



Polish Journey

Newsletter of the Polish Cultural Council • Vol. 14 • Spring 2016

PCC is an Official Partner in Pittsburgh's Bicentennial

July 9, 1816 marks the date when Pittsburgh's first mayor, Ebenezer Denny, took office. On Saturday July 9, 2016, the City of Pittsburgh, under the guidance of Mayor Peduto, will celebrate the 200th anniversary of the incorporation of the city of Pittsburgh, with a parade starting at 1pm on Liberty Avenue at 11th Street. The Polish Cultural Council is an official Bicentennial Partner with the city. We have been asked to participate in the parade. And, we will.

No one can doubt the contributions made by Polish Americans to Western Pennsylvania and Pittsburgh since the first arrival of Poles as missionaries and traders with Indians in the mid-1700s. By 1852, there was a large number of Poles living on Pittsburgh's South Side. In 1875, the first



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Polish Parish opened in the Strip District, St. Stanislaus Kostka.

We want to get the Polish Community in Pittsburgh involved in the concept, design and construction of a "Polish float" for the parade.

Our parade chairperson, Ms. Evanne Addams, has already

procured two flat bed trucks for the float, the use of a white and red convertible, as well as a red truck to pull the float. Now we need ideas for the float's theme. We need people to design it and volunteers to help construct it.

July 9th will be here in about 13 weeks so we need to get started right away. This is a great opportunity to bring families together and to create something for the public. We are searching for a place to build the float before the parade. Polish Hill may be the perfect spot. So, if you want to help, and I hope you do, please either email, write or send a letter to: Polish Cultural Council, P.O. Box 81054, Pittsburgh, Pa 15217, pccorg.ms@gmail.com, 412-871-3347

—Rick Pierchalski



It's Spring!

The time of renewal! Spring into action!!!
RENEW YOUR 2016 MEMBERSHIP!

online: PolishCulturalCouncil.org

By mail: send the completed form on page 2 with your check

The Polish American Congress

The Polish American Congress (PAC) was founded in 1944 by Polish Americans concerned by the treatment of Poland by the Allies after World War II, and the eventual takeover of democratic Poland by the communists. The PAC has been at the forefront of lobbying the Congress and the President on all matters regarding Poland for the last 70 years. The PAC is recognized by both the Republic of Poland and the United States government as the true voice of Polonia in the US, and, as such, has been continuously consulted by the US State Department. Since the fall of communism, the PAC lobbied vigorously for Poland's entrance into NATO, for fair trade agreements and the Visa Waiver program for Poles traveling to the United States. The PAC has a full time lobbyist with offices in Washington DC.

From a personal standpoint, I have been working in the PAC for the past twenty years and had the responsibility of lobbying in person President Clinton, Senator Santorum and members of Congress for Poland's entry into NATO. I actually got into



an argument with Senator Spector for his refusal to support Poland. My point is that our lobbying is up front and personal with our senators, congressmen and president, and it is important and vital to the security of Poland.

Recently, we had our latest meeting of the Board of Directors in Washington, DC. We lobbied our representatives on behalf of Poland. We reminded them of the US's NATO Article 5 commitment, which states that an attack on one member is an attack on all. Obviously, our concern is the Russian incursion into Ukraine. Will Poland be next?

In addition, the PAC is very involved in international trade and business with the burgeoning Polish economy. The PAC has hosted business seminars on manufacturing, energy, and legal topics. Our seminars have been presented and attended by Americans of Polish descent, Polish economic ministries, Polish-American Chambers of Commerce, and Polish businesses.

Why am I writing this? The PAC is organized with chapters throughout the US, from California to Massachusetts. Western Pennsylvania has a chapter in need of new members. If you are interested in international politics, care about the future of Poland, and would like to hear about how the PAC is organized, our annual Board of Directors meetings, and our efforts, please contact me. We are planning to have an organizational meeting in Pittsburgh this year. I can be reached at 412-977-6968. If you are searching for further information, go to our website at PAC1944.org and look at some of our newsletters.

—RICK PIERCHALSKI

PLEASE RENEW YOUR
MEMBERSHIP TODAY!

Just fill in this form and mail it with your dues to the address shown below. Thank You!

*Keeping Polish
Culture Alive!*

Polish Cultural Council
P.O. BOX 81054
Pittsburgh PA 15217-0554
www.PolishCulturalCouncil.org

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I would like to get involved in one of the committees:

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- ☐ Kennywood Day
- ☐ Newsletter
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- ☐ Community Outreach and Membership

I would like to support PCC in the amount of
\$ _____

Please make your check payable to the Polish Cultural Council

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"The opinions expressed by authors do not always reflect the views of the PCC."

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visit us @ www.PolishCulturalCouncil.org

Pittsburgh, a City of History

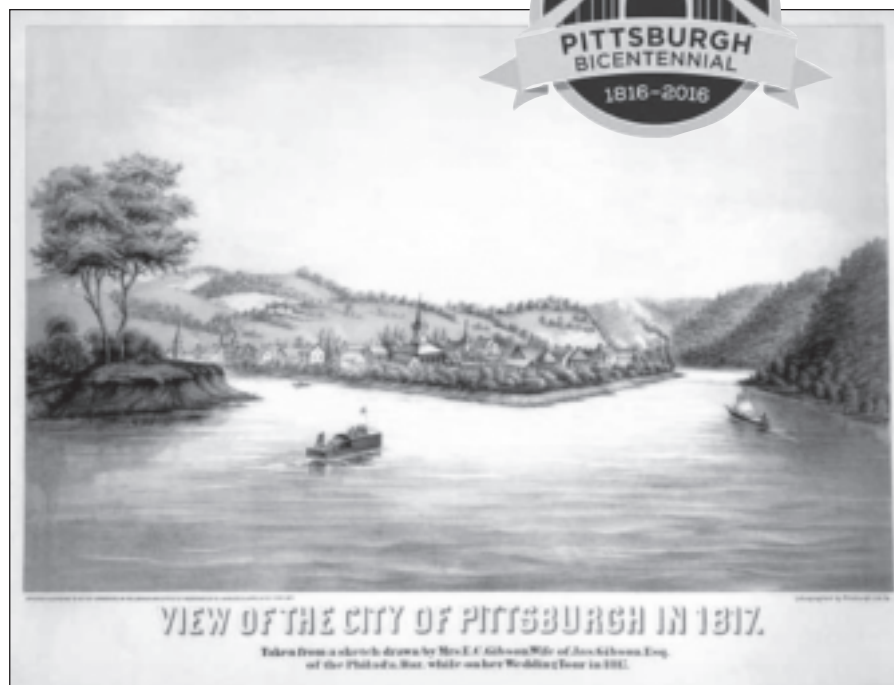
By Jan Napoleon Saykiewicz

Two hundred years ago, a reporter described Pittsburgh as a “well-built town” comprised of these buildings: 11 of stone, 283 of brick, and 473 of frame and logs. That was the beginning of the growth of a city that has a well-defined position in American history, a city which has made substantial contributions to the American economy. At that time, Pittsburgh was the leading producer of iron, brass, tin and glass. It also built superior quality steam engines and all kinds of machines. With the growth of these and other industries, Pittsburgh was no longer a frontier village.

It was on its way to becoming one of America’s vital manufacturing centers. Situated on the banks of three navigable rivers, Pittsburgh was regarded as the “Gateway to the West”.

Because of economic and social development, Pittsburgh was incorporated as a city on March 16, 1816. Its government consisted of a mayor; the Select Council; the Common Council, whose membership included leading citizens; a recorder; and twelve aldermen. In the year of its incorporation as a city, Pittsburgh, itself, had 960 houses and a population of six thousand. Its expanding suburbs raised the population to ten thousand. There were eight churches, three banks, a theater, a Masonic Hall, three market houses, a courthouse, and a jail. The first two bridges were already chartered. There was also a public academy where Latin and Greek classes were taught; however, according to an article in the press in 1817, this academy was not thriving.

The main obstacle for Pittsburgh’s continued growth was transportation; however, the invention and extensive use of the steamboat changed a lot. The completion of the Pennsylvania Turnpike in 1820 provided a road by which wagons could come over the



mountain. The Turnpike reduced the journey from Philadelphia to less than two weeks. The further development of water, and later, railroad transportation made Pittsburgh the “making iron city”.

Indeed making iron was the principal industry in Pittsburgh for over 150 years. From earliest times Pittsburgh was a working town, a town of business, a town where money was made. Great fortunes were built on the sweat and blood of workers, mainly immigrants from Italy, Poland, Germany, Ireland, and also other countries.

The work resulted in growth. Pittsburgh became the “City of Bridges”, the City of Steps, and the “City of the First Skyscraper University”, when the Cathedral of Learning was completed in 1936 at the University of Pittsburgh.

Today’s Pittsburgh is a modern “renaissance city” that changed its character from a city whose industry was based upon steel to an industry now based upon education, medical research and services, electronics, sophisticated machinery, finances,

and culture.

Some traditional trades continue. We still have specialized steel, alloys, glass and paints, and also food products; however what really keeps people in Pittsburgh, and brings new people to Pittsburgh, is a modernity based upon traditions, the quality of jobs, schools, housing, cultural attractions, and sports. These elements create a unique quality of life.

So, the City of Pittsburgh, please accept our warmest and most sincere congratulations on your 200th anniversary of incorporation. You have come a long way from Fort Prince George (1754), through Fort Duquesne, to the modern-day Pittsburgh of 2016. We, the Polish Cultural Council, which represents Americans of Polish heritage who were with you from the very beginning, are proud of your and our growth, and of your and our contributions to the greatness of the United States of America.

Jan Napoleon Saykiewicz is Honorary Consul of the Republic of Poland and Professor Emeritus, Duquesne University.

Ambassador Urszula Gacek, the Consul General of the Republic of Poland in New York in conversation with PCC's Eva Tumiel-Kozak

PCC: Madame Ambassador, I'm very grateful that you found time in your busy schedule to share a bit of yourself with all of us at PCC. We are privileged to be one of the first organizations you have visited. We had a chance to talk with you and to share information. Many of our members met you at OSTATKI, 2015, at the early stages of your appointment as Consul General of the Republic of Poland in New York. You also have the title of Ambassador. Please kindly explain why you hold both titles.

CG: I was an ambassador in the past, Poland's Ambassador for four years to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg. This organization, which was established after WWII, and to which Poland has belonged since 1991, is often mistaken with the European Union. My experience as an ambassador was completely different from the typical position such as, for example, ambassador in Washington. I was not a "people person". I didn't deal with the citizens. My duty was mostly to interact with other ambassadors in the Council of Europe, negotiating international legal documents, for which you have to have specific negotiation skills. I now have a completely different job as a Consul General in New York, dealing mostly with people.

PCC: Your route to the top was not a typical one. You were born in Great Britain, to Polish emigre parents. You are a graduate of the prestigious University of Oxford, with degrees in philosophy, politics, and economics. What prompted you to move to Poland and to choose a career in diplomacy?

CG: Indeed, my career path was not a typical one. I came to Poland in 1991 and decided to live in the small town of Tarnów, where I worked mostly in the field of business. It gave me an opportunity eventually to get



Ambassador Urszula Gacek, the Consul General of the Republic of Poland in New York

involved in many projects, which brought me closer to public life. It took me almost 15 years of life in Poland to move closer to politics. I got elected to the Polish Senate, where I was on the committee dealing with Polonia and its interests. My interest was always in foreign affairs. Later on, as a member of the European Parliament, I was interested in energy, security, and East-European strategic issues. I was a spokesperson for defense matters, definitely not typical subjects for a woman!

I must say, I was the only woman in the Security Committee, always interested in tough geo-political subjects, always shying from the "typical" programs for women. It was a hard job, not always recognized or appreciated. But I never had an inkling about my future diplomatic career.

I spent almost half of my life in Poland, which means that I am well and truly rooted there. At the same time, being a part of the European Parliament, gave me the advantage

of having interesting and helpful contacts for the future.

PCC: It has been over a year since you took on your duties as Consul General. Would you explain for our readers what your everyday involvement is like?

CG: In my job as a Consul General, I have to be open to people, dealing with people in all walks of life. On a typical day, I might have dealings with, for example, homeless people in Greenpoint, and later on, in the evening, attend a black tie affair. In other words, I have to find a mutual language for these different types of people. One of the necessary things in my line of duty is to... like people. Otherwise you cannot be a good Consul.

PCC: Yes, I noticed last year at Ostatki how good and "natural" you were in connecting with people.

CG: In New York I meet regularly with my staff of 30 people. I'm overseeing the finances and the general

organization, but sometimes I do the mundane day-to-day stuff. At the same time, I take a personal interest in difficult human cases. I don't leave the challenging matters to my deputies. I still like and demand to be informed about any legal position of the citizens, of any unusual situations. I'm not a "soft touch" person, but I have a genuine interest in our citizens, especially if they are in a difficult position. Recognizing the so-called human side is my forte. We have the best network, here and in Poland, for those people with hardships and we are constantly trying to help.

PCC: It's great for Polish citizens to know that you take care of them...

CG: This year we're initiating programs of information: for example, what could happen to senior citizens if they relocate to Poland; what happens to their pensions and social security services, etc. We do seminars, use social media, and all possible means to spread as much information as possible.

PCC: What do you find the most challenging in New York? What do you like the most? Are there any achievements which you would like to share? Any disappointments?

CG: My job is basically seven days a week, since we have so many different matters to deal with. I usually sustain myself on four and a half hours of sleep, maximum. I like to get out of Manhattan and listen to people. Of course, there are disappointments. The biggest one? Days are not long enough. Also, on occasion, having to say "No" to deserving people. I try to juggle as much as possible, try to improve things. It's an ongoing process. I try to chal-

lenge people to challenge their own ways of doing things.

PCC: What is your philosophy toward your work in this position? What would you like to change or to improve?

CG: Demographics are changing. We have to show this side of Poland in a slightly different way. We do respect the older generation and their traditions, as well as their role as mentors. But we also know that many young people are not comfortable speaking Polish. We have to communicate to them in English. We have to realize that what worked for the older Polonia is not always a solution for the younger generation.

PCC: We all realize well that most members of Polonia organizations are from the older generations who strive to keep the Polish traditions alive. Do you have any ideas or suggestions for involving younger members?

CG: We're trying to bring new blood to Polonia, encouraging them to implement something new and fresh in their organizations. We're supporting young talent.

This year we're showing Polish creativity, for example, Polish culture, fashion, design, and cuisine. Some of the projects will be presented at the Consulate.

But if anybody in Pittsburgh has any ideas in that field, you're always welcome to share them with us. You have to offer a variety of events which cater to many groups of Polish people, including the young generation.

Keeping Polish traditions is important and, at the same time, promot-

ing Polish contemporary culture is a necessity.

We're also interested in promoting all the achievements of Poland, be they technical, artistic or any other. I'm myself originally from Polonia. We would like to bring Polonia closer to Poland, and to offer many satisfying experiences to the Polish Jews, who have an opportunity to visit the country of their origin and to admire many positive changes.

PCC: Do you have any message for Polonia organizations which you would like to share? Is there anything that our organization can do to make our collaboration more successful?

CG: Be open to working with the younger generation. If you want to realize a specific project, be my partner in creativity and ideas, not somebody who is demanding from us. Keeping Polish traditions alive and, at the same time showcasing Polish reality is very important. Polonia is a group of people with many talents, well-connected, with many good ideas. Therefore, join us on the basis of community projects.

PCC: Our challenge is not always ideas. Most of the time, it is lack of funds.

CG: You have to select a good project, and we'll try to help. We need applications based upon a business-like proposal. We are governing the funds of the Polish tax-payers and we have to find the most effective and responsible way to utilize them.

PCC: Many thanks and much appreciation for your words of wisdom. Wishing you lots of success in each of your endeavors and many happy returns to Pittsburgh!

The Tomaszów Adventure

With Tuwim, St. Idzi and St. Hubert in the background.

By MAGDA RYBKA

I must be getting older and nostalgic, because I have just remembered one long May weekend last year or maybe two years ago. We typically have a few days off at this time. My family, however, had not planned anything in advance. We seemed to enjoy spending some time at home, because the weather was unusually unpleasant. It was a fairly good opportunity to catch up with accumulated laundry or whatever we were behind with. But suddenly the clouds dispersed and the ball of helium came out and started to dry out the water pools. Well, I thought: time to go. I had just listened to Ewa Demarczyk singing the famous verses: *A może byśmy tak, najmilszy, wpadli na dzień do Tomaszowa (and maybe, dearest one, we could just go for one day to Tomaszów)*, and I realized that I had never been there. I am quite an authoritarian person, (which is lately quite a fashionable trend), so my family could not resist. We quickly packed our indispensable bag of vegetarian food, loaded our bikes and set off. It took about an hour and a half to get from Warsaw to Tomaszów Mazowiecki.

Tomaszów is about 70 miles south-southwest of Warsaw in the Łódź Voivodship. The town is situated near the Zalew Sulejowski reservoir, on the edge of the Puszcza Spalska wilderness area, and on the bank of the Pilica river.

I have recently read a nice novel by a Belorussian writer Natalka Babina. The main female character of the book had the gift of insight into the past in places where much suffering took place and where some important events occurred. If I had such a gift it would probably be activated in the Tomaszów area, which



The Zalew Sulejowski Reservoir

seems to have been a favorite choice of moving battlefronts. We will not describe here the famous fight on the banks of the Pilica in 1145, between Władysław Wygnaniec and his brothers Mieszko Stary and Bolesław Kędzierzawy for the Krzywousty legacy. It is too old.

But the Tomaszów area witnessed some severe fighting in both world wars. Most memorable was probably the September campaign in 1939. The area was defended by the Polish 13th Infantry Division under Col. Władysław Zubosz-Kaliński. The German assault was by two armored divisions of the 16 Panzer Corps. After the day-long battle, German forces broke through the Polish defences and took the town. The Polish 13th Division sustained heavy losses and was forced to retreat towards Warsaw.

Now, in the vicinity of Tomaszów Mazowiecki, visitors can tour an interesting open-air museum of the the Pilica River. That's exactly where we went.

Good news for all men is that there are some very nice vehicles at the museum. These are not toys, but one-time dangerous machines, which were pulled up from the bottom of the Pilica River. This section of the exhibition is called "War trophies of

Pilica". Its most interesting piece is an artillery tractor belonging to the Luftwaffe. It spent 54 years at the bottom of the Pilica River. These artifacts are in fairly good condition, despite a long submersion.

Another important section of this open air exhibition is "Flour-milling by water in the Pilica River basin". Its most important exhibit is a wooden water-mill. Visitors may climb inside. There is much to learn about the traditions of water-milling in the area. Besides the mill, there is the largest Polish collection of traditional millstones. There is also a 1:10 model of a unique floating mill that was once in operation on the Pilica River, models of old bridges and lots of traditional household accessories like irons, pepper-mills and scales that, while no longer practical, look great.

The museum also includes exhibits from the nearby town of Spała. I dare say that one of the most original and popular is the Tsar's toilet. There is also a guardhouse which previously sat behind the President's residence in Spała, during the Second Polish Republic. I would really recommend visiting the museum with children, especially on a nice and warm spring or fall afternoon.

After you have seen the museum,

you must by all means cross the road to the Blue Springs Nature Reserve, a paradise of small lakes. The Reserve is famous for two pools, which are formed by an underground spring, and which contain water of an exquisite turquoise color. It is very interesting to see how the water passes through the sand and causes a rippling effect. This place hosts many species of birds and fish, colorful butterflies, and some not always lovable insects. I remember the place as magically lit by shy rays of sunshine filtered through the canopies of trees.

It was still quite early, so we drove to Spała. Spała is well-known as a hunting destination, not only for the Tsars, but also for inter-war presidents Stanisław Wojciechowski and Ignacy Mościcki. In 1928, a monument of a bison (żubr) was brought to Spała. Even today, it is an important landmark and a great tourist attraction.

An important place of interest, located in the very center of Spała, is a park which used to surround a small palace. The palace was built in 1884 for Tsar Alexander III. Later, it was used by Polish presidents. During WWII, the German headquarters were there. After the war, the



The Church of St. Idzi in Inowłódź

palace was burned by the Soviets, who wanted to erase all vestiges of the Tsars. Next to the park, is a gem of wooden architecture, a small St. Mary chapel, also called a presidential chapel. It was built in 1923 on the order of Stanisław Wojciechowski.

I would also advise a short walk to the forest to see the St. Hubert grotto, which marks the place where Alexander III caught his first deer. There are two other landmarks which remind of the Tsar. These are two hotels which were built for the numerous guests of the Tsar. Now, they are guesthouses. As you may

easily see, Spała has always been a thriving place, because it was a holiday place for many powerful people. Edward Gierek had his residence built somewhere in the woods here in the 1970s. I think Spała gives a sense of historical continuity, which is increasingly rare in Poland.

If you happen to be in Spała and still have some time to spare, please go to Inowłódź. In Inowłódź, is the wonderfully old Romanesque church of St. Idzi. According to one theory, it was founded by prince Władysław Herman, in the XIth century. The prince wished to express his thanks to the saint for giving him an heir – the future Bolesław Krzywousty. St. Idzi was such an efficient patron of procreation.

It was a long and very fruitful afternoon. We returned home after dark, hungry and tired, but happy and impressed. I do not want to sound overly patriotic, but Poland can be such a nice and inspiring place to be.

A historian and an English teacher, and a graduate of Warsaw University and the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, IN, Magda Rybka lives in Warsaw with her mathematician husband and musical daughter. She likes travel, vegetarian cooking and bird watching.



The bison statue in Spala

Speaking Polish – Piece of Cake

by Veronica Wojnaroski

The seasons of the year, pory roku

In this installment of Speaking Polish, we present the Polish ways of marking the passage of the seasons.



Wiosna, goddess of spring

Wiosna, spring

By far the most interesting name for a Polish season is *Wiosna*. The word *Wiosna* derives from the name of an ancient goddess in Slavic mythology, *Vesna*. *Wiosna* is the goddess of spring, morning, and the birth of every living thing. Each spring, *Wiosna* seduced the lightning god, *Perun*, ushering in an end to winter. *Wiosna* is portrayed as always smiling, beautiful, and barefoot. Her hair is long and adorned with flowers. Sometimes she holds an apple and some grapes, and sometimes she holds a swallow, a symbol of spring, on her right index finger. She carries a bouquet of flowers to symbolize marriage. It was said that she carried the smell of spring with her, and that all of spring's scents are signs that she is passing by.

Wiosna had a twin sister, *Morana*, the goddess of night, winter, and death. In Polish, her name is *Marzanna*, from the word *mara*. We have the word *zmora*, which means *associated with death*.

There was a wide-spread ritual, the burning or drowning of *Marzanna* in the form of a rag and straw doll. *Marzanna's* ritual burning or drowning helped *Wiosna*, the spring, to come faster. There was no goddess for autumn, because *Wiosna* and *Marzanna* competed for control of the autumn weather.

Polish Slavs called *Wiosna* *Devana*, and gave her the added title of the goddess of fertility and sometimes, the goddess of the hunt. In other places, *Wiosna* was also known as *Zhivana*, *Zhiva*, *Siva*, *Diva*, *Deva*, *Devica* and *Danica*.

From *wiosna*, we get the adjective *wiosenny*. *Kanapki wiosenne* are open-faced sandwiches made from fresh cheese and sliced radishes, which appear in the spring, *wiosna* or *na wiosnę*.

The word *Vesna* means spring in some Slavic languages, including Ukrainian and Russian. It is also a popular female name in Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Slovenia.

Lato, summer

Lato is the Polish word for summer. It is derived from the Proto Slavic **lěto*, from the Proto Indo-European word for summer. It may stem from the name of the Slavic goddess of harmony, merriment, youth, love, beauty and sometimes summer. *Lada* was considered the mother of all gods. She was a symbol of beauty and order. Where she was, there was a feeling of warmth and comfort, a feeling of home.

The Polish word for *years*, *lata*, (plural, the singular is *rok*), probably derives from the same root. From this word, we have the old and charming custom of reckoning your age in summers. The question, "Ile masz lat?", "How old are you?", literally asks the question, "How many summers have you?"

Lato is known as *gorąca pora roku*, the hot season. In the summer, *latem* or

w lecie, you eat *chłodnik*, *zupa na lato*, a summer soup. *Chłodnik* is a cold beet soup, which also contains cucumber, hard-cooked egg, fresh dill, green onions, buttermilk and sour cream and sometimes, cold, boiled potatoes. The Polish version of Indian Summer is called *babie lato*, the *old woman summer*. It also means the small spider webs which cover vegetation at that time of year. In the source of this phrase, there may have been confusion from the German *weben*, to *weave* (here a cobweb) and *weib*, *woman*. In medieval times, spiders and their webs were associated with witches.

Some version of *lato* is used for the word *summer* in Ukrainian, Slovak, Russian, Czech, Slovenian, while Slovenian uses *leto* only for *years*. *Poletje* is used to mean *summer*.

Jesień, autumn

Jesień is an old word of Proto Indo European origin, *eeson*, which means *harvest*. *Jesień* means autumn in various Slavic languages, including Polish, Ukrainian, Slovak, Russian, Czech, and Slovenian. *Jesieni* or *na jesieni* are the ways to say *in the autumn* in Polish. The *colors of autumn* are *barwy jesieni* or *kolory jesieni*.

The *barwy jesieni* are on full display during the Golden Polish Autumn, *Żłota Polska Jesień*. This is a time in Poland during September, when the weather is still warm, but the forests and parks are ablaze with the reds, yellows and oranges of autumn, and the rains are less frequent than in summer. It is a time of plenty. This season takes its name from the poem, *In the Autumn*, *Na Jesieni*, by Polish poet Wincenty Pol. (See <http://inside-poland.com/t/on-polands-harvest-festivals-and-the-golden-polish-autumn/> for the poem and its English translation.) This is also the time of the harvest festivals, the *dożynki*, which David Motak wrote about in the Winter/Spring 2015 issue of the *Polish Journal*.

Interestingly, the verb in Polish which means *to harvest* is not derived from *Jesień*. Instead, the verb is *zbierać*, which means both *to harvest* and *to collect*. Harvest time is *żniwa*, and the crops are *zbiory*.

Zima, winter

Żima is also an old word which comes from a Proto Indo European root. It has traveled, largely unchanged, into the languages of Poland, Ukraine, Slovakia, Russia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Belaruse, Bulgaria, Croatia, Serbia, and even Persia (Farsi). Everywhere, it is used to mean both *winter* and *cold*.

The adjectives *zimowy* and *zimny* derive from *zima*. They mean *wintery* or *cold*. *Zima* is the *cold season*, *pora zimowa*. *Żimno* is the adverbial form. In Polish, to say that you are cold is *jest mi zimno*: *It's cold to me*. When your feet are cold, you say *Żimno mi w nogi*. We also have the verb, *zimować*, which means to *hibernate*, or *to winter over*, which can be used for animals, insects and plants. *Żimna wojna* was the *Cold War*, and *zimowisko* is a *winter camp*. The Czechs have named the winter honeysuckle *zimolez*, from *zima* and *lézt*, *to climb*; so, it is a winter climbing vine.

The coldest (*najzimniejszy*) place in Poland is the Suwałki region, the northeastern corner. During winter nights, the temperature often falls below -13° F (-25° C). In Suwałki, snow remains for the longest period among Polish municipalities, for more than 100 days. Suwałki is called the *Polish North Pole*, because it has the lowest average temperature in the whole of Poland, with the exception of mountain resorts.

The beverage ZIMA came to the United States in 1993. It was a fizzy, low-alcohol beverage made by Coors Brewing as an alternative to beer. (It disappeared in 2008.) The marketers thought that the association of the product with cold Russian vodka would help to sell the product.

ONE THOUSAND FIFTY YEARS OF THE STATEHOOD OF POLAND

By Jan Napoleon Saykiewicz, Honorary Consul of the Republic of Poland

In this year, 2016, the Poles and the Government of Poland celebrate a very important anniversary – one thousand and fifty years of the emergence of Poland as an independent state that was the result of the unification of the main Polish tribes around Prince Mieszko, and the formal acceptance of Christianity in the territory governed by him.

This is a very important event. Many of us remember the worldwide celebration of the first thousand years of both the statehood and Christianity of Poland in 1966. That anniversary was solemnly celebrated among all the Poles in Poland, despite the influence of communism, and also by the Poles in the diaspora all over the world.

Indicating the year of 966 as the beginning of Statehood, we speak of a State in formation, because the beginning of the Polish State goes back at the very least by a century and a half. Unfortunately, this beginning is lost in prehistoric obscurity.

The trustworthy tradition enumerates the three first Polish monarchs of the House of Piast. Their names do not tell us much. What is certain, is that one after the other worked at the unification of the Polish tribes, and that they left to the fourth, named Mieszko, an already considerable State.

Mieszko was a very far-sighted statesman. He wanted to secure for the Kingdom of Poland not only the central territory, but also Poland's access to the Baltic Sea. In fact, he succeeded in subjecting

to his authority Pomerania, the inhabitants of which were closely related to the Poles. In his efforts, however, Mieszko was always under heavy pressure and political rivalry, not only from the Germans to the West, but also from the Danes to the North.

To avoid that rivalry and pressure, especially under the pretext of Christian propaganda on the part of the Germans, Mieszko understood that it was necessary to adopt immediately

and voluntarily the Christian faith. It was his desire to consolidate his relations with the Latin West. In 965 he married Dubravka, a Bohemian Princess, thus allying himself with that Slavic neighbor, already a Christian state. In 966 he was baptized, himself, along with all his subjects.

By this very act, Mieszko gave all of his territory into the hands of the Holy See, and thus placed it under pontifical protection.

As a counterbalance for his act of submission to the Holy See, Mieszko gave his young State the best possible guarantee for its independence and security. This close tie with the Holy See was to serve Poland as a solid support in the gravest crises through which she passed. It helped to ensure the integrity of Polish frontiers in various periods of time, and influenced her national character. It was also an external expression of a principle of the spiritual order which is visible throughout the whole of Polish history.

Let's celebrate! The next thousand years and forever!



Mieszko



Sernik - Say Cheese!

One of Poland's most popular desserts is "sernik" or cheesecake. With its long agricultural history, it is little wonder that the people of Poland would devise desserts that incorporate plenty of farm-fresh butter, eggs, milk and cream. Sernik should be one of the staple items in the culinary repertoire of every Polish cook. Here are three recipes for classic Polish "sernik":

Sernik Krakowski Cracow Cheesecake

pastry:

- 13 ounces of flour
- 4 Tbs. powdered sugar
- 4 Tbs. margarine

Cream the margarine with powdered sugar until light, add the flour and knead the dough. Let the dough set for 20 minutes in a cool place, then roll out the dough and place it in the bottom of a well-greased spring form pan. Bake for 20 minutes at 350° until golden. Cool.

cheese mass:

- 55 ounces of Farmer's Cheese (about 3.5 lbs) (Also called "Twaróg" in Polish delis)
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 2 Tbs. vanilla
- 4 eggs
- orange zest
- 6 Tbs. butter, melted
- 2 Tbs. flour
- 1 Tbs. powdered milk

In a food processor, mix the cheese, sugar, eggs, vanilla, orange zest and, while stirring, add the milk powder with the melted butter. Pour into the spring form pan on top of the pastry and put into the oven at 350° until firm. (Note: For a lighter cheesecake, separate the eggs and beat the egg whites until firm. Transfer the cheesecake mixture from the food processor to a mixing bowl. Add the egg yolks to the cheesecake mixture and stir,

then gently fold in the beaten egg whites and pour the cheese mixture into the pan and bake as above.)

Classic Polish Style Cheesecake Sernik

- 1 1/2 cup flour
- 1/4 lb + 3/4 cup butter
- 4 eggs
- 4 Tbs. + 1 cup confectioner's sugar
- 2 Tbs. milk
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1 1/2 lb Twaróg (Farmer's Cheese)
- 2 medium potatoes, peeled
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 5 egg yolks
- 3 Tbs. potato starch
- 1 cup raisins (soaked in brandy or vodka)
- 2 Tbs. finely chopped candied orange peel
- 3 egg whites, stiffly beaten

Sift 1 1/2 c flour onto a board and cut in 1/4 lb cold butter. Beat 4 eggs with 4 Tbs. confectioner's sugar and add to the flour mixture. Sprinkle with 2 Tbs. milk and 2 tsp baking powder, quickly work ingredients into a dough and chill in refrigerator for 30 minutes. Meanwhile, grind or process 1 1/2 lbs farmer cheese and blend together with 2 medium cold, well-mashed potatoes. Cream 3/4 cup butter with 1 cup confectioner's sugar. Add 1 tsp vanilla extract, continue beating, gradually addition 5 egg yolks and cheese mixture a little at a time. When fully blended, sprinkle with 3 Tbs. potato starch, add 1 cup plumped raisins and 2 Tbs. finely chopped candied orange rind. Mix ingredients and fold in 3 stiffly beaten egg whites. Roll out 2/3 dough 1/4" thick to fit lightly greased pan. Top with cheese filling and smooth the top. Roll remaining dough into pencil-thick strands and arrange latticework on top of cheese. Brush top with beaten egg and bake in preheated 350° oven for about 50 minutes.

The third Polish "cheesecake" recipe isn't a cheesecake at all, but a traditional Easter dessert from eastern Poland, particularly the city of Lwów, called "Pascha". I have encountered Pascha many times in Poland, particularly at the famous Wedel Chocolate Cafés and I have made it a tradition to order it at least once every time I am in Poland. In fact, I have been so fascinated with

Wedel's version of Pascha that I have endeavored to recreate their recipe. Thanks to very strong taste buds and a good "taste memory", I have been quite successful. This recipe takes a bit of time, but it is well worth it. And, since Pascha is very rich, a small scoop served with say, a slice of babka goes a long way. This recipe is modified from the an old recipe of Alina Żerańska.



Cheese Pascha from Lwów

- 3 egg yolks
- 1 1/4 cups sugar
- 1 cup whipping cream
- 1 pound Twaróg (Farmer's Cheese)
- 1/4 lb unsalted butter
- 1/2 Tbs. vanilla
- 2 ounces peeled and chopped almonds
- 2 ounces diced candied lemon rind
- 2 ounces diced candied orange peel
- 2 ounces white raisins soaked in sherry
- Grated rind of 1 orange
- Pinch of saffron
- Prepared caramel sauce (such as Smuckers)

Equipment: cheese cloth, cord, large bowl, sieve with lip/hang to position over bowl. Beat the egg yolks with the sugar until thick and creamy. Add half of the cream. Heat stirring almost to the boiling point, but do not boil. Remove from the heat. By hand, mix the cheese and the butter, the rest of the cream saffron and vanilla. Fold in the egg mixture, mix well. Add the almonds, raisins, candied fruit and orange rind and mix together. Refrigerate for 4 hours. Mold tightly into a ball. Wrap in cheese cloth (double layer) and tie tightly with cord. Place into the sieve positioned over the bowl. Set something heavy over cheese ball, such as a large soda bottle. Set in refrigerator for two days or until a most of liquid has drained from the cheese cloth. Serve cold. Suggested presentation would be a small scoop drizzled with caramel sauce. Great along side babka.

Smacznego!

—Dave

Library of Congress Expands Unique Digital Polish Collection

The Library of Congress is expanding the digitization of a unique collection of greetings from Polish Citizens. It is called *Polish Declarations of Admiration and Friendship for the United States, 1926*. This large collection, comprising 111 volumes was presented to then president Calvin Coolidge from Poland in 1926, to honor the 150th anniversary of American independence. Poland had long looked to the United States as a model of democracy and as a promise for their own future. It is, thus, no surprise that, only 8 years after gaining independence, Poland should choose to celebrate America's anniversary in this way. The collection was a project of the American-Polish Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Poland (est. 1921) and the Polish American Society, founded by Polish composer and statesman, Ignacy

Paderewski in 1926.

The collection is richly illustrated by some of the leading Polish artists of the day, such as Zofia Stryjeńska, who was called the "Queen of Polish Painting." There are submissions from nearly one sixth of Poland's population at the time, 5,500,000 people. Signatories include national, provincial and local government officials, representatives of religious, social, business, academic and military institutions, and five million schoolchildren and their teachers.

President Coolidge gave the collection to the Library of Congress, where it remained largely unnoticed until 1997. Its rediscovery coincided with

the visit of Poland's then First Lady, Jolanta Kwasniewska. She, along with a delegation from the Polish Embassy to the United States, viewed several volumes of the collection in May, 1997 when the new European Reading Room was opened. The collection, especially the volumes of the schoolchildren's signatures, is an important genealogical resources.

The first 10 volumes of the collection are already online, and can be searched at <http://international.loc.gov/intldl/pldecquery.html>. It is not now known when the entire collection will be available online, but work is proceeding.

For a more detailed description, see <https://www.loc.gov/collections/polish-declarations/about-this-collection>.



Bal Polanaise 2016 Now Accepting Debutantes

The lovely and wonderfully entertaining debutante tradition is back after a year hiatus. Join us in November for the 23rd Annual Bal Polanaise featuring the theme Muzyka! Music!

We are currently accepting debutantes, young ladies between the ages of 15 and 25.

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Become a member of the former debutante and escort family that now totals close to 500.

For information call Evanne Addams, Debutante Chair 412 877 3827
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THE POLISH CULTURAL COUNCIL PRESENTS



TALES OF POLA NEGRI

(in Polish with English subtitles)

APRIL 16TH, 7 PM

**THE MAKER THEATRE,
SHADYSIDE**

5950 Ellsworth Ave/Negley Ave

Written & Directed by: Kazimierz Braun

Cast: Agata Pilitowska

Maria Nowotarska

Stage design: Ewa and Michał Monka

Music adaptation: Jerzy Boski

World premiere: Teatro Municipal

Mirita Casimiro in Estoril, Portugal

This play tells the beautiful life story of Pola Negri, the famous, the most colorful and exotic Polish actress of silent movies. Negri is gregariously portrayed by the actress, Agata Pilitowska. Our heroine speaks to the audience from the cozy ambience of her dressing room, dressed in her gorgeous wardrobe. She reminisces on her life: the secrets of her childhood; the beginnings of her career; and her love for her mother, who is portrayed by

the actress, Maria Nowotarska, in this moving role. She speaks of her great fame, and her romantic encounters with Charlie Chaplin and Rudolf Valentino. The play is accompanied by fragments of Negri's movie roles.

The Salon of Poetry, Music and Theatre

was created in 1991 by Maria Nowotarska, the former actress of the Juliusz Slowacki Theatre in Cracow, Poland. She is also the Salon's artistic director and script writer, and frequently performs in the Salon's productions. The Salon, a non-profit organization, promotes music and poetic theatre, not only in Toronto, but also in North America and Europe. It has presented hundreds of performances, which provide an excellent overview of Polish theatre.

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