

# PCC Polish Journey

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

To those readers who may have not known Don Mushalko, he was a former PCC board member and Polish cultural activist, who passed away last week. His obituary is in today's Polish Journey. I encourage all of you to read it. Don was a very fine musician, who used his skills to promote traditional Polish music, especially kolędy. He taught at the University of Pittsburgh. He started the Karuzela Choir and was its director for many years. He was one of the founders of, and the guiding force behind, the Bal Polonaise. He was its director for over 10 years. Don was a man full of ideas and energy.

It is often said that, if you want to get something done, give the task to

a busy man. Don was one of those people. Don was a volunteer's volunteer. He gladly gave his time and expertise to the PCC to help move our agenda forward. His contributions to making the organization what it is today are incalculable. Without him, we surely would be "something else". When we went through the transformative phase from Central Council to the Polish Cultural Council, Don knew instinctively that the change was necessary for our organization to survive. He embraced the change by supporting it in every way he could as long as he could.

This brings me to the point not only of volunteerism but also of the importance of being an active PCC

member. Better yet, an active "paid up" PCC member. If you are reading this and you have not paid your dues for 2014, pay today along with your dues for 2015. We cannot do the things that are important to you unless you contribute. You can donate or pay your dues at [www.polishculturalcouncil.org](http://www.polishculturalcouncil.org), or send a check to PCC, P.O. Box 81054, Pittsburgh, PA 15217-0554. We need your help today. Please consider sending a donation in memory of our dear friend, colleague and board member Don Mushalko. They broke the mold when they made Don. Rest in peace my friend.

— Rick Pierchalski

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# THREE POLISH MATHEMATICIANS WHO CHANGED THE WORLD

By Richard Howland

In August, 2014, The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) awarded its Milestone Award to the three Polish mathematicians who broke the Nazi Enigma cypher machine codes before World War II. These mathematicians were Marian Rejewski (1905-1980), Jerzy Różycki (1909-1942), and Henryk Zygalski (1908-1978).

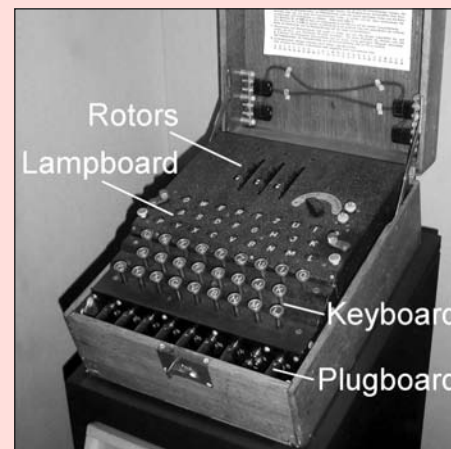
The IEEE, an international organization of nearly half a million members, awards the Milestone in order to recognize technological innovation and excellence for the benefit of humanity. It has been widely thought that Alan Turing and his team at Bletchley Park in England were the first to crack the codes. In fact, the IEEE awarded the Milestone first to the Bletchley team in 2003, for their work during the period of 1939-1945. The award to the Polish team last year acknowledges the Poles' pioneering work during the period of 1932-1939. In the recent film, *The Imitation Game*, about Bletchley Park, Turing twice recognizes the contributions of the Poles. Rejewski, Różycki, and Zygalski now stand beside the 152 other recipients of the Milestone, including Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Edison. With these two men, and only a few others, they share the distinction that the award carries their individual names, not just the name of an organization.

## Why the Poles were interested in German Ciphers

Ciphers are a means to pass messages between sender and recipient which can-

not be read by third parties. Poland, having just reemerged as an independent nation following World War I, had every reason to want to read messages which were sent by its belligerent neighbors, Germany and Russia. In 1919, a Cipher Section (Sekcja Szyfrów) was formed within the Polish Army. In 1927, the Warsaw Customs Office received a misdirected package from Germany, which was identified as "radio equipment". Knowing of the Cipher Section's interest in radio equipment, the Customs Office allowed the Cipher Section to examine the contents of the package before it was returned to Germany. In the package, they found, not radio equipment, but a cipher machine, an early Enigma Machine. Because the machine had been invented by a German engineer, Dr. Arthur Scherbius, for commercial purposes, the Cipher Section was able to purchase a copy. By 1928, both the German Army and the German Navy had adopted a modified Enigma machine as their main cryptographic device. Later, the German military acquired Scherbius' company and the machine was withdrawn from sale. On July 15, 1928, the first German military Enigma transmissions were received by the Poles, whose cryptologists, all linguists were unable to read them. By 1932, Rejewski, Różycki, and Zygalski, all mathematicians, had been hired by the Cipher Section.

Technical details of how the Enigma Machine worked, and how Rejewski and his colleagues solved this puzzle can be found in a longer article on the PCC website. Suffice to say that Enigma was a complicated mechanical and electrical device, whose encryption scheme was changed daily by the Germans with a new "key" to the settings of the machine. Between 1932 and 1939, the Poles successfully inter-



A German Enigma machine with labels.

cepted and deciphered German military transmissions which were encrypted by Enigma. During this period, they had to work constantly to keep up with improvements to the machine.

## From Poland to Britain

By mid-1939, with war looming, the Poles decided to share what they had learned about Enigma with France and Britain, who had not managed to decipher it. The Poles described what they had accomplished, and gave each country a duplicate military Enigma which they had built, and documentation of their deciphering procedures.

After September 1, 1939 when Germany invaded Poland, the Cipher Section destroyed its files and fled to Romania. Following the fall of France shortly after, Rejewski, Różycki and Zygalski went to London to continue their work.

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

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Janina Sylwestrzak, daughter of Enigma engineer Marian Rejewski, stands in front of the IEEE plaque which honors the Polish cryptographers.

## MATHEMATICIANS continued from page 2

The British, acting on information supplied to them by the Poles, ramped up efforts, eventually employing 9,000 people at Bletchley Park. Bletchley Park became an “intelligence factory”, which was dubbed Ultra Secret. They supplied intelligence information to military commanders and strategists, without ever divulging that their information came from intercepted German messages.

Henryk Zygałski stayed in England as an academic for the rest of his life, never speaking of his work because of British secrecy laws. Jerzy Różycki died in a shipwreck in 1942. Marian Rejewski returned to Poland, where he worked at menial jobs, and never mentioned his wartime work until 1980.

### The impact on our lives

While trying to help win a war by breaking the Enigma codes, these mathematicians mathematized cryptography, turning it from an art to something approaching a science. They laid the foundation for secure electronic communications. Today, encrypted messages secure our credit cards, our bank accounts, and our passwords. That is part of the reason for the IEEE Milestone award to the Polish mathematicians for innovation and for the benefit of humanity.

Part of every Milestone award includes the placement of a plaque at the historic sites where the work was done. On August 5, 2014, Rejewski’s daughter, Janina Sylwestrzak, was an honored guest at the dedication of a stone monument in front of the Institute of Mathematics of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw. The plaque on it reads “Polish Cipher Bureau mathematicians Marian Rejewski, Jerzy Różycki and Henryk Zygałski broke the German Enigma cipher machine codes. Working with engineers from the AVA Radio Manufacturing Company, they built the ‘bomba’ – the first cryptanalytic machine to break Enigma codes. Their work was a foundation of British code breaking efforts which, with later American assistance, helped end World War II.”

For more information about Enigma, see the PCC web site for a longer article. For an in-depth story, see Kozaczuk, Władysław, *Enigma*. University Publications of America, Inc., 1984, which contains two articles written long after the war by Rejewski, just before his death, about the breaking of the Enigma code.

## NORMANDY— TRACING MY FATHER’S FOOTSTEPS *By Rick Pierchalski*

My father fought in Patton’s Army. General Patton did not land in France on D-Day, but landed August 1st, after the June 6th invasion force had secured most of Normandy. Patton’s army was ordered to go south and southeast, and to take on the Nazi invaders wherever they were found. My father was wounded in Normandy, transferred to a field hospital in St. Mere Eglise, the first city liberated by the Americans, and then eventually sent to London for a year-long recovery. He was active in the Disabled American Vets; so I decided to remember him last October by spending a week in Normandy, visiting its battlefields, museums and cemeteries.

I have to say that the French have kept the beaches, museums and memorials dedicated to the invasion in pristine condition. I was impressed to witness numerous field trips of young French high school students touring the cemeteries as well as the battle sites. They were quiet, well behaved and very respectful. When I hear of someone bashing the French, as Americans are apt to do, I will politely tell them of my experiences in Normandy and the high regard that they still pay to the Americans and the Allies who died for them and liberated them from the Nazis.

When I am in these types of war memorials where Poles contributed their lives, I am always curious as to the recognition bestowed upon them at the memorials. At the museums and many of the memorials, it is quite common to see Polish flag along with US, French, British, and Canadian flags. The Poles participated on D-Day not only by providing troops but also with numerous merchant marine as well as a battle ships to transport and protect the troops. Shortly after the D-Day landing, under Maj. General Maczek, the Polish 1st Armored Division was part of the invasion of France, which drove the Germans back to their own country. We put the Polish Military Cemetery, located in Urville-Langannerie Normandy, on our

itinerary and set out to find it. Going through Caen, we drove on N158 and took the exit for Urville, where a sign along the exit announced, “Cimetiere Militaire Polonais”.

This five acre resting place is in a very quiet, out of the way, rural area, 30 miles from D-Day’s Sword Beach. The land was given to “the Polish people in perpetuity” from the government of France. The French beautifully maintain the grounds. There is an artistic aluminum fence surrounding the cemetery with Polish symbols attached, adding a definitive “Polishness” to this hallowed ground. These symbols include wings from the winged hussars, military and city symbols such as Syrenka, the fierce mermaid, the symbol of Warsaw. When you walk into the area you are struck by the symmetry of the crosses and the Stars of David on the 696 graves. However, your attention is drawn to the end of the center of the cemetery where a 30-foot, V-shaped aluminum sculpture, symbolizing the Polish Eagle holds forth. As you walk through and look at the graves, you are struck by the familiarity of the names, names of families that you grew up with and can’t help but think these might be the relatives of those who immigrated to the US so many years ago.

The day we went to the Polish cemetery was at the tail end of our Normandy trip. We had been to five military museums, as well as the enormous American cemetery, along a bluff overlooking Utah Beach, as well as the beaches of Omaha, Sword etc. By the time this day was ending, we had reason to reflect upon the horrors of war and the sacrifices all the young men and women made regardless of nationality. The Polish cemetery, with its more human size, its recognizable names on the graves, and the symbols, brought us to a place where nothing more could be said or done but the simple contemplation of why. We signed the memorial book, took one more look, and left.



Some of the many graves in the American cemetery in Normandy.



# Heritage Project Update

Mary Lou Ellena

After an incredibly busy fall, the Heritage Project is slowly taking shape. We now have a data base and are in the process of contacting potential funding sources. Interviews are proceeding slowly, but they are moving forward.

Early in 2015, you will be contacted to set up a time and place for an in-depth interview. Initially, we will communicate through an email exchange or through a phone call before moving to a more in-depth conversation. Please remember that everyone cannot be contacted on January 1. Remember also that we are all still members of the workforce, so our jobs often intervene and may change our plans or our intentions.

If you have questions or concerns (especially those dealing with the necessity for a speedy interview), please email me at [ml ellena@glconcepts.net](mailto:ml ellena@glconcepts.net). I promise to get back to you in an expeditious time frame. If you know someone who has an interesting story - who has directly participated in an historical event or who has made a significant contribution to improve the quality of life please share the contact. We will do the rest!

Thank you for your patience as we move this project forward.



# Peace in Eastern Europe Through Southwestern PA Energy

By Congressman Tim Murphy

After World War I, the famous Polish Marshall Józef Piłsudski said, "There can be no independent Poland without an independent Ukraine." This sentiment was later used by leaders in the Solidarity movement to stress the need for free and fair elections in Soviet satellite countries. The Russian incursion into Ukraine makes this phrase as relevant today as it has ever been.

Increased hostile meddling in Eastern European affairs by Russia - troops in Ukraine, the manipulation of the European Union economy, the cutting off of natural gas supplies - has increased concerns that Poland's security is threatened.

Russia's power in this region stems from their government-owned and government-operated oil and gas monopoly, Gazprom. Through Gazprom, Russia uses energy as a political weapon against other energy-dependent nations like Poland, which gets nearly 60 percent of its natural gas from Russia. The key to breaking this energy chokehold is right here in Southwestern Pennsylvania because of the Marcellus shale.

This past summer I had the opportunity to travel to Poland and participate in the Atlantic Council Wroclaw Global Forum entitled "Energy Flows & Security in the 21st Century," where I discussed how European and American Energy freedom can only become a reality if we safely maximize development of Southwestern Pennsylvania's natural gas.

More than 200,000 Pennsylvania jobs are supported by the Marcellus Shale, which could also make America energy self-sufficient by 2035. The Marcellus has

the potential to erase our trade deficit with OPEC, save hundreds of billions in military costs, and reverse the losses of our manufacturing strength. But, beyond the domestic benefit of natural gas, there is a unique opportunity to aid our allies abroad and advance peace through the strength found in energy independence.

While Russia may not fear an attack from American aircraft carriers, they do fear a fleet of US-flagged ships selling America's liquefied natural gas to our allies around the globe as we become the leader of the international energy market.

In March, the House of Representatives took the first step in making this new approach to foreign policy a reality by passed the Domestic Prosperity and Global Freedom Act (H.R. 6). This legislation expedites the approval process for the export of natural gas and allows us to sell gas to our friends so they no longer will have to live in the fear of dependency on Russia.

We must move forward and seize this opportunity to protect our world, strengthen our communities, and help our families. We can drive job creation, economic growth, global energy markets and international peace from right here in Southwestern Pennsylvania and support our friends and allies in Poland. To learn more about my legislative efforts in this area, visit my web site, [www.Murphy.House.Gov](http://www.Murphy.House.Gov), and sign up for my weekly email newsletter.

*Congressman Tim Murphy is in his sixth term representing Pennsylvania's 18th congressional district encompassing parts of Allegheny, Washington, Westmoreland and Greene Counties. He serves as Chairman of the House Energy & Commerce Subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations.*

# A Young Filmmaker's Vision

Natalia Kaniasty conversing with PCC's Eva Tumiel-Kozak

*Our organization, despite being non-profit, occasionally co-sponsors worthy causes which are compatible with our mission. Such was the case of the aspiring young filmmaker, Natalia Kaniasty, enrolled in the Master's program at New York University. She needed a little help from us to finalize her project.*

*A year later, Natalia surprised us with an invitation to the October 25th, 2014 public screening of her pre-thesis short film HOME RANGE. Some PCC members traveled to the event which played at the packed cinema in her hometown, Indiana, PA. A local band, Wolves in Sheep's Clothing, added to the special ambience of the evening. The event also featured a question and answer session with Natalia and her cast members.*

*"Home Range" follows the story of Bobby, an emotionally withdrawn war veteran, who returns to his rural Western Pennsylvania hometown. Here, he struggles to reconnect with his former sweetheart and hunting buddies. Natalia found inspiration in the 1978 Michael Cimino film "The Deer Hunter", which starred Robert DeNiro and Christopher Walken.*

**PCC: what prompted you to choose this particular topic?**

NK: In the second year of my MFA program at New York University, we were assigned a ten-minute film project that we could shoot anywhere, left pretty much to our own devices. I knew immediately that I wanted to come home to Western Pennsylvania to tell a story specific to our region. "The Deer Hunter" came to my mind, because it was shot around this area. What drew me to it was the relevance today of the veterans' affairs issues that Cimino addressed in his film following the Vietnam War. Thankfully, a lot of effort goes today into helping our veterans. Nevertheless, rates of unemployment and psychological distress, including suicide among our service men and women returning home, are at unacceptable levels. It was important for me to give voice to those characters, because my cousin is a veteran of the Iraq War.

**PCC: did you have a prototype for your hero?**

NK: My original inspiration was my cousin Nick, who lived with me in New York my first year of graduate school. He is Polish-American and a veteran of the war in Iraq. The character took on a life of his own through the writing process, but I still see Nick in him very much. In the film, he even speaks Polish to his mother. The role was modeled

after Nick but it was written for the screen specifically for my friend from high school and college who is a professional actor. The rest of the cast was comprised of locals, both non-actors and experienced performers. I even brought an international crew of my classmates from NYU to Pennsylvania last November to shoot the film over Thanksgiving week. To bring my vision to life, they braved snowy weather and even a scene in the middle of a freezing cold river.

**PCC: You were influenced by the "Deer Hunter." Is that the reason the psychological break-through for your hero comes at the post-hunting moment?**

Although I am clearly referencing De Niro's pivotal scene in "Deer Hunter" in my own film, it's a very different moment in "Home Range". I chose hunting for other reasons than Cimino did. He was focused on the act of shooting a gun. For me, hunting represents a means of getting our hero back into the routine of civilian life. You might wonder how a veteran suffering from trauma could go and hold a rifle, but it's more about being back in nature, doing something he has done for years, since he was a boy, with friends and family. It's the return to tradition and friendship that helps his healing, as well as being out in the natural world.

**PCC: Besides Cimino's film, do you have a highly effective person, a sort of "film guru," who had a great impact on your work? If so, what did you learn from his/her example?**

NK: I'm heavily influenced by Belgium's filmmakers, the Dardenne brothers, and Poland's own Krzysztof Kieslowski. Both Kieslowski and the duo started as documentary filmmakers before venturing into narrative film. Similarly to them, I find that my films live in a kind of hybrid form. I strive to write and film simple life stories about very real people with the utmost authenticity. That means executing my film in similar ways that a documentary filmmaker would. I cast non-actors as themselves, or if working with an actor, I demand a high level of preparation and rehearsal to become the person they are playing. I spend a lot of time scouting locations for the perfect place to shoot. My camerawork is completely handheld so it feels like it is a part of the world and is following a real person.

**PCC: It took almost a year from shooting to the debut in Indiana in October to complete the post-production process. Not too long a time for such a short film?**



Natalia at the opening night of her film.

NK: The film underwent many versions through editing because of the different requirements of my MFA program. I also spent a lot of time in post-production because, like many filmmakers, I find that this is the time a film is truly written and comes together. The process is very fulfilling. This final version is the one I'm of course most satisfied with. For Home Range, a significant part of the time in post-production was further spent perfecting the sound design, which I found was crucial for this film. The main character suffers from anxiety and depression following trauma at war. Often our senses act in different ways when we're suffering from emotional distress. My sound designer and I played with the different layers of his internal versus external experiences, trying to mirror them in sound.

**PCC: Your end goal?**

The ultimate goal when you make a short film of this kind is to get into as many festivals as possible, which I currently am applying to in the US and Europe. But I have to say, it's been a true pleasure and honor bringing it back home to Pennsylvania to screen it locally. It's a film about community, and my community really supported me through the entire process. So, most important to me is for them to see and enjoy it. I think they did!

**PCC: Thank you Natalia. Watching the reaction of the audience, they definitely did! Wishing you many more terrific ideas and - success will follow!**

# Speaking Polish-Piece of Cake

By Veronica Wojnarowski

For this issue of the *Polish Journey*, *Speaking Polish* presents a brief introduction to Polish diminutives, *zdrobnienia*.

## What are diminutives?

Diminutives are words which “indicate small size and sometimes the quality or condition of being loved, loveable, pitiable, or contemptible”.<sup>1</sup> We feel affection for things or people or animals if they are smaller and cuter than their full-sized versions. We might use a childhood nickname (a diminutive of a given name) for an adult friend whom we knew in childhood, because the nickname became for us a term of affection. Diminutives, especially in Polish, are used to talk with or about children and their parts; and they are used when describing or talking to loved ones.

Polish is a language which is rich in diminutives. Almost any Polish noun or adjective, and many adverbs, can be turned into diminutives. Anna Wierzbicka described them in her book, *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics: the Semantics of Human Interaction*, as the “heart of Polish language and culture”. She believes that they are such a powerful force in Polish because, while some diminutives can be negative in feeling, most in Polish are positive.

## How to form them

A diminutive can be formed by the addition of adjectives to a noun, as in the English phrase, *sweet little house*, or by the addition of an affix to a noun, as in *doggie*. In English, there are several key adjectives which are used to create diminutives. These adjectives include *small*, *sweet*, *little*, *darling*, *cute*, *adorable*, or *teeny-tiny*, to name a few (although there are not many more). Similarly, in English, there are few affixes which can be added to form

diminutives, notably, *y*, *ie*, *ette*, *let*, *kin*, and *kins*. Think: *Bobby*, *kitchenette*, and *babykins*. A doggie is cuter and more loveable than a dog, and a babykins is most certainly cuter and more loveable than a baby.

In Polish, the possibilities for diminutives are endless. They are formed primarily by the addition of affixes. There are some guidelines for the addition of these affixes, but there are no hard and fast rules. In general, the affixes are as follows:

**For some masculine nouns**, add *-ak*. For example, *chłopak* (boy) from *chłop* (peasant or chap).<sup>2</sup> For other masculine nouns, add *-ek*, *-uszek*, *-aszek*, *-qtek*, *-ik*, *-yk*, or *-czyk*. In Polish, you could say *mały dom*, for *small house*; but it's just a small house. A *domek*, on the other hand, is an adorable little house. A *kwiat* is a flower; but a *kwiatek* is a pretty little flower.

**For feminine nouns**, add *-ka*, *-eczka*, *-yczka*, *-ulka*, *-uszka*, *-etka*, or *-eńka*. A *kokarda* is a bow; but a *kokardka* is a pretty little bow. *Twarz* is anybody's face; but a *twarzyczka* is the face of a beloved.

**For neuter nouns**, add *-ko*, *-eczko*, *-eńko*, *-etko*, *uszeko*, *-onko*, *-qtko*, or *-qczko*. A *pole* is a field; but a *poletko* is an attractive little field, something to be proud of, if it is yours. A *jablko* is an apple; but a *jabluszek* is something which is small and delicious.

## Diminutives for babies

In Polish, the words for describing babies, especially in the setting of your family, are especially filled with emotion. The uses of ordinary words for describing a baby are, to a Pole, strangely cold and loveless. Anna Wierzbicka writes of her “Polish scripts” which she uses in describing or talking to her granddaughter.<sup>3</sup> She says that she could never say to her granddaughter, “I’ll wash your hands”. Instead, she would use the diminutive

for hands, *rączki*, the equivalent of *handies*. Her granddaughter has *loczki*, (pretty little curls), *zabki* (dear little teeth), and, for her age she is still *malutka* (dear-little-small). Your baby does not have a mouth (*usta*), a head (*głowa*), or a nose (*nos*). Instead, he or she has *usteczka*, *główka* and *nosek*, all teeny-tiny and oh, so adorable.

## Diminutive adjectives & adverbs

In Polish, adjectives and adverbs can take diminutive forms. Here are just two examples, one of each; but to really know the situations in which each of the forms could be used, advice from a native speaker of Polish would clarify the usage. The adjective *small*, *mały*, can take the varied forms of *maleńki*, *małuski*, and *malusieńki*. *Maleńki ptaszek* is a cute little bird. The adverb *drobno*, *finely*, can be expressed as *drobniutko*, *drobniuteńko* and *drobniusiutko*.

## Diminutives of Polish given names

Diminutives for Polish given names abound. They are all used familiarly, with affection. They are never used when speaking to strangers. Children may use them with each other, but never with their elders. Here are just a few, from the names of some of our PCC members. For the ladies, Ewa can be called Ewka, Ewcia, or Ewunia; Małgorzata can be called Gosia, Gośka, Małgosia, or Małgośka; Maria can be called Marysia, Marynia, Maryś, or Marysienka; Elżbieta can be called Ela, Elka, Elżbietka, Elżunia, or Elza. For the gentlemen: Ryszard can be called Ryś, Rysiek or Rysio; Robert can be called Robek, Robcio, Robercik or Bercik; and Jan can be called Janek, Jasiak, or Jaś. For a list of Polish given names, along with their diminutives, go to [http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Appendix:Polish\\_given\\_names](http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Appendix:Polish_given_names).

<sup>1</sup> Merriam Webster, Third International Unabridged Dictionary

<sup>2</sup> For this and the following examples, see Lockyer, Dorothy, “That Poor Little Thing: The Emotive Meanings of Diminutives in Polish and Russian Translations of *Alice in Wonderland*, 2010. Available at [http://www.academia.edu/4965957/That\\_Poor\\_Little\\_Thing\\_The\\_Emotive\\_Meanings\\_of\\_Diminutives\\_in\\_Polish\\_and\\_Russian\\_Translations\\_of\\_Alice\\_in\\_Wonderland](http://www.academia.edu/4965957/That_Poor_Little_Thing_The_Emotive_Meanings_of_Diminutives_in_Polish_and_Russian_Translations_of_Alice_in_Wonderland)

<sup>3</sup> Wierzbicka, Anna. “Two Languages, Two Cultures, One (?) Self: Between Polish and English” in Bessemeres, Mary and Wierzbicka, Anna, eds. *Translating Lives: Living Between Two Cultures*. University of Queensland Press: 2007.



# CELEBRATING THE POLISH HARVEST

by Dave Motak

Since I was a child, I had always wanted to attend an authentic "dożynki" Polish harvest festival. When I was living in Poland during my younger years, I was never able to. So, this past year, I organized a cultural tour to Poland to coincide with the National Harvest Festival hosted by Polish President Bronisław Komorowski in the resort town of Spała, west of Warsaw. Having produced numerous cultural tours to Poland, I was surprised to find that no one has ever offered a tour that featured this colorful national folk event, so I did my research and, working with Chopin Tours from Toronto, Jack Samuels and I produced the Polish Harvest Tour this past September.

Our itinerary focused on eastern and southern Poland with stops in Warszawa, Lublin, Zamość, Sanok, Zakopane and Kraków, a stay at the magnificent Renaissance palace of the Krasicki family in Krasieczyn, as well as a day trip to the picturesque city of Lwów in western Ukraine. There were 25 people in our group, including several members of the Polish Cultural Council. For the "grande finale" of our cultural excursion, we made arrangements for our group to stay at the beautifully restored Odrowążów Palace and Resort Spa in Chlewska, in central Poland. Odrowążów was restored as an initiative of the Mazowsze Provincial government. It is one of the most luxurious resorts in Poland.

The celebration of the harvest or "dożynki" in Poland dates back to ancient pre-Christian times when Slavic tribes celebrated the fertility and abundance of the earth with special harvest festivities. Throughout Polish history, dożynki has been the time to express gratitude for the abundance of the harvest and appreciation for the labor and toil that brought it from the fertile earth. Traditionally, the lord of the manor would welcome his villagers to his home for a harvest celebration that would include mass, feasting and merriment. It was customary for the local farmers to present their lord with a large loaf of bread which he would reverently kiss. The farmers would also create a large ornate "wieniec" or crown incorporating a variety of grains, flowers, nuts, and fruit, and adorned with colored paper or ribbon. Sections of these creations are then stored in barns over the winter. In an effort to insure fertility and abundance, pieces of the grain from the previous year's wieniec are incorporated with the fresh grain that is planted in the spring. Even though dożynki is today a Christian tradition, it is still common practice to place a large stone slab in the bottom of the wieniec, which replicates the stone altars used by our pagan Slav forefathers.



President Komorowski ceremonially kisses the loaf of harvest bread.

The Dożynki Prezydenckie (Presidential Harvest Festival) was established 80 years ago as a national event hosted by the first President of Poland, Ignacy Mościcki, at his presidential retreat in Spała from 1927 to 1938. This was the first time that delegations from villages and provinces throughout Poland came together to celebrate the harvest; prior to that time it was more of a local or regional event. During the communist era, when the communist party used folk art and culture to promote its political agenda, the national dożynki festival was moved to a large stadium in Warsaw. It assumed a very political nature. Instead of the celebration of mass, communist officials presided over a heavily orchestrated ceremonial reception of delegations from various parts of rural Poland. After the return of democracy to Poland, dożynki was moved back to Spała, reassuming its original, more homespun character.

As I am a member of an international committee established by the Polish Parliament (Sejm), I was fortunate to secure personal printed invitations from President and Mrs. Komorowski for each person on our tour to be their special guests at the Dożynki National Harvest Festival. The morning of the festival, our group traveled to Spała aboard a vintage steam locomotive. There were numerous representative groups from every region of Poland, each dressed in their local folk attire. An outdoor mass, attended by President and Mrs. Komorowski and members of the Polish government, began the day's activities. To enter the VIP section, which is where our group's seats were reserved, we had to pass extensive security screening. With the international situation with Russia a constant worry, the Poles were taking no chances.

The presence of security did not hamper the

festive nature of the event. There were hundreds of people dressed in colorful costumes, displays of folk crafts and regional foods. After the mass, a parade proceeded through the streets of Spała, comprised of many quaint horse-drawn carriages, marching bands and colorful folk groups, each carrying (or pulling) a large "wieniec" constructed from the fruits of their labor. An honor guard of "ufani" or Polish Cavalry on horseback escorted the presidential couple in their carriage, which presented a scene reminiscent of old Poland. The dożynki events included the presentation of the traditional large loaf of harvest bread to President Komorowski, who ceremonially kissed it. This was followed by speeches by members of the Polish government as well as by performances from various folk ensembles, including the Łany Student Ensemble of the Poznań University of Life Sciences. The various wieniec creations were also brought to the stage by delegations dressed in regional folk attire. President Komorowski's staff thought of everything and were perfect hosts. In addition to being offered beverages, when the clouds above threatened rain, they distributed "Presidential Umbrellas" to our group. Although not needed, these were wonderful souvenirs of the event. After the ceremony our group was invited to attend a special private reception hosted by President and Mrs. Komorowski.

Participating in this event helped us to appreciate the abundance of the Polish harvest, to witness first-hand how our Polish heritage is kept alive through the colorful traditions and ceremonies of our ancestors and to take pride in how Poland has now become a progressive and prosperous nation.

*For photos of our dożynki experience, please visit our web site at [www.janddtours.net](http://www.janddtours.net).*

# Looking Back...

It has been quite a busy 2014 Autumn season for PCC.

In September, we started with a popular **Membership and Volunteers picnic** in the Croatian Center, gathering quite a crowd. We do hope this annual event will encourage many people to participate in different events of the PCC throughout the year. After all, it is a great time to get together, to “exchange notes”, as well as to encourage those who attend only one or two functions per year to get involved with other activities. We need everyone to be involved much more!

In October, annual Polish Heritage Month, the PCC hosted a great performance of the **“Duo Klavitarre”** from Poland, an unusual combination of piano and guitar. We listened to a variety of international music, including some arrangements of Chopin and Moszkowski. A crowd of music lovers gathered at a lovely venue on Mt. Washington. We enjoyed good music, good wine and a lovely view. The enthusiastic listeners have asked for many more musical events.

November is a traditional month for our **collaboration with the International Three Rivers Film Festival**. For this festival, the PCC presented five of the newest films of contemporary Polish cinema. This time, our Polish and American audience had a chance to see:

- a “Masterpiece of Polish Cinema” from Martin Scorsese’s list: *The Saragossa Manuscript*
- a political thriller, *Jack Strong*
- the winner of the 2013 Montreal Film Festival, *Life Feels Good*
- the world premiere of *Heart and Little Heart*
- the captivating blockbuster *The Gods, Bogowie*

We had the pleasure to introduce the director of the latter, Lukasz Palkowski, and the composer of the exciting score, Bartek Chajdecki.

**Our 22nd annual Bal Polonaise** had the theme of “On the Wings of an Angel”. It again brought lovely debutantes and their escorts and many guests to the Circuit Center and Ballroom. We were entertained by the music of North Allegheny Strolling Strings and our favorite orchestra, the Continental Dukes. The house was brought down by a

delightful performance of the debutantes and their escorts in the Grande Polonaise, a waltz, and the Hand Jive. The 2014 Debutantes and the Escorts included: **Miss Monica Buczynski** escorted by **Mr. Parke Lambert**, **Miss Maura Corder** escorted by **Mr. Marcus Kielman**; **Miss Jonah Jankovik** escorted by **Mr. Edoardo Frezza**, **Miss Sarah Jobe** escorted by **Mr. Connor Penn**; **Miss Caroline Keane** escorted by **Mr. Dakota Williams**; **Miss Guro Klevrud** escorted by **Damian Peters**; **Miss Angelika Pyszkowska** escorted by **Mr. Nicolas Pereira**; **Miss Mikayla Williams** escorted by **Mr. Matthew Wisneski**; **Miss Victoria Marie Whitney** escorted by **Mr. John Peirlert** and **Miss Nicole Zdrojewski** escorted by **Mr. Christian Ford**.

A special honor was presented to

**Mrs. Irene Addams**, the “Queen” of the Bal,” who inspired us all to present the debutantes 16 years ago. She has worked very hard throughout the years to bring each Bal to fruition. We are always grateful for our volunteers who make this event successful: **Evanne Addams** and **Marie-Zielmanski Fallon**, Co-Chairs of the event, as well as to the Committee Members **Irene Addams**, **Lisa Barczynski**, **Terri Barger**, **Olivia Barger**, **James Clark**, **Jenene Cwalina**, **Mary Lou Ellena**, **Lillian Grindle**, **Kris Gutkowski**, **Anna Herold**, **Amy Havonec**, **Joe Kaminski**, **Antoinette Mizgorski**, **Lisa Sasinoski**, **Maria Staszkievicz**, **Barbara Wally**, **Bill** and **Monica Zanieski** and **Marysia Zioncheck**.

To all of our volunteers, please accept our warmest thanks and appreciation.



Debutantes and escorts pose for photographs at the 22nd Annual Bal Polonaise, Nov. 15, 2014.



# REMEMBERING DON



Pittsburgh Polonia lost a staunch supporter, a creative educator, and a dear friend with the death of Dr. Donald Mushalko on

December 28, 2014 at the age of eighty-four. Dr. Mushalko's gradual health decline escalated with the death of his beloved wife and soul mate Helen in 2011.

Born in McKeesport on April 6, 1930, Donald Mushalko developed a love of music from early childhood. He graduated from Carnegie Institute of Technology where he studied violin and music education and served as concert master of the school's orchestra for five years. He then went on to teach in the Baldwin-Whitehall School District for ten years before earning his doctorate from the University of Pittsburgh. The next forty years he spent teaching music at the Falk Laboratory School on the Pitt Campus. He also served as president of the Polish Room, one of the nationality rooms located in the Cathedral of Learning.

Those who knew Dr. Mushalko were aware of his love of all things musical and all things Polish from the onset. He paired those loves first through his church Holy Family Polish National Catholic Church in McKeesport where he served at various times as choir director and organist. He named the Polish Dance Troupe of the parish "Lajkoniki" and

saw that authentic costumes for the group came from Poland. He shared his skill with the Polish community at large, first through the former Central Council of Polish Organizations and more recently through the Polish Cultural Council as the founder and first director of the Karuzela Chorus and Dancers. Dr. Mushalko was the chairperson of the very first Bal Polonaise and continued in that capacity for about ten years. He initiated the tradition of debutantes leading the Grand Polonaise.

As Vice President of the Kosciuszko Foundation of Pittsburgh, Dr. Mushalko was also on the Board of Directors of the Kosciuszko Foundation in New York City for many years. He was instrumental in bringing many vocalists and musicians to Pittsburgh as part of the early cultural mission of the organization.

Whether he was instructing the Karuzela chorus or his church choir on the proper pronunciation of Polish lyrics, organizing the food for the Nationality rooms annual open house, leading the Polish hymns at the outdoor Mass at Polish Day at Kennywood Park or planning the favors and flowers for the Bal Polonaise, he approached every task with perfection, expertise and love.

Pittsburgh Polonia has lost a true friend with the passing of Donald Mushalko. As corny as it may sound, those of us who knew him can picture him organizing the celestial choirs in heaven, making sure that a few Polish hymns are in their repertoire. We will miss you Don. May you rest in eternal peace with the angels and saints.

## ANATEA EINHORN PARTICIPATES IN INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

This past summer, Anatea Einhorn, a student at Winchester Thurston Academy completed the 7-week Rising Sun international program in leadership, in Rhinebeck, New York. This program, established by the Louis August Jonas Foundation, has been in operation for more than 80 years. It seeks to develop in promising teen-agers leadership, personal growth, and a spirit of giving. Sixty

boys and sixty girls from all over the world participate. Together, they take over the daily operations of the facility, participate in performing and visual arts activities, and explore their cultural differences and similarities.

By all accounts, Anatea was a stellar participant. Congratulation to her from the PCC.

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

*Keeping Polish Culture Alive!*

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## A bowlful of History...

As in any cuisine, the Poles have a variety of favorite foods and cherished recipes that have been passed down for ages, such as pierogi with a variety of fillings, a host of soups and sauces, and traditional and regional foods prepared especially for the holidays. But among the myriad of Polish dishes, one has attained almost cult status and is recognized as the Polish national dish: bigos.

Bigos (pronounced "bee-ghos") is an ancient dish evocative of a time when Poland reached "od morza do morza" - reaching from the Baltic to the Black Sea - and was comprised of vast stretches of verdant, fertile fields and almost impenetrable primeval forests, two elements that influenced the creation and preparation of this national dish. It was in these vast forests that the Polish nobility engaged in hunting parties in pursuit of wild game that ultimately became the prime ingredients for this incredibly rich and earthy stew.

Legend has it that King Władysław Jagiełło supposedly served bigos to his guests at a royal hunting party in 1385. So, in the succeeding seven hundred years since King Jagiełło played host in the verdant Polish forest, it has been customary to include wild game as the principal ingredients in bigos. Venison, wild boar, bison and other wild meats were added to the bigos stew pot, to which were also added smoked meats such as ham, kielbasa, bacon and fresh meats including pork, veal, beef, as well as lamb, and both wild and domesticated poultry. These meats were blended with the bounty of the Polish countryside including cabbage, sauerkraut, fresh vegetables, a variety of wild mushrooms and seasoned with pepper corns, caraway, juniper berries and marjoram. Fresh fruits such as apples, plums or pears, as well as dried fruits were also often included. A basic meat or vegetable stock was used.

Mead, vodka or other alcoholic liquids were often added, according to the tastes of the preparer. The seasonal availability of cabbage and its richness in vitamin C made bigos a traditional part of the winter diet in Poland.

Every hunting party and every manor house had its own special recipe for bigos. The ingredients were often altered to include foods that were available, which were on hand, or were leftover from other meals. The preparation of bigos often took on ritualistic proportions as the dish grew in stature to become the most significant way of celebrating a special occasion or feast. Since bigos is basically a winter dish, it would keep well in a country storage room, to be reheated again, when the need arose, each time intensifying the taste. This was important, as in older times, when the tradition of Polish hospitality demanded that guests, even unexpected guests, would be welcomed with food and drink and no guest should leave your table hungry. Only the status of the host, whether peasant or noble, would determine the richness of the ingredients.

Celebrated by many Polish poets and writers, bigos has achieved legendary status among Poles. Traditional bigos never included potatoes or tomatoes. These were the "New World" vegetables, and omission indicates that bigos is one of the oldest Polish dishes, predating the discovery of America in 1492.

One observed custom in Old Poland was to keep a pot of bigos going for a week or more, replenishing a variety of ingredients as necessary and as available, sort of like a "perpetual" stew. Hence, with its hodgepodge of ingredients, metaphorically, bigos means "a jumble" or "mish-mash" in Polish.

Although modern Poles do not often include wild game in their bigos, they do often use a variety of meats, spices and vegetables. Since a wide range of kielbasa is now available, both in Poland and in Polish-style delicatessens abroad, the contemporary Polish cook can now select from many types of traditional sausages, though kielbasa and meats with a higher fat content tend to hold-up better during the lengthy cooking and reheating process that making and serving traditional bigos requires.

Because of its utility, its ease of preparation, and perhaps because one can feed a large number of people at a reasonable cost, bigos has always been the "go to" food for Polish entertainment and it is the favorite entrée to serve during the winter holidays. It is a popular dish in Poland to be served on the Second Day of Christmas and especially for "Sylwester" or New Year's Eve. A piping hot bowl of bigos, some crusty bread and a tall glass of Polish beer are certain to take the chill out of anyone's bones during the cold

winter months!

Since there are perhaps as many versions of bigos as there are Polish cooks, there are hundreds of recipes for this classic dish, and it is not uncommon for Polish cooks to get into heated arguments as to how to make a "proper" bigos, as everyone has their own version. I have included a "contemporary" rendition of this classic dish that was recently published by *Veranda Country*, a new Polish lifestyle magazine with very impressive coverage of Polish fashion, design and cuisine. The translations and modifications for the recipes are, of course, mine, but feel free to make this bigos recipe your own by adding or modifying according to your individual taste. (Note: These days you can usually find duck in the frozen meat section of Giant Eagle.)

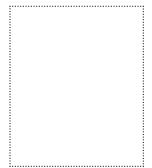
### Hunter's Bigos with Duck and Plums

2 lbs sauerkraut, rinsed and drained  
3 Tablespoon cooking oil  
7 oz slab bacon, coarsely chopped  
1 medium onion, diced  
16 oz stew beef cut in large cubes  
2 cups beef broth\*  
1/2 roasted duck, deboned and cut into 1/2" pieces  
3 oz unsalted butter  
6 Tablespoon flour  
handful of dried plums, coarsely chopped  
6 - 8 peppercorns  
2 bay leaves  
A few pieces of dried porcini or Polish mushrooms  
Salt and pepper to taste

### Preparation:

Soak the sauerkraut for several minutes in cold water, rinse, drain and press out as much liquid as possible. In a large pan, stock pot or Dutch oven, sauté the bacon, adding the beef. Brown the beef then add the onion. Sauté until onion is translucent. (\*Add the cooking oil if needed.) Add the drained sauerkraut and the duck pieces and stir until all ingredients begin to lightly brown. Deglaze the pan by adding the broth. Make a "zasmażke", or roux, by combining the butter and the flour. Stir until a yellow paste forms, removing all lumps. Bring bigos broth to a boil. Ladle about 1 cup of the broth into a bowl and slowly add the zasmażke taking care to avoid any lumps. Whisk until smooth, then add the mixture back to the main bigos pot and stir to combine. Add the plums, dried mushrooms, pepper corns and bay leaf and cook in a 325° oven for two hours. Cool and refrigerate. Each day you reheat the bigos, do so on the stove or in the oven at low heat for about 1 hour. (Dave's notes: This recipe could also benefit from the addition of grated apples or pears or chopped dried apple slices and perhaps a small amount of sherry.)





[www.PolishCulturalCouncil.org](http://www.PolishCulturalCouncil.org)

## Polish Bicyclists

By John A. Adamczyk, Esquire

Rafal Majka is not a very familiar name, unless you are a fan of professional bicycle racing. Majka is Polish and has been steadily making a name for himself in the world of professional bicycle racing. In 2014 he placed 6th overall in the Giro D'Italia road race, one of several major races in the world, while riding for team Tinkoff-Saxo. That year, he also placed first in two of the mountain stages of the Tour de France. For his excellent performance, he received the polka dot jersey, designating him the "King of the Mountain" champion for best racer in the mountain stages. The majority of racers never achieve this level of accomplishment. Majka was the first Pole to do so. Weeks later, was the overall winner in the Tour of Poland.

Michal Kwiatkowski is another young Polish rider who came in 11th place in the 2013 Tour de France. A strong Polish team also led him to the overall victory in the



Edited photo by John Adamczyk, age 13

2014 World Championship Road Race. He is considered an all-around strong racer who is on the Omega Pharma Quickstep Team.

Both of these young Polish racers are considered to have the ability and potential to contend for and win the Tour de France.

According to Velo magazine, "Kwiatkowski is part of a new wave of Polish riders making headway in the Peloton (a

kind of formation of cyclists). The sport has steadily grown over the past two decades and the inclusion of the Tour of Poland in the World Tour only helps. Zenon Jaskula, who rode to third in the 1993 Tour de France, remains the only Polish rider to reach the Tour Podium, but the likes of Majka and Kwiatkowski seem intent on rewriting the history books."