

BULLETIN of the



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DATE CHANGE OF POLPEX '89

Due to an unexpected conflict of dates with Glenpex '89, a well known Chicagoland Stamp Expo, also to be held on Feb. 24-26, 1989, we had to move Polpex '89 to Febr. 10-12, 1989.

BE A POLPEX '89 PATRON

Once more we would like to make an appeal for financial support of our GOLDEN JUBILEE POLPEX '89 EXHIBITION. The treasury of Polonus Philatelic Society can't support an undertaking of such magnitude.

Planned to be the finest if not the largest of Polonus Exhibits, 50th Anniversary POLPEX '89 will display over 200 large, international size frames of the finest philatelic material of Poland. Collectors from U.S.A. and abroad will be invited to exhibit their best collections in the broadest scope of Polish philately.

The Polish-American Numismatic Association will celebrate its 25th Anniversary and contribute excellent exhibits of Polish coins, medals and military decorations.

We sincerely hope that your generous help will ensure the success of our most ambitious undertaking — GOLDEN JUBILEE POLPEX '89.

Be one of the proud owners of a special medallion, which will be minted in a very limited quantity and presented to the financial supporters who contribute \$100.00 or more. The medallion will be mounted on a walnut wood base or lucite stand. Don't miss this opportunity and at the same time, help your Society on its 50th Anniversary. Send \$100.00 or more (make check payable to Polonus/Polpex '89) to:

FRED SZEBEL, Chairman

9041 Emerson Street, Des Plaines, Illinois 60016



POLONUS

A Monthly Magazine Devoted to the
STAMPS of POLAND

Official Organ of the Polonus Philatelic Society

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FROM THE PUBLISHER

THIS publication will take upon itself the task of coordinating various interests of Polish collectors in expanding their collections and in gathering specialized information on the stamps of Poland. The early issues especially offer endless varieties in paper, perforations, inks and printings which are of particular interest to some collectors. We have considerable information and authentic articles from Poland on many issues. This information will be made available to our readers. A section of the magazine will be used as a clearing house for the exchange of specific information on Polish stamps.

The idea will be to organize advanced collectors into sections so that an individual or group can make an intensive and specialized study of one particular stamp or issue. It is proposed to make available to such an individual or group the resources of this publication and of its contacts in the way of books, technical articles, stocks of stamps, sources of purchase, etc. and to get the section in touch with other collectors who may have advanced or specialized knowledge of the issues involved. It is our hope that we can publish regularly the findings of these sections and to offer these columns as a round table discussion for collectors in general.

There are in America very many holdings of Poland No. 1 which occurs with about 350 cancellations of post offices throughout Poland, besides the railroad cancellations, etc. Scott No. 165 has been recorded in over 600 varieties and very many of the earlier issues are classified quite completely in Polish sources. It is the intention that these complete classifications will be given in this publication. Some of the later issues, however, are not completely classified and it will be possible through the aid of this monthly to give tentative information with the idea that our readers throughout the country will carefully check their own holdings and report into this clearing house for a complete tabulation of results.

First Meeting of the Polonus Philatelic Society



Little did Chester Mikucki realize when he began inserting notices in the *Daily Zgoda* for the formation of a Polish Stamp Club that the result of his idea would be the Polonus Philatelic Society. Chester was probably the most surprised young man when on February 26, 1939, fifty-four stamp-collecting enthusiasts responded to his call for a meeting at the Veterans' Home on Wood Street in Chicago. Nevertheless, such WAS the result. And the above photograph shows a part of the group that attended the first meeting.



The above sketch is a key to the identification of those on the photograph. No. 1, Felix Pientka, secretary; 2, Roman Reinowski, director; 3, J. Wisniewski; 4, Mrs. J. Wisniewski; 5, J. A. Kupiec; 6, F. Kunicki; 7, Charles Cwiakala; 8, Stanley Pindak; 9, Bert Powell, publicity director; 10, unidentified; 11, J. Witkowski; 12, Walter Leja; 13, A. Zukowski; 14, E. Skupniewicz; 15, J. Migiel; 16, C. Sarnecki; 17, R. Wojcicki; 18, Dr. Leon Kozakiewicz, director; 19, Henry J. Choynacki, vice-president; 20, Stanley Madro; 21, M. E. Steczynski, historian and librarian; 22, Adam Nowinski; 23, Lester Jankowski, president; 24, J. Czesak; 25, W. Lewinski; 26, J. Jaworski; 27, unidentified; 28, E. Mizdrak; 29, Chestef Mikucki, treasurer; 30, Dr. M. E. Uznanski; 31, Jack Domar, sales manager; 32, John Skotnicki.

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CHAPTER 110
SOCIETY OF
PHILATELIC
AMERICANS



PAGES FROM THE HISTORY OF POLONUS:

P. 2.) Front page of original Polonus Magazine, dated November, 1940, Volume 1, No. 1.

P. 3.) First official photo of a group of Polish collectors, when Polonus was founded and first officers were elected, February 26, 1939.

POLPEX 88

POLPEX 88 took place March 12-13, 1988 at the Przybylo's White Eagle Banquet facilities. As always the show had good attendance.

This year's theme of POLPEX 88 was the 10th Anniversary of the Pontificate of Pope John Paul II.



Opening Ceremony - from left: Romuald Odrowski; Walenty Poniecki; Art Walinski,, Polpex 88 Chairman; in back row: Stefan Czarniecki; Tom Gobby; Stanley Dobrzycki; Fred Szebel.



Exhibit Frames and Dealers' Tables.

Dr. Conrad P. Straub's exhibit, "Second Provisional issue of Poland" took top honors with a Grand Award and the President's Award.

Polonus Award for best Pope John Pau II exhibit was presented to Arkadiusz Walinski for "The Coat of Arms of Pope John Paul II" exhibit.

Special Mikucki Postal History Award, donated by the Mikucki Family in memory of the late Chester J. Mikucki was awarded to Fred Szebel for his "Pilsudski Polish Legion" exhibit. All the above exhibitors also received Gold Medals.

Other winners at POLPEX 88 were:

Silver:

Romuald Odrowski — Grudziądz - Graulenz. Postal History.

Romuald Odrowski — First Issue of the Polish People's Republic.

Stanislaw Dobrzycki — The Universal Pope. Selected pages.

Walenty Poniecki — Postal History of Poland - 1838 to date.

Arkadiusz Walinski — Scout and Girl Guides Philatelic History of Australia. Stamps, covers, air letters, postal & meter cancellations.

Bronze:

Stefan Czarniecki — Flown Covers with Cancellations, used during Pope John Paul II's 36 world pilgrimages.

Romuald Odrowski — Solidarność.

Stanley Slomiany — Pope John Paul II.

Teresa Poniecka Lederer — His Holiness Pope John Paul II.

Judges were: Richard Drews, Tom Gobby, Mark Isaacs and Dave Stefancic. In the numismatic section, Arkadiusz Walinski presented an exhibit of Vatican coins issued during the pontificate of Pope John Paul II.



At the Pope John Paul II Memorabilia Exhibit: from left: Romuald Odrowski, N. Zbyszewski, Bishop Alfred Abramowicz, Art Walinski and Fred Szebel.

Very popular with visitors was the Pope John Paul II memorabilia exhibit where books, magazines, records, video cassettes, posters etc. from all over the world were presented by Arkadiusz Walinski with help from Stanley Dobrzycki.

Saturday night's BEEBA Banquet brought a large group of Polonus members with several out-of-town guests from Milwaukee, Buffalo, Cleveland and Minnesota. As in past years, a large group of veterans from the 5th Carpathian Brigade Association participated in the Beeba Banquet.

Tom Gobby, president of Polonus was master of ceremonies.



Dr. Conrad Straub being presented with the Grand Award by Art Walinski.



**Chester Mikucki Family at the Banquet.
Guests from Buffalo at Beeba-Banquet.**

Arkadiusz Walinski served as the Executive Chairman of POLPEX 88 with the assistance of the following: Bourse: Romuald Odrowski; Sales: Al and Fran Rybarski; Frames: Walenty Poniecki and Stanley Dobrzycki; Finances & Patrons: Fred Szebel; Publicity: Arkadiusz Walinski, Chester Schafer, Tom Gobby and Roman Strzelecki; Program Catalog: Chester Schafer; Arts & Awards: Arkadiusz Walinski; Show cancellations: Edward Link and Arkadiusz Walinski; Ads: Chester Schafer, Arkadiusz Walinski and Stanley Dobrzycki.

The following Souvenirs from POLPEX 88 can be purchased from Walenty Poniecki, 6020 N. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60646. Two different cacheted covers with special cancellations (different one for each day) priced at \$1.50 for the set. A souvenir card printed in multicolor, priced at \$1.50 mint and \$2.00 cancelled. A pair of souvenir sheets with descriptive folder is available for \$1.00. The official Souvenir Program catalog may be purchased for \$1.00. An additional \$1.00 is requested with each order to cover postage and handling.

COLLECTING POLAND TODAY

By JAMES MAZEPA

The following article is reprinted from *Polonus Bulletin* #382 (Sept.-Oct.) 1980. After it appeared in the *Bulletin*, it was picked up by two National Philatelic publications and reprinted. The thoughts in this article are just as valid today as they were eight years ago and with that in mind, we again offer it to our members. —Editor

Several years ago at a POLPEX Exhibition I was admiring a display of Poland postal history put up by one of our members. Along with me was an "old-timer" and we were commenting on the exhibit. After some time, we noted all the pros and cons of the collection, the scarcity of some of the covers, and what we thought could be added to improve the exhibit. Finally, he said, "it's nice, but it's not like the collections we used to have. You just don't see those kind any more."

His comments have remained with me since then, for certainly, we all hope to have a reasonable collection with some degree of completeness. But the more I thought about it, I found a bit of truth in his statement. It is impossible to duplicate the great collections of the past. We may never see collections to the depth and breadth of those belonging to the great oldtime philatelists. And this is as one would expect. The philatelic times have changed, just as the rest of the world has changed. There are more collectors making demands on material that was limited to begin with. For example, there were 1300 of the 90 heller Krakow issue, of which probably 800-900 exist today. Even if everyone who collects Poland wanted one copy, there would not be enough to go around. Secondly, much of the material has increased in price faster than inflation and our incomes, thus placing it beyond our means. Good stamps and covers are valued now not only by philatelists but also by investors, and this has contributed to the dramatic increases over the last several years.

Does all this mean it is impossible to have an excellent collection of Poland today? I don't think so. I believe that a key factor is to remember that great collections are formed over the years with great amounts of searching, patience and perseverance. Here are some thoughts on how to go about this:

1. GET ORGANIZED. Keep your philatelic material in order. There are several preprinted albums which can help us including Scott, Minkus, and K-Line. Blank pages are available for extras or covers. Other stamps should be classified and kept on stock pages or glassines. There can be nothing so dismaying as a shoe box full of stamps, and nothing so pleasing as leafing through your albums to view your "treasures."

2. GET A CATALOG. Fortunately, there is the Ruch Polish Catalog, which is very inexpensive and includes all the information you will probably need. It can be easily used, even if one doesn't read Polish. If it is not feasible to buy a Scott catalog, borrow one from your local library and xerox the pages for Poland (one copy for personal use does not violate copyright laws). If one is more advanced, he might want to look into the German Michel catalog.

3. BE REALISTIC AND COLLECT WHAT YOU CAN AFFORD. Few can begin to collect numeral cancels on #1, so set your limits. This may mean mint post-war and used pre-war, or some other combination.

4. BEGIN A SPECIALTY COLLECTION. This will be in addition to your general collection and will be in an area of special interest to you. There are many possibilities (as discussed further), but the idea is to find something that YOU like and would want to know more about.

5. TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT POSTAL HISTORY. Often we think of Postal History as the "old stuff." What is forgotten is the development of the post in the first part of this century, and even in the post-war period. This material will be the treasures of the future, yet so little is being saved today.

6. DON'T FORGET THEMATICS. Poland especially lends itself to collecting thematics, because of the stamps it has issued with popular topical themes, and because of the potential of other themes such as Polonica.

7. GET TO KNOW A DEALER AND STICK WITH HIM. Philatelically, he will be the best friend you have once he knows your interests. If he is working to find material for you, don't complain about the price. In the long run, you will come out ahead.

8. GIVE YOURSELF A STAMP BUDGET. This will help you stay within your means and help keep your marriage together.

9. BUY THE MOST EXPENSIVE STAMP YOU CAN WITH THE MONEY YOU HAVE. If you have \$5.00, buy a \$5.00 stamp; if \$25.00, buy a \$25.00 item. Expensive stamps only get more expensive; cheap stamps usually stay the same.

10. IF YOU HAVEN'T SEEN SOMETHING BEFORE, AND YOU CAN AFFORD IT, BUY IT. And do so even if the price seems high. There is a reason you have not seen it, and you may never see it again. Pride of ownership will always offset the pain of the price—after the first few days!

11. COMPLETE PREWAR POLAND. Prices, especially in Europe, are climbing rapidly. These are, for the most part, still available here and will be really scarce items in the future.

12. ATTEND PHILATELIC EXHIBITIONS AND MEETINGS. You will meet some very nice people, and maybe even find someone who collects your interest.

13. SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND INTERESTS. Always bring one cover or stamp to a meeting to show others.

14. SUBSCRIBE TO A NATIONAL PHILATELIC PUBLICATION. There is much contained within the pages of **Linn's**, **Stamps**, and **Stamp Collector**, to suggest just a few. Eventually, something of interest will be found, and it will be well worth the price of subscription.

15. TRY YOUR HAND AT AN AUCTION. If you have never done this before, ask a friend who has. It is a lot easier than you might think.

16. DO SOMETHING NEW. You can get more out of your hobby if you try your hand at something new. Perhaps writing an article, exhibiting, or getting on the organizing committee of the next show will add that extra spark. There are others who will gladly help you get started if you are unsure of what to do.

17. COLLECT FOR FUN AND ENJOYMENT, NOT FOR PROFIT. If one buys wisely and carefully, money will not be lost, but nor should it be the motive for what we buy, unless we are strictly investors.

18. FINALLY, OUR COLLECTING SHOULD PREVENT HEART ATTACKS, NOT CAUSE THEM. It should also enhance our family lives, not disrupt them. It is okay to reevaluate what we are doing from time to time, to see how it affects our lives and the lives of those around us.

These are some ideas of how to begin or how to continue to build an excellent collection. If you have any other ideas, jot them down and send them in. Others would like to hear from you!

Acid Papers:

A THREAT TO OUR HOBBY

By MAYNARD PHILBECK

Try a simple test sometime: Place a silver coin inside a standard everyday envelope and put it away for a few months. When you open it up, the coin will be well on its way to turning black. The cause is an insidious ingredient of the paper—sulfuric acid—reacting with the metal to form tarnish.

Since the advent of paper made from wood pulp, the archives, libraries, and other repositories of books and papers are in danger of having their stocks selfdestruct. At present, there is nothing anyone can do about it. Books keep turning into brown paper dust.

An old newspaper put away a couple of years ago in pristine whiteness will have turned brown and will flake and crumble. My heirloom books from the early part of the century have turned gray in the pages. A casual thumbing-through will leave a little ash-like residue on the fingers.

This creeping disservice was brought about by modern technology when the practice of making high-quality paper from rags was displaced by the use of cheap wood pulp. Rag papers have little or no acid to cause trouble. This is why books and papers dating from Colonial times have stood up so well. Trees, on the other hand, are full of acid. A truck-load of pulp logs contains enough sulfuric acid to kill an elephant. While the paper companies don't have anything to do with putting the acid in pulp, most of them don't bother to take it out.

IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

Even if every stamp you have paid dearly for is acid-free, what are its surroundings? What sort of an album is it stored in? Are the pages acid-free? Are stock books sufficiently safe so that harmful acids will not migrate onto philatelic material and ruin it?

About 20 years ago, I mounted a cover collection on black mounting pages with plastic sheet protectors. These are the same kind of display sheets available at any office-supply company from coast to coast. I was curious about their acid content, but delayed for months having a page analyzed because I thought surely "they" would not market anything so potentially dangerous. Finally, I sent a page to an expert paper conservator recommended by the Smithsonian Institution in Washington. I blanched when I received his report. The black-dyed pages concealed a cheap, pulpy, highly-acid paper stock that no stamp collector would have bought in its undyed state.

I expressed my concern to stamp columnists and was told there is nothing to worry about.

If you ever want to know anything about acid papers, contact the conservation laboratory at the Smithsonian Institution. Most papers manufactured worldwide today contain not only acids, but also such compounds as lignins. To compound the problem, we have cheap papers sized with alum-rosin, which, in the presence of atmospheric moisture, produces more acids. Lignins deteriorate in the unpurified pulp and create additional acids.

An important factor contributing to the deterioration of paper is light—especially ultra-violet light. Sunlight, acting on the lignins, photochemically initiates oxidation which turns the paper yellow, then various degrees of brown. Cheap newsprint is most notorious for this reaction. In cities, sulfur dioxide from vehicle exhaust and other combustion combines with moisture and oxygen in the atmosphere to produce sulfuric acid. You thus have a double threat: Sulfuric acid from within and sulfuric acid from without.

Acids migrate from one sheet of paper to another. Books printed in the 1700's on good quality rag paper, which were rebound years later in wood-pulp covers or end papers, showed migrated acid from the new bindings. The pages closest to the new bindings always held the most dangerous levels of acid. In some cases, there was no dangerous level of acid, but other escaping compounds had seriously discolored neighboring pages.

Collectors of Germany are familiar with the OSTROPA sheet printed in 1935. When I bought my copy in 1965, the savvy clerk pointed out that I had best remove the original gum. As the stamp catalogs say, the gum contained sulfuric acid. When I dunked the block in a neutralizing bath, I noticed that the paper underneath the brownish gum had turned slightly grayish.

ACIDS MIGRATED

I saw the results of migration in my own collection. In the beginning, I cornermounted my covers on a good grade of white bond paper, then affixed both to the black sheets. After about 20 years, acid from the black mounting sheet had migrated and burned the white bond to a tan color. The corner mounts blocked the burn so that the area just underneath remained white. This was dramatic evidence of acid migration. Needless to say, I removed every cover from the sheet protectors and threw the protectors into the nearest trash can.

Several things can be done to protect your collection of stamps and covers from acid damage. First, textured mounting pages made of rice, wheat, or any other kind of straw, or hemp or jute may look cute, but they are potential time bombs. Avoid them. Avoid black sheet protectors. Avoid anything that has not been certified acid-free. Never ask office-supply clerks if any given paper is acid-free, for they may misguide you in their exuberance.

Don't store your collection any old place. Cold winters are very good for paper preservation but hot, humid summers are very bad. Don't cut the air circulation off from your valuables, such as enclosing them in airtight containers, for you may trap moisture which will activate acid damage. A dry desert atmosphere protected delicate things in King Tut's tomb, but most of the United States requires air conditioning for good summer preservation.

Remember, the cooler and drier the repository, the better. Deep-freeze conditions are just about ideal, but before you rush off to try it, consider what will happen if your material is suddenly removed to room temperature: Cold going into hot produces moisture; gum-dissolving, sticking moisture. Work with the coolest temperature you can steadily maintain—with gentle, natural swings and variations.

My collections are **not** kept under air conditioning in the summer, yet I feel very good about their safety. They are kept in a cool, airy room on the eastern side of the house—away from the blazing afternoon sun. They are not subjected to sudden temperature changes. The stamps are kept in plastic envelopes that have been analyzed and found suitable, then placed in metal card files. Some covers are corner-mounted on certified acid-free album pages, then covered with acid-free plastic protectors. The room receives no direct sunlight and is dimly lighted.

Contact either the Smithsonian Institution or the Library of Congress for a list of acid-free paper manufacturers. They will also provide a list of paper conservators who can examine questionable materials in your collection. If you buy standard stamp or cover albums, make sure that they are certified acid-free. If we make the acid danger as big as it deserves to be, the manufacturers of philatelic accessories might fall into line some day. Patronize those who do produce acid-free products and ignore those who don't.

—Reprinted from *The German Postal Specialist*



YES, WE WANT NEW MEMBERS!

Membership Drive

The best way to celebrate our Golden Jubilee is to support the Society with a Drive for new members. A few years ago we lost our founder Chester Mikucki, and in the last decade, many older members, who always supported the Society with great enthusiasm. In this Bulletin, you will find a Membership Application. Try to enroll at least one new member. For more applications write to Fred Szebel, 9041 Emerson St., Des Plaines, IL 60016. Let's all help Polonus be strong and prosper for the good of Poland's philately.

IN OUR MAIL BOX

To The Editor:

Dear Sir:

It may be of some interest to you and the readers that on August 22, 1987, I delivered a lecture to the members of the Red Sea Philatelic Society in Yanbu Al - Sinaiyah, Saudi Arabia - on the subject of "Polish Philately." Samples of Polish philatelic items from the Royal mail to the recent Solidarity covers were presented.

The presentation was received with genuine interest by the multi-national audience.

Adam S. Berestynski, Architect
c/o SAPL, P.O. Box 30167
Yanbu Al-Sinaiyah, Saudi Arabia

50 ANNIVERSARY

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Polonus Philatelic Society
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