

BULLETIN OF THE

POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY



Meets Every Second and Fourth Friday of the Month at Falcons Hall, 1062 N. Ashland Ave., Chicago, Ill.

Issue 253

September-October, 1967

OUR FALL SCHEDULE OF SPEAKERS

Polonus started its 1967 fall season of meetings with a powerful array of guest speakers. It all started September 22nd when Dr. James J. Matcika, Jr., Complex Director, S.P.A. President and Member of the U.S. Stamp Advisory Committee, gave a talk on exhibiting at national and international shows. The Doctor has visited shows extensively, both here and abroad, and he told us of what kind of exhibits won grand awards — mostly classical material. He pointed out that postage dues, locals and postal history had a small chance of winning — general issues predominated. He stated that album pages should have as little description as possible. Once your exhibit wins a grand award, when it is exhibited again, it is sure to get a gold medal.

The following meeting of October 13th was enriched with the presence of Zbigniew Mikulski who came to Chicago from Switzerland via Canada. He spoke on the rarest stamps of Poland. His talk was adapted into an article and with the kind help of Myron Steczynski who translated it from the Polish, will appear in our next Bulletin.

On October 27th our speaker was "The Number One Collector of Poland stamps in the world" Dr. L. P. Kozakiewicz. He showed us rare, original artists' drawings used for stamp



Dr. Leon P. Kozakiewicz — No. 1 Collector of Poland Stamps in the World

designs. The Doctor had designs by several post war artists and it was interesting to see the various designs submitted, why they were rejected, and then the final design which was accepted and used by the Polish Ministry of Posts.

Doc Kozy has consented to speak again at our November 24th meeting and show an unusual and unique collection of actual cancellations used in Poland by the German, Austrian and Russian posts prior to 1918 and the Polish government cancellations used from after World War I to 1940. The collection totals 6,940 such cancellations.

MAZEWSKI AND ROZANSKI WIN HIGH P.N.A. POSTS

Congratulations to our member Aloysius A. Mazewski on his recent election to the post of President of the Polish National Alliance, the largest Polish American fraternal organization in America.

And the same to our honorary member, Dr. Edward C. Rozanski, on his election to the post of Director of that organization.

BOSTON SHOW WINNERS

The Polish Philatelic Society of Boston held its 1967 show in conjunction with the New England Stamp Show on Sept. 30 and Oct. 1 at Hotel Bradford in Boston. The Best Polish Exhibit Award was given to Chester Schafer for his Lublin Issues of 1918-19. Rt. Rev. Jerome Holubowicz of Chelsea, Mass. received the Second Award and Stanley Bykowski of Hyde Park, Mass. the Third.

LONDON PILSUDSKI SHOW

The Union of Polish Philatelists in Great Britain will hold an exhibition on December 5, 6 and 7th on the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of the birth of Marshal Jozef Pilsudski. Additional information may be obtained by writing to Jan Z. E. Berck, 30 Greencroft Gardens, Flat J, London, N.W. 6, England.

APPLICANTS PENDING

Dr. Miet A. Kamienski
2967 Kingston Road
Scarborough, Ont. Canada
Delbert Meinung
3921 Quarry Road
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ACTIVITIES OF POLONUS MEMBERS IN TORONTO

Following the first meeting on Jan. 22, 1966 (see Bulletin No. 239, p. 6) the members of Polonus and other collectors interested in Polish Philately continue meeting at the home of Dr. H. Fenigsein every 6-7-8 weeks. The attendance varies, up to 12 e.g. on Sept. 16, 1967 (11th meeting) with Mr. Zbigniew Mikulski (presently residing in Montreal) as a guest speaker of our group for the second time. He spoke about his impressions of the stamp exhibitions in Amsterdam, Holland and showed some interesting material, including Lublin and Gniezno overprints. The gathered collectors showed a lot of interest in the stamps exhibited and a social hour including lively conversation, the exchange of views and barter of material then followed. —Dr. H. Fenigstein

BUDAPEST WINNERS

Three Chicagoland members participated in the recent international show at Budapest, Hungary and won five medals for themselves with their various exhibits.

Alfred Szebel received a Silver for Dornier DOX Flights; another silver for U.S. Rocket Mail; and a bronze for Mercury and Gemini Flights.

Zdzislaw Wagrowski won a silver for Poland First Flights; and Ludwik Pieczara a bronze for Project Telestar.

CAMPAIGN FOR U.S.-CZECH COMMEMORATIVE STAMP

Member Joseph Janicka appeals to Polonus members to write their Congressmen, Senators and to the U.S. Postmaster General to request the issuance of a commemorative stamp on the 50th anniversary of the independence of Czechoslovakia, and in recognition of that nation's declaration of its freedom on October 26, 1918, at Independence Hall, in Philadelphia Pennsylvania.

Danzig, Pawn In Many Wars Through The Years, Is Now A "Dead Country " To Philately

By Jozef L. Brodowski

Reprinted from LINN'S WEEKLY STAMP NEWS

(Continued from previous issue)

According to the records, as early as in 1585 the city of Danzig had ten postal coaches and two foot messengers for the local duties. The postal administration at first belonged to the merchants circles, then the city itself took care of the whole postal system.

Postal connection of Danzig with the neighbor German postal units, especially with that of German Elector of Brandenburg — and not without the enmity from both sides — had caused many misunderstandings and fights between Poles and Germans.

As a result Polish King John Casimir in 1654 took over postal administration of the city of Danzig under the royal care.

Once more the city of Danzig suffered quite a lot during the Polish-Swedish war of 1655-1660. The partitions of Poland in the years 1772-1795 and nearly 150 years of occupation of Danzig (with the other Polish western territories) by the German rulers, brought a complete Germanization of the city.

After World War I which gave independence to Poland, Danzig became in 1920 the "Free City of Danzig", by the Treaty of Versailles, with the area of 731 square miles and 400,000 inhabitants.

After 1933, in which Hitler took into his hands the fate of the German Reich, an overwhelming majority of the Nazis in the Senate of the Free City of Danzig was very hostile to Poles living in the Free City and to their public (postal) administration.

According to the Treaty of Versailles and to the additional agreements between the interested partners Poland was granted certain rights and privileges in Danzig, including that of establishment of her own postal administration with Polish personnel and Polish postal installations.

This duality of the postal system created a unique situation, rather strange, as for instance mail boxes with German and Polish inscriptions in the same city!

Between the two World Wars three Polish post offices and Polish General Post Office were organized in Danzig. This was not easy and not without difficulties caused by the Nazi Senate of the Free City of Danzig, despite the rights given to Poland by the Versailles Treaty.

Several provocations had taken place in the city, including smearing of the Polish emblems on the Polish mail boxes. Also, various limitations of rights of Poland in Danzig were applied by the German public administration of the city, but when the case was brought up by Poles at the League of Nations, many controversies, very intricate, and not only postal in nature, were temporarily smoothed.

Polish postal authorities in Poland and in Danzig had been aware of a difficult situation, created by the Nazi antagonism. Therefore, to avoid any complications, only regular stamps of Poland, with the overprint "Port Gdansk", without any special design or significance, were used by the Danzig Polish postal administration.

These stamps of Poland, with the "Port Gdansk" overprints, designated for the use in Danzig, are cataloged under "Poland" in the section "Polish Offices Abroad" (Scott's Nos. 1K1-1K32).



While the German postal administration for Danzig had applied several designs to its postage stamps — very often for the propaganda purposes — the Polish administration was very moderate in this respect, using for Danzig only regular postage stamps of Poland with the overprint "Port Gdansk" on them.

The Polish GPO in Warsaw made just one exception from the policy concerning the issuance of the postage stamps for Danzig:

It issued in November 1938 a set of four stamps (1K33-1K36) especially designed for the free city of Danzig, with the accentuation of the Polish character of the city in the past.

The set, in only one design, represented Polish merchants selling wheat, with a fragment of Danzig's port of the 16th century in the far background of the picture.

When this issue appeared in Danzig, the Nazi Senate of the city became furious, claiming the design of the stamps was a "provocation" and demanding their withdrawal from circulation.

The Polish Government rejected such a demand as baseless, the more that the design for those stamps was taken from the picture (by an unknown painter) hanging at that time

on the wall of the Nazi Senate conference room!

At the same time Polish GPO was planning another set of regular issue, especially for Poland, in connection with the 20th anniversary of her independence. The 15 groszy value of this set was to represent the treason of the Teutonic Knights and their defeat in the Grunwald battle.

This design was already approved and the plates made ready for printing, when at the last moment, came an order from proper authorities to withdraw the approved design — a result of the German intervention through the diplomatic channels of the German Reich.

As the whole set was planned as a short picture history of Poland, with highlights referring to the past of that country, the Polish GPO decided to replace previously approved design by another one, less drastic, but also on the same subject, the defeat of the Teutonic Knights in 1410.

The substitute stamp which appeared in the set as No. 322 represents King Jagiello, the victor of the Grunwald battle, and queen Hedwig, but at the same time it featured at the feet of the royal pair two Teutonic swords and the helmet of grand master Ulrich von Jungingen, slain in the Grunwald encounter.



When this stamp was put into circulation in 1938 as a part of the set

(Nos. 320 - 332) the reaction of Nazi Germany was again immediate.

The Senate of the Free City of Danzig, completely overpowered by Hitler, decided on the issuance of a provocative set of stamps of Danzig, misrepresenting the real history of the city and the Polish-Danzig relations (Danzig Nos. 234-237).

No. 237 of this set especially featured the "defeat" of the Poles in 1577 at Wislowiscie as a "retaliation" for Grunwald, and No. 236 depicts a make-believe "reunion" of Danzig and Prussia as German territories.

In March, 1939 the Polish GPO withdrew No. 322 from circulation and replaced it with No. 339. The main motif of the design was left the same, but the two swords of the Teutonic Knights and the helmet were removed from the design and replaced by a Gothic ornamentation at the feet of the royal couple. When the Poles withdrew No. 322 from the set, the Germans did the same with their set 234-237 of Danzig.



This "stamp war" started in 1938-1939, just a few months before the real, shooting war started in September of 1939. The problem of the Free City of Danzig was, of course, one of the main causes of the Second World War.

As a matter of fact, it started in Danzig September 1st, when the German battleship "Schleswig - Holstein" fired its first shots at the Polish mili-

tary depot found at Westerplatte, a part of Danzig territory, heroically defended for seven days by only a small Polish garrison.

At the same time the German SS troopers attacked Polish GPO in Danzig. There 51 Polish employees defended themselves for 14 hours inside the building, finally set on fire by the German "soldaten". 51 Polish postal workers gave their lives in that battle, 39 of them were shot to death by the German SS firing squadron.

As soon as the city was occupied by the Nazi forces, the German GPO was ready with a short set of postage stamps (492-493) with the old German slogan "Danzig is Deutsch" (Danzig is German).

In 1945 when Danzig as Gdansk once more came back to Poland, Polish postal authorities in post-war Poland issued in 1945-46 two semipostals which commemorate the last tragic hours of the Poles in Danzig in 1939.



No. B41 depicts the battle of Westerplatte, while No. B48 was issued to honor Polish postal employees slain in the German attack on Danzig in September 1939. In 1954 Poland issued a set of five stamps in connection with the 500th anniversary of Pomerania's return to Poland.

This set includes one value with a general panorama of Gdansk. A few other stamps of postwar Poland also represent various Danzig edifices. On Nos. 370 and B39 is seen the Krantor, 371 depicts the Stock Tow-

er, 372 an ancient High Gate of the city, while on C46 is seen Danzig Long-market Place with the city's main Town Hall.

The German Senate of Danzig, not being limited by threat or fear in its activity had issued in the period 1920-1939 several "Freie Stadt Danzig" stamps with many designs. They represent the general panorama of the city — Danzig B4-B5, air mails, many monumental edifices (193-199, B12-B19) or monuments of the artistic past of Danzig (B23-B27.)

It certainly seems rather strange that despite the hostile activity and propaganda against Poles, the Nazi postal administration for Danzig had issued many stamps which really speak so well for the old Polish past of that city. Let us mention at least a few such stamps.

No. 198 (A23) represents St. Mary's church which was finally finished in the 16th century. The royal chapel, the city's finest existent example of Baroque relic, built in 1678-82 alongside the church, was founded by King John Sobieski III.

The beautiful Town Hall in the Long-market street, seen on 199 (A24) was started in the 14th century, just before the Teutonic Knights took the city in 1308.

In the 17th century the edifice was crowned with a new Renaissance tower and topped by a statue of King Sigismund Augustus of Poland. Was it an oversight that the likeness of the Polish king appeared on German stamp B25 of Danzig described by Scott as the "Weathervane on Town Hall"?

Two "Winterhelp" sets were issued by the German postal authorities in Danzig. They included stamps Nos. B13, B18 and B19 which represent the old gates of the city built by Poles at the end of the 15th cen-

tury as a part of their defense system against the Teutonic Knights.

Most of these gates were decorated with the coats of arms of Danzig, Pomerania and Poland. The "Polish Eagle" is quite well visible on B18 featuring the Langgarter Gate.

Let me add that Danzig was not only the city which belonged to the Free City of Danzig territory, created by the Versailles - Treaty after the first World War. The Free City of Danzig consisted of a few more towns and villages, like Oliva, Zoppot, and Bresen, just to mention these which are seen on the German Danzig stamps.

Nos. 193 and 194 depict a general panorama of Oliva with its castle and cathedral. Around the year 1200, Danish Cistercian monks started the construction of a church and monastery there.

The buildings have been preserved, together with their sumptuous Renaissance and Baroque interior decoration, imparted in later centuries. The monastery church, now a cathedral, was the traditional resting place of the Gdansk princes.

On the 3 Gulden is seen a general view of Zoppot a well known watering place. Wealthy Polish merchants of Gdansk built their summer residences there already in the 16th century. In the first half of the 19th century, Zoppot became a salt water spa. Another small place, Bresen, seen on 216-218 of Danzig, is very well known for its beautiful bathing beaches.

It would be impossible to discuss in a short article all these stamps of German "Danzig" and Polish "Port Gdansk" which at the same time circulated in the Free City of Danzig in the period 1920-39. Consisting of several varieties, these stamps are quite an interesting field for study.

One more chapter of the history of Danzig was closed when it came back to Poland in 1945 as Gdansk and as one of the greatest Polish ports on the Baltic Sea. For philatelists it became a "dead country," giving them an opportunity to start collecting the stamps of a country which can be completed".

NEW ISSUES

Kosciuszko 150th Anniversary

To commemorate the 150th anniversary of Tadeusz Kosciuszko's death two values, a 60 gr. and 2.50 zl., were issued on October 14th, 1967.

Tadeusz Kosciuszko was the alumnus of the School of Knights in Warsaw and studied military engineering in Paris. In the years 1775-1783 he took part in the struggles for the independence of the United States as a Colonel, and later, as a Brigadier General.



After returning to his own country, Kosciuszko was one of the organizers of the Polish Army. During the 1792 Campaign, he fought in the defense of the Constitution proclaimed on the third of May. He prepared and stood at the head of the Uprising of the National Liberation in 1794 as Commander-in-Chief of the National Military Force.

Upon the downfall of the Uprising he was a prisoner of war and later emigrated.

Kosciuszko was a gifted commander, using the newest tactics, and as a

politician he understood the connection of the struggle for the freedom with the necessity of carrying out the social reforms.

He issued an Act ("Uniwersal Polaniecki") which took off the personal serfdom of the peasants and limited their servility.

T. Kosciuszko died in Switzerland in 1817.

Steel engraving-rotogravure printed on common paper in sheets of 60 stamps at PWPW Warsaw. Quantities issued: 60 gr. 4,500,000; 2.50 zl. 3,000,000. Designed by R. Dudzicki.

Stamp Day 1967

On October 9th, 1967 on the occasion of "Stamp Day", a 60 gr. face value was issued.

Traditionally these kind of stamps represent more interesting items of Polish painting. This year a reproduction of the picture by a Polish painter of the 19th century, Wincenty Kasprzycki — "The Courtyard View of the Wilanow Palace" was featured.

The Palace in Wilanow was a residence of King John III Sobieski.



Steel engraving-rotogravure printed in sheets of 40 stamps on common paper at PWPW Warsaw. Quantity issued: 8,000,000. Designed by Stefan Malecki.

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OLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY

ALFRED SZEBEL, Secretary
9041 Emerson St. Des Plaines, Ill. 60016
STANLEY DOBRZYCKI, Treasurer
1935 N. Tripp Ave. Chicago, Ill. 60639

CHESTER A. SCHAFER, Editor
864 N. Ashland Ave. Chicago, Ill. 60622

LESTER JANKOWSKI, Publications Chairman
7303 N. Kildare Lincolnwood, Ill. 60646

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— Annual Dues are \$2.50 —

Ave., Buffalo, November 10 thru 12.

A cacheted cover and souvenir sheet will be issued marking the 100th anniversary of the birth of Madame Marie Curie (Skłodowska), the discoverer of radium. The covers are 25c each, the souvenir sheets 10c each. Orders must include a large stamped, addressed envelope, and may be sent to C. Wloch, 460 Wilson St., Buffalo, N.Y. 14211.

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