



# Polish American Historical Association Newsletter



 Volume 68  Number 2  October 2011 

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Prof. Neal Pease

Dear Friends,

The greatest pleasure of serving as president of the Polish American Historical Association is the periodic opportunity to report on the various good works, both scholarly and civic, of the organization, its members, and all those interested in its activities. The past few months have been especially eventful, as a glance through these pages will demonstrate. Not least, PAHA continues to take enormous pride in the enthusiastic reception of the recently published *The Polish American Encyclopedia*, edited by James S. Pula, with the assistance of numerous associate editors and contributors from within PAHA's ranks. We are already confidently able to predict that the *Encyclopedia* will come to be regarded as a classic work in the field of Polish American studies.

We note as well the recent publication of an important book by PAHA past president Brian McCook, *The Borders of Integration: Polish Migrants in Germany and the United States, 1870–1924*, the latest entry in the “Polish and Polish American Studies” series of Ohio University Press which has produced an impressive string of books of high quality, including several by PAHA-affiliated authors.

 [see p. 2](#)




## MAREK PROBOSZ ON CAPTAIN PILECKI

Five years after the premiere of *The Death Of Captain Pilecki* directed by Ryszard Bugajski and starring Marek Proboasz in the title role, the stark film still attracts a lot of attention around the world. In October 2011, the Polish Cultural Center in London, U.K., will celebrate the 110<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Pilecki with a screening of this astounding film about the Captain's tragic death and a meeting with Mr. Proboasz. Additional screenings are planned in Poland and California, the two “residences” of the star.

Who was Witold Pilecki, why is Proboasz promoting him, and why we (most of us, in any case) have never heard about him? One of the forgotten heroes of World War II, Captain Witold Pilecki (May 13, 1901 – May 25, 1948) He played a crucial role in obtaining information about the atrocities at Auschwitz death camp, fought in the 1921 war against the Soviet Invasion of Poland and in the Warsaw Uprising. His exploits are almost unthinkable to all, who are focused more on their personal survival than doing the right thing. If there was a living embodiment of heroism anywhere on the planet, Pilecki is it.



 [see p. 9](#)

## PAHA'S ANNUAL MEETING IN CHICAGO, IL. – 5-7 JANUARY 2012

PAHA's 2012 Annual Meeting will be held in Chicago, Illinois from January 5-7 as part of the American Historical Association's Annual Conference, held at the Sheraton Chicago Hotel and Towers (301 East North Water Street, Chicago, IL 60611). The Conference Program, selected by a panel chaired by Professor Neal Pease, PAHA President, presents a rich array of Polish-American and Polish topics, as listed below.

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## **PRESIDENT, from p. 1**

We also congratulate longtime PAHA mainstay Professor M.B. B. Biskupski of Central Connecticut State University on his recent assumption of the presidency of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America. PAHA looks forward to continued close cooperation with the Polish Institute. Several of our members participated in the PIASA annual meeting this past June, and PAHA sponsored and organized a panel at the conference, as has been our recent custom.



The coming months promise yet more exciting scholarly occasions. In January we will gather in Chicago, the capital of Polish America, for the 2012 annual meeting, as part of the American Historical Association convention. The program appears elsewhere in the Newsletter: we look forward to our largest, best attended conference of the past few years. Following that, our midyear 2012 meeting will be held in Poland, in connection with a conference on the theme “East-Central Europe in Exile: Patterns of Transatlantic Migrations,” organized and hosted by the University of Gdańsk, toward the end of May and the first days of June. That’s a very pleasant time of year to be in one of the more delightful cities of Poland—that’s a hint, by the way.

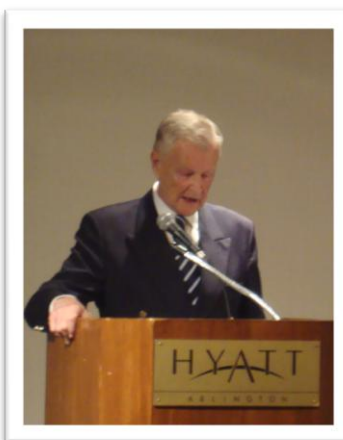
*Neal Pease*  
President


## **PIASA ANNUAL MEETING, ARLINGTON, V.A.**

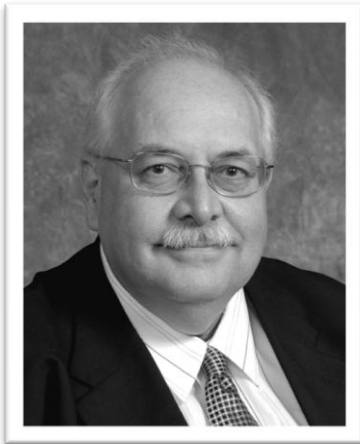
The program of the 69<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America, held at Arlington, V.A., on June 10-11, 2011, included notable contributions by PAHA members. Prof. M. B. Biskupski chaired the Program Committee, presided over the Gala Banquet, and gave a paper on “Dewey and Polonia Politics.” He also took a gavel from Dr. Thaddeus Gromada, who retired after long and illustrious career as PIASA Executive Director and, recently, President. This symbolic gesture indicated the transfer of power, as Prof. Biskupski (formerly the Vice President) became the next PIASA President. In his new office, he was joined by Prof. Bożena Leven, selected to serve as PIASA Executive Director (she is portrayed with Dr. Gromada).



A special session on “Poland and Polonia in the New Polish American Encyclopedia” marked the publication of our Opus Maior. Professors James S. Pula, Donald Pienkos, and Neal Pease talked about various aspects of the Encyclopedia project, including its coverage of Polonia secular organizations (Pienkos) and Polish history (Pease). Prof. Pease also chaired two sessions, on “The Memoir and the Novel” and on World War II. Prof. Pienkos discussed “Poland’s Political Party System and the Economy” during the opening session. Ms. Iwona Drag-Korda chaired a session on Polish American organizations in the age of the internet, including a paper by James S. Pula on “Promoting Polonia in the Digital World.” Dr. Paul Knoll served on the Program Committee and chaired a session on medieval Poland. Dr. Thaddeus Radzilowski reported on a Piast Institute’s survey of Polonia and its members born in Poland. Dr. Maja Trochimczyk chaired two sessions, on Language and Literature, and Music and Art, and presented two papers, on the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Helena Modjeska Art and Culture Club and on the career of the eminent



composer Marta Ptaszyńska. Dr. Renata Vickrey talked about Connecticut Polish American Archives, and many other PAHA members participated in the conference, but the most important presentation was given by Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski, National Security Advisor to President Jimmy Carter and Counselor and Trustee of the Center for Strategic and International Studies. He thanked his friend, Dr. Gromada for extensive contributions to Polish and Polish-American history, and so do we. 




In June 2005, the PAHA Board convened in Grand Rapids, Michigan, for its annual mid-year meeting. During that meeting the Board authorized a project to create an encyclopedia on the theme of Polish American history and culture and to dedicate the final product to the

late Stan Blejwas. The Board appointed James S. Pula the editor-in-chief with responsibility of developing and managing a budget, developing a list of potential entries, pursuing a publisher, and providing general oversight for the project. A group of Associate Editors was also appointed to manage general topic areas including identifying potential entries and authoring major entries. These included M. B. Biskupski (Central Connecticut State University), William Galush (Loyola University Chicago), Anna Jaroszyńska-Kirchmann (Eastern Connecticut State University), Thomas J. Napierkowski (University of Colorado at Colorado Springs), Neal Pease (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee), Donald E. Pienkos (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee), and John Radzilowski (University of Alaska-Southeast). During the course of the project, the editor's sister, Cheryl A. Pula (Dunham Public Library), joined as a research assistance and proofreader.

The editors designed the encyclopedia to include three types of entries. "Thematic Entries" were designed as major essays to interpret important aspects of the Polish American experience through general themes such as organizational life, religious life, cultural customs, participation in organized labor, and so on. "Topical Entries" were intended to identify specific events, organizations, or cultural elements such as the American Council for Polish Culture, the Latimer Massacre, or *wigilia*. "Biographical Entries" were, as the name suggests, to provide information on individual Polish Americans. The purpose is not to create a potpourri of famous Polish Americans, which would necessarily be incomplete. The purpose was to identify those who made significant contributions at the regional

or national level either to the history and culture of the United States, or to the development of American Polonia. With such an enormous number of potential biographical entries, the editors limited inclusion to people who were Polish Americans: that is, Poles who had not become U.S. citizens or had not resided and worked in the U.S. for a significant amount of time were not included. The only exceptions were entries for people like Agaton Giller who had a fundamental influence on the organization of Poles in the U.S., or Henryk Sienkiewicz whose brief residence in the U.S. led to significant writings based on his experience there. Second, the editors limited inclusion to people who made significant contributions as evidenced by membership in established halls of fame, the awarding of significant civilian or military awards, or noteworthy recognition within the Polish ethnic community.

The biographical entries proved the most difficult because of the problems of definition and the obvious space restrictions of a one-volume encyclopedia. What, for example, really is a Polish American? Would someone who migrated to the U.S. from the area of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth be "Polish" even though the individual might be descended from some other ethnic group? Would Tadeusz Kościuszko be Lithuanian, Ruthenian or Polish? Would John Shalikashvili be Georgian or Polish. The problem was further complicated by the increasingly frequent intermarriage between groups in the United States. Who, exactly, was to be considered a Polish American? The editors attempted to include only those people who had some identification as being "Polish," either through their self-identification, their activities, or membership in some Polish or Polish American organization.

The editors wanted to attract a commercial publisher for the encyclopedia to guarantee that it would have wide distribution. PAHA was fortunate that McFarland Publishers expressed immediate interest in the project. McFarland has experience publishing encyclopedias, and thus a ready marketing network, and has also published previous books on Polish topics. McFarland proved very easy to work with, and helpful in all aspects of the final production. In the end, after four and one-half years of work, 128 authors contributed to an encyclopedia containing 585 pages with over 1,200 entries of more than 644,000 words, and 358 illustrations.  [see p. 4](#)





The UN International Year of the Forests and of Chemistry, 2011 is a year of anniversaries and strange numerical coincidences. Internet chain letters try to convince us that something momentous is going to happen, if we share with the world the proliferation of “ones” – as in 1/1/11, 1/11/11, 11/1/11, 11/11/11 – in the dates this year.

It is 2011 not 11, of course... and the Year of the Rabbit.

We do celebrate many anniversaries, though. Ten years since 9/11. It is the Miłosz Year, filled with conferences and commemorations of the great, Nobel-Prize winning poet (1911-2004). The violinist Roman Totenberg and *The Pianist's* Władysław Szpilman (d. 2000) were also born that year. In 1911, Maria Curie-Skłodowska won her Nobel-Prize for Chemistry. During the Centennial of the International Women's Day, we should remember Maria Szymanowska (1789-1831), one of the most celebrated musicians of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. General Józef Sowiński was killed in 1861 during the November Uprising. Historian Joachim Lelewel also died 150 years ago. Ignacy Jan Paderewski died on June 29, 1941, during yet another campaign to save beleaguered Poland. On June 22, 1941 (the year of Pearl Harbor), German troops attacked the Soviet Union. They murdered millions, but let us remember just one massacre—of the entire faculty at Lwów University, 44 innocent civilians, among them 25 Polish professors, including mathematicians Prof. Antoni Łomnicki and Kazimierz Bartel (former Prime Minister), and Prof. Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński, writer/physician. Captain Witold Pilecki had already gotten himself arrested to go to Auschwitz and organize resistance there. Sixty years ago, in 1951, the Cold War was starting, Miłosz defected to the West, and Poland's eastern borders were again “re-adjusted” with more people losing their homes. In

*Maja Trochimczyk*

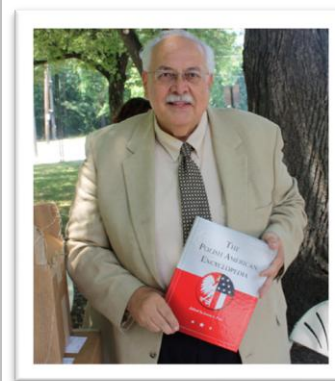
Editor

PAHA Newsletter (ISSN-0739-9766) © Polish American Historical Association, 2011. Published semiannually by the Polish American Historical Association, and distributed to its members. Individual memberships : \$40 per year. Institutional memberships: \$98 per year. Maja Trochimczyk, *Editor*. John Guzowski, *Poetry Editor*. Mailing Address: PAHA at Central Connecticut State University 1615 Stanley St., New Britain, CT 06050. Email: [maja@moonrisepress.com](mailto:maja@moonrisepress.com)



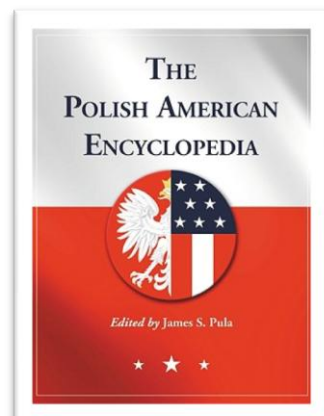
For the illustrations, PAHA is indebted to various individuals, and especially to the Connecticut Polish American Archives at Central Connecticut State University, the Józef Piłsudski Institute, the Library of Congress, the National Archives and Records Administration, the Polish American Historical Association, the Polish Museum of America in Chicago, the Polish Mission at Orchard Lake Schools in Michigan, the United States Military History Institute, and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Library and Archives.

The completed work is the only reference encyclopedia in existence on American Polonia. To make it more useful as a research tool, each entry contains one or more bibliographic references for more information on the subject. The August 2011 issue of *Choice*, the journal of the Association of College and Research Libraries, commented that: “The publication of this work is a landmark in reference and ethnic studies and represents an impressive effort on the part of its creators to include significant amounts of regional and ethnic history and culture in an affordable volume.” Its recommendation to its members was a single word: “Essential.”



Lastly, but by no means least, an essential aspect of the project was funding. Without sufficient funding the project would not be successful.

In this respect, PAHA was fortunate to gain the early and substantial support of the Kosciuszko Foundation which was indispensable to realizing the project's goals. Other funding came from several organizations and a large number of PAHA members to whom we owe a debt of gratitude.



# Encyclopedia Honor Roll



## Major Institutional Investors (\$3,000 and more)

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**The Polish American Historical Association Thanks You!**



## **PROGRAM OF PAHA'S MEETING IN CHICAGO, IL, JANUARY 5-7, 2012**

The Polish American Historical Association will hold its Annual Meeting in conjunction with the American Historical Association Annual Meeting in Chicago, Illinois, January 5-7, 2012. We are looking forward to an impressive array of presentations and events.

### **Polish American Historical Association Annual Board Meeting**

Thursday, January 5, 2012: 3:00 PM-5:00 PM  
Sheraton Chicago Hotel & Towers, Lincoln Boardroom

#### **Registration**

Friday, January 6, 2012: 8:30 AM-9:30 AM  
Sheraton Chicago Hotel & Towers

### **Polonia in the Northeastern United States**

Friday, January 6, 2012: 9:30 AM-11:30 AM  
Sheraton Chicago Hotel & Towers, Arkansas Room

**Chair:** Anne M. Gurnack, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

#### **Papers:**

- *The Halcyon Years of the Polish Community in Clinton, Massachusetts* - Barbara Pulaski, Mount Ida College, Francis Wolenski, Boston University
- *Cultural Identity and Linguistic Identity: An Insight into the Cultural, Religious, and Linguistic Practices of Polish Heritage Speakers in the Northeastern United States* - Monika Woloszyn-Domagala, University of Zielona Góra
- *A Modern Look at the Work of Historian Frank Renkiewicz's Analysis of New York City Polonia* - Anne M. Gurnack, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

**Comment:** The Audience

### **Issues in the History of Polish American Organizations**

Friday, January 6, 2012: 9:30 AM-11:30 AM  
Sheraton Chicago Hotel & Towers, Tennessee Room

**Chair:** Neal Pease, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

#### **Papers:**

- *Charles Rozmarek, Aloysius Mazewski, Edward Moskal: Leaders of American Polonia* - Donald Pienkos, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
- *Living History through Collective Memory:*

- *Defining Polish Culture in California: The Fortieth Anniversary of the Modjeska Club* - Maja Trochimczyk, Moonrise Press
- *The Power to Organize: A Female Tradition?* - Pien Versteegh, Tilburg University
- *Edward Moskal in the Polish Political Debate* - Joanna Wojdon, Uniwersytet Wroclawski

**Comment:** The Audience

### **Anticommunism in Transnational Perspective**

Friday, January 6, 2012: 2:30 PM-4:30 PM

Sheraton Chicago Hotel & Towers, Colorado Room

**Chair:** John Radzilowski, University of Alaska Southeast

#### **Papers:**

- *Poland's National Democracy, an Overview* - Marek J. Chodakiewicz, Institute for World Politics
- *The First Ally: The Polish Guards Companies of the U.S. Army in Germany* - Wojciech Jerzy Muszynski, Institute for National Memory, Warsaw
- *Anticommunism versus Un-Americanism: Ethnic Groups in Search of American Identity* - Ieva Zake, Rowan University
- *Cuban Emigré Anticommunism: Yesterday and Today* - Tania Mastrapa, Mastrapa Consultants

**Comment:** John Radzilowski, University of Alaska Southeast

### **Topics in Polish American History through the Centuries**

Friday, January 6, 2012: 2:30 PM-4:30 PM

Sheraton Chicago Hotel & Towers, Missouri Room

**Chair:** Thomas J. Napierkowski, University of Colorado Colorado Springs

#### **Papers:**

- *Gaspard Tochman and the Polish Brigade* - Piotr Derengowski, University of Gdańsk
- *The Polish Museum of America Library: Preparing*

*Solidarity during Martial Law as Remembered by Polish Children* - Sarah Grunberg, Graduate School for Social Research, Warsaw

- *Casimir Pulaski Revisited* - Angela Pienkos, Polish Center of Wisconsin
- *Polish Americans Today: The Piast Institute 2010 Survey of 1400 Polish Americans* - Thaddeus C. Radzilowski, Piast Institute

**Comment:** The Audience

### **Polish and Polish American Literary Themes**

Saturday, January 7, 2012: 9:00 AM-11:00 AM  
Sheraton Chicago Hotel & Towers, Arkansas Room

**Chair:** M. B. Biskupski, Central Connecticut State University

#### **Papers:**

- *Witold Gombrowicz's Argentine Interlude* - Silvia Dapia, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, City University of New York
- *The Neighborhoods of Memory: Stuart Dybek's Chicago* - Grazyna J. Kozaczka, Cazenovia College
- *The Creativity of Tadeusz Wittlin: Polish Writer and Patriot in Exile* - Peter Obst, LaSalle University
- *Grotowski in America* - Magda Romanska, Emerson College

**Comment:** The Audience

### **Book Forum: Brian McCook, "The Borders of Integration"**

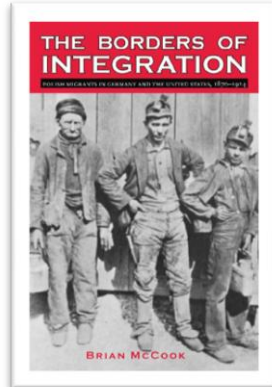
Saturday, January 7, 2012:  
9:00 AM-11:00 AM

Sheraton Chicago Hotel & Towers, Tennessee Room

**Chair:** Pien Versteegh, Tilburg University

**Papers:** *The Borders of Integration: Polish Migrants in Germany and the United States, 1870–1924* - Brian McCook, Leeds Metropolitan University

**Comment:** Pien Versteegh, Tilburg University



### **Chicago, the Capital of Polish America**

Saturday, January 7, 2012: 11:30 AM-1:30 PM  
Sheraton Chicago Hotel & Towers, Arkansas Room

**Chair:** Maja Trochimczyk, Moonrise Press

#### **Papers:**

- *Ignacy Jan Paderewski, Artist, Statesman, Humanitarian: The Chicago Connection* - Victoria Granacki, Granacki Historic Consultants

*for the 100th Anniversary in 2015* - Małgorzata Kot, Polish Museum of America Library

- *"Greasy Thumb": The Underside of Chicago Polonia* - James Pula, Purdue U. North Central
- *Illinois State Division of the Polish American Congress in the Cold War Era, 1944–88* - Joanna Wojdon, Uniwersytet Wroclawski

**Comment:** The Audience

### **Polish American Historical Fiction: Doug Jacobson**

Saturday, January 7, 2012: 2:30 PM-4:30 PM

Sheraton Chicago Hotel & Towers, Arkansas Room

**Chair:** Thomas J. Napierkowski, University of Colorado Colorado Springs

#### **Papers:**

- *The Literary and Historical Context for "The Katyn Order"* - Thomas J. Napierkowski, University of Colorado Colorado Springs
- *The Conception and Writing of "The Katyn Order"* - Doug Jacobson, Independent Scholar

**Comment:** The Audience

### **Religion in Polish America: Community, Conflict, and Cooperation**

Saturday, January 7, 2012: 2:30 PM-4:30 PM

Sheraton Chicago Hotel & Towers, Tennessee Room

**Chair:** Margaret J. Rencewicz, University of Pittsburgh

#### **Papers:**

- *The Making of Parish Communities in American Polonia, 1880–1940* - John Radzilowski, University of Alaska Southeast
- *Hazleton, Freeland, Pennsylvania: Father Joseph Masztoas—Poles' and Lithuanians' Interactions* - Adam Walaszek, Jagiellonian University, Krakow
- *A Review of Bishop Hodur's Outreach to Other Groups, Religious and Ethnic* - Theodore Zawistowski, Pennsylvania State University
- *"We Were Dead-Set Americans": Reimagining the Polish Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission, 1939–75* - Charles R. Kaczynski, St. Francis College

**Comment:** Margaret J. Rencewicz, U. of Pittsburgh

### **Polish American Historical Association Awards Ceremony and Reception**

Arrangements are being made to hold the Awards Reception one evening at the Consulate of the Republic of Poland, details of day and time TBA.





## PAHA'S MEETING IN CHICAGO – REGISTRATION AND AWARDS



### REGISTRATION:

Full information about the AHA conference can be found at [www.historians.org](http://www.historians.org). PAHA members who only plan to attend PAHA conference need not register for the AHA conference, but are required to register for the PAHA conference by November 1, 2011. Registration may be done on-line at [www.polishamericanstudies.org](http://www.polishamericanstudies.org) or by sending the \$20.00 registration fee to the PAHA Headquarters c/o Magda Jacques, CCSU, 1615 Stanley Street, New Britain, CT 06050. The details for the PAHA awards reception will be available in November.

### AWARDS:

The following PAHA awards will be bestowed on worthy individuals, groups, and organizations during the Annual Awards Reception:

- *Mieczyslaw Haiman Award* offered annually to an American scholar for sustained contribution to the study of Polish Americans.
- *Oskar Halecki Prize* recognizes an important book or monograph on the Polish experience in the United States. For works of historical and/or cultural interest (history, social sciences or humanities), published in the prior two years.
- *Swastek Award* recognizes the best article published in the *Polish-American Studies*.
- *Skalny Civic Achievement Award* honors individuals or groups who advance PAHA's goals of promoting research and awareness of the Polish and Polish-American experience.
- *Amicus Poloniae Award* recognizes significant contributions that enhance knowledge of the Polish and Polish-American heritage by individuals not belonging to the Polish-American community.
- *Distinguished Service Award* is given to a member of PAHA who has rendered valuable and sustained service to the organization.

### 2012 MID-YEAR CONFERENCE IN GDAŃSK, POLAND:

PAHA Board of Directors accepted an invitation to hold its June 2012 PAHA meeting in Gdańsk in connection with the "East-Central Europe in Exile: Patterns of Transatlantic Migrations" conference planned for May 31 to June 3, 2012 at the University of Gdańsk, Poland.



### ENCYCLOPEDIA IN THE WORLD



PAHA Secretary, Thomas Duszak reports about the progress of the *Polish American Encyclopedia* around the world:

According to OCLC WorldCAT on July 8, 2011, the total of 65 libraries (generally smaller public libraries are excluded) had the print copy of the encyclopedia in their collections. The 65 libraries are located in 25 of the 50 states. There are no holding libraries in Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Delaware, Louisiana, North and South Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington and 15 other states as of July 8, 2011. By September 24, 2011, the number of libraries owning the print version of our Encyclopedia has grown to 87, including those at London, Leipzig, and Zurich in Europe, as well as Antigonish and Halifax in Canada. Additional six libraries purchased the electronic version, bringing the total up to 93, and counting...

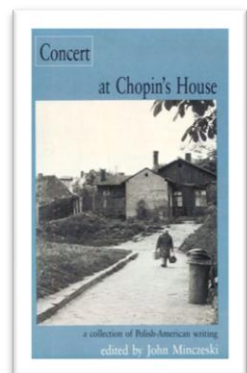


### CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS



### New Concert at Chopin's House

For an anthology of Polish/American authors, the editors (John Minczeski and John Guzowski) seek quality poetry, short fiction and creative non-fiction, not necessarily on a Polish theme, from writers with a Polish background. The anthology will update *Concert at Chopin's House*, a Collection of Polish/American Writing, published by New Rivers Press in 1988. Payment, 1 copy. Please send 3-5 poems, or up to 10 pages of prose by Word or RTF attachment to: [Polish.Anthology@gmail.com](mailto:Polish.Anthology@gmail.com). Deadline: 1/31/ 2012.







## MAREK PROBOSZ ON CAPTAIN WITOLD PILECKI, continued

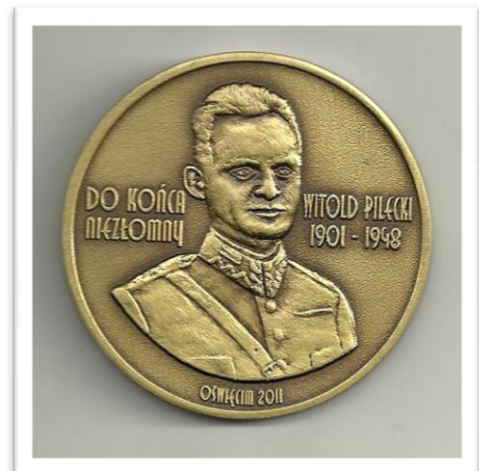


*Captain Pilecki's Arrest Photo, 1947, Rakowiecka Archives (Wikimedia Commons)*

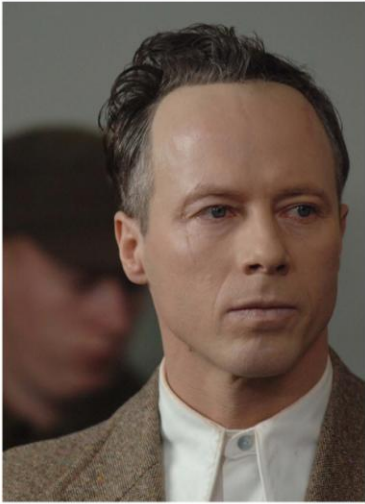
As a seventeen-year old Boy Scout, Pilecki participated in World War I in a Polish self-defense unit. He soon enlisted in the Polish Army (cavalry) and fought in the Polish-Soviet War of 1919-1920 – defending Grodno, and participating in the Battle of Warsaw, and the liberation of Wilno. He received two Crosses of Valor for this campaign. Then, he came back to finish high school, continue his military training, work on his family estate, marry and raise a family. Ever dedicated to volunteering and social causes, he received the Silver Cross of Merit in 1938 for his contributions to the community. In August 1939, Pilecki returned to active service as a cavalry commander, participating in the September campaign. It may seem improbable, but his horse-mounted troops fighting near Lwow (now Lviv) were able to shoot down a German plane and destroy two other planes and seven German tanks. After the Soviet invasion of Poland, Pilecki returned to Warsaw where he co-founded the Secret Polish Army that grew to 8,000 men and became one of the seed-groups of the Home Army. In 1940, Pilecki volunteered to be arrested and sent to the German Concentration Camp at Auschwitz ("Tomasz Serafinski") in order to gather intelligence for the Allies. (Wladyslaw Bartoszewski was arrested along with 2,000 other Poles in the same street roundup in Warsaw). As a prisoner no. 4859, Pilecki formed an underground Union of Military Organizations in the camp to help inmates, provide news, and improve morale. The group also sent out the first intelligence reports from the inside, proving the reality of the Holocaust to the Allied command. (The International Red Cross delegation visited the camps in September 1944 and saw nothing unusual; the Allies refused to believe Pilecki's reports, intervene and bomb the camp to stop the atrocities and help inmates). After escaping from the camp in 1943 and stealing some German documents to prove the reality of the improbable,

Pilecki participated in the Warsaw Uprising, again with heroic results. Following the capitulation of the Home Army in Warsaw, and after being imprisoned by the Germans at Zambinowice and Murnau, Pilecki joined the Second Polish Corps in Italy and, after the war ended, accepted General Anders' orders to return to Poland and gather information for the Polish government in exile. Caught, tortured and executed in 1948, Pilecki was rehabilitated only in 1990. He posthumously received the Order of Polonia Restituta and the Order of the White Eagle, the highest Polish state honor.

His story makes us uneasy, both because of the superhuman heroism, intelligence, survival skills, and virtue, and because of the tragic and senseless destruction of such a worthy life. Infamously, Józef Cyrankiewicz—Poland's Prime Minister in 1947-1952 and 1954-1970 and the country's President in 1970-1972—testified against Pilecki and his companions during the public trials. Ryszard Bugajski's film *The Death of Captain Pilecki* transfers our discomfort to the screen, as it visualizes the imprisonment, trial, torture and death of a true war hero. The film is so effective in bringing Pilecki's story to life due to the talents of Marek Probosz, a Polish-American actor, director, writer and producer, based in Los Angeles and professionally active in Poland and the U.S., with over 50 films as well as screenplays, books and theatrical performances to his credit.



## MAREK PROBOSZ ON CAPTAIN PILECKI, cont.



In June 2011, Marek Probosz traveled to Oswiecim where the State Higher Vocational School was named after the war hero. The school is located in the buildings where the first prisoners sent to Auschwitz concentration Camp were held in 1940. At the solemn dedication ceremony, a memorial tree was planted, and Probosz read fragments of Pilecki's reports. He also received a commemorative Witold Pilecki medal, awarded to those who were dedicated to

his ideal of remaining "Invincible to the end" (Do końca niezłomny). The event also featured the publication of a volume of studies about Pilecki and other Auschwitz prisoners, *Free and Enslaved* (*Wolni i zniewoleni*), a result of a 2009 conference held in Oswiecim. Probosz contributed to the proceedings an article "To save the Spirit of Witold Pilecki." When asked about his interest in becoming Captain Pilecki on the screen, Probosz answered:

*"The arrival of Captain Pilecki in my life was an unexpected joy. The proposal of impersonating one of the greatest heroes of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was for me a great challenge, a way to give justice to history that was completely denied by the communists. The more I studied the tragic fate of this hero, the more delighted I was with his spiritual and physical power. I could not stop reading about him. Pilecki never gave up, he kept his dignity and internal freedom to his last breath. His final words before his execution at the Rakowiecka Prison in May 1948 were "Long live free Poland" ("Niech żyje wolna*



*Polska"). To identify with Pilecki transformed me internally. After the completion of the film, I still felt a need to share his incredible history with the world. Five years after the premiere, I still travel around the world with The Death of Captain Pilecki, I meet audiences of many nationalities and discuss the phenomenon of Pilecki's human nature. I repeat his mantra: "We raise our children to become honest people." Political and social regimes always change, depending on the global balance of powers, but the final truths – love, freedom, truth, nobility – are universal and eternal. You get them from your mother. If we become aware of the responsibility that we carry, there is a chance that a new generation of heroes would be raised – new Pileckis. In Poland and around the world."*

Probosz responded to my second question, about the significance of Pilecki's heroism with the following comment:

*"Pilecki is so important to us today, because the world we live in is in the throes of a profound inflation of the most important moral values. We miss true, uncorrupted, invincible heroes, who remain faithful to their ideals to the last breath. The character of Pilecki deserves a great, epic film that should be known to the whole world."*

*We had in Poland a James Bond who was not a fictitious super-agent, but a true hero of all nations. He is the only person in the world who volunteered to go to the death camp at Auschwitz in order to organize underground resistance among the prisoners and to liberate, without religious, racial or ethnic divisions, all the prisoners. We dream about such characters, we invent them in literature and film and here, such a story is written in blood, it is a true story of a Polish national hero."*

Whether he's teaching, writing, directing, or performing in Poland and the U.S., Marek Probosz has vowed to keep alive the memory of Captain Pilecki, one of the greatest heroes that the world has ever known.

*By Maja Trochimczyk*





## POETRY CORNER



Edited by John Z. Guzlowski

### Oriana Ivy's *April Snow*



#### Asking the Cuckoo

Cherries burn in the orchards.  
I wear cherry earrings,  
a necklace of berries  
that shrivel on the thread

like the faces of the very old.  
Sleep smells of hay.  
Swallows bring rain.  
Honeysuckle twines stalks of wheat.

After a while I cannot bear  
the small weathers of the city.  
The forest grows in me.  
Strips of birch bark

scroll around my fingers.  
Mushrooms lie scarlet or secret.  
The stream wrinkles to touch,  
a live mirror.

I stroke pincushions of moss  
and count cuckoo cries – replies.  
One afternoon I ask  
how many children I will have.

Sun shuttles through the warp  
of crowns. The cuckoo,  
countless, carries on.  
Hundreds, the cuckoo calls.



#### April Snow

I climb to Condor Lookout,  
into the snowdrifts of clouds.  
To what altar do we wade,  
slow procession with snow-lit pine?

That night a beautiful young man  
dawns at my door  
with a rifle, a soldier's uniform.  
He smiles a shy boyish smile.

I don't seduce, I don't plead.  
I chat: where is he from, is he  
happy. I want what remains  
to have tenderness.

He is the age my son would be,  
if I had a son – this handsome  
executioner, life's last gift,  
like the trees shining in crystal.

Over his shoulder the white slopes  
sparkle with moist breath.  
His smile covers everything.  
Don't worry, I say, I know.

I show him my daily list,  
little whips of chores;  
my walk before sunset,  
when the light is the best.

But with petals of April snow  
the wind has erased my tracks.  
Pines and firs go with me.  
I only want tenderness.

**Oriana Ivy** was born in Poland and came to the United States when she was 17. Her poems, essays, book reviews, and translations from modern Polish poetry have been published in *Poetry*, *Ploughshares*, *Best American Poetry 1992*, *Nimrod*, *New Letters*, *The Iowa Review*, *American Poetry Review*, *Black Warrior*, *Wisconsin Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Seneca Review*, *Spoon River Review*, *Southern Poetry Review*, and many other journals and anthologies.

Her first chapbook, *No Longer Mine*, won the Sow's Ear Press Competition. The poems reproduced here come from a new chapbook, *April Snow*, that won the New Women's Voice Chapbook Competition, and will be published in April 2012 by Finishing Line Press.

A former journalist and community college instructor, she leads the San Diego Poetry Salon and writes a poetry-and-culture blog <http://oriana-poetry.blogspot.com/>





The permanent archeological exhibit Rynek Underground opened in Kraków in September 2010, in subterranean chambers at the east side of Sukiennice (the Cloth Hall). The 6000-square-meter exhibit is a branch of the Historical Museum of Kraków, and exposes one thousand years of the city's history: ancient foundations including the Great Scales and the Rich Stalls, authoritative reconstructions, extensive displays of artifacts, and engaging touch-screen and projection technologies. Rynek Underground was developed after major renovations of the Rynek Główny, begun in 2000, expanded in 2005, as archeological discoveries compounded.

At the southeast corner of the Cloth Hall, near St. Adalbert's Church, 95% of the Great Scale foundations were excavated. At the Great Scales building, ores and metals had been measured and extracted. Kraków received royal privileges in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, as a market for copper and lead, a source of considerable wealth for the growing city, extending mercantile bonds to the Hanseatic League. (The massive scale itself was named the Lead Scale.) Scholars knew about the Great Scales from written records dating to 1302. They did not know if it had been a building, or a roof set on poles over the scales.

Masonry walls were discovered after excavations reached 20 to 30 centimeters. Remnants of wood beams from the wall structures helped show it to be one of the biggest buildings of its type in Europe of the Middle Ages. Three smelting furnaces and a dozen kilos of lump copper were discovered. Silver, it was learned, had also been extracted from ores at the Great Scales.

In the recesses of the Great Scales' foundations, a lead mass in the shape of an overturned bowl was recovered. Its sphere-sector shape came from the mold in which the 693 kilos of lead had been poured; deep notches on its edge facilitated transport hooks. The archeologists required heavy machinery to turn the mass over; when its flat bottom was cleaned, stamps were found. One designates the Olkusz mine outside Kraków, another the mass of 11 hundredweights or *cetnals*. Another is the half-lion, half-eagle coat of arms of Władysław Łokietek (the Elbow-High), and a fourth is the seal of the royal crown.

The lead mass may have been hidden away during the mutiny led by town elder Albert in 1311. Its discovery,

after resting three meters under the Rynek for nearly 700 years, clarifies the hundredweight measure. That precise measurement had gradually been lost after Poland was partitioned in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, when Russia, Austria and Prussia imposed their own weight standards. For two centuries, a hundredweight was estimated at between 50 and 55 kilograms; it is now known to be 63 kilograms. The lead mass is the largest known from the Europe of its era; it is also 99.9% pure, surpassing the standard set in today's European Union regulations.



*Thanks to Cezary Busko, the lead archeologist on the Rynek project, for a paper he provided, and to his project colleague, Wojtek Glowka, for his essay.*



## SEARCH FOR INFORMATION



Czesław Barek was a talented pen-and-ink cartoonist who created a series of stories during World War II depicting Polish and Polish American military exploits. Please contact Theodore Zawistowski with additional information about this artist at [ZawistowskiT@embarqmail.com](mailto:ZawistowskiT@embarqmail.com) or 23431 Freeport Ave., Port Charlotte, FL 33954.

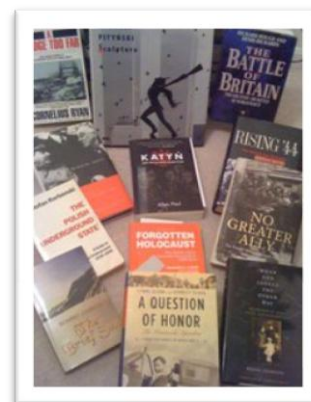




## PAHA AND POLISH-AMERICAN GROUPS ON FACEBOOK



PAHA now has its Facebook page with 155 members who post information about Polish and Polish American history, links to other sites, film, photo albums, and more. Among hundreds of Polish-themed groups, two more Facebook pages might be of interest to our readers: *Polish American Writers and Editors* (with 185 members including our own John Z. Guzowski, who also maintains the influential blog, *The Polish Diaspora*), and *The Way Back – Unknown Stories of WWII Poland*. The latter one, moderated by William H. Szych and Maureen Mroczek Morris, has 290 members who contribute information about forgotten history of Polish tragedies and heroism during World War II. The group's documents include an extensive bibliography and a list of over 150 links to websites and other depositories of knowledge about the past that should not be forgotten. Readers may re-post these lists on their pages to spread the knowledge.



## POLISH MUSEUM OF EMIGRATION TO OPEN IN GDYNIA



In the summer of 2011, Polish journalists Edi and Asia Pyrek, contributors to the *National Geographic*, started their travels around the world to gather information about Polish emigrants who settled on different continents. They spent over two months in the U.S., working on their project, *Tour de Polonia – The World Through Polish Eyes* that will be presented at the new Polish Museum of Emigration, to open in Gdynia at the end of 2012. The Museum of Emigration is, according to its website, “a pioneering project of great importance for millions of Poles in Poland and all over the world. The history of Polish emigration, the process so important for our culture and national identity, will gain here the proper recognition it deserves. Gdynia became the true centre of Polish emigration in the times of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic. The Maritime Station served the passenger traffic for half a century and will regain its splendour owing to the Museum.” The address: Maritime Station, Polska 1 Street, Gdynia, Poland, [en.muzeumemigracji.pl](http://en.muzeumemigracji.pl)

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## **HEADACHE OR HERITAGE? WHAT'S IN A (POLISH) NAME?**

***by Robert Strybel***

For various reasons, Polish surnames, especially the multi-syllabic ones rich in such diagraphs as “trz” and “szcz”, have for generations given headaches to Polish Americans and have been Anglo-mangled beyond recognition by their non-Polish peers. Affected Polish-Americans could either meekly accept the distortion and agree to have Dąbkowski mispronounced “Dumb-Cow-Ski” or repeatedly correct the Anglo-manglers and say: “It’s Dom-CUFF-Ski”. Others have tried to modify their names. Some have shortened them turning Stefańczyk, for instance, into Stefan. Others phonetically respelled their name so Jankowski became Yankoski — something everyone could pronounce! Still others translated their Polish surnames, whereby the above-mentioned Stefańczyk became Stevens and Bednarski ended up as Cooper.

But behind every surname, whether readily pronounceable or not, stands a family, and finding out all about it can be a good first step towards exploring one’s ancestral heritage. In many cases it is possible to establish when the name first appeared in Polish chronicles, and that was usually two or more centuries ago. It can tell a person about its original bearers—who they were, what they did for a living, where they lived and/or who their father was. Where a Polish American’s namesakes now live in Poland can also provide additional clues. If the surname is uncommon and its bearers are concentrated in a single area, chances are good the root-searcher is related to all or most of them in some way.

*Robert Strybel, a professional linguist specializing in onomastic (name-origin) research, has helped thousands of Polish Americans learn all about their family heritage. Interested parties may contact him at: Robert Strybel, ul. Kaniowska 24, 01-529 Warsaw, Poland.*

## **SENIOR SLAVIC POSITION AT INDIANA**

The Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at Indiana University, Bloomington, announces an open-area faculty position at the senior level, to start fall semester 2012. Although area(s) of specialization are open and joint appointment with other units is possible, the successful candidate should have administrative experience, native or near-native English and excellent command of one or more Slavic languages, an established publication record, and an attractive research agenda. The University is seeking a mid-career scholar wishing to take part in the leadership of the department and to promote the Slavic field in the wider university context, as well as to teach at both the undergraduate and graduate levels and to supervise graduate students. Search Committee, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, Indiana University, BH 502, Bloomington, IN 47405-7103. Applications can also be submitted electronically, to: [iuslavic@indiana.edu](mailto:iuslavic@indiana.edu), subject line: senior position. Preference given to applications submitted by November 1, 2011, but applications will be considered until the position is filled.



## **PERSONALIA**



- **T. Lindsay Baker** serves as the W. K. Gordon Endowed Chair in History at Tarleton State University in Stephenville, Texas. His most recent books, both scheduled for release in 2011, are *Gangster Tour of Texas* (Texas A&M University Press) and *Texas Stories I Like to Tell My Friends* (Abilene Christian University Press).
- **John Bukowczyk**, Professor of History at Wayne State University in Detroit, recently completed an article entitled, “Making Polonia—From Many One? Or Many? Or None? Problematizing Polish-American Identity,” which will appear in a forthcoming issue of *The Polish Review*. His essay on “New Approaches in Teaching Immigration and Ethnic History” is the concluding chapter in the *Oxford Handbook of the History of American Immigration and Ethnicity*, ed. Ronald H. Bayor, also forthcoming. He also continues to edit the *Journal of American Ethnic History* and the Ohio University Press Polish and Polish-American Studies Series.
- **Mary Patrice Erdmans** published “The Polish American Family,” pp. 82-98 in *Ethnic Families in America*, eds. Roosevelt Wright, Charles Mindel, Thanh Van Tran, and Robert Habenstein. New York: Pearson, Education, Inc., 2012.



## **PERSONALIA, continued**

- **J. William Gorski** is Vice President of the Polish Genealogical Society of Michigan and First Vice President of the Friends of Polish Art (ACPC) in Michigan. He is Co-Chair of the Kubinski Art Show in Orchard Lake, Michigan, Chair of the Szopka Competition at the Art Center in Hamtramck, and participated in the Padzieski Art Show in Dearborn, Michigan.
- **Ann Hetzel Gunkel** will be on academic leave from June 15, 2011 to January 15, 2012 to serve as a Fulbright Visiting Professor of American Cultural Studies at the Institute of American Studies and Polish Diaspora of the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, Poland.
- **Linda Nemec Foster** has had a very busy spring and summer. She has given readings, lectures, and workshops throughout Michigan at such places as The Roethke House in Saginaw and Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park in Grand Rapids. She was selected to be part of a book tour of writers and poets traveling in July throughout the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Foster was also a finalist for the 2010 *New Letters'* Poetry Prize. Three of her poems were chosen by the Grand Rapids Art Museum to be displayed for the National Poetry Month in April. This academic year (2011-2012) marks the 15th anniversary for the Contemporary Writers Series at Aquinas College, a program that Foster established with her husband, Dr. Anthony Foster. She is currently a member of the Series' programming committee.
- **James S. Pula** made a presentation on "Kościuszko's Role in the Northern Campaign" at the annual Kościuszko remembrance at West Point in April; gave the keynote address at the dedication of the Eugene Paul Nassar Ethnic Heritage Studies Center in Utica, NY, in April; gave the commencement address at Sts. Cyril and Methodius Seminary in Orchard Lake, MI, in May; and made presentations on the PAHA encyclopedia and PAHA membership in JSTOR at the annual meeting of PIASA in June. He published "Eagles Over England: The Kościuszko Squadron in the Battle of Britain" in *Studia Historica Gedanensia* (University of Gdańsk, 2011), three chapters in *Multicultural America: The Hispanic Americans* ("Hispanics in the American Revolution, 1775-1783," "Hispanic America: The Early National Period, 1783-1859," and "Hispanic America from the Civil War through the Gilded Age, 1860-1900"), three chapters in *Multicultural America: The Asian Americans* ("Beginnings in America: Pre-Colonial to 1859," "The Fifties: 1950-1959," and "The Seventies: 1970-1979"), and a chapter in *Multicultural America: The European Americans* ("Colonial Era: Beginnings to 1776").
- **Mark Pawlak** published poems in *Wilderness Journal* (Vol. 6, No. 2) and *Hanging Loose* 98, and an essay in the *Istanbul Review* (May 2011).
- **Edward J.P. Pawlowski, Ph.D.** serves on the Board of Directors of the Polish American Congress, Polish American Arts Association, and Friends of Pope John II Foundation at Washington, D.C.
- **Donald Pienkos** was awarded the Officer Cross of Merit from the President of Poland in recognition of his scholarly and civic contributions to the public appreciation of Poland and its heritage. In June Angela and Don Pienkos took part in the 69<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America.
- **Ben Stefanski** chaired the planning committee for the 63rd convention of the American Council for Polish Culture in Cleveland, July 14-17, 2011.
- **Carl S. Stoy, Jr.**, is Vice President of the New England Chapter of the Kosciuszko Foundation and a Board member of the Polish Center of Discovery and Learning in Chicopee, Massachusetts.
- **Dr. Anna Szpindor** was appointed as Chair of the Polish American Congress Illinois Division American Agenda Committee and elected as Vice President of this organization.
- **Maja Trochimczyk's** article on "Chopin in Polish-American Poetry: Lost Country, Found Beauty" appeared in *Polish American Studies*, 67, no. 2 (Fall 2010). She presented two papers at the 69<sup>th</sup> PIASA Meeting, on the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Helena Modjeska Art and Culture Club and on the Polish identity of composer, University of Chicago professor, Marta Ptaszyńska. Dr. Trochimczyk's poetry appeared in the *Lily Literary Review*, *San Gabriel Valley Poetry Quarterly*, *Beatrix Emerges*, & chapbooks by Poets on Site. Her recorded poems are posted on the website of the Pacific Asia Museum in Pasadena, as a part of the Audio Tour by Poets on Site, and can be heard by calling the Museum: 626-628-9690, then #445, #455, or #464.

