

POLONUS **PHILATELIC SOCIETY**



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POLSKA '93 - 20 Years Later

By **FRED SZEBEL**

After visiting the National Exhibition "Bydgoszcz '91", I wrote an article ending it with the sentence: "The general impression of foreign visitors was that the P.Z.F. needs definite rejuvenation and has to get in step with changes in the post-communist era in Poland. It was very clear that the current Board of P.Z.F. does not want or is not capable of change." Two years later, at POLSKA '93 the same "limited in quantity" group, is at the head of P.Z.F. and has no intention of giving up, using the same old communist-style approaches and mentality. If they have any honor and have the good of P.Z.F. in their hearts, they should voluntarily step down and give a chance for leadership to new people, before the organization falls apart.

We arrived with a small group of Polonus members and exhibitors on May 5th, on the Boeing 767 LOT Polish Airlines. The flight was very comfortable, the food and service were good. Shortly after, together with a New York group, we left by private bus, arriving early in the evening in Poznan. The next day, setting-up was smooth and efficient.



Ludwik Malendowicz, Executive Chairman and Lech Walesa, Poland's President, at POLSKA '93.

On May 7th, with beautiful weather, the Opening Ceremony took place with the participation of a few hundred dignitaries and visitors. The President of Poland Lech Walesa opened the Exhibition and visited the show with his family.

The organization of POLSKA '93 was not as good as POLSKA '73, 20 years ago, possibly because of different times and conditions. There was not enough information available for foreign visitors. Some of our friends wandered around, paying daily entry fees; while as exhibitors, they should have had special badges and received their



Polonus was represented on the LOT Flight by (left to right): Fred Szebel, Tom Gobby. Mr. and Mrs. James Mazepa, Roman Burkiewicz and Dr. Conrad Straub.

catalogs. Those who stayed at the headquarter Hotel Poznan, were fairly well informed, but exhibitors and visitors from the other hotels or staying privately, were out of touch.

In total, 95 countries participated in POLSKA '93. A small group of Polonus members exhibited or visited. At various times we met Mr. J. Podejko and E. Neuman of Canada; T. Yamamoto of Japan; R. Ritter and A. Vaumoud of Germany; K. Mazur of Denmark; P. Buchbayan and H. Bieniecki of the U.S. and others.

There were a few special events such as the opening ceremony Reception of the Polish Post Office; an evening with the Mayor of Poznan and others. The Palmars Dinner, attended by over 500 guests cost "only" \$60.00 — or 1,000,000.00 zloty, unrealistically high for the local exhibitors. Invitations to various events were very poorly organized and many of our friends missed these affairs.

Special medals were minted for POLSKA '93, but only the Large Gold, Gold and Special Award were given at the Palmars dinner. Others were to be mailed after engraving in due time.

The International Jury, of which Dr. M. Kamienski of Canada, the only Polonus member; judged the exhibits, giving the following awards to Polonus exhibitors:

Large Gold: Dr. J. Mazepa, and Dr. J. Kuderevicz who was a candidate for the Grand Prix National, which was awarded to M. Miszczak of Poland.

Gold: J. Rutkowski and S. Petriuk of Germany.

Large Vermeil: M. Rosen, A. Szebel, A. Roszkowski of England.

Vermeil: Dr. C. Straub, M. Rosen, Z. Korszen of Poland, Dr. R. Aszniewicz of Australia, P. Madej of Canada.

Large Silver: W. Demianczuk of Canada.

Silver/Bronze: T. Gobby.

Bronze: H. Gagnon.

At one of the philatelic meetings, Fred Szebel presented Polonus 50th Anniversary medals to L. Malendowicz and Dr. L. Konopinski. Later two more were given to J. Tokar and J. Adamczyk for their activities in Polish philately. Attending collectors received from Polonus 25 sets of POLPEX '93 covers, souvenir sheets and souvenir cards, as



well 50 Bulletins #458. The other 50 copies were given to L. Malendowicz for the organizing Committee.

During Polska '93, dealers and foreign post offices had business activity from poor to very good. Sorry to say, the U.S. and Canadian post offices did not participate in Polska '93. Twenty years ago, the U.S. was strongly represented in the Copernicus Pavilion, "The American."

Due to changing conditions in Poland, attendance at Polska '93 was poor. Hotels, transportation and food were very expensive for the local population and not cheap for foreigners either.

A novelty was the publication of daily bulletins, well managed by W. Alexiewicz and Co. A few special philatelic events took place: coach trip to Berlin; glider, plane and balloon flights, documented by special mail. Each day different cancellations were in use. Polonus Honorary member, Czesław Slania engraved beautiful souvenir sheets, printed in Holland: perforated, imperf and proofs. They were offered at many Polish P.O. stands at about \$30.00 a set. Polonus received permission from the U.S. Post Office at the time of Polpex '93 for a special postmark honoring Polska '93, which was reproduced in the official catalog on page 55.

This was the Fourth International Exhibition under the F.I.P. patronage since World War II. They were: Polska '60 in Warsaw, Tematica '68, Polska '73 and Polska '93 in Poznań. Yours truly participated in all of them, winning various medals from bronze to silver.

S. Banchik and Dr. J. Mazepa, U.S. Commissioners, brought about 50 collections and earned our thanks.

For the first time visitors to Poland, some excursions were offered and over 600 people took advantage of them, seeing the best of the country. For others, the economical and political situation is going from bad to worse. In this condition, it is doubtful if the next International Stamp Exhibition in the year 2003, ever gets off the ground.

POSTMEN ATTACKED

Postal carriers in Poland are being attacked by thieves. The reason for the holdups is that personal bills, pensions and even business transactions are paid with currency (cash) instead of checks. Checking and credit card accounts are still not widely used.

Last year, over 82 mail carriers were attacked and over \$250,000 was taken in the resulting robberies. Thus far this year, two postmen have been killed in attacks by bandits, who were pursuing cash in the mail.

The Polish Postal Agency (Polska Agencja Poczтовая) has started a self defense training program for its carriers. It is equipping them with tear gas and warning sirens.

KRAKOW Issue 50 h Stamp with INVERTED OVERPRINT

By STANLEY KRONENBERG

One sheet of 50 heller Austrian stamps which contained 10 x 10 stamps was overprinted upside down with the overprint form I. This sheet was shipped to the post office in Lancut where all these stamps were used up for postage, most often on money orders or on parcel post mailing certificates which were kept for records by the post office and were periodically recycled as waste paper. Most of these stamps were thus lost and only about six were later found, all of them used. The postmaster in Lancut tore these stamps carelessly off the sheet with the result that most known stamps are damaged in a lesser or a greater degree. The stamp illustrated here (overprint position 75, form I) is however in a perfect condition. It is postmarked "Lancut."



Philatelists were not aware of the existence of the 50 heller Krakow Issue stamps with inverted overprint for a long time. In 1933 Prof. Stanislaw Mikstein wrote in his book: "Die Ersten Provisorischen Briefmarken im Ehemaligen Osterreichischen Teilgebiet", (Verlag die Postmarke Ges. M.B.H., Vienna I), p. 33:

"Inverted overprints on 50 heller stamps overprinted with the form I do not exist; those which may occur on the market are forgeries."

Later Prof. Mikstein changed his opinion and signed such authentic stamps presented to him for examination.

TEN WAYS TO DESTROY YOUR SOCIETY:

The following was taken from the "Sunriver Scene", an Oregon Newspaper:

1. Stay away from meetings. Show up at meetings only if you have a real problem or complaint.
2. Decline office or appointment to any committee. Then get angry if you are not nominated.
3. Insist on describing your organization in negative terms only.
4. Never prepare an agenda, never plan the details of an event and never coordinate with affiliates. Espouse creativity, flexibility, and effectiveness under pressure.
5. Don't do any society work, if you can avoid it. Then, when the old reliables pitch in and get the job done, accuse them of being a clique.
6. If you do come to a meeting, don't speak until the meeting is finished. Then criticize and say how things should have been handled.
7. Oppose all new programs as being a waste of the membership's money.
8. When nothing new happens, complain that the officers have no imagination.
9. Read your bulletins infrequently. Then, complain that you don't know what is going on.
10. Never introduce yourself to new members or visitors — make them come to you.

Krakow Postal History Before 1918

By JANUSZ ADAMCZYK

(Translated from the Polish by Stanley Kronenberg)



In the history of Poland, the mail as an institution was of great importance in sponsoring civilization. It provided communication within the country and with other countries. This facilitated the exchange of information, the spread of knowledge and the assimilation of ideas arriving from different parts of the world. Often the timely transfer of information was decisive in events of historical significance. The formation of a postal system was also of fundamental importance in the travels of people and during the times of the development of commerce, it served to transport wares. Traveling and communication demanded the building of roads, the construction of improved means of transportation namely postal coaches as well as improvements in the organization of communication. Thus the mail was pioneering many of the present institutions without which our present life would be difficult to imagine.

At the end of the 15th century, we find in Kraków the forces of activities which appear to be the precursors of a postal service. Thus the University of Kraków, founded by Casimir The Great, maintained connections with universities in Italy and Paris.

The increase in commerce in Europe including Poland, required the formation of a system which ensured the connections between merchants of different countries. Under these circumstances, the Fugger Company in Kraków involved in commerce and banking, undertook to deliver private correspondence. This "Merchants' Mail" was started in Kraków by the rich merchant and banker Severyn Boner (1486-1549). Its representatives and places of business were in Italy and in Germany.

The developments in the areas of economics, politics and culture during the 16th century required novel resolutions for the maintenance of communication within the country as well as with foreign countries. The previous arrangements which depended on messengers, were designed for the small group of representatives of authority and served specific purposes. They were of little use because they were too slow, uncertain and could not cope with the requirements of the general public.

In 1557 Queen Bona died and her relatives took over her estate in Italy. Her son, King Zygmunt August objected, and started proceedings with the Italian Court of Justice about his mother's estate. This forced him to maintain frequent contacts with his representatives there. Under these circumstances on October 18, 1588, the king decided to create a postal service for the Kraków-Venice route and nominated the Italian, Proper Provena from Piedmont, who lived in Kraków, as its head. The franchise given to Provena mentions that "the mail which includes the distribution of horses, is being established for our and our subjects' convenience and its purpose is the forwarding of letters to Italy.

The difficulties encountered in the maintenance of the Polish route between Kraków and Venice with the new track through Vienna and Graz were caused mainly by competition with the Taxis mail who had bought

out and held almost the entire mail service in Western Europe. The efforts of the Taxis to take over the Polish mail track became successful in 1562. After recalling Prosper Provena, King Zygmunt August gave the Polish mail to Kristopher Taxis. The director of the Imperial Court Mail, who obligated himself to deliver the royal mail free of charge through the mails active under the management of the Taxis family. Following the wishes of the king, K. Taxis started a new mail route, called the "Lithuanian" mail from Kraków (where the headquarters of the Polish mail was located) to Vilno. The end of the career of K. Taxis at the Imperial Court, caused also the abolishment of his position in Poland.

In 1564, a citizen of Kraków, Piotr Maffon, an Italian by birth, became the next director of the Polish Mail. He did not, however, live up to the difficulties connected with this position. On February 1st, 1569, Sebastian Montelupi became the next postal director. His Italian family had settled in Kraków during the mid 16th century, shown by the quick change of its name to Wilczogorski. The privilege granted by Sigismund August on June 22, 1569, defined exactly the responsibilities and the rights of the director of the "Royal Mails". The main post office was located in Kraków, Market Place (currently number 7).

With the death of Sigismund August in 1572, the privilege granted to Sebastian Montelupi lost its validity and thus the royal mail ceased to exist. However, S. Montelupi did not disassemble the postal structure and kept directing it at his expense. Without the king's privilege he was forced to introduce some limitations in the postal operations. After the ascent of Stefan Batory to the throne and in connection with the planned participation of the Republic in the all-European war against Turkey, there was need for a regular communication between the ruling courts in Europe, particularly with Rome. In this spirit, Stefan Batory issued in Niepolomice in 1583 a privilege which assigned the organization and management of the post to Sebastian and Walery Montelupi. During this period of postal activity the uniformity of postage for letters was introduced. In this respect, the Polish Mail preceeded other countries by 250 years.

After the death of Sebastian Montelupi in 1600, the mail continued to be managed by his cousin, Walery (died 1613), and then by his two sons, Sebastian and Karol. For these achievements the Montelupi family received in 1632 a life time privilege to manage the post.

With the transfer of the Capital to Warsaw in 1596, Kraków ceased to be the main postal headquarters but kept its importance on the track between Italy and Warsaw. The general political and economic situation in the country until the first half of the 18th century did not contribute to the development of the post including the post in Kraków.

After the coronation of Stanislaw August Poniatowski in 1764, a



tendency toward progress in the areas of economy, politics and culture became noticeable. These aspirations could not be satisfied by the contemporary postal activities. The evidence that the king realized the great importance of effective mail service for the development of the country is seen in that his first legal decree issued on December 18, 1767, was the "Manifesto for Postal Affairs" and associated with it: "Institutions for Postal Magistrates of the Royal Mails and the Mails of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania," and also "The Complete Postal Fees for Letters, including those to Foreign Countries from the Kingdom and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania."

The development of postal communication during this period is evident by the creation of 22 postal routes totaling 750 miles. (One Polish mile equals about 7.4 kilometers). Kraków was connected with Warsaw via two routes: through Nowe Miasto and Opoczno (42 miles) and through Rawa and Opoczno (46 miles) which was extended from Kraków to Bielsko by 9 miles. The connection to Lwów was: Kraków-Jarosław (28 miles) followed by Jarosław-Lwów (15 miles). Lublin was connected via Kraków-Opatów (20 miles) and Opatów-Lublin (13 miles). In addition, the "Kraków Post" connected Warsaw with Vienna, Venice and Rome.

Kraków also had a separate horse coach connection with Wrocław (35 miles) which was established in 1673 before the postal reform by Stanisław August took place. The only postal markings found on the letters were hand written annotations indicating the place of mailing (e.g. "ad Cracovia", "z Warszawy" etc.) and the serial number assigned by the post office. These annotations and other handwritten marks provide the proof that the letters were indeed transported by the postal system. This is quite important because there exist without doubt also mailings on letters delivered via private carriers, servants, or carried as a favor which do not have a connection with the postal service and thus with philately.

The "Instruction of Postal Magistrates" of 1767 recommended the introduction of postal wax seals whose purpose was to secure the confidentiality of the contents in case the letter became damaged. In addition, these official wax seals were also used for official documents. Such seals were applied by the post in Kraków and an unique example exists on an official letter mailed on October 6th, 1793 by Jan Gapari, the postmaster in Kraków to Życzkowski, the secretary of the City of Kraków (Photo No. 1).



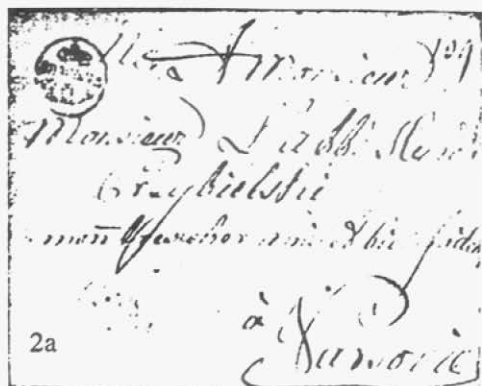
Modeled after wax seals, mailing seals impressed in ink appeared. They were created on the postmaster's initiative who impressed a seal with the name of the place of mailing instead of making annotations. Doubtlessly the appearance of these seals in Poland was influenced by the imitations of similar seals used abroad.

The post in Kraków possessed two types of such seals. The round seal "Cracovia" with a crown and a posthorn was used during the times of the postmasters Poschman and Gaspari. So far the existence of five letters with such impressions was confirmed from the period of March, 1773—October, 1783. The other postmark called initial postmark was analogous to French postmarks; instead of the city's name it had only its initial letter "K" which together with the crown was confined in a circle.

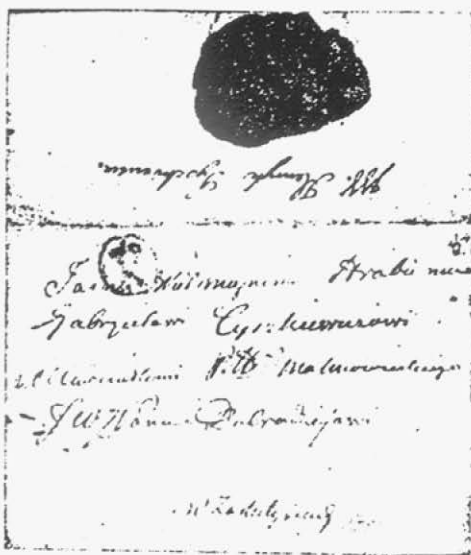
This postmark is known on eleven letters from the years 1786–1792.
(Photographs No. 2, 2a, 2b).



2



2a



2b

In 1772, Russia, Prussia and Austria participated in the first partition of Poland. The border of the Austrian partition near Kraków was established in accordance with the Partition Treaty along the Wisła River. At that time there was also the old dead bed of that river which separated Kraków from Kazimierz, which was still an independent town. A wrong interpretation of the border line according to which the old bed was considered to be the River Wisła, resulted in the incorporation of Kazimierz into Austria. In mid June, 1773, the Austrians moved the post office from Wieliczka to Kazimierz entrusting it to the controlling officer Munder. The rush and involvement during the establishment of the post office in Kazimierz were the result of the expectation of taking over, in the future a large part of the correspondence originating in Kraków and resulting in considerable profits. The first official postmaster of Kazimierz became Henryk Brandl on October 15, 1773. Since May, 1775, the Postal Station in Kazimierz was served by a mail coach. From the chronicles of this mail we know that in December, 1775, the controlling postal officer, Antoni Nowak, committed a misdeed (the theft of a letter with declared value), during the departure of the coach and was arrested. His position was taken over by the controlling postal officer Bogdangi. The efforts of the Kraków city government and the Polish government in 1776, resulted in the correction of the border line and Kazimierz was returned to Poland after the departure of the Austrian Army. Under these circumstances, in February, 1777, the district government of Wieliczka moved the postal station from Kazimierz to Podgórze on the right bank of the Wisła.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

IN THE TRADITION OF COUBERTIN THE FORGOTTEN OLYMPIAD

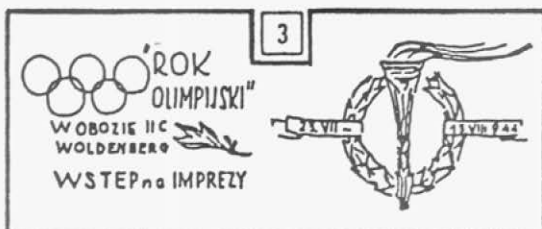
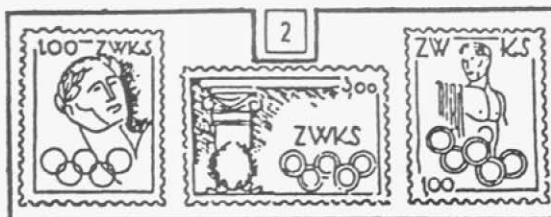
Most of those who attended the XXV Olympic Games in Barcelona probably gave little thought to the fact that there were no official Olympic Games in 1940 and 1944 because of World War II. And fewer knew that there was an unofficial Olympiad held in 1944.

In 1944, many Polish athletes recalled the words of their compatriot, Jan Parandowski, who stated at the 1936 Berlin Olympiad, "there is an ideal we can call Commandment to which the 20th century mankind aspires and waits for – the Peace Commandment. In ancient times, the voice announcing the Olympic Games disarmed the fighting forces, stifled their feelings of hostility and discord. And notwithstanding such truce had been going on for only a few months, sometimes it spanned whole years."

Thousands of Polish soldiers were taken prisoner during WW-II. The officers were confined to OFLAG (Officers Concentration Camps) like Woldenberg in Dobiegniew (called the OBÓZ II C) and Gross-Born in Sulimowo (called OBÓZ II D). According to the Geneva Convention, these Polish officers were allowed to organize their own social life and establish communications between their prison shelters. So they requested and obtained authorization from the German authorities to:

1. Organize an international postal service to distribute mail among the various camp shelters.
2. Print and issue their own postage stamps for internal correspondence.
3. Collect money for such postal service using the profits to aid the widows and fatherless children of Poland.

The Woldenberg (OBÓZ II C) post office operated from May 5, 1942 to January 25, 1945, while the Gross-Born (OBÓZ II D) post office operated from December 3, 1943 to January 28, 1945. Within



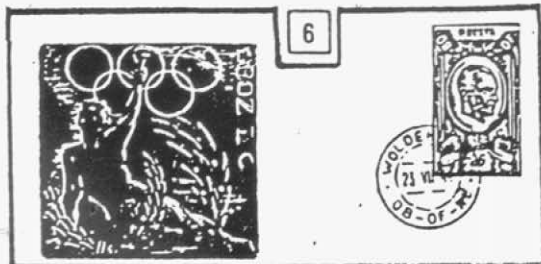
a few months after the Woldenberg post office opened, the Polish officers organized a "Sports Week" and all mail was postmarked with a special cancel (Illustration 1).



As the war continued, a group of Polish officers at the Woldenberg camp decided to organize a mini-Olympiad to commemorate the 1944 Olympic year in the tradition of Pierre de Coubertin. An Olympic Committee was formed to organize the event and to prepare the athletes for such events as the 100 meter, 1,500 meter, and 4 x 100 meter relay races, the 10 kilometer walk the long jump, boxing, soccer, basketball and volleyball. The Committee printed 10 copies of a program (now worth thousands of dollars) and three Olympic labels (Illustration 2) which were sold for 1 and 3 marks.

A non-postal cancellation was applied to the entrance tickets (Illustration 3) and the OFLAG post office printed a true philatelic item on

August 13th, 1944 (Illustration 4). The 10 pfen. imperforate stamp was designed by Edmond Czarnecki, printed in brick-red on very small sheets (25 mm x 39 mm. of Swedish paper supplied by the Red Cross. Each sheet contained a single stamp, and a total of 17,580 stamps were printed. A commemorative postmark was designed by T. Ptonczak and carved on the rubber sole of a shoe by R. Wieczorkiewicz. (Illustr. 5).



To commemorate the Sunday, August 13, 1944 opening day of the mini Olympics, the Committee printed souvenir cards on heavy paper, using one of the five colors of the Olympic rings on each of the stamps. (Illustration 6).

After a few weeks, the Gross-Born OFLAG launched its own mini-Olympiad. The Polish officers had formed their own Olympic Committee and for the July 30, 1944 opening day of their mini Olympiad, they issued a set of 3 stamps (10, 20, and 50 pfenig) which were designed and carved by

Włodzimierz Zieleniewski (Illustration 7). The total quantities printed were: 10 pfenig (brown-red) 5,133; 20 pfenig (brown and olive-brown) 5,245; and 50 pfenig (dark green) 4,702.



For the opening day, two types of postal cards were imprinted with the same 10 pfenig stamp (Illustration 8). The stamp was printed in light red on cards of heavy grey paper (90 mm x 60 mm) and in red brown on cards of white heavy paper (100 mm x 60 mm). The post office cancelled these postal cards throughout the Games with a rectangular handstamp.

During the final days of the mini-Olympiad (August 12-153), a philatelic exhibition was held which was commemorated with 1,115 sou-

venir sheets (100 mm x 93 mm) depicting all 3 stamps (Illus. 9). A circular postmark was employed depicting a posthorn and the numerals 1, 2, 3 and 4 (very rare) representing the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th day of use.

Some of these philatelic items have been recently reproduced by the Polish Postal Administration on their postal cards to help us remember this forgotten Olympiad.



POLONUS HAS A NEW MEETING PLACE

At the general meeting held on May 28, 1993, it voted that Polonus move its meeting place from Sts. Cyril & Methodius Church Annex to the Polish Youth Association Building (Dom Harcerski) at 6934 W. Belmont Avenue, corner of Nagle, in Chicago.

CUSTOM IMPRESSIONS TAKES OVER K-LINE PUBLISHING

After 34 years in the business, George Kobylka has decided to let a younger man take over his philatelic publishing line, John La Porta of Custom Impressions. The new owner intends to continue the publication of K-Line's Poland, Czechoslovakia, Copernicus, World Fairs, Olympic Games, Scouts, Christmas, Christmas Seals and Artists. George will stay on as a page designer so that the same style and quality of pages will be maintained.

Just released is Poland supplement #36/1991-1992 (17 pages, numbers 384 through 397) at a price of \$7.10 plus \$2.00 postage (see advertisement). All those clients who had sufficient deposit with K-Line will be mailed this supplement shortly.

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