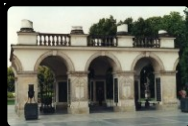


POLISH WEEK
IN WINDSOR
2006



FINAL REPORT





1. Holy Mass at the Holy Trinity Polish Church.



4. Vocal and Theatre Group Piłomień performs at a Banquet held at Dom Polski Hall on Sunday.



3. Veterans in front of an Exhibition at Dom Polski Hall during the Sunday Banquet.

2. Veterans presenting wreaths at a commemorative plaque in front of Dom Polski Hall.



5. Exhibition at City Hall, illustrating Poland's contribution to world peace, science and culture.



6. Delegation at the Windsor City Council Meeting, during the Proclamation of Polish Week in Windsor 2006.

POLISH WEEK IN WINDSOR 2006

***A series of Polonia events in the Canadian South
from 22nd to 28th of October.***

For the citizens of Windsor, the celebration of Polish Week was a display of Poland, her history, tradition, culture and scientific discoveries.

SUNDAY, October 22nd ~ A Lesson in History and Patriotism

October 22 saw the beginning of Polish Week in Windsor. It was already being celebrated for the third time, having taken place previously in 2002 and 2004. This year's events were dedicated to commemoration of the sixty-fifth anniversary of the opening in Windsor of the Polish Army Recruitment Centre for individuals of Polish origin, living in Canada and the United States. In accordance with tradition, it began with the solemn Holy Mass, celebrated in the Polish Church of the Holy Trinity by Prelate Priest Roman Waszkiewicz, Canon Priest Piotr Sanczenko and Priest Sławomir Szwagrzyk (*Photo Nr. 1*). The participants were representatives of Polonia, veterans under the flags of different units, as well as Polonia organizations. The Polish Book Fair was an occasion for enriching personal collections with new publications, fresh from Poland.

The same afternoon, in front of Dom Polski, there was a ceremony to pay tribute to the veterans of the Second World War. Błażej Wyderkowski, in his greeting, told those assembled about the events of sixty-five years ago, when the Poles living in North America responded to the call of the Supreme Commander General Sikorski, reinforcing the ranks of the Polish Army. General Bronisław Duch was in command of recruitment at the station. The centre received, trained and sent to the front more than a thousand soldiers. Consul of the Polish Republic, Andrzej Krężel, Polish Military Attaché, Commander Kazimierz Starobrat, as well as delegations from Polish organizations in Windsor and Chatham paid tribute to the veterans by laying wreaths below the plaque, commemorating those, who answered the call to arms (*Photo Nr. 2*). Those present next retired to the Banquet Hall of Dom Polski, where there was the official opening of an exhibition, showing Poland and her contributions to peace, science and culture in the world. The official opening was carried out by the Consul of the Polish Republic, City Councillor David Cassivi and Federal Government representative Jeff Watson. As in a kaleidoscope, we saw fragments of our history, so recently written in the blood of our soldiers on all fronts of the Second World War, and also vignettes, recalling the achievements of famous Poles on the world stage, in the perspective of time. We also saw the Poland of today, adorned in beautiful, architectural treasures, rich in tradition, and enchanting scenery, and so characteristic for Poland and the Polish people, openness to the world, illustrated by the partnership between the cities of Windsor and Lublin.

During an excellent dinner, representative Watson presented certificates of recognition to our veterans, recruited in Windsor during the Second World War, Franciszek Bielecki, Jan Sali and Jan Wilk (posthumously). Commander Starobrat presented each of them with the Pro-Memorium Medal and Jerzy Barycki, on behalf of Federal Government representative Joe Comartin, handed them Certificates of Congratulation.

The President of the Polish Society of Combatants in Canada, Dr. Andrzej Garlicki, spoke of the process of recruitment sixty-five years ago, how it had caused great changes in the hearts and minds of the citizens of Canada and the United States, giving proof that for the Polish people there are things, worth fighting for and worth dying for. Deeply moved, we watched, as Commander Starobrat appointed Mr. Jan Garlicki, our Windsor veteran, to the rank of captain. *(Photo Nr. 3)*

The evening lit up with a performance by the theatre group Płomień, which with poetry and song reminded those present that “freedom is measured in crosses” and of the combat and the glory of Polish arms *(Photo Nr. 4)*. Together with Płomień, all present sang with tears in their eyes: veterans, as well as the younger and older members of Polonia. It was an evening, which united us in the spirit of love for Poland and a great lesson in patriotism.

MONDAY, October 23rd ~ Great Appreciation for Polonia in Windsor

Monday, October 23, included the next presentation of our portable exhibition in City Hall *(Photo Nr. 5 & Nr. 7)*. Television reporters, always helpful in showing information about our events, were among those present. Shortly afterwards, a delegation from Polonia appeared at a session of the City Council. Mayor Eddie Francis sincerely welcomed those assembled. Moments later, there was a presentation on DVD by the Mayor of Lublin, Andrzej Pruszkowski, extending good wishes and an invitation to next year’s celebration of the 690th anniversary of the granting of the rights of a city to Lublin. Ms. Ania Raczy, Secretary of the Organizing Committee, read the Proclamation of Polish Week. The Consul General, Dr. Piotr Konowrocki, delivered greetings from the Polish Government. Next, Mr. Jerzy Barycki, Chair of the Organizing Committee, invited all present to participate in the events of Polish Week *(Photo Nr. 6)*. The presentation ended with gifts, in the form of hand-painted mugs from the mountain people of Zakopane, handed to the members of Council by young people from the group Tatry, clad in beautiful, regional costumes. Our presentation provided a basis for reflections from Councillor David Cassivi on the values, which distinguish Polish people as an ethnic group in the multicultural society of Canada. As he also emphasized, the fact that Jerzy Barycki is taking on the role of Vice President of the Canadian-Polish Congress is a great distinction, not only for Polonia, but also for the City of Windsor.

TUESDAY, October 24th ~ An Evening of Humour and Relaxation

Tuesday, October 24, witnessed the screening of one of the pearls of modern Polish cinematography, the film “Jasmine”, directed by Jan Jakub Kolski. This comedy produced roars of laughter from the audience.

WEDNESDAY, October 25th ~ The University and an Interesting Partnership

Wednesday, October 25, was a day reserved for the University of Windsor, introduced by Prof. Frank Simpson. He emphasized the fact that not only Polish people, but also individuals not of Polish heritage make a big contribution to the events of Polish Week at the University of Windsor and in particular the staff of the Leddy Library. Vice President, Academic, and Provost, Prof. Neil Gold,

officially welcomed the guests to the University and Ms. Gwendolyn Ebbett, University Librarian, opened two exhibitions: the mobile exhibition for Polish Week, as well as a second one, prepared by the Library staff. The University had on display Polish books, published in English, making up part of the collection, purchased with annual donations from the Polonia Centre (Windsor), Inc. This year, a cheque to the value of \$3,500.00 was presented to the University. This is an excellent way of spreading the word about Polish science, history and culture.

After the opening of the exhibition, Mr. Richard Beattie, mentor for the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Ottawa, outlined programmes, in which the Polish Government contributes to the development of countries in Africa and Eastern Europe (*Photo Nr. 8*). This is one expression of the involvement of Poland, in the framework of her commitments to Western European programmes. Mr. Beattie currently also collaborates with Poland in joint CIDA-Poland projects.

THURSDAY, October 26th ~ “Tu Es Petrus” - An Evening of Reflection

On Thursday, October 26, the Holy Trinity Parish invited the community to view on a large screen the oratorio “Tu Es Petrus”. The libretto was written by Zbigniew Książek, and performed to the music of Piotr Rubik. The beautiful music and poetry afforded a time of reflection for audience members, who were greatly moved.

FRIDAY, October 27th ~ Polish People - An Integral Part of Canada’s Success

On Friday, October 27, there was an afternoon presentation by Mr. Joe Comartin, MP (Windsor-Tecumseh), titled “Visit to Poland and Ukraine, July 2006” (*Photo Nr. 9*). It was arranged by the University Organizing Committee and coordinated by Dr. Frank Simpson. Mr. Comartin shared his impressions from a trip to Poland and Ukraine. He spoke about his meetings, observations and related plans for the future, connected with the development of the cooperation between Poland and Canada in the fields of economics (energy), health (the training of staff), science (exchange of researchers and students) and another area of possible collaboration of local interest, related to Essex County and the Lublin Voivodeship (greenhouses, vineyards). This was without doubt an interesting view of relations between Canada and Poland, including observations that were all the more valuable, because they were presented by a federal representative.

The evening of October 27 was reserved for the Twelfth Annual Polish-Canadian Business and Professional Association Dinner. It was an important evening, not only for the Polish ethnic group in Windsor, but also for the Canadian community as a whole. An indication of this is the presence of such guests as the Mayor of Mississauga Ms. Hazel McCallion, Consul of the Republic of Poland Mr. Andrzej Krężel, federal representative Mr. Joe Comartin, former federal representatives Mr. Jesse Flis, the Hon. Eugene Whelan and the Hon. Susan Whelan, as well as City Councillor Mr. David Cassivi (*Photo Nr. 10 & Nr. 11*). Also present were representatives of Polonia and Canadian business and Polonia organizations. The Master of Ceremonies, Dr. Andrzej Sobiesiak, introduced the keynote speaker, Ms. Hazel McCallion, Mayor of Mississauga for some twenty years. She “stole the show”, as Canadians say. This vigorous, senior lady (85 years old), showing a remarkable sense of humour, presented her

innovative approaches to running the city, to making it appealing for its citizens and to the dynamic development of commerce. The list of corporations worldwide with offices in Mississauga is impressive. These were words of great significance, with a sound basis in facts. Under the administrations of this mayor, Mississauga has seen a growth in population, which today amounts to nearly 700,000, and is a city with a budget surplus. Many times she made reference to the large Polonia and its important role in the daily life of Mississauga. It was a dynamic, professional and instructive talk. As the next speaker, Member of Parliament Joe Comartin emphasized, taking the podium immediately after Ms. McCallion, bordered on suicide. The fact is that all of the evening's speakers directed words of support and recognition toward the Her Worship the Mayor and the participants in the gathering applauded every time her name was mentioned.

Representative Comartin once more spoke about his trip to Poland and Ukraine. As he remarked, the main topic of conversation was the issue of a visa waiver for Poles visiting Canada. He assured everyone that he is already thinking about continuing the collaboration, initiated by Poland, during his next visit to our country, which is planned for the year 2007.

Mr. Bernie Gorski, representing the Southwestern Ontario Vintners Association (SWOVA), presented interesting observations on the state of the business in Essex County, and spoke about some of its limitations and the future of wineries. It is necessary to add that also present in the room was Mr. Aleksander Bemben, the owner of a second Polish winery, the Alexander Winery. The excellent wine from the winery of Bernie Gorski, Colchester Ridge Estate Winery (CREW), was served during the dinner. It appears that thanks to the work of these two enterprising individuals, it will be easier for the local Polonia to respond with actions to the call of the bard, "Drink up your wine".

Issues raised by the guests were concern about the future of a region so much dependent on the production of cars, ways of becoming free from the capriciousness of the market, and how to change Windsor, so that it would be attractive to other businesses and not only to sectors of business related to the auto industry.

An individual well known to Polonia in Windsor, the former federal representative from Toronto, Mr. Jesse Flis, spoke about the role of Polish youth in preserving its Polish character and in its participation and responsibilities towards Canada. Consul Krężel underscored the importance of initiatives, such as Polish Week, to the development of cooperation between Poland and Canada. Mr. Stanisław Niec and Mr. Albert Flis received high national honours from the hand of the Consul for their many years of service to Polonia and Poland: Mr. Niec, the Cavalier's Cross of the Polish Republic, and Mr. Flis, the Gold Cavalier's Cross.

The President of the Canadian-Polish Congress, Mr. Władysław Lizoń, presented the results of the elections to the governing body of the Congress and spoke with optimism about the future of the organization. Together with Mr. Jerzy Barycki, he presented a Certificate of Recognition and the Golden Order of the Canadian-Polish Congress to Ms. Hazel McCallion and to Sister Małgorzata Górka, the Superior of the Ursuline Sisters of Saint John of the Cross in Windsor. Mr. David Cassivi brought the evening to an end with words of appreciation and support from Mayor Eddie Francis, who was unable to attend.

SATURDAY, October 28th ~ Young People - Our Best Investment in the Future

On Saturday, October 28, Dom Polski hosted the Windsor Polonia with a celebration lunch. On this occasion, the main theme of the gathering was the “Year of the Polish Language”. The star of the programme was Ms. Jasmin Nari, a high-school student, who won the competition for the best essay in the Polish language, titled “How does my Polish heritage enrich me, a citizen of Canada?” In her essay, she tries to find an answer to this question. When she read her essay, those listening were able to visualize the most beautiful scenes from our history, resounding with the music of Chopin, and were encouraged by the sincere smile of “our” Pope. Touched and amazed, we felt the pride, with which the young Polish girl spoke of her heritage. Ms. Daria Zajac, a third-year student, took the first place among essays written in English. In their comments, Consul Andrzej Krężel, former representative Jesse Flis, and the President of the Canadian-Polish Congress Władisław Lizoń seized upon the great involvement and participation of young people in Polish Week in Windsor, at the same time emphasizing how Polonia, by funding grants, prepares the way for those who will bear the torch in the future. It is noteworthy that this year, we had a large number of young people, who not only joined in the organization of events, but also played a leading role in them. An example is the third-year University student, Ms. Dorota Kruba, who ran Polonia’s Jubilee Banquet and Lunch.

The crowning piece of Polish Week in Windsor was Folklorama, a marathon of Polish dance and music, from the Polonaise to the Oberek. The Polonia group Tatry from Windsor, Kujawiacy from Kitchener, Krakowiak from Boston, Lechici from Chicago and Syrena from Milwaukee took us on a wild journey through every region of Poland, in the mountains, to Kujawy, to Opoczno, to Warszawa and of course to Kraków (*Photo Nr. 12 & Nr. 13*). The rainbow costumes, the energy and professionalism of the dancers unleashed a storm of applause. The enthusiastic Polish and Canadian audience bade farewell to the dancers with a standing ovation.

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SUMMARY

Polish Week in Windsor was not only a splendid opportunity for bringing the citizens of Windsor closer to Poland and Polonia, but also a possibility for the exchange of views on matters, close to the hearts of all the inhabitants of our city. The Organizing Committee transformed itself into a group of friends and the enthusiasm and impetus, related to particular events, magnified the feelings of closeness between the citizens of Windsor and Polonia, all of the organizations preparing the programme and particular individuals. Some special words of acknowledgement go to all of the organizers, to Ms. Ania Raczy, who prepared the graphics for the programme, the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Toronto, the authorities of the City of Windsor, the University, as well as our steadfast sponsors. The next Polish Week in Windsor will take place in two years, which is fairly soon. We invite you all.

Windsor, Ontario, November 7, 2006

Dorota Witalec and Cezary Tywoniuk
Translated by Frank Simpson

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POLISH WEEK IN WINDSOR 2006

(as of November 30th, 2006)

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7. Part of the PWW 2006 Organizing Committee in front of the Exhibition at City Hall.



8. Presentation by Richard Beattie from CIDA at the University of Windsor.



9. Presentation by Joe Comartin, MP at the University of Windsor.

10. Mayor Hazel MacCallion and VIP guests before the Business Dinner.



13. Oldest Group of the Tatry Song & Dance Ensemble performs a Suite from the Opoczno-Łowicz region.



11. Guests and Individuals honoured at the Business Dinner.



12. Syrena from Milwaukee performs at Folklorama 2006.



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*The Organizing Committee would like to thank volunteers,
institutions, sponsors, performers and all others who
contributed to the success of "Polish Week in Windsor 2006" !!!*



Henryk Sienkiewicz



Andrzej Wajda



A. Mickiewicz