

BULLETIN of the

POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY



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GOLDEN JUBILEE POLPEX '89 WILL CROWN POLONUS' 50 YEARS OF ACTIVITY

Fifty years will pass in February of 1989, since Chester Mikucki called the first meeting of the Polonus Philatelic Society. Chester and many of the founding members are no longer with us, but Polonus, the oldest Polish Philatelic Society in the free world, still publishes a Bulletin, conducts an annual Polpex Exhibition, is active and vibrant and will be for many more years to come.



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ANNIVERSARY

This most important event in our Society's life will take place on February 24th-26th, 1989 at the Grand Ballroom of the House of the White Eagle, 6839 North Milwaukee Avenue in Niles, Illinois, a northwest suburb of Chicago.

Twenty-five years ago Polonus celebrated its Silver Jubilee in Chicago at the Andrews House, owner of today's prestigious House of the White Eagle, most popular Polish Banquet Hall and Restaurant in Chicagoland.

Lots of celebration plans are in the making, so watch for announcements in the coming months. Plan now to take active personal and financial part in this memorable celebration.

Fred Szebel, Chairman

Short-lived Allenstein has a lot to offer

By Frederick W. Baumann

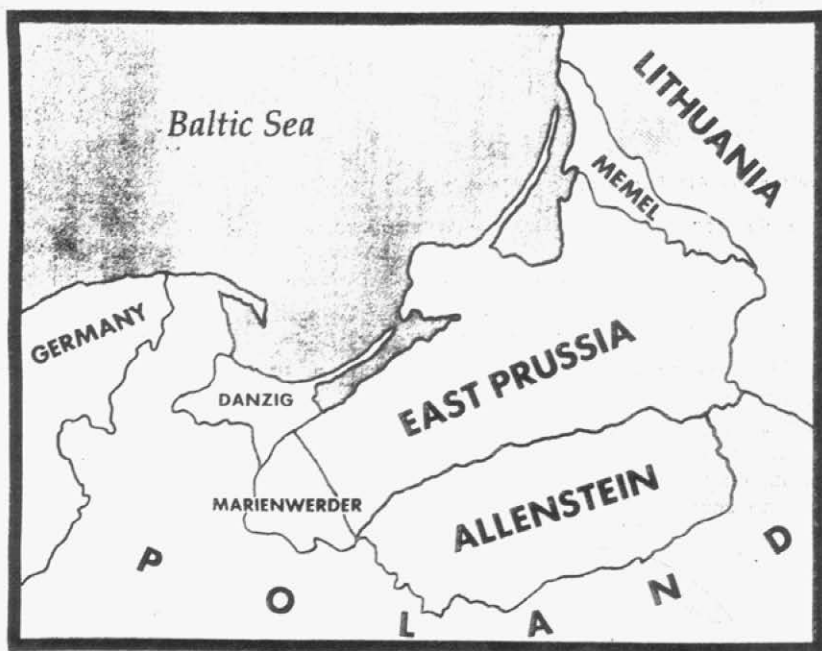


Figure 1. This map shows the position of Allenstein and several other Treaty of Versailles plebiscite districts as they existed in 1920. Most of this territory had originally been part of northeastern Germany prior to World War I.

Following World War I, the Treaty of Versailles transformed the eastern frontier of what had been the German Empire. Figure 1 outlines the complex situation in 1920.

After Versailles, Western Prussia was handed over to Poland, and the Hanseatic port of Danzig and its environs were declared free territory. This gave landlocked Poland an important corridor north to the Baltic Sea.

What remained of once proud Prussia was an eastern island surrounded by Poland and Lithuania, cut off from the rest of Germany.

By the terms of the treaty, the nationality of the southern and western portions of East Prussia was to be decided by a popular vote, or plebiscite, in each of those regions.

The southern plebiscite territory was known by the name of its principal town, where Teutonic knights had established a castle early in the 14th century.

Poles called the town Olsztyn. To the Germans it was known as Allenstein.

About the size of the state of Connecticut and with a population of more than half a million souls, Allenstein was administered by Germany immediately after the war.

On Feb. 14, 1920, civil authority was transferred to an allied commission charged with conducting the July 11 plebiscite vote.

Among the interim responsibilities of the commission was the provision of stamps for the next five months to 220 post offices scattered over 10 districts in Allenstein. Conduct of postal affairs otherwise re-



Figure 2. A three-line overprint on German stamps produced the first issues of Allenstein, including Scott 2.

mained in German hands.

For the first six weeks of its brief existence, Allenstein continued to use German stamps. The first plebiscite issues were not available until April 3.

These stamps consisted of 14 German definitives from 5

pfennigs to 3 marks with a black three-line overprint obliterating the German national name. Figure 2 shows an example of the 10pf value.

Both thin and thick varieties of this overprint are known on all values except the 15pf dark violet. Double overprints are found on the 1m and 1.25m values, and the 3m is known with both a double and an inverted overprint.

German catalogs list a few important overprint varieties and allude to the existence of many lesser ones.



Figure 3. Many unlisted minor overprint varieties can be found on Allenstein issues, such as this "PLEBISCITE" variety of Scott 10.

Figure 3 shows one of the latter, in which a break in the type makes the top line of the overprint on a 1m stamp look like "PLEBISCITE."

The three-line overprint was also applied to about 500 sets of the 5pf, 10pf, 20pf, 30pf and 40pf monochrome Germania issues of 1920. These were apparently overprint essays, and none of these elusive and valuable stamps is known in used condition.

Figure 4 shows a second type of overprint introduced in May and June.

There must have been some compelling official reason for this second issue, because there was surely very little postal need for it.

The denominations of the second set are the same as those of the first, and when the new overprints were issued, it was known that Allenstein had but two months left in which stamps would be required.



Figure 4. An oval overprint invoking the Treaty of Versailles appears on the second set of Allenstein stamps, of which Scott 16 is a part.

The second overprint was in French, the official language of the allied commission overseeing the plebiscite.

The center of the oval is inscribed "TRAITE DE VERSAILLES Art. 94-95." Though the issues it spawned were le-



Figure 5. Although the stamps were never used, Allenstein's oval overprint was applied to about 10,000 copies of Germany's 40-pfennig carmine Germania definitive of 1920.

gion, this is the only specific mention I know of that disastrous document on any postage stamp.

Because it alone was issued late in June, the 15pf violet brown Germania is the key value in this otherwise inexpensive set of 14 values.

The oval overprint was also applied to about 10,000 copies of the 1920 40pf carmine Germania, as shown in Figure 5. Though it was never issued,

copies later surfaced in mixtures or packets after Allenstein had ceased to exist, and the stamp is now quite valuable.

Alenstein's scarcest stamp is the 1m issue with inverted oval overprint.

Both a double and an inverted oval overprint are also known on the 3m issue.

Convincing counterfeits of the oval overprints exist. Errors should always be expertized, and unlisted varieties, of which I have seen several, are invariably bogus.

The two basic sets of Allenstein are inexpensive in unused condition, but collectors of used stamps and covers are likely to find their work cut out for them.

Though catalog values are not high, the majority of the postmarked copies of all these stamps are identifiably canceled-to-order, especially the mark values from both sets.

According to the Michel catalog, there should be plenty for the cover collector to pursue, including traveling post offices and mixed frankings with German regular issues.

However, most of the few Allenstein covers I've seen at North American shows are philatelic creations. Postal history buffs may have to search abroad to find much of what they're looking for.

Though the stamps were used for some months thereafter, Allenstein came to an end with the July 11 plebiscite, which saw a 98-percent vote in favor of reunion with Prussia and Germany.

In rosy retrospective, German nationalists later claimed this lopsided result as a testimonial of Prussian love for the fatherland.

Sober historians, however, point out that a vote to join Poland in 1920 was also a vote to join a war then raging with Soviet Union, a prospect that also played an underrated role in the landslide.

Many nations supply Antarctic cachets

By Steve Pendleton

Many countries engaged in Antarctic research reinforce territorial claims by the establishment of post offices and the use of official postmarks. However, many other nations with Antarctic bases only have limited base identification on cachets.

In addition to those bases with post offices, these countries have established cachet-using bases: Brazil, Uruguay, West Germany, East Germany, India, Korea and Poland.

As a country gets more involved with the mechanics of supplying an Antarctic base, the question of opening an official post office often arises. Thus, the latest Korean expedition carried an official cancellation device, and India has been debating about opening a post office at its base, Dakshin Gangotri.

The Antarctic cachets can be much scarcer than markings from the bigger Antarctic powers, such as the United States, Great Britain and the Soviet Union. Certain markings, especially those from a country's first expedition, can be rare.

Hints on obtaining interesting cachets, can be discovered by examining the background of each country's Antarctic effort.

Poland. Poland also seems to be interested in the Antarctic as a food source, both from krill and fish.

In the late 1970s, Poland sent at least three krill survey expeditions to the Antarctic. Among the ships used were the *Parma*, *Professor Bogucki*, *Garneszwski* and *Professor Siedlecki*. They provided ship's cachets for collectors.

In 1978, Poland established the H. Arctowski Base in the South Shetland Islands. At one time, the Poles proposed turning this base over to the Brazilians in repayment of a debt, but this never materialized. As of 1987, the Poles still occupy Arctowski.

Scientists at Arctowski seem to have used two main types of cachets, although there are variations, such as year date. One is a round cachet bearing the base name and a stylized drawing of an iceberg. The other is an oval with a penguin in the center.

Generally, the Polish polar effort seems to be more independent of the Soviet Union's efforts than that of the East Germans, but at one time the two programs were similar. In 1959, Poland took over the Soviet International Geophysical Year base Oasis and renamed it Dobrowolski.

As of 1987, these were the major cachet-using bases. However, each year new countries are eager to establish Antarctic bases. These efforts are not always well-publicized. This means there are great possibilities for the alert cachet searcher.

One clue that may indicate a country's interest in the Antarctic is the one-year (temporary) expeditions sent either by private or governmental agents in that country's name.

In the last few years, Austria, Italy and Spain have sent groups south. Does this mean new bases for these countries? Possibly, possibly not. But watchers of these (and other) nations may be well rewarded by receiving an unusual polar cachet.





POLISH KRILL EXPEDITIONS 1975-1979

NAVIRE

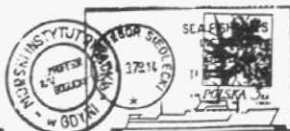


1976
1977

MORSKI
INSTYTUT
RYBACKI W GDYNIA



KLUB MARYNISTÓW
Polskiego Związku Fisheryjistów
ul. Leśna 17
40-442 Odolanów-Wrocław



Pośrednictwo Pocztowne
R/V PROFESOR SIEBLECKI



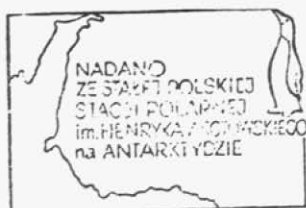
mgr Klemens Hejnowski
skrytka pocztowa 108
81-963 Gdynia 1
Polaka / Poland

I 1977-1978
Antarktyczna
Polska

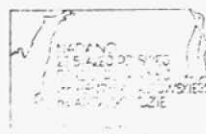


WYPRAWA
ANTARKTYCZNA
m/s. "ZABRZE"

1977
J. Szymon
ul. Piłsudskiego 41
81-381 GDYNIA
Poland - Polska



NADANO
ZE STAFKI POLSKIEJ
STACJI POLARNEJ
im. HENRYKA ARCTOWSKIEGO
NA ANTARKTYDZIE



POLISH ANTARCTIC EXPEDITIONS 1977-1988

(from collection of F. Szebel)



Printed matter

HENRYK ARCTOWSKI
Antarctic Station
Polish Academy of Sciences
King George, South Shetlands

Antoni Gruciel
m/s. Wypława Antarktyczna PA
na Stacji im. H. Arctowskiego
1979 - 1980 r.

Arctowski Station
LAT 5 60' 00" 45"
LONG 76 56' 27" 45"

Przewiezono na okr. "Antarktyczna"
w celu wyprawy Instytutu Geograf.
na Północną Antarktydę w 1979-1980 r.

skrytka pocztowa
81-963 GDYNIA 1
Poland

Antarctic Expedition
FIBEX - BIOMASS
z/ Professor Siedlecki
1980-1



skrytka pocztowa
81-963 GDYNIA-1
Polska / Poland

VII Wprawa Antarktyczna
Polska Akademia Nauk
na statku
130. 1982/83



Kierownik VII Wprawy Antarktycznej
Polskiej Akademii Nauk
dr Marek Edanowski

KAPITAN
P.V. Professor Siedlecki
R. Klemens



Head of the VII Antarctic Expedition
Polish Academy of Sciences
Dr. M. Edward Siedlecki
Kapitan
dr Marek Edanowski
Radosław Marchlewski
Kpt. Z. W.



Wzrost 180 cm
Ciężar ciała 70 kg
Ciężar ciała 70 kg
ul. Jana z Jolą 2
71-603 SZCZECIN



mgr K. Klemens
W. Klemens
81-963 25
p.c.

WYKAZA...
POLSKA AKADEMIA NAUK
Dr. Stanisław H. Arctowski
1987-1989



NADANO
ZE STANU POLSKIEGO
STACJI POLARNEJ
IM. HENRYKA ARCTOWSKIEGO
NA ANTARKTYCZIE



CZESŁAW SŁANIA

MASTER ARTIST AND CRAFTSMAN

By THOMAS J. GOBBY

The biographical data for Czesław Słania is: born October 22, 1921, Czeladzia in Zagłębie Dąbrowskie, Poland; matriculated in Lublin before World War II, studied at the Academy of Arts, Kraków and graduated with honors, 1950; worked in the department of stamp design and engraving of the National Security Printing Co. (PWPW), 1950-6; employed by the Swedish Ministry of Posts since 1960. These are only facts, but what of the man?

Czesław Słania, is one of the greatest living steel engravers of postage stamps. About 90 steel engravers currently practice this art in the world today, and Słania is considered to be at the top of this difficult and demanding field by both his peers and laymen. Since childhood, he has exhibited an exceptionally keen, almost photographic, eye for exquisite detail. From his earliest pen and pencil studies to his latest engravings, he has displayed artistic mettle and craftsmanship to the "nth" degree.

Distinguishing himself with his diploma study (praca dyplomowa) "Grunwald", he graduated, with honors, from the Academy of Arts in 1950. This diploma work would later become the subject of considerable controversy and cause of considerable flap in Polish philately in 1956-7. It is also the subject of an illustrated article elsewhere in this program book.

After his graduation Słania began to work for the PWPW



where he was responsible for no less than 25 stamp designs and 24 steel engravings. His "microscopic wit" was developed here. An example of this "wit" may be found on two stamps in the series commemorating the 10th Anniversary of the Polish People's Republic (Scott No. 654-5). In the engraved centers, with the aid of a powerful magnifier, one can discover the following: Józefa Słania, his mother; Maria Majewska, his niece; Jadwiga Przygodzka, later to be his wife; "Lilka", his sweetheart; Herwick, a departmental director at the post office; and several other individuals. During his 6 year sojourn with the PWPW, Słania constantly sharpened his skills, and produced some of the finest engraved specimens — in Polish stamp history.

In 1956, Słania left the ship "Mazowsze" and sought political asylum in Sweden. While awaiting approval of his request

for asylum, he executed a copy of U.S. currency which featured the replica of a \$1 bill on one side, and a \$10 bill on the other side — all by hand! Deviating from the normal text, he inserted his personal best wishes to President Eisenhower who was then campaigning for re-election. He mailed his "artwork" to Eisenhower, and this generated a thank you note from the office of the President, and a cross-Atlantic visit from agents of the FBI and Treasury Department. Both agencies were deeply disturbed at the technical excellence of the banknote, and unconvinced that it had been entirely executed by hand. Their skepticism would not permit belief that the note had been printed without benefit of engraved plates. Finally, under the watchful eye of the American and Swedish authorities, Słania sat down in his hotel room and drew a portion of another banknote — this time with even greater technical excellence. The authorities were convinced. They left him with the strongest admonitions to cease and desist from his practice of copying currencies. One can only imagine what the quality of our currency would be if Mr. Słania were to do the engravings today.

The years 1956 to 1960 were filled with some hardship for Słania. Then early in 1960 he went into the employment of the Swedish Ministry of Posts where he continues to this day turning out a long succession of exquisitely executed and engraved postage stamps for the countries of Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, and most recently, Monaco. To date he has been responsible for over 100 stamps

each for the countries of Sweden and Denmark alone.



POLPEX 1965 Souvenir Sheet with Kopernik Stamp designed by Cz. Słania.

Słania has also run off a long succession of private studies and commissions. Amongst these have been portraits of Queen Elizabeth, Churchill, de Gaulle, John F. Kennedy, Marilyn Monroe, Sophia Loren, Piłsudski, and General Anders. One of these portraits, that of Queen Elizabeth, may make its appearance on the English Pound note. He has also executed several souvenir sheets for the Union of Polish Philatelists in Great Britain.

However, his most notable work (in this author's opinion) is the superbly executed study of the Battle of Grunwald, from the original painting by the great Polish artist, Jan Matejko. The format is large (113x203 mm) and is most impressive for its attention to exquisite detail, artistic merit, and overall quality. Those in attendance at this

TYSIĄCLECIE POLSKI CHRZEŚCIJAŃSKIEJ

Thousand Years of Christianity in Poland



"POLPHILEX 66"

ZWIĄZEK FILATELISTÓW POLSKICH W W. BRYTANII

Birmingham: 29 April - 1 May 1966. London: 21-24 May 1966

POLPHILEX 66 — Millennium Souvenir Sheet of the Association of Polish Philatelists in Great Britain. Stamp engraved by Czesław Słania.

exhibition are asked to view the special composite exhibit of Słania's work which features a copy of "Grunwald", and where they can see, firsthand, the artistry of Czesław Słania.

Słania's ability and artistry are without question. Master that he is, specialists in this demanding field come from around the world to consult with him. He is also expert in various printing techniques, and his expertise has helped the West German firm, "Goebel", in the development of multi-color printing presses.

This then is the man, Czesław Słania — artist, engraver, technician, and craftsman. His work is worthy of extensive study, and each of his stamps is a miniature in art. In his own lifetime he has earned a niche of respect and reverence — a niche not usually accorded until many years after the discovery of an artist's greatness. His greatness is now!

Sources:

Exhibition Catalogue, Union Of Polish Philatelists in Great Britain. Polphilex 71. May, 1971

Dziennik Związkowy (Zgoda): "Głos niusz Polskiego Grawera" by M. L. "Antenie". December 17, 1971

At AMERIPEX 86 Polonus meeting, Czesław Słania was presented with Honorary Membership as a recognition of his outstanding contribution to the designing and engraving of postage stamps. At age 67, he has already engraved 750 stamps and his life goal is 1,000! At CAPEX 87 in Canada, Czesław Słania promised Fred Szebel to engrave souvenir sheets for Polonus' 50th Anniversary, POLPEX 89. A L. Kawecki design was already mailed to Sweden. If his busy schedule permits, he will attend our Anniversary in February, 1989, so look forward to this extraordinary event!

Plan of Emissions of Polish Post for 1988

Succ. No.	Description	No. of stamps	Date of Issue	Face value zł.
1.	Dragon - flies	6	Febr. 23	140.00
2.	Cracow Restoration	1	March	15.00
3.	World Philatelic Exhibition "Juvalux-88"	1	March	40.00
4.	International Year of Applied Graphics	1	April	40.00
5.	Old Clocks	6	May	110.00
6.	World Philatelic Exhib. "Finlandia-88"	1	June	65.00
7.	Seul Olympic Games	6	July	175.00
8.	Monument of Warsaw Uprising 1944	1	Aug.	15.00
9.	European FAO-Conference in Warsaw	2	Aug.	55.00
10.	Horses	6	Sept.	170.00
11.	Defensive War of 1939	3	Sept.	45.00
12.	World Day of the Post	1	Oct.	20.00
13.	45 Years Polish People's Army - Combat Decorations	2	Oct.	35.00
14.	200th Anniv. of Polish Parliament (Sejm)	1	Oct.	20.00
15.	Dogs	6	Oct.	140.00
16.	Fire - Ships	6	Nov.	125.00
17.	70 Years of Poland's Independence - Historical Set	6	Nov.	180.00
18.	70 Years of Poland's Independence - Economic History	6	Nov.	180.00
19.	Polish Kngs and Princes series	2	Dec.	25.00
20.	New Year	1	Dec.	20.00

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Warsaw, March 1988

—ARS Polona



POŁONUS MEETING 20 OR SO YEARS AGO. DO YOU RECOGNIZE YOURSELF?



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.

Please Pay Your Dues!

As of April, 1988 about a third of the membership did not pay their dues for this year. In order for your Society to function properly, please do your duty and send \$12.50 to:

Fred Szebel, Treasurer
9041 Emerson Street
Les Plaines, IL 60016

Late Patron Polpex 88

A. J. Szafranski, Glenshaw, PA

New Member

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Annual Dues which include a subscription to the 'Bulletin' are \$12.50 (U.S. funds only) and should be sent to Fred Szebel, 9041 Emerson St., Des Plaines, IL 60016. Membership Dues are payable by December 31st, for the next calendar year. New members will receive all the 'Bulletins' for the year in which they join. Changes of address, problems with receiving the Bulletin, contribution of articles for the Bulletin, or general matters pertaining to the Society, should be addressed to:

Polonus Philatelic Society
Box 1217, Oak Park, IL 60304

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