

BULLETIN OF THE **POLONUS** PHILATELIC SOCIETY



Meets Every 2nd & 4th Fri. at Weisz Stamps & Coins, 2936 N. Pulaski, Chicago

Issue No. 332

Price 40c

April, 1975

JOHN GAPINSKI HONORARY MEMBER

EDITOR'S NOTE:

At the POLPEX 75 presentation of awards ceremony, senior member John Gapinski was presented with Honorary Membership in Polonus. He was one of the first Polonus experts of the Krakow issues and was helpful in translating philatelic articles

from the German language into English for Polonus publications.

We asked John to write an article on himself and here's what he submitted:

The lure of Philately got me early, in other words, I got hooked by the stamp collecting hobby when I was about 12 years



John Gapinski (center) holds plaque with Polonus medallion denoting him as an Honorary Member. Polpex Chairman C. Schafer (left) and President Tom Gobby (right) made the presentation.
(J. Lukas Photo)

old. At that time I saw some foreign stamps in a bookstore and bought a package of mixed and an album for fifty cents and started stamp collecting. As all young stamp collecting beginners my ambition was to get every stamp that was issued. However, I soon found that I would have to own Fort Knox to do it—so I settled for less and collected European stamps.

In 1914, just a few months before World War I, I was fortunate to sneak out of Poznan, which was then under German domination, and I brought my collection of a couple thousand stamps with me. On arrival in the U.S.A., there was no time for stamp collecting. It was like the old proverb, "You want to come to America, you have to work"—so, I had to work.

Since I had about two years of apprenticeship as a pharmacist in Poland, my desire was to become a pharmacist. I studied English and Pharmacy and became a Registered Pharmacist in 1924. To obtain this, I had to work in my spare time in drug stores, bakery shops, teaching German in a preparatory school and all kinds of odd jobs to make a living and pay my tuitions. After becoming a registered pharmacist, my ambition was to get still higher up so I enrolled for a four year course at the Armour Institute of Technology from which I graduated with a B.S. degree in Chemical Engineering.

At that time economic conditions were just as bad as during the depression. There were no jobs for Chemical Engineers, especially with Polish names. So I went back to pharmacy and bought my own drug store at Chicago and Ashland Ave. (It is still operating under my name,

although I have retired a few years ago. I still work a few days when necessary.)

In those days there was a small beanery on Washington, near Dearborn, under the name of Rieke. For 18 cents one would get a generous portion of Boston baked beans and black and white bread. For an additional five cents, a piece of roast pork may be had—and for another nickel, a cup of real good coffee.

When I went to enjoy this excellent treat one day, I met a college chum of mine, Frank Wolosewick. While enjoying the beans and talking about all kinds of unimportant things, the conversation turned to stamps. We discovered, with a great surprise, that we two mutually belonged to the category of nitwits known as Philatelists. We also discovered that we not only collected Polish stamps but of all things Krakow issues.

Wolosewick informed me of the Polonus Society and was instrumental in dragging me over to a meeting. When I met the illustrious members of the club, I promptly joined. Since then my interest in Philately revived again. Due to the nature of my profession as a pharmacist, I was not able to attend the meetings regularly and did not hold any offices. But I was actively interested in the club, and during the early days of the Polonus, when the meeting places were changing, the basement of the drug store was always the storage room for the exhibit frames.

I participated in many Polpex exhibits, and received about six ribbons, several medals, and one statuette. The most cherished of all the prizes that Frank Wolosewick and I received from Polonus in 1953, was the plaque in-

scribed. "In Appreciation of His Services on the Experts Committee."

When Wolosewick and I discovered our mutual interest in the Krakow issue, we decided to make a thorough study of them. We had a considerable amount of these stamps and obtained whatever literature was available including a copy of Mikstein's work. For several years thereafter, we met once or twice a week in the back of the drug store and measured and studied the stamps—mainly to know how to expertize. Many nights we worked till one or two o'clock in the morning. From time to time we published some translations from Mikstein and some of our own observations in the *POLO-NUS* bulletin and some where in *STAMPS* magazine. These articles aroused a great interest in the Krakow issue. Inquiries were coming in from all over—even from Derek Palmer in Lima, Peru. Most of the members of *Polonus* who had some of these stamps had them expertized by us and the work was piling up.

Fortunately, a few other members began to get interested in these stamps and from our articles they were able to become quite proficient. One was Myron Steczynski who had a pile of these stamps—and what a pile. The other was the late Jack Domar, he did not have a pile of these stamps, but in an amazingly short time he became the real expert.

It is astounding the interest aroused and the influence on the market value of the Krakow issue by the *Polonus* Society. The Scott price increased hundredfold. At present, there are very few collectors interested, and it is my hope that the work Dr. Ka-

mienski is doing will stimulate a revival.

Now that I am retired (being 78 years old), and relieved of all the business troubles and pressures, I devote most of the time to my hobbies which are many.

I am interested in Archeology and in the last five years have made a trip to the Aegean sea and visited the ruins of the most ancient Greek cities including Troy. I traveled thru the jungles of Yucatan to see the famous ruins of the Mayas and Mexico. Twice I visited Poland and saw the prehistoric remains at Holy Cross mountains, the excavations at Nowa Huta and the Biskupin Bronze Age settlement.

In Illinois, which is abounding with prehistoric locations, I visited the Cahoki mount, the excavation at Kampersville and Dickson. My collection of Indian artifacts keeps me busy sorting and identifying.

I grow indoor plants and occasionally make wine. A library of several hundred books, classical, historical and scientific, keep me occupied trying to catch up on the reading that I missed in my early busy years.

Of all the hobbies I enjoy the most is my stamp collecting. I have spent many pleasant hours looking over my stamps and accidentally spilling a few drops of Michelob on my 90 Heller Krakows.

—John Gapinski

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Members who change their address are asked to notify us immediately. Failure to do so is costing the Society unnecessary expense. Please mail the notice of change to C. J. Mikucki, 4704 N. Overhill, Norridge, Ill. 60656.

A NEWLY DISCOVERED POSTAL FORGERY

By STANLEY KRONENBERG

During the 1923-24 inflation years in Poland, obsolete postage stamps were overprinted into stamps of much higher denominations. Among them 20 Mk stamps (red) with a sower and a rainbow were overprinted into 25,000 Mk stamps. The basic stamps were issued in two sizes: 28x22 mm and 25.5x21 mm. Two different overprint forms of 10x10 overprints had to be used to accommodate the considerably different dimensions of the sheets. The overprints on the large stamps are 26 mm long and on the small stamps 21.7 mm (Scott numbers 196 and 198 respectively). The typographic overprinting was done hastily and therefore carelessly by the Polish Graphic Plant (P.Z.G.).



FIGURE 1

Large 20 Mk stamp with a small (forged) overprint.

Recently, I acquired a curiosity: the large stamp with the small overprint (figure 1). It first appeared to be an interesting error originating from a sheet of large stamps overprinted erroneously with the small form, but examination revealed that the overprint is a forgery. The reasons for this are:

1. All genuine overprints are an intense black[†]; this overprint is

of a different (warmer) shade of black.

2. As a rule, all genuine stamps show to some extent white spots in the overprint on places where the ink did not take and black spots outside the lettering of the overprint caused by splashing of ink (see e.g., figure 2). The ink of this overprint is perfectly uniformly distributed; its borders are very well defined.



FIGURE 2

A typical small 20 Mk stamp with the normal (small) overprint.

3. In all genuine small overprints the left vertical line of the left "M" is directly above the top left of "2." In this overprint it is shifted to the left so that it lines up with the bottom left corner of the "2".

4. In all genuine small overprints the distance between the left edge of the left "M" and the left edge of the right "M" measures 16.1-16.2 mm (ignoring occasional splashes of ink). Here this distance measures 16.5 mm. (Most other dimensions agree with those of the genuine overprint.)

5. While genuine overprints are always positioned horizontally this overprint is rotated counter-clockwise by an angle of 2.5 degrees.

Having determined that this is a forgery the question arose whether it was made to defraud stamp collectors or the postal service. Both possibilities appeared feasible. It is known that philatelic forgeries of the inflation overprints exist as inverted and double overprints. (I have personally seen only the forged 10,000 Mk overprint). Therefore it is probable that the forgers could have made an overprint on a wrong stamp to create still another freak. However, this stamp bears a cancellation which, while difficult to read (probably "Tarnów, 1924") appears to be authentic in every respect. This cancellation is on top of the overprint and therefore was applied after the overprint was made: this allows the possibility of it being a postal forgery.

Another reason supporting this possibility is that forging the overprint to defraud the postal service would have been profitable to the forgers. Obsolete unused 20 Mk stamps were easily and cheaply available during the inflation times and overprinting them with an easy to imitate overprint would have made them usable again for prepayment of postage.

To decide between the two options I went through the following exercise in logic: "if this is indeed a postal forgery then using a small overprint on a wrong (large size) stamp could have been done only by mistake and such forged overprints should exist mainly on small stamps. Forging a small overprint on a small stamp to defraud philatelists would have been senseless because these stamps are most common and inexpensive."

With this in mind I checked



FIGURE 3

Small 20 Mk stamp with forged (small) overprint.

several thousand (mainly used) small, overprinted 20 Mk stamps and found one (and only one) stamp for which I was looking (see figure 3). Its overprint has all characteristics of the forgery described above. In particular the overprint is also tilted counter-clockwise indicating that these overprints were apparently made either singly or with a form containing only a few overprints, so that a deviation of the imprint from a horizontal position was likely to occur. The year of cancellation on this stamp is 1923; only a part of the town's name is visible. According to its ink and type this cancellation appears to be authentic. It was applied on top of the overprint.

On this basis I believe that after 50 years of unrecognized existence this postal forgery has been identified.

†On one shade of the small stamp printed on a very thin paper the ink of the overprint was incompatible with the red of the stamp and was therefore not absorbed at the places which were previously printed. Such overprints although printed with the usual black ink, appear to be brown.

NEW ISSUES

30th Anniversary of Warsaw Liberation

The Polish Post issued a 1.50 zł. commemorative on January 17, 1975 on the 30th anniversary of the liberation of Warsaw from the Nazi occupation. The multi-color stamp shows a reconstructed section of Warsaw—the Nike monument on the background of the Grand Theatre of Opera and Ballet. Rotogravure printed by PWPW Warsaw on chalky paper in sheets of 35 stamps. Designed by H. Chylinski; photo by P. Krasowski. Quantity printed: 6,000,000.

30th Anniversary of Oświęcim Concentration Camp

A 1.50 zł. commemorative was issued January 27, 1975 showing the striped cloth of the prisoners, the broken barbed wire and the name of the camp in German, "Auschwitz". Steel engraved and rotogravure printed by PWPW

Warsaw in sheets of 50 stamps on common paper. Designed by Zbigniew Stasik. Quantity printed: 8,000,000.

—RUCH

Now Available —

HANDBOOK OF UPPER SILESIA

By Dr. M. A. Rayall de Ragan

For the specialist. 66 page booklet covering the stamp issues of 1920-22.

\$2.00 plus 16¢ postage

Available from
Chester J. Mikucki
4704 N. Overhill Avenue
Norridge, Ill. 60656

POLAND 1972-74 ISSUES

	MINT	USED	FDC
1972 issues—87 stamps—2 s.s.	12.50	6.00	17.50
1973 issues—62 stamps—1 s.s.	9.00	3.50	15.00
1974 issues—56 stamps—2 s.s.	9.00	3.25	15.00

B-128a Polska-73 Violet "entry" s.s. mint or used ... 3.00

1979/80 Minisheets of 6 mint 3.50—used 1.50

2032b Katowice Exhib. "entry" s.s. mint or used... 3.00

2037a Soccer—1 s.s. (1st issue) mint or used .. 2.75

Silver medal Soccer s.s. with tabs ... mint 1.00—used .40

Polskie Znaki Pocztowe Vol. I/V 35.00

Bound Filatelista monthly, each year 7.00

Ruch catalogs 2.50

Other books and catalogs on stamps and coins available or can be ordered.

B I E N I E C K I

BOX 100 — GRANITE CITY, ILL. 62040

HAYM SALOMON COMMEMORATIVE

The U.S. Postal Service will issue a set of four 1975 commemorative stamps honoring heroes of the American Revolution.



The stamps in the set, called Contributors to the Cause, will be issued on March 25th. All four stamps were designed by Neil Boyle, of Los Angeles, California.

The subject of each stamp is identified by name and by a descriptive phrase in the design. The subjects—the phrases are: Sybil Ludington—Youthful Heroine Salem Poor—Gallant Soldier, Peter Francisco—Fighter Extraordinary, and Haym Salomon—Financial Hero.

Haym Salomon, merchant, banker and Revolutionary War financier, was born in Poland of Jewish-Portuguese parents in 1740. An advocate of Polish independence, he fled to England in 1772 and then to America, where he opened a brokerage office in New York.

He was in New York only a few months before he joined the Sons of Liberty, a group of revolutionary patriots, and was twice arrested and imprisoned by the British. Later, in Philadelphia, Salomon became financial agent in America for the French government and was one of the leading dealers in bills of exchange and other securities. As a large depositor in Robert Morris' Bank of North America, Salomon contributed to maintaining the new government's credit. When Morris was appointed Superintendent of Finance, he turned to Salomon for help in raising the money needed to carry on the war and later to save the emerging nation from financial collapse. Salomon advanced direct loans to the government and also gave generously of his own resources to pay the salaries of government officials and army officers. With frequent entries of "I sent for Haym Salomon," Morris' diary for the years 1781-1784 records some 75 transactions between the two men.

After the war, Salomon was almost penniless and died in 1785 before he could rebuild his business. Salomon, Morris and George Washington are the subjects of Lorado Taft's "Great Triumvirate of Patriots" monument in Chicago.

Compliments of

T. A. GACKOWSKI-ACHMATOWICZ

OTTAWA, KISOKI, ONTARIO, CANADA

(Because of the Canadian Mail Strike, we received this ad after the Polpex)

CALENDER OF EVENTS

Friday, March 28, 1975 —

Good Friday — No meeting.
Happy Easter!

Friday, April 11, 1975 —

Regular Business Meeting at
Weisz Stamp & Coins Hall start-
ing at 8:00 p.m.

PLEWACKI POST COVERS

Plewacki Post Stamp Club is-
sued two cacheted covers with
special show cancel for their AL-
PEX 799 show March 21-23. One
depicts the Concord Bridge and
the other a map of the battle
scene. The cancel carries the
theme of the show "Freedom Be-
gan at Concord." Covers at 35c
each or three for \$1.00 are avail-
able from Plewacki Post Stamp So-
ciety, 385 Paderewski Dr., Buf-
falo, N.Y. 14212, c/o Francis Mo-
dzelewski. Mail orders should be
accompanied by a stamped self-
addressed No. 10 envelope with
check or money order.

POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY

William Jusack, Secretary
12335 S. Parnell, Chicago, Ill. 60628
Al Rybarski, Treasurer
P.O. Box 82, River Grove, Ill. 60171
Chester A. Schafer, Editor
864 N. Ashland, Chicago, Ill. 60622
T. J. Gobby, Publications Chrm.
5713 Warwick, Chicago, Ill. 60634

The Polonus Philatelic Society is non-
political. Views expressed by authors
of articles appearing herein do not
necessarily express the views of the
Polonus Philatelic Society.

Annual Dues are \$5.00

POW ISSUES STUDY GROUP

Serious collectors of POW camp
issues are invited to participate
in a study group organized by
Henry F. Zebrowski to accumu-
late data and engage in research
in the area. Information can be
obtained by writing to him and
enclosing a stamped self ad-
dressed No. 10 envelope at 3721
Nile Rd., Davidsonville, Maryland
21035.

— POLAND NEW ISSUES UP TO DATE —

(Scott Cat. No.)		MINT	USED	FDC
2072-73	Neruda & W-w Opera-house (2)	.20	.10	.60
2074-81	The Falcons (8)	1.50	.65	1.90
2082	Auschwitz Camp (1)	.10	.05	.30
2083-86	Athletic Championship (4)	.85	.40	1.25
B130	Montreal 1976—Olympics ss (1)	1.20	.75	1.45
●				
Complete Year 1972	(90)	13.95	7.50	23.50
Complete Year 1973	(64)	15.50	9.80	24.50
Complete Year 1974	(58)	12.25	6.30	21.80

From #1 all Polish issues in stock.

Complete Price List 50c. RUCH Catalogue \$3.00

— SPECIAL EXCLUSIVE OFFER —

DeLuxe Limited Edition, the International COPERNICUS PORTFOLIO
ALBUM plus SELECTED DOCUMENTATION of 500th World-wide Co-
pernicus Observances, all designed on a useful, practical level, in a
flat, NO-RING VINYL BINDER, with crystal clear, NO-GLARE VINYL
POCKETS for insertions up to 8½"x11"—Complete Unit U.S.A. Post-
paid \$59.00.

25c Handling per order—N.Y. Residents add Sales Tax

W. KOLAKOWSKI CO.

P.O. BOX 394

GREAT NECK, N.Y. 11022