

John Brodowski

My uncle, John Brodowski, was 84 years old when he passed away, on November 1, 2023. His daughters live out of state, but my husband and son and I got to celebrate his September birthday last year with some Polish beers. He was at his home on hospice care at that time. Although he was my late aunt's husband, he was the only male figure in my life growing up, and he treated my children as his own grandchildren.



John Brodowski in his office at Brookhaven National Laboratory

Uncle John left Poland alone at age nineteen with one suitcase and made a successful life for himself here in the U.S. He worked as a highly regarded engineer for over 30 years at Brookhaven National Laboratory, most recently at the Collider-Accelerator Department. In addition, he was a self-taught violin maker (I have three of his instruments) and an accomplished runner and cyclist.

When I played the violin in high school, my young cousin desired to play too. Her dad (my uncle) picked up her violin and said, Hmm I can make this!!! And so he did. He sold a few of them to professional violinists, and I was honored to receive one as a gift at graduation from medical school. His daughter packaged up two for each of my kids, who play brass instruments, but it is a kind memento of his work. He used to test the integrity of the shape of the violin by vibrating sawdust on the surface, making Chladni figures.

I play now occasionally in an Irish fiddle group. It's a lot of fun!! Thank you, Uncle John.

– Carol Davis