

Frederic Chopin 200th Birthday Celebration

The Paderewski Music Society and Modjeska Art and Culture Club will present an Evening of Music and Poetry on February 27 at 7:00 PM. The event will take place at Zipper Hall – Colburn School, Conservatory of Music, 200 South Grand Avenue, Los Angeles.

Award winning actress Jane Kaczmarek will be the hostess and poetry reader. Featured pianists are John Perry and Wojciech Kocyan (Laureate of the Paderewski, Viotti, and Busoni International Piano Competitions.) Alexander Suleiman, winner of the International Brahms Cello Competitions will be another featured performer.

The program will include Chopin's Introduction and Polonaise Brillante in C Major) Op. 3 (for piano and cello), Nocturne in D-flat Major Op. 27 No. 2, Waltz in A-flat Major Op. 34 No. 2, Waltz in c-sharp minor Op. 64 No. 2, Sonata in b-flat minor, Op. 35, and Sonata in b-minor Op. 58.

Cost of admission is \$25. Tickets can be purchased at the door (if available), by mailing check to the Paderewski Music Society (8504 Independence Avenue, Canoga Park 91304), or by PayPal from their website – www.jpaderewski.org. All purchased tickets will be available at the Box Office before the event. (Info, 818-456-7742.)

Chopin and Jenny Lind From Icons of Europe

New research on Chopin and Jenny Lind

Irrefutable proof shows that Frederick Chopin and Jenny Lind (1820 – 1887), the Swedish Nightingale, developed a close and lasting relationship in 1838 – 1849.

The depth of the relationship is astounding. She was his musical and financial benefactor and planned to marry him in 1849 with the knowledge of Queen Victoria. In addition, she sang at his death bed and arranged his lavish funeral at La Madeleine with special permission of Louis Napoleon, President of France.

For the rest of her life Jenny Lind contributed to the enrichment of Chopin's legacy. She emphasized his Polish roots. Chopin's music was not well known in Poland during the 19th Century, due to the longstanding and harsh Russian occupation. On October 18, 1894, at the unveiling of Chopin's memorial at Łelazowa Wola, the piano numbers on the program were performed by Mily Balakirec – a Russian pianist, conductor, and composer.

An opportunity now exists to reinterpret the cult and artworks paying tribute to Chopin in Paris and Poland – the scope of which surpasses commemorations of any other composer.

The Chopin – Jenny Lind romance has been a guarded secret and obscured by falsified translations and other means. It is believed that the exposure of this romance would damage Europe's cultural heritage.

It strikes a raw nerve, as Poland is a country that has used language and culture to maintain a strong national identity in turbulent times. The truth about this relationship could be a benefit for the legacy of Polish poets, painters and sculptors. This new insight could also have a bearing on Poland's dialogue with

Chopin in outer space

By: *Robert Strybel*,
Polish/Polonian Affairs Writer

For the first time ever, the music of Fryderyk (Frédéric) Chopin has established its presence in outer space – a fitting tribute to Poland's great composer during International Chopin Year marking the 200th anniversary of his birth. A copy of Chopin's original manuscript of his Prelude in A Major Opus 28 No. 7 and well as a recording of the composer's works were taken into space aboard the Space Shuttle Endeavor by the mission's captain, George Zamka.

Chopin's notes that had been in outer space are due to be presented to the Polish Minister Culture and National Heritage when the astronauts visit Poland in May. "When listening to those compositions, one can truly perceive the romantic beauty and majesty of outer space," commented Colonel George David Zamka who has Polish roots.

The latest mission, carried out by six astronauts – five males and one female – has involved delivering a third module to the international space station as well as a seven-window copula to be used as a robotics control room. The space station, which had been assembled during earlier missions, is about 90 percent completed.

Zamka's great-grandfather had come from what was then Prussian-occupied Pomorze (Pomerania) in 1885 and settled in Milwaukee where he operated a furniture store. The astronaut's mother is of Colombian ancestry, so Hispanic Americans are also proud of "one of their own".

Another American astronaut of Polish descent is Scott E. Parazyński who took part in NASA's 2007 mission aboard the space shuttle Discovery. A medical doctor and veteran spacewalker, he is the only astronaut ever known to have climbed Mount Everest. During that mission he took with him into outer space a Polish-American aviation symbol par excellence: a patch of the Tadeusz Kościuszko 7th Fighter Squadron in which American pilots fought for Poland against the Ukrainians and Soviets in 1919-1920.

Astronaut James Anthony Pawelczyk, who prefers to be called just Jim, took a Polish flag on board the space shuttle Columbia in 1998. A year later, on the Third of May, Polish Constitution Day, he presented the flag to then Polish President Aleksander Kwaśniewski when he visited Poland. Since the 1998 mission had taken place during the Easter season, Pawelczyk was reported to have prepared Polish-style white Easter barszcz and kielbasa for fellow-astronauts.

NASA's earliest known astronaut of Polish background was New Yorker Karol Joseph Bobko who took part in three space missions during the 1980. He was also a member of the team that prepared the joint Soviet-US Apollo-Soyuz mission. After leaving NASA, Bobko worked the aero-space sector specializing in flight-simulation equipment.

Judging by their names, other NASA astronauts with possible Polish roots have included Randolph Bresnik and Timothy L. Kopra. The first Pole in outer space was Mirosław Hermaszewski who took part in a two-man space flight aboard Soviet space ship Soyuz-30 with Russian Piotr Klimuk in 1978. □

Sweden and Russia and on Poland's role in Europe.

Icons of Europe has proposed a joint research program to the Fryderyk Chopin Institute in Warsaw on how the Łelazowa Wola estate could have been inaugurated and financed in 1894 under the Russian occupation, with the "supreme permission" of Tsar Alexander III. The timing of the unveiling of Jenny Lind's Memorial at Westminster Abbey, also in 1894, was not a coincidence. □

Dare we forget ?

By: *Stanley Elman*

It has been over six decades since the end of World War II and so few of the combatants from it are alive that some suggestions imply that we forget and move on. After all, there is the War on Terror; there are Iraq, Afghanistan, and now looming on the horizon Yemen; there was Desert Storm, and, of course, there are the endless conflicts in and near Israel. We should concentrate on them.

Well, let us introduce you to two individuals who will not forget -- one, from very far away, does not want to, and the other, from nearby, who cannot.

Waldemar Ociepski is a member of the "Black Hammer" group in the small town of Kedzierzyn-Koźle, about 30 miles or an hour's drive south from Opole in southern Poland. Black Hammer is what American and British pilots often called the Blechhammer Region (polish: Blachownia) in what was then Germany. The area was an important industrial region - a target of many American and British bombing sorties that tried to knock out the IG Farben [Interessen Gemeinschaft Farbenindustrie] was a German chemical industry conglomerate and holder of the patent for the pesticide ZYKLON B used in the gas chambers during the Holocaust.

Ociepski and his colleagues (most of them model airplanes enthusiasts) have built and equipped a mini museum of data on airmen and POW's (prisoners of war) that contains in its two rooms many WWII aircraft artifacts, including parts, bombs, spent ammunition and fragments (gathered from the area), photos, decorations, American, British and Polish military documents pertaining to flying over or bombing the locale, uniforms aircraft equipment, anti-aircraft memorabilia, eye-witness reports and interviews, and history of the area. When they locate a fragment of downed airplane, they try to identify it and the names of its crew and whether any survived and what happened to any survivors. Such research often takes many months in various documents and databases. A successful conclusion to a search gives much satisfaction to all and leads to new contacts.

The two-room mini museum is located in the Dom Kultury "Lech" located on 7B Wyzwolenia Street in Kedzierzyn-Koźle, telephone (077) 483-66-70. In addition to the museum the Dom contains two meeting halls and a small theatre seating 125 people. As far as we know, the museum is open only on Thursdays from 5PM to 8PM. The park around the Dom Kultury was recently renamed the 15th United States Air Force Park. Last September, in a moving ceremony, Air Attache in Poland, Colonel Mary E. Peterson (photo) unveiled a memorial plate (photo) honoring the 15th U.S. Air Force airmen.

The 15th U.S. Air Force, 485th Bomb Group (and others) considered the area around Kedzierzyn-Koźle a primary target because of the factories of IG Farben which produced synthetic fuel for the Nazis. The factories were near concentration camps and forced-labor camps from which the Nazis obtained the necessary labor supply -- an estimated 83,000 slave laborers in 1944, including many unfortunate Poles and Jews. The bombers usually started out of a base in Italy. One such bombing raid in November of 1944 consisted of some 500 B-24 Liberators and B-17 Flying Fortresses, escorted by 300 P-38 Lightning and P-51 Mustang fighter planes. Unfortunately, only about a third of the bombers reached their targets due in large degree to unusually bad weather.

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The Execution of Eddie Slovik

An article by: *Laurence M. Vance*

Jeffrey Tucker has written about all modern armies being essentially totalitarian enterprises. "Once you sign up for them, or are drafted, you are a slave. The penalty for becoming a fugitive is death. Even now, the enforcements against mutiny, desertion, going AWOL, or what have you, are never questioned."

One notable example of a man who paid the ultimate price for wanting to change his job, a job that he never asked for in the first place, was Edward Donald "Eddie" Slovik (1920–1945). Slovik was a private in the U.S. Army during World War II. January 31 marks the 60th anniversary of his execution by firing squad for desertion. There were 21,049 soldiers sentenced for desertion during WWII, with 49 of them receiving death sentences. However, only Slovik's death sentence was carried out. He was the first U.S. soldier to be executed for desertion since the Civil War. He was also the last.

Born in Detroit, Michigan, Slovik was a small-time thief and ex-convict who was originally classified (4F) as unfit for military service. But shortly after his first wedding anniversary, in November of 1943, he was reclassified (1A) and drafted anyway. After training for a few months at Camp Wolters in Texas, he was sent to France in August of 1944. Slovik faced impending death in The Battle of Hürtgen Forest, where the American army suffered 24,000 casualties during the battle and an additional 9,000 casualties due to fatigue, illness, or friendly fire. After Slovik's request to be reassigned from the front lines to the rear was refused, he deserted, voluntarily surrendered, and wrote that he would run away again if sent into combat. Confined in the division stockade and facing a court-martial, Slovik refused to return to his unit. On November 11 (Armistice Day), 1944, he was tried and pleaded not guilty, but was convicted of desertion. He wrote a letter to General Eisenhower on December 9 pleading for clemency, but on December 23, during the Battle of the Bulge, Eisenhower confirmed the death sentence.

Captain Benedict Kimmelman, a member of the court martial board, wrote in 1987 that "Slovik, guilty as many others were, was made an example, the sole example, it turned out." He considered the execution a "historic injustice." Colonel Guy Williams, another officer on the panel, said that he didn't think "a single member of that court actually believed that Slovik would ever be shot. I know I didn't believe it."

According to Bernard Calka, the man responsible for bringing Slovik's remains home in 1987 from an army cemetery in France reserved for criminals to Woodmere cemetery in Michigan, "The man didn't refuse to serve, he refused to kill." Calka, a Polish-American WWII veteran who served as an MP during the war and a commander of a VFW post afterward, and later became a commissioner of Macomb County spent more than ten years and \$8,000 of his own money to have Slovik's remains re-interred next to his wife. Stephen Osiniński, a retired judge who filed a formal petition for a Slovik pardon, said that he found "a virtual plethora of significant deprivations of Pvt. Slovik's constitutional rights."

Like Private Slovik, there are others who owe their deaths to Eisenhower. The repatriation of Russian prisoners of war under Operation Keelhaul was another shameful event of World War II. Russian prisoners liberated from German prison camps were to be returned to the Soviet Union – even though they did not want to go back to life under Stalin (our ally in World War II).

One historian with the courage to report this atrocity is Thomas Woods. In his

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