Polish Profiles
Góralka czy ci nie zal

By: Kaja Mirecka Ploss, Ph.D., Executive Director
Iwo Cyprian Pogonowski, Editor

There isn’t a Pole, or a Polish American who hasn’t heard or maybe even sang himself that beautiful and nostalgic song, “Góralka czy ci nie zal”. We sing it at parties, picnics, and family gatherings. Most probably none of us remember that those haunting words were written by Maria Konopnicka. She wrote it for the GÓRAŁE (mountaineers), who were immigrating in masses to the United States well over one hundred years ago. Many of them settled around Chicago and in the city itself. That song became like an anthem for them.

Maria Konopnicka called the Polish immigration to the United States and Brazil “Męczennica Droga Ldu” (The People’s Martyrdom Road). She made her debut with a well known poem, “Zimowy Poronak” (A Winter Morning). However, her real career started with a cycle of poems called “In the Mountains”. Many of the stories and poems were about those who for financial and survival reasons left Poland. Besides the United States, many Poles immigrated to Brazil. For them, Konopnicka dedicated an epic poem in six parts, “Pan Balcer w Brazylii” (“Pan Balcer in Brazil”). For the mountaineers she wrote that unforgettable poem “Góralka Czy Ci Nie Zal”.

Except perhaps for Eliza Orzeszkowa who wrote about people’s fate and injustice, Konopnicka wrote about things that pained her, that mattered to her; like the people who left Poland to seek a better tomorrow in foreign lands, or people behind bars. However, children’s education was most important to her.

Konopnicka’s books for children revealed how much she cared for them. When they were published, they became a sensation. Three of them, written some as prose and some as poems, are still very popular in Poland. The best known is a fairy tale “O Krasnokutkach i Sierotce Marysi” (The Little Orphan and the Seven Dwarfs). Another one is a charming story called “The Wanderer”, in Polish “Janek Wędrowcik”. The third one is an amusing little story about “Burry Picking” (Na Jagody). Who that was and what modest woman who so passionately wrote her well known books? Maria Konopnicka was a woman who participated in numerous conspiratorial activities and who fought for human rights and treatment, not only for political prisoners, but also for imprisoned criminals.

She was born Maria Wasilowska on May 23 in 1842. She spent her childhood in Kalisz and was home schooled. Later on she was sent just for a few years to a Warsaw boarding school run by nuns. In Warsaw Maria met her future husband, and at the age of 20 she married Jarosław Konopnicki. The couple settled on her husband’s estate school run by nuns. In Warsaw Maria met her future husband, and at the age of 20 she married Jarosław Konopnicki. The couple settled on her husband’s estate school run by nuns. In Warsaw Maria met her future husband, and at the age of 20 she married Jarosław Konopnicki. The couple settled on her husband’s estate school run by nuns. In Warsaw Maria met her future husband, and at the age of 20 she married Jarosław Konopnicki. The couple settled on her husband’s estate school run by nuns. In Warsaw Maria met her future husband, and at the age of 20 she married Jarosław Konopnicki. The couple settled on her husband’s estate school run by nuns. In Warsaw Maria met her future husband, and at the age of 20 she married Jarosław Konopnicki. The couple settled on her husband’s estate school run by nuns. In Warsaw Maria met her future husband, and at the age of 20 she married Jarosław Konopnicki. The couple settled on her husband’s estate school run by nuns. In Warsaw Maria met her future husband, and at the age of 20 she married Jarosław Konopnicki. The couple settled on her husband’s estate school run by nuns. In Warsaw Maria met her future husband, and at the age of 20 she married Jarosław Konopnicki. The couple settled on her husband’s estate school run by nuns.

Maria Konopnicka was the woman we would call today, a “spóźczynka”. Her living conditions were very difficult. She worked as a teacher and wrote for newspapers to make a living for herself and her six children. Yet at the same time Konopnicka established and was a member of a group of Polish women who participated in many conspiratorial activities and who fought for human rights and treatment, not only for political prisoners, but also for imprisoned criminals. She was also Editor of a women’s magazine “SWiT”, and worked for a committee that helped the population in Upper Silesia. Konopnicka also established a long lasting organization named at the Polish immigrants called “MACIERZ POLSKA”. She did all this in addition to her writing. She was known to work 18 hours daily. In 1902 in Krakow and Lwow there took place a celebration for Maria Konopnicka on the 25th anniversary of her first publication. In the following year she received as a National Section, Editor

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Pitt Bull with Lipstick

By: Justyna Ball

My cousins in Poland have asked me if I want to go see “Mamma Mia” yet. No, I haven’t, and I don’t intend to. It’s not the type of film which I actually love... I even named my dog ABBA. It’s the image of Pierce Brosnan singing “S.O.S.” that turns me off. And the whole script idea with the girl who plays Meryl Streep’s daughter being on a mission chasing down three men. All three had entered her mother’s life... well, before she became 30. A little longer and she gave me a little more than just a second look, she gave her a daughter. Adda, the daughter wants to know who her dad is... dah!

I don’t know about you, but I spent the last week watching the Democratic Convention and this week, the GOP’s. I was very pleased with remarks by both Sen. Obama and his wife Michelle. “Uncle Teddy’s” as well as Joe Biden. I was pleasantly surprised by both Clinton’s speeches. Since the beginning of the election process, over 160 million Clinton fans... or more precisely something better than just for the sake of the keeping the Democratic Party together.

Yes, Mr. Clinton. The Clintons pulled off quite impressive (No Way, No How, No McCain) speeches and pledged 100% support for Sen. Obama. Obama’s long awaited acceptance speech (for over 84,000 at the stadium and 38 million at home) did not disappoint either. Our being fed up with Bush’s politics was clearly spelled out... ENOUGH! And along with the fact that the standard talk by an ex - president is ignored, the plan for the next several years was introduced and the party stayed united. A job well done.

And then came the GOP convention, which took over all the attention and the constant supervision… but wait at least until Trayor goes to kindergarten. I was very pleased with remarks by both Sen. McCain and his wife Cindy. “Iwo Cyprian Pogonowski

POLONIA UNITED BALL

Dec 7, Sun, 1:30 pm. Opłatek Day at the Polish Clubhouse Six, organized by The Polish Club of Laguna Woods, Information: 949-206-9122.

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Calendar of Events
January 21, 2009, Santa Ana - All The World’s a Stage, Modjeska’s Arden at Old Courthouse Museum, 211 W. Santa Ana Blvd., Information: www.occourts.org/occourts/courtinfo and (714) 973 6605.

Oct. 1, Wed, Celebration of 400th Anniversary of Arrival of First Poles to Jamestown (Virginia)

11 12, Sat and Sun, Polish Festival at Fr. Maximilian Maria Kolbe Polish Mission in San Diego.

12, Sun Los Angeles - 1:30 pm. Polish American Congress Meeting Our Lady of the Rosary Church Response of Our Lady of the Rosary Church, located in the Catholic Church, in Lower Los Angeles.

12, Sun, 2:30 pm. Life and Music of Jan Ignacy Paderewski, Auditorium Concert, Clubhouse Three, organized by The Polish Club of Laguna Woods, Information: 949-206-9122.

9, Sun, 10:30 a.m., Commemoration of 30th Anniversary of pope John Paul II election and 24th Anniversary of Fr. Jerzy Popiełuszko, Chaplain and Patron of Solidarity Martyrdom. Otrębusy Popieluszko in Jana Pawła II, 3999 Rose Dr., Yorba Linda, CA Information: 714-996-8161.

9, Sun, Banquet after the noon Mass Organized by the Friends of John Paul II Foundation at the Parrish Hall of Our Lady of the Bright Mount Church at 3424 W. Adams Blvd., Los Angeles, CA Information: (213)278-1018.

8, Sat, 6:00 p.m. Polonia United Ball, at Hyatt Hotel in La Jolla, CA, orchestra Zbyszek Gałązka, info: 858-496-0092.

Dec 6, Sun, 1:30 pm. Oplakate – Lunchon and Awards Banquet, sponsored by the Polish American Congress – Our Lady of the Bright mount church hall in L. A.


Please send information for the calendar to Bish Petryka - e-mail: zbyskoopet@aol.com #