


# SIR KAZIMIERZ STANISŁAW GZOWSKI

This year, we celebrate the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of the most famous Canadian of Polish origin, Sir Kazimierz Stanisław Gzowski. On this occasion, Thursday, May 30, 2013, an exhibition about our famous countryman went on display in the Ontario Parliament, in Toronto. The location was no accident. In this very building, he worked as Administrator of the Province of Ontario from 1896 to 1897, toward the end of his rich life. A marble bust of him stands to this day in the hall on the third floor, but it was placed in the room, where the official opening of the exhibition took place.

*Celebrating  
Sir Casimir Gzowski's  
200th Birthday*




1813 1898  
Born a member of a noble Polish family. Died a distinguished Canadian.


**Reception**  
Thursday, May 30th 2013  
11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.  
Legislative Assembly of Ontario  
Queen's Park, Room 228-230

Please RSVP by May 15th, 2013  
to [info@ypcpa.ca](mailto:info@ypcpa.ca)

Co-hosted by  
Helena Jaczek, MPP (Oak Ridges-Markham)



Consulate General  
of the Republic of Poland  
in Toronto



Young Polish Canadian Professionals Association

*Celebrating  
Sir Casimir Gzowski's  
200th Birthday*

May 30, 2013  
11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.  
Legislative Assembly of Ontario  
Queen's Park

**Program**  
Program begins at 12:00 p.m.

**Welcome:** Agnes Podbielski, President, Young Polish Canadian Professionals Association

**Introduction of Speakers and Special Guests**

**Official presentation of Sir Casimir Gzowski panel display:** Jerry Barycki, President, Polish Canadian Business and Professional Association of Windsor


**Remarks:**

Hon. David C. Onley, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario  
Dr. Helena Jaczek, MPP (Oak Ridges-Markham)  
Jeff Yurek, MPP (Elgin-Middlesex-London)  
Cheri Di Novo, MPP (Parkdale-High Park)  
Teresa Berezowski, President, National Executive Board, Canadian Polish Congress  
Consul Grzegorz Jopkiewicz, Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Toronto  
Victoria Warwick, great-great-granddaughter of Sir Casimir Gzowski


**Viewing of Sir Casimir Gzowski poster panel display**

Masters of Ceremony: Monika Wyrzykowska and Matthew Samulewski

Co-hosted by  
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Young Polish Canadian Professionals Association

It is appropriate to say a few words about the individual, who without a doubt deserved to be called “a Renaissance man of the Nineteenth Century”. Sir Casimir Gzowski, for this is how he is known in Canada, was born in 1813 into an aristocratic family in St. Petersburg. The origins of this worthy family go back to 1560, when forefather Stanisław Gzowski served in the court of King Zygmunt August.

Kazimierz's father was a captain in the Imperial Guard and a diplomat. As a young person, he received a fine education at the famous Krzemieniec Lyceum. His patriotic upbringing soon spurred him into action. He took part in the November Uprising, under the leadership of General Dwernicki. He was wounded and cast into prison; the Uprising failed. However, he gained a small amount of good fortune, for he found himself in the Austrian Partition. Shortly after, together with a group of friends, officers from the Uprising, he received approval for emigration to America.

In the new land, he supported himself by teaching fencing, music and languages. He studied law, all the while learning yet another language, his sixth – English. He found employment with a lawyer, learned the law and very soon became a lawyer, but work in engineering appealed to him more. Once more, he found good fortune. He married the beautiful Maria M. Beebe, from Erie, Pennsylvania, the daughter of a doctor. Shortly afterwards, he and his wife moved to Canada, where he had been offered the supervision of public works.

Gzowski became not only one of the most famous engineers and builders of the central transportation network on land and on water, but also made significant contributions to education, to the exploitation of natural resources, and to the shaping of and provision of training for the army.



Part of the Exhibition



Members of the Gzowski Family  
(From the left: Victoria, Alison, and Dawn)

The first speaker at the meeting was Agnes Podbielski, President of the Young Polish-Canadian Professionals Association in Toronto – the organizers of this significant event. She presented the accomplishments of Gzowski and toward the end of the meeting she summed up the celebrations, thanking the patrons, organizers and sponsors. Next, the originator and coordinator of the entire project, Jerzy Barycki from Windsor, formally opened the exhibition, presenting several interesting aspects of it. He also offered sincere thanks to all of the individuals and institutions, as well as the sponsors, for their help in its realization.

The present governor of the Province of Ontario, Lieutenant Governor the Hon. David C. Onley in an extraordinarily interesting and colourful way presented the achievements of his predecessor, Sir Kazimierz Gzowski. Gzowski's great-great-great-granddaughter, Ms. Victoria Warwick, offered thanks in the name of the entire family to the creators of the exhibition and the organizers of a celebration that was so emotional for the family. Other members of the Gzowski family also present in the hall were Ms. Dawn Oxley and Ms. Alison Gzowski.

There also was a presentation from Dr. Helena Jacek, a Member of the Provincial Parliament, who is of Polish heritage. This celebration took place under her patronage. The Consul for Polonia Affairs, Mr. Grzegorz Jobkiewicz, from the Polish Consulate General in Toronto, also a sponsor of the celebration, spoke of the importance to Poland of promoting historical Canadian figures with Polish roots. Polonia was strongly represented by individuals from many organizations, led by the President of the Executive Council of the CPC, Ms. Teresa Berezowska. She also thanked the creators of the exhibition and the organizers of the event.



The governor of the Province of Ontario, Lieutenant Governor the Hon. David Onley speaks.



Speeches during the event.



Member of Provincial Parliament Cheri DiNovo announced that shortly after the meeting, there would be the third reading in Parliament of Bill 72, an Act to proclaim April 2 in each year as Pope John Paul II Day. That very afternoon, the Act was declared carried, so that May 30, 2013, in the Ontario Parliament entered into the history of Ontario, Canada, Polonia and Poland.

The meeting was chaired effectively by Matthew Samulewski and Monika Wyrzykowska; she also coordinated many organizational elements of the event.

A pleasant aspect was that the Hon. David C. Onley, immediately after the speeches, invited the members of the Gzowski family for a meeting in private. They were moved by the remembrance of their great ancestor by Canadians and Polonia.

An additional attraction took the form of brochures that were the exhibition in miniature, distributed with the programmes at the entrance to the hall by young, likable students.

In summary, it is worth noting the most famous accomplishments of our countryman, as presented in the brochure: participant in the 1830-31 November Uprising in Poland, co-founder of the Central Canadian transportation network, co-founder of the Niagara Falls Park, founder of the Dominion of Canada Rifle Association, Aide-de-Camp of Queen Victoria in the Canadian Army, designer and builder of the International Railroad Bridge between Fort Erie, Ontario, and Buffalo, New York, co-founder of the Engineering Institute of Canada, Administrator of the Province of Ontario, Warden of St. James Anglican Cathedral, Toronto, and founder of Wycliffe College, Toronto. For his meritorious service, he was knighted by Queen Victoria, who in this way bestowed upon him special recognition.



The Exhibition.

In conclusion, it is worth noting that the activities of young ambitious people of Polish heritage are on the increase. An example of this is the organization of the meeting in Queen's Park to mark the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Sir Kazimierz Gzowski. For this reason, it is appropriate to accord some words of appreciation to the Young Polish-Canadian Professionals Association of Toronto for their involvement for the benefit of us all.

Ewa Barycka, June 1, 2013.

Translated by Frank Simpson, Windsor