asked, "What did they look like?" Mom calmly looked at each of them, pointed at one and said "Oh, one looked just like this man" which made them burst out laughing and shout "Bandit, bandit".

During the whole questioning, my not-yet-five-year-old little brother, Witek, was standing next to Mom and was carefully observing "the guests".

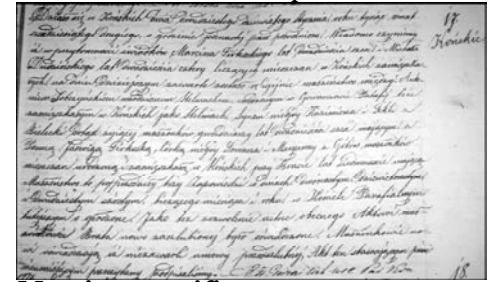


When they asked, through the interpreter, the question about the type of weapons carried by the partisans, he opened his mouth. But since he yet could not speak well, he tried to lean forward towards the table and to point at one of the German rifles, but Mom vigilantly told him not to interrupt.

Finally, the interrogation came to an end. Observing the interpreter who sitting next to the commander. I could see that they were checking Mom's answers against a little paper they held discreetly. Dad came to the house upon their departure. We learned that he had been questioned by the gate, in the freezing air. We learned that both of my parents were asked the same questions – fortunately, they also gave the same answers. Thanks to God Almighty. On the next day, my 40-year old Dad had no more brown hair.

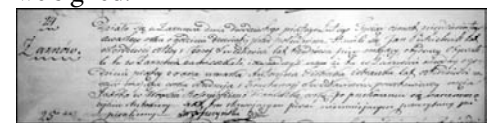
## Enchanted by the language...

Old parish registers, as probably all of you know, contain a great number of interesting information. But a few realize how colourful and different form the modern is the language they are written in... Here are some examples.



### Marriage certificate:

It happened in Konskie on the twenty-ninth day of January eighteen hundred sixty two at eleven o'clock before noon. We make it known, that at the consciousness of the witnesses Marcin Firkowski being twenty six years of age and Michal Dudzinski being twenty four years of age both good citizens living in Konskie, on the present day the religious marriage between Antoni Jobczynski born from young Stelmach in Gowarczow Parish and living in Konskie as Stelmach was settled. The then son of Kazimierz and Tekla of Bielecki hitherto living, a couple of nail-men being twenty six years of age and Miss Jadwiga Firkowska, the then daughter of Tomasz and Marianna from Guty, a couple of good citizens, born and residing in Konskie by the brother, being seventeen years of age. This wedding was preceded by three banns on the twelfth, nineteenth and twenty-sixth of the running month and year in the local Parish Church announced. As was given the oral permission of the brother present at on wedding moment. The couple declare that there had been no pre-marriage agreement drawn. This certificate, read to the ones missing the skills of reading, we signed.



### Death certificate:

It happened in Zarnow on the twenty-fifth day of February, eighteen hundred fifty four at ten o'clock before noon. Jan Pichielnik forty four years of age and Józef Sweckowicz thirty five years of age both citizens residing here in Zarnow presented themselves and announced to us that the day before a day ago at five o'clock in the morning Antonina Firkowska a beggaress being forty six years of age the daughter of Andrzej and Konstancja Sweckowicz died leaving the husband Jakub in the Boficjers Army and the daughter Franciszka. Upon examination with our own eyes, this certificate, read to the ones missing the skills of reading, we signed.



## 60th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz – Birkenau concentration camp

[...] It is very cold. It snows heavily. The eighty-year-old Miroslaw Firkowski has been already sitting for quite some time on his chair in the open air together with the other former prisoners. They are all waiting for the beginning of the ceremony commemorating the 60th anniversary of the camp liberation.

The ceremony begins. A whistle of a locomotive can be heard. It is to remember the trains that were brought over hundreds of thousands of people, to the gas chambers, to death. It will be necessary to withstand over two hours on this honorary place, in the cold and strong wind. Firkowski has his warmest suit and warmest coat on. [...] Miroslaw breaths with difficulty, often coughs, though he does not smoke. [...]

He looks good as for his age, despite the suffering he had to go through during those five years spent in the camps. Five years of the mental terror, tortures, all the illnesses, medical experiments, frequent x-rays and weight lost down to 76 lbs.

Miroslaw speaks fast. He says that people should never forget this. [...] Millions lost their lives in the camps. Today many memories of that time fade. But one cannot forget this. This is a challenge for the schools and the media. He repeated that over and over again. [...]

He was often come back to the places of terror he had witnessed, maybe fifteen or twenty times to Oswiecim. He does not know exactly himself... „It is like visiting a cemetery, where my close ones are buried. So many of my friends were murdered and cremated in Oswiecim” – he said.

He was eighteen when the Nazis arrested him. He was suspected of organizing the resistance in his home town of Konskie. Together with his colleagues the Nazis took him to the jail in Kielce where all of them were subject to tortures. It is impossible to describe the scenes and the pain they had to undergo as the victims of the interrogations. [...]

It is already dark. The square in front of the railway ramp in Brzezinka, where SS were deciding about the life and death of the newcomer prisoners is covered with even light. It still snows heavily. All speeches are already over. The heads of states are lighting candles. The candle flames are lighting the tracks leading to the gate through which the death trains used to enter. A piercing music can be heard. One tone. Once loud and again quiet. [...]

*de l'article dans Berliner Zeitung  
28.01.2005.*

**On January 26th, 2005**

Miroslaw Firkowski, in acknowledgement of his extraordinary merits in commemorating history and the truth about Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp, was awarded the Officers' Cross of the Polonia Restituta Order



## Trésor Caché

Les événements de la guerre de 1939 qui ont frappé la Pologne, ont également touché la famille Firkowski d'Opoczno. Tous les hommes de la famille ont décidé de s'engager pour défendre leur patrie. C'est dans cette période que Piotr Firkowski âgé de 24 ans s'engagea dans l'Armée Polonaise, En tant que s o l d a t .



Son régiment stationnait à Skierniewice, puis participait à la bataille sur la rivière Bzura. Après la défaite, le régiment se dirigea vers l'ouest pour rejoindre d'autres régiments polonais. Durant la traversée des forêts dans la région de Skierniewice, le régiment tomba dans une embuscade. Piotr Firkowski reçut un ordre du Commandant de cacher l'argent du régiment ainsi que le drapeau. Piotr partit avec 2 autres soldats exécuter l'ordre et enterra sous un arbre 3 sacs d'argent et le drapeau. Puis tous les 3 soldats furent capturés par l'ennemi. Piotr –

prisonnier de guerre fut envoyé en Allemagne comme travailleur forcé. Là bas il travailla chez un « Bauer » où fut très mal traité. Il attrapa le typhus. Grâce à l'intervention d'autres Allemands il fut transféré à Hambourg pour travailler à la gare.

Après la libération par les Américains il continua à se battre pour son pays et s'engagea dans l'Armée américaine. Il fut affecté dans la Police Militaire. Une fois la guerre terminée il partit



pour les Etats-Unis. Mais sa famille, son pays et sa maison lui manquaient beaucoup. Il retourna en Europe où dans de mystérieuses circonstances il trouva un lingot d'or allemand qu'il coupa et cachât dans sa ceinture, mais sur le chemin du retour on le lui vola. Il retourna à Opoczno en 1946 et vécut heureux jusqu'à sa mort.

Auteur: L. Firkowski – Slupsk, Poland  
Poli - Traduction Française: Ilona Ventura



# A Dream come true

Lukasz Firkowski

The participants of the first reunion contributed to the realization of one of my dreams by offering me the first 'brick' to the huge amount I had to collect for the "expedition of my life" to Tibet.

„One of the most mysterious and remote places on Earth. Monumental, covered with shining ice and snow mountain ranges, highland s t o n y deserts



through which Tibetan nomads cruise and pasture their herds of yaks, majestic monastery buildings and lonesome ruins – mute witnesses of the past, never-ending spaces going into horizon and praying pilgrims heading towards holy places (...). This country is a cradle of the Tibetan Buddhism with numerous temples, stupas, some turned into museums, it is a homeland of Dalajlama, a place of a vivid and true religious cult filled with mysticism, mysteriousness, where fortune-telling, oracles, folk believes and visions are practiced to these days, and where monks persistently defend their faith against the Chinese authorities.”

I visited fascinating places in Tibet. I learned about the perishing Tibetan culture and about the religion of the country on the Roof of the World. Coming from northwestern Tibet through the central Tibet, I reached remote and not commonly known nor visited places. I visited rooms of the monumental Potala Palace – one of the



most stunning buildings on Earth, which hovers over the capital, Lhasa, spanning one mile, it has thirteen levels and entirely covers the top of the Red Hill. I walked along the alleys of

Norbulinka, the summer residence of dalajlamas, the place from where Tenzin Gyatso, the present Dalajlama had to flee for good in 1959. I was strolling around the most sacred Tibetan temple of Jokhang along an always, jammed pilgrim route, constituting a fascinating combination of strong devotion and faith with a market economy, where sacrum and profanum meet in one place. I could see at close range Tibetan monks debating and praying in numerous monasteries that I



was visiting, among which, the most important ones were Sera, Ganden, Labrang, Kumbum.

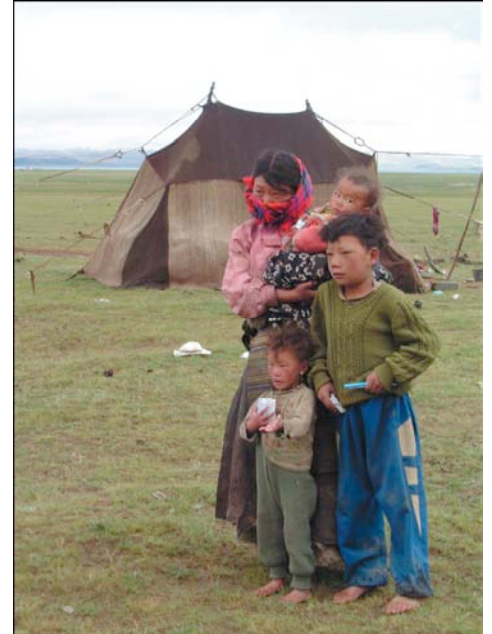


I also had an opportunity to admire the Drepung monastery, stretching on a hill on the outskirts of Lhasa – once the biggest monastic center in the world with the then population of ten thousand monks. Neither will I ever forget the river crossing of Brahmaputra in a flat-bottom boat on the way back from the officially inaccessible Samya monastery. I



bathed in hot springs on the elevation of over 14,000 ft with the view on the snowy mountain ranges. My route led

also through the cities of Gyantse and Shigatse - the latter hosting the Tashilumpo monastery, the seat of the present Pantshenlama. Passing along the unbeaten track of the Tibetan Plateau, I crossed the mountain passes of over 16,000 ft, I arrived at the tents of nomads scattered around the



meadows and I made my way to holy lakes placed picturesquely inside the rings of white peaks over 22,000 ft high.



I also tasted dishes of the local cuisine like the yak-steak, tsampa and salty yak butter tea so disliked by many tourists. I was enchanted by the cloudless panoramic view of Himalayas and I spent a night at the foot of the highest peak of the world – Mount Everest.

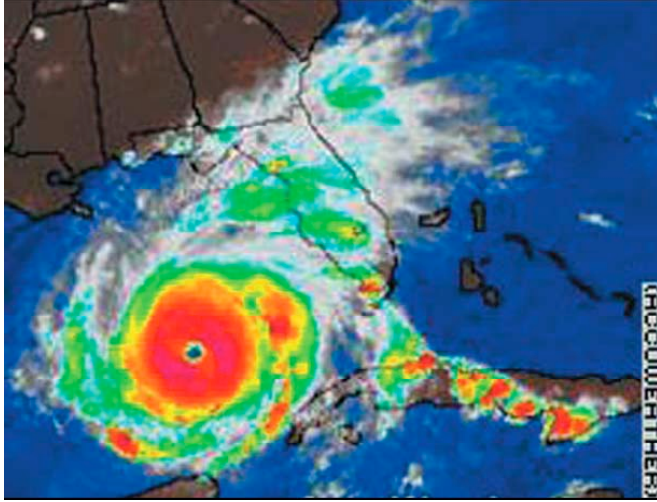


Finally, leaving Tibet I went down the plateau along the curvy hairpin road into the scenic, tropical green of Nepal. Once again, I would like to thank all those who helped me make my dream come true.



# A Date With Rita

*She came up slowly from the south, played around in the Caribbean for a week, gathered strength, turned into a category 5 hurricane (winds of 250+ kilometers per hour), then slowly started to creep north/northwest across the Gulf of Mexico and headed directly for Houston, Texas, USA.*



My wife Sherrie Ann and I have been living in Houston, Texas since November of 1991. Part of the price we have to pay for living in the beautiful sub-tropics, is the occasional threat of hurricanes, which form during the season (June – November) in this part of the world.

We watch the hurricanes form every year and every year they pass us without any harm. As I started watching, this “Rita” began to gather strength and turn into a category 5 hurricane. I began to have a very bad feeling and could see that this time, this time it might not miss us and with winds this strong and the threat of a 6 meter high tide surge. We had better plan to get ourselves out of the way. We live only about 10 miles from Galveston Bay, which connects directly into the Gulf of Mexico. A wall of water 6 meters high was nothing to guess about.

We had to make a decision to evacuate this part of Houston and head away from the water and the winds. The greater Houston area has a population of 4 million people and is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest city in the USA. Leaving this area would not be easy and it was not. We own two Lincoln “Town Cars” which are large automobiles. We would have to pack everything into the two vehicles with just the most important things and leave the rest behind. Those decisions would be very difficult at first but as the threat of the storm became a reality, the decisions became easier. What does a person bring and what does one leave behind, perhaps never to see it again?

We packed our two cars with all the most important papers and documents which we had. Photographs were another treasure we would dare not leave behind and after forty three years of living together, we had many, many photographs. We brought our collectibles and other valuables, as well as the computer and all the important

software and CD’s with more photographs. Sufficient clothing to last for a week, personal items as well as enough food and drink to last us for about the same time. We boarded up the windows of the house, taped up any other open glass, turned off the water, and removed those things on the floor onto the beds or tables to get them off the ground in case of flooding. We then sadly said goodbye to our home.

Our first twenty minutes on the road took us 20 miles northeast of Houston. The next thirty miles took us thirteen hours. The traffic on all the highways, crossing through and surrounding Houston was at a complete standstill and temperatures were running at 37 C. Many cars overheated, many ran out of gas. All the gasoline stations were closed and out of gasoline, stores were closed, all bathrooms were closed

also. This made it very difficult for many people and some people died because of the heat or other reasons.

After not being able to drive any further than 50 miles, because we were at a total standstill, we decided to “ride-out” the storm in the area in which we were located. At least we were away from the water. We spent the next two days and nights in a church/school building that the minister was kind enough to let us stay in, along with about 350 other people. Sherrie Ann and I had one of the children’s classrooms all to ourselves. We helped with distributing the food that so many people had donated to the church and no one went hungry or thirsty. Everyone cleaned up after themselves. We actually had a great time together and many new friendships were made.

The major path of the hurricane had turned east and missed Houston for the most part. Much of the city was without electricity for as much as a week. Our area was spared. It was very windy but only some trees and branches were lost, no homes were destroyed. On the third day we took a chance and left back for our home south of Houston. It took us only an hour to get back home the 50 miles we had traveled, as the freeways and highways were mostly clear of traffic. As we approached our home, I could see that we had electricity, because the outside light was still on. Our yard was scattered with many broken tree branches but no major damages.

We were fortunate. We had a home to come back to and suffered no damage and could begin to put our lives together again. We were lucky, many people east of us lost all they had including their lives.

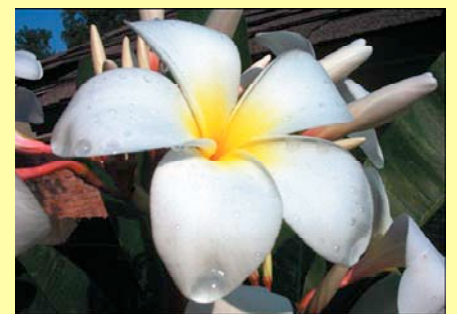
Eric Firkowski

# From Sherrie Ann



The drive itself was, of course, a VERY horrible experience. But the experience at the church shelter that we stayed at was a very GREAT experience. The pastor & his family were wonderful, as were his deacons and others that helped in the kitchen and to help keep us organized. We had families of several cultures there and there were no problems at all. We all got along with each other VERY well. Everyone helped out as best as they could. It was important that the families who had children keep an eye on them. That way, everyone else wasn’t always trying to find the parents of lost children. There were several people in wheelchairs. Obviously they were not able to help or maybe just a little bit. There were also several elderly people. The amount that we helped in the kitchen and around the building, helped to keep our minds busy and we didn’t have time to worry so much. We will never forget this experience and we will remember the church people and our new friends forever!!

We also will not forget the many thoughts and prayers of our friends and family both here in the U.S. and around the world. As we came around the last corner before reaching our house and we saw that our home had not been destroyed, of course we said a HUGE prayer of thanks to our WONDERFUL Lord!!!!!!!!!!!!!! But one of the thoughts on my mind was that we had been spared because of all of you. For this we want to thank you all very, very much. We hope that you never have to have an experience like this. But if you ever do have to, we hope you would be able to find someone to help to make everything better, like we did.



## Ode to a Plumeria

Plumeria's a wondrous sight,  
Growing yellow, pink or white!  
When in bloom, those colors glow.  
Don't you know we love you so?  
Frangipani's fragrant smell;  
We are in your glorious spell!  
Lots of sun and not much rain;  
We want you to bloom again!  
Pretty Plumey's beauteous face;  
You are blessed with God's good  
grace!  
Noble, fair and rich with splendor;  
You are just the best of flowers!!

**Sherrie Ann - USA**

# What is a First Cousin Twice Removed?

If someone walked up to you and said "Howdy, I'm your third cousin, twice removed," would you have any idea what they meant? Most people have a good understanding of basic relationship words such as "mother," "father," "aunt," "uncle," "brother," and "sister." But what about the relationship terms that we don't use in everyday speech? Terms like "second cousin" and "first cousin, once removed"? We don't tend to speak about our relationships in such exact terms ("cousin" seems good enough when you are introducing one person to another), so most of us aren't familiar with what these words mean.

## Relationship Terms

Sometimes, especially when working on your family history, it's handy to know how to describe your family relationships more exactly. The definitions below should help you out.

### Cousin (a.k.a "first cousin")

Your first cousins are the people in your family who have two of the same grandparents as you. In other words, they are the children of your aunts and uncles.

### Second Cousin

Your second cousins are the people in your family who have the same great-grandparents as you., but not the same grandparents.

### Third, Fourth, and Fifth Cousins

Your third cousins have the same great-great-grandparents, fourth cousins have the same great-great-great-grandparents, and so on.

### Removed

When the word "removed" is used to describe a relationship, it indicates that the two people are from different generations. You and your first cousins are in the same generation (two generations younger than your grandparents),

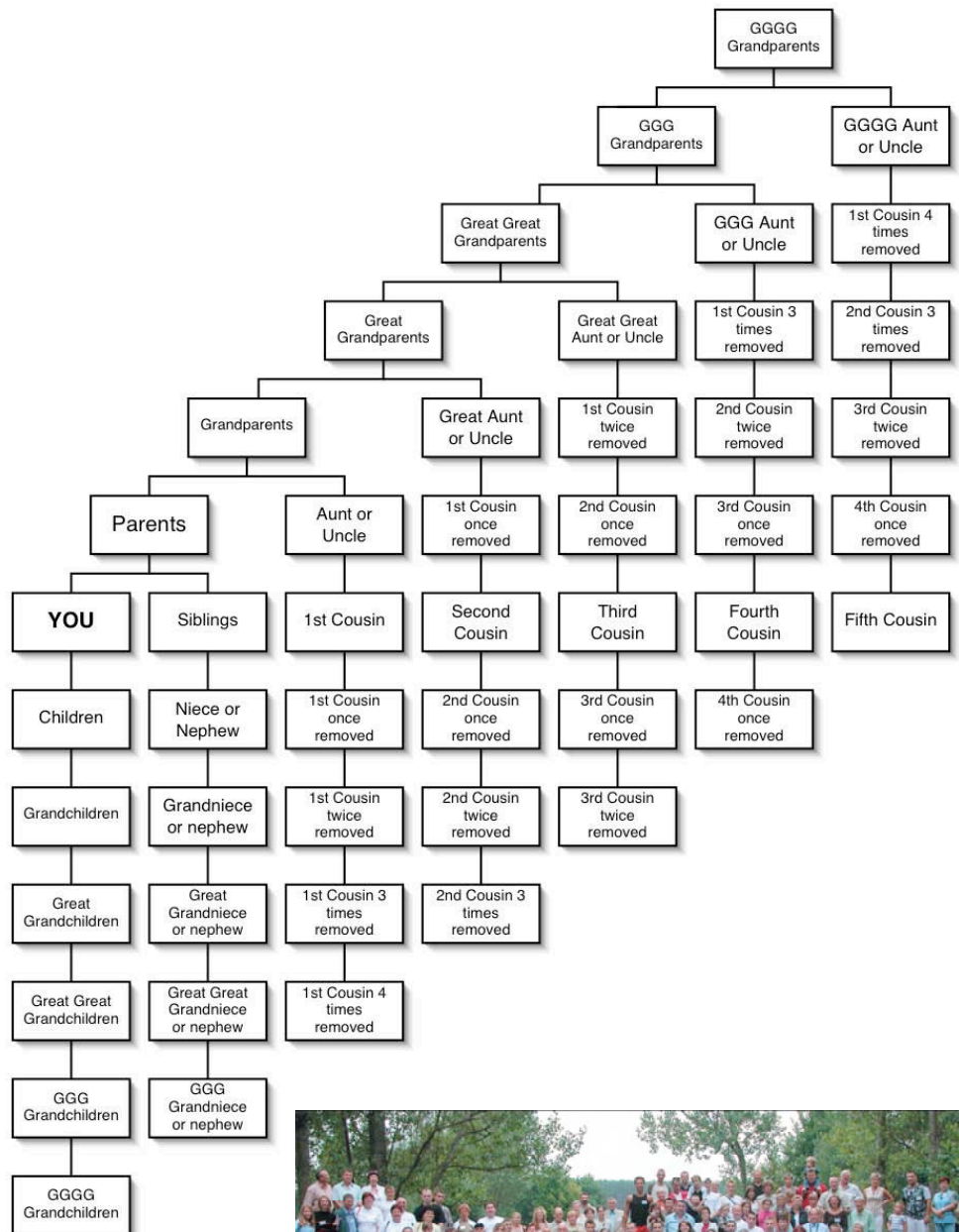
so the word "removed" is *not* used to describe your relationship.

The words "once removed" mean that there is a difference of one generation. For example, your mother's first cousin is your first cousin, once removed. This is because your mother's first cousin is one generation younger than your grandparents and you are two generations younger than your grandparents. This one-generation

difference equals "once removed."

Twice removed means that there is a two-generation difference. You are two generations younger than a first cousin of your grandmother, so you and your grandmother's first cousin are first cousins, twice removed.

Reprinted from article at [http://www.genealogy.com/r6\\_cousn.html](http://www.genealogy.com/r6_cousn.html)





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Gadu-Gadu#2159480  
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[www.firkowski.com](http://www.firkowski.com)

When we are researching the Firkowski Family for new people, we are looking for any information that may help us in our research, every piece of information is a clue to locating another relative. If you would like to help us add to our information about the Firkowski Family, here are some pieces of basic information we are looking for. Dates & Places of Birth, Baptism, Death, Burial, Marriage, and Places they have lived. We also must try to find all the spouses that a person had, their parents and their children. Family Stories can be quite useful also in giving us clues about where to search for more information. If you would like to help in the Firkowski Family Research you can see the information we already have on our web pages. Research takes time, but with the help of more people, we will learn more about the Firkowski Family History sooner.

## Lukasz Firkowski

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Gadu-Gadu#3812933  
Web page:  
<http://firkowscy.of.pl>

## Nous recherchons n'importe quelles informations sur ces personnes:

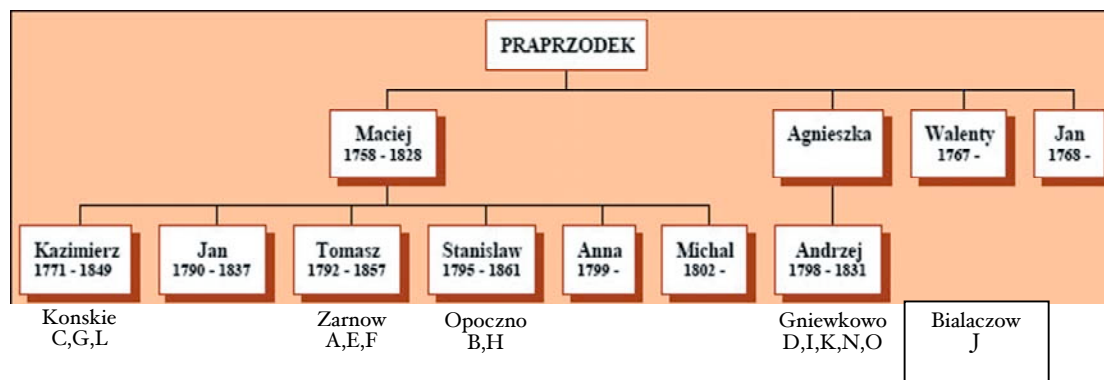
Aleksandra Firkowska	Berufsschule Polen, Koordinatorin
Alojzy Firkowski	Bielsko-Biala, Poland ul. Podgorze
Aneta Firkowska	Piotrków Trybunalski ul. Slowackiego (0-44) 646 86 64 Poland
Aneta Firkowska	Tomaszów Mazowiecki Zespól Szkol Ponadgimnazjalnych, Poland
Ann Firkowska	Brazil
Antonina Firkowska	hotel industry?
Barbara Firkowska	Mnisków Poland Nurse; ul. Piotrkowska 42; 26-341 Mnisków (0-44) 756 19 01
Elzbieta Firkowska	Lodz, Poland ul. Podhalanska
Ewa Firkowska	Warszawa, Poland Instytut Gospodarki Mieszkaniowej - Zakład Badania Rynku Nieruchomosci; ul. Filtrowa 1; 00-611 Warszawa
Gabrielle J Firkowski	Fort Lauderdale, FL data urodz. 1950 USA
Gwynth Firkowski	Canada Member of Edmonton Bird Club <a href="http://ebc.fanweb.ca">http://ebc.fanweb.ca</a>
Ettore Firkowski	Brazil
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Jadwiga Firkowska	Jezow, Poland Dressmaker; ul. Lowicka 61; 96-134 Jezow
Jerzy Firkowski	Lublin, Poland
Jolanta Firkowska	Szczecin, Poland ul. Legnica
Justyna Firkowska	Lodygowice, Poland Finished High School in 1994
Katarzyna Firkowska	Bydgoszcz, Poland ul. Fiordonska; (0-52) 348 97 21
Leokadia Firkowska	Warszawa, Poland ul. Keniga
Lukasz Firkowski	Gdansk, Poland <a href="mailto:lacki@biomed.eti.pg.gda.pl">lacki@biomed.eti.pg.gda.pl</a>
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Malgorzata Firkowska	Warszawa, Poland ul. Kochanowskiego
Malgorzata Firkowska	Warszawa, Poland Surgeon; ul. Ksiecica Ziemowita
Maria Firkowska	Warszawa, Poland ul. Natolinska 2
Marianna Firkowska	Lodz, Poland ul. Tuwima
Marianna Firkowska	Mniskow, Poland ul. Piotrkowska; tel. (0-44) 756 16 93
Mateusz Firkowski	swirus37; Scientific secretary
Mirosław Firkowski	Lublin, Poland
Monika Firkowska	Chorzow, Poland ul. Młodzieżowa (0-32) 247 53 55
Natalie Firkowski	Manitoba, Canada Kelvin High School in Winnipeg, Canada
Piotr Firkowski	Gdansk, Poland
R. Firkowski	Lodz, Poland "Fart-Plus" Autokomis; ul. Wojska Polskiego 83; 91-755 Lodz
Sabina Firkowska	Kielce, Poland Tour group "Czaploki" from Cieszyna; <a href="mailto:leszekczudek@poczta.onet.pl">leszekczudek@poczta.onet.pl</a> ; ul. Nowowiejska (0-41) 342 65 90
Stanisław Firkowski	Opczno, Poland numer gadu-gadu 5242188, more than 67 years
Tadeusz Firkowski	Jezow, Poland ul. Wojska Polskiego; 95-047 Jezow; tel. (0-46) 875 51 98
Thomas Firkowski	Bielsko Biala, Poland went to England to look for work
Władysław Firkowski	Wroclaw, Poland Doctor; Wroclaw
Zofia Firkowska	Smardzko, Poland Sklep spoz.-przemyslowy; 78-300 Smardzko 22; (0-94) 365 34 49

Toutes les données ci-dessus ont été trouvées sur l'Internet et en annuaires téléphoniques.

Si vous identifiez quiconque, entrez en contact avec svp Tim ou Lukasz.

## Nous sommes une grande famille !

Le 1er mars, 2005 ensuite sur 2.5 ans de recherche généalogique toutes les branches de notre famille ont été reliées au grand arbre de la forme une. Et quoique les ancêtres grand-grands restent inconnus, beaucoup de choses ont été clarifiées. Nous avons trouvé dans les registres de paroisse, les informations sur des enfants de mêmes parents et la progéniture de nos ancêtres plus âgés. Ceci nous a permis de créer la disposition ci-dessus des forebearers de notre famille. Ainsi, tout le Firkowskis sont une famille...



# Je suis mon propre grand-père

Stanislaw FIRKOWSKI

Monsieur le président de la république de Pologne,  
chef des armées  
48/50 Krakowskie Przedmiescie St.  
00-071 Warsaw

Monsieur le Président de la République,

Permettez-moi de prendre la respectueuse liberté de vous exposer ce qui suit, et de solliciter de votre bienveillance l'appui nécessaire pour obtenir une démobilisation rapide.

Je suis sursitaire, âgé de 24 ans, et je suis marié à une veuve de 44 ans, laquelle a une fille qui en a 25. Mon père a épousé cette fille. A cette heure, mon père est donc devenu mon gendre, puisqu'il a épousé ma fille. De ce fait, ma belle-fille est devenue ma belle-mère, puisqu'elle est la femme de mon père. Ma femme et moi avons eu en Janvier dernier un fils. Cet enfant est donc devenu le frère de la femme de mon père, donc le beau-frère de mon père. En conséquence, mon oncle, puisqu'il est le frère de ma belle-mère. Mon fils est donc mon oncle.

La femme de mon père a eu à Noël un garçon qui est à la fois mon frère puisqu'il est le fils de mon père, et mon petit-fils puisqu'il est le fils de la fille de ma femme. Je suis ainsi le frère de mon petit-fils, et comme le mari de la mère d'une personne est le père de celle-ci, il s'avère que je suis le père de ma femme, et le frère de mon fils. Je suis donc mon propre grand-père. De ce fait, Monsieur le Président de la République, ayez l'obligeance de bien vouloir me renvoyer dans mes foyers, car la loi interdit que le père, le fils et le petit-fils soient mobilisés en même temps.

Dans la croyance de votre compréhension, veuillez recevoir, Monsieur le Président de la république, l'expression de mes sentiments les meilleurs.

Stanislaw Firkowski



## Annonce – Concours !

Combien de personnes participeront à la 2<sup>ème</sup> réunion de familles des Firkowski en 2006?

Personne actuellement ne connaît la réponse à cette question. Et en fait, personne ne le saura avant le premier jour de la réunion.

Vous pouvez donc participer au concours et établir votre pronostic...

Pour mémoire, la première réunion de famille regroupait 202 personnes

### Qui compter ?

- 1) Ne sont pris en compte dans le calcul que ceux qui arriveront avant l'ouverture officielle de la réunion de famille (samedi): Ceux qui se sont inscrits.
- 2) Seront pris en compte ceux qui sont très proches de la famille tout comme ceux qui en sont plus éloignés.
- 3) Ne seront pas pris en compte l'équipe locale, les amis, les invités et les journalistes.
- 4) Les femmes enceintes comptent pour une personne

### Règlement :

- 1) Une seule inscription par personne.
- 2) Pour participer au concours vous devez être âgé de plus de 12 ans.
- 3) La personne ayant le chiffre se rapprochant le plus du nombre exact de participants recevra un prix d'une valeur approximative de 250 zlotys !! **Un lecteur DVD/ DivX Manta DVD-001**

### Emperor 3

- 4) Dans le cas où il y aurait plusieurs gagnants ex-æquo, un jury procédera à un tirage au sort pour déterminer l'unique gagnant.
- 5) Le retrait du lot par le gagnant se fera sur place au moment de l'annonce des résultats du concours (samedi). Sa présence est obligatoire.

**La date limite d'inscription au concours est le 31 mars 2006.**

Au-delà de cette date, aucune inscription ni modification aux inscriptions ne seront acceptées. Afin d'éviter tout litige, la liste des participants au concours sera mise en ligne sur le site Internet de la famille Firkowski avant le 10 avril 2006. Cette liste détaillera les pronostic de chacun des participants.

Aucune contestation relative aux votes de chacun ne sera acceptée après le 30 avril 2006.



### Renseignez-vous sur Maciek Firkowski de Brwinowa.

Il n'était pas à la première réunion parce que, il visitait Rome en même temps. Maintenant il attend impatiemment la 2ème Réunion de famille de Firkowski et il voudrait venir dans sa voiture rêveuse.



### Votre inscription doit comprendre :

- 1) Votre pronostic sur le nombre de participants à la prochaine réunion de famille.
- 2) Les nom et prénom de la personne votant.
- 3) Sa ville de résidence.

### Vous pouvez vous inscrire UNIQUEMENT via :

- 1) SMS : 0 501305961.

Exemple de S1

Kazimierz Firkowski, Bydgoszcz

2) Courrier électronique : lukasz@firkowski.com

3) Voie postale : Lukasz Firkowski; ul. Kosciuszki 19/220; 41-300 Dabrowa Gornicza POLOGNE

Remarque : En cas d'inscription par SMS ou courrier électronique vous recevrez une confirmation.

Cela signifie qu'un SMS envoyé par Internet ne sera pas accepté. Les inscriptions ne peuvent se faire physiquement, par téléphone ou par quelque autre moyen de communication électronique.