

ACPC in Milwaukee from 5

some of the very exciting events that will take place during our convention this year. As the Club's Co-Chair for the Convention, she pronounced that the Spirit of the Convention would be a joyous one, like attending a Polish wedding! She urged "give yourself a treat – join your friends in a week of celebration and accomplishment on the cultural level."

Jarosław Golembowski of our ACPC Music Committee reported that the Chicago Chopin Society of which he is president and founder is preparing a celebration to commemorate the 200th Anniversary of Frederic Chopin's birth in 2010. A series of special events begins with a lecture and concert in June 2009 by renowned pianist Nina Drath. In April 2010 the winner of the 2008 Natl. Chopin Piano Competition in Poland will present a recital, followed in May 2010 by a concert performance by the winner of the Chopin Foundation of the U.S. The Society is also planning as the main event of the program series a Composer Competition "In Memory of Chopin" during the first year of the bicentennial year of his birth. Following his report, the board members discussed and approved a motion that the ACPC will offer a \$5,000 prize to the Chopin Foundation of the U.S. (Lady Blanka Rosenstiel, Founder/President) piano competition in 2010.

On Saturday afternoon Board members enjoyed a guided tour of the Polish Center of Wisconsin that was led by Mrs. Susan Mikos, Art Director of the Center. What a pleasant surprise! The very elegant Center is styled after a Polish manor house. Enormous windows throughout the two-story building afford spectacular views of the picturesque acreage surrounding the edifice. On the entry side of the building, guests look out upon the blue waters of a spring-fed lake that lies below. We learned that in 1996, representatives of more than 15 Polish organizations laid the groundwork for the new building and raised more than two million dollars to start construction.

Today, the Polish Center of Wisconsin celebrates Poland's proud heritage, providing meeting sites for Polish community groups and serves as a cultural center where people learn about Polish history, language, literature, traditions and contemporary affairs. It also offers a popular venue to all community groups for weddings and social occasions. The imposing structure surely stands out as one of the most beautiful and outstanding Polish centers in the country. We were treated to a warm welcome with an elegant wine & cheese buffet and other tasty tidbits. We will always remember the beautiful art gallery, library, Veteran's Room and spacious, high-ceiling reception areas.

In welcoming the guests at the closing gala banquet Saturday evening, Dr. Wnuk displayed a copy of the world famous Leonardo da Vinci painting "Lady with an Ermine" which he brought from Poland just a few days earlier. The copy of the portrait is on loan to the American Assoc. for Advancement of Polish Culture from the Czartoryski Museum in Krakow. The banquet guests and ACPC members deeply appreciated Dr. Wnuk's special efforts to intimately acquaint the audience with this priceless painting.

A highlight during the closing gala banquet Saturday evening was a dynamic presentation about recent developments in Polish American relationships by Dr. Donald Pienkos, Prof. of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, where he chairs its Polish Studies Committee and is Coordinator of its Intl. Studies Major. Dr. Pienkos is the author of books on the Polish National Alliance, the Polish Falcons of America, the Polish American Congress, and the Polish Womens Alliance (co-authored with his wife, Prof. Angela Pienkos). Dr. Pienkos has served in leadership positions

with leading national Polonia organizations and is currently a director with the Polish Institute of Arts & Sciences, and the Polish American Congress. His work has been recognized by distinguished awards from the Polish American Historical Association, Polish American Congress, and the American Council for Polish Culture.

Among the honored guests at the banquet were the Chicago Consul General Zygmunt Matynia of the Republic of Poland and his wife. Honoring us with their presence also were Ms. Jolanta Zablocka, Director of the Center for Academic Excellence in the Chicago Public Schools, and Deputy Joanna Zakrzewska. We were also privileged to enjoy the company of Ms. Bożena Gawor, a Director with our host organization, the American Association for the Advancement of Polish Culture. Ms. Gawor is a published poet – one of her poems "Passage of Time" won a national award in 2007. A CD was produced with musical background for the reading of her poetry by a British actor.

Among the evening's highlights were the energetic and very talented "Syrena" Polish folk dancers whose Founder and Artistic Director is Ms. Ada Dziewanowska. They executed the vibrant dance steps with great precision and artistic perfection. Our Council members were highly pleased and entertained by this beautifully costumed group, rated among the best in the country. Another group, the "HOLNI" – "Polish Highlanders – Dancers and Singers" of Holy Cross Parish in Joliet, Ill came by bus from Chicago for this performance. They danced with enthusiasm and great energy. The gracious youths in lovely folk costumes delighted the audience with their dancing talents and the obvious joy that they took in performing for the public.

Mr. Mirecki, the officers and board members extend heartfelt thanks to Dr. Wnuk, all of the participating members of the American Association for the Advancement of Polish Culture, and the many other people who helped make this a delightful event. Their genial hospitality, the warm reception, gala banquet program and the grand tour of the Polish American Center of Wisconsin contributed richly to making this an outstanding ACPC Spring Board Meeting.

We cordially invite readers of this publication to join us during our Council's 61st Annual Convention in Hartford, CT, Aug. 4- 8, 2009, which is being hosted by the Polish Cultural Club of Greater Hartford. Delightful programs are planned for your interest and enjoyment, but most especially, to reinforce your pride in Polish culture. Check our website for details: www.polishcultureacpc.org. □

BBC article about Enigma from 8

"The easiest was the German air force - they weren't as security-minded and made blunders. They were broken daily."

Turing created the "Bombe" at Bletchley Park - a more sophisticated decoding machine than an earlier Polish machine called the "Bomba".

The Polish machine exploited a weakness in the German "indicators" - the starting positions for sending Enigma messages. But when the Germans changed the indicator system in May 1940 the Polish method became redundant.

The British "Bombes" however did work, based on "cribs" - recurring patterns in German secret messages, such as the words "special arrangements for".

The German naval codes were the hardest to crack - and that mattered hugely while U-boats were wreaking havoc, torpedoing Allied ships in the North Atlantic.

Bletchley Park's work is reckoned to have shortened the war by as much as two years. □

Skalny Scholarships from 5

their visit to Poland as their favorite among all the countries they visited. Nicole is currently a member of the Polish Home Assoc. and assists in fundraisers and events. A member of the Washington State Women's Soccer Assoc., Nicole is also an assistant soccer coach at an elementary school. She has worked in various capacities with children and has tutored Polish language and other subjects. Nicole has backpacked throughout Europe for the past four summers, and last year traveled and studied in Australia. She is currently a senior majoring in Intl. Communications at the University of Washington and has consistently made the Dean's List. Her Polish Studies have included Polish Language, Literature and Slavic. Assoc. Professor of the UW Slavic Dept. Katarzyna Dźwerek writes that Nicole contributed much to the discussions and had well-informed opinions on a variety of topics, and in a class that deals with cultural and linguistic variables in expression of emotions, "Nicole's sensitivity to cross linguistic variation in emotional concepts was impressive."

The Skalny Scholarship award was presented to Nicole Pawluskiewicz on behalf of ACPC by John Golubiec, Pres. Polish Home Assoc. of Seattle.

Michael Szpindor Watson of Schaumburg, Ill. describes himself as "very involved in Polonia, whether socially, academically, politically, or voluntarily... choosing to be Polish means supporting Polonia and exploring my Polish interests." Michael credits his early involvement in the Polonian community to his mother, Dr. Anne Szpindor. He writes that his mother, herself very active in the Polonian community of Chicago, raised her children learning Polish and about Poland. Michael boasts of over thirteen trips to Poland as the family spent summers visiting there. He has been actively interested in his "Polish roots" since seventh grade, and is involved in various Polonian activities and events in the Chicago area. Since attending Indiana University- Bloomington campus, Michael has become active in Polish activities there as well. He is a founding member and treasurer of the current Polish Cultural Assoc. of Indiana University and has organized various events and fund raising active ties. Michael has attended the Polish Table discussions weekly while at the University. His Polish Studies courses have included Polish history, literature, film and language. He is the first student in Indiana University's history who designed his own major in Polish Studies. He is majoring in Interdepartmental Economics and Political Science, Polish Language and Literature with a minor in Russian and Eastern European Institute with Polish Language Certificate. Justyna Beinek, Asst. Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures, writes that Michael "distinguished himself in my classes by showing avid interest in Polish culture, constantly improving his analytical, writing, and oral presentation skills... there is no other student as committed to discussing Polish politics and culture...has a proven academic record and is a leader...". Michael plans on returning to Chicago to finish his studies.

The Skalny Scholarship was presented to Michael Szpindor Watson on behalf of ACPC at a luncheon event by Dr. Vivian Walkosz, Pres. Polish Arts Club of Chicago, an ACPC Affiliate. □

Third Polish Republic from 10

and read newspapers, construction workers sat around because supplies had not been delivered. Work did not get done, but everyone got paid. Cash was no problem because the government could also print more paper money to pass around. Even the apparent benefits of totalitarian communism such as free kindergarten-through-university education and medical care as well as low-cost vacations ultimately had a demoralizing effect. The cradle-to-grave communist welfare state created a lethargically society waiting for government hand-outs. Anyone not satisfied with bare subsistence level guaranteed by the state often had to resort to under-the-table arrangements and various schemes.

Most Poles believed that after the Solidarity movement had dumped communist rule, they would soon enjoy freedom and prosperity. The freedom was easy enough to achieve. Laws were passed to abolish censorship and grant political liberties including the right to join or even set up a political party, establish a private business or have a passport. Under communism, passports were kept by the police, and citizens had to apply for permission to travel abroad.

But prosperity, which could not simply be legislated into existence, has been long in coming. The communists had left Poland with a cumbersome, antiquated and heavily bureaucratized economy and mountains of debt cause by the 1970s spending spree of communist leader Edward Gierk. He may have won some personal popularity by introducing Coke, Pepsi, Marlboro cigarettes and other Western consumer goods as well as putting Poland on wheels in the Fiat 126P minicar. But it was all done on gigantic Western credit which has taken generations to repay.

Another legacy of the communist era was 600 percent inflation. The shock therapy used in the early 1990s by government economist Leszek Balcerowicz to overcome it and get the economy moving initially caused widespread poverty and frustration. Overnight people saw their purchasing power slashed in half. The resultant disenchantment with the Solidarity-rooted government brought about an astonishing political backlash: in 1993 the communists, now calling themselves Social Democrats, were voted back into power. They were back in office a second time in the past two decades in 2001-2005.

Poland started recording hefty annual economic growth after the turn of the century and became a European leader in that respect. But access to the job market of the British Isles after Poland joined the European Union in 2004 started a mass exodus of some of the country's most energetic and well-trained younger workers, leaving a domestic manpower shortage in many key areas. And the impressive economic growth of recent years has slowed considerably due to global economic crisis.

Everyone knows that the capitalist economy works in cycles, and every recession eventually has to end. But, economic ups and downs notwithstanding, one thing is certain. The indisputable advantage of today's Poland over that of the between-the-wars period was its admission to NATO in 1999. Over the centuries, Poland's unfortunate location between two traditional foes – Germany and Russia – had been the source of endless conflicts, invasions and occupations. Today's Poland is internationally more secure than any time since the Middle Ages when it formed part of the sprawling land empire known as the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. In fact, the country's secure position in the heart of Europe is about the only thing the perpetually squabbling Polish political scene agrees. □

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