

Alliance News

Toledo-Poznan Alliance newsletter

SUMMER 2011

DOZYNKI 2011

Please keep the date Sunday, October 16, 2011 open to celebrate Dozynki 2011. This year we are celebrating the 20th year of the signing of the Sister City agreement between Toledo, Ohio and Poznan, Poland. It will be held at the Lourdes College Franciscan Center and will begin with Mass at the Queen of Peace Chapel at noon, with dinner and festivities following at 2:00.

The Echoes of Poland and Millie's Polka Band will be performing for us.

Please look for your invitation in the mail.

If anyone can help and donate any items, preferably some Polish, for the Silent Auction, please get in touch with Walter Palicki at 419-475-6688. You can also donate gift cards from stores or restaurants.

CELEBRATION OF A LIFE

In loving memory of one of Toledo-Poznan Alliance's past member, **Marian Wojciechowski**, a Mass and celebration was held Saturday July 16th. at St. Adalbert Catholic Church with Father Paul Kwiatkowski presiding. There were officials from Poland and Washington, D.C. present along with Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur.

Marian Wojciechowski had a story to tell like very few others. He survived Auschwitz and the horrors that followed him for most of his life. Most of us find it hard to imagine surviving such atrocities. He led a truly exemplary life that will be remembered.

His story can be read in "*Seven Roads to Freedom*" and "*Forgotten Survivors*" by Richard Lucas.

Tributes outlining his life and victories were given by Marcy Kaptur, Peter Ujvagi, Peggy Grant, and his many friends some coming as far as Poland.

Tributes also followed at his interment at Mount Carmel Cemetery where his cremains were laid to rest next to his wife, Wladyslawa and son, Lucian. Polish soil from memorable and important places to Marian were

scattered in the grave. The services closed with the singing of the Polish National Anthem.

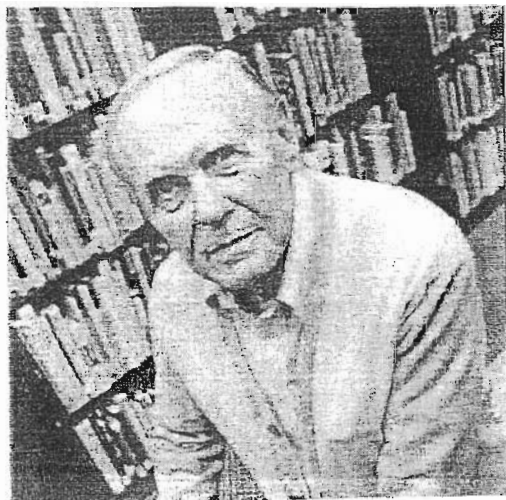
Below are pictures of his son John and daughter Mary Ann and a picture of some of the visitors from Poland.



SPRING CONCERT ECHOES OF POLAND

Sunday, June 12th the Echoes of Poland gave one of their outstanding performances at the Ave Maria Performance Art Center at the Notre Dame Academy. For those of us that attended we were given another delightful performance by the adult ensemble as well as the children's ensemble. It was another time for us to get together and enjoy The Echoes sing and dance to the songs and music of various regions in Poland.

TPA Board Member Retires



(Photo courtesy of The Blade)

Recently in a story by the *Toledo Blade*, one of our Toledo Poznan Alliance board members, **Walter Palicki**, celebrated a milestone of sorts. He worked part-time for 57 years at the Toledo-Lucas County Public Library. He started at Mott Branch on Dorr St. and eventually worked at every branch in the system and every public service department at the Main Branch downtown.

Walter's full-time employment was at the Bedford Public Schools Junior High as both an English and Social Studies teacher. He was asked to start their library a few years later. His new responsibilities meant his job would eventually eliminate classroom teaching and library work would be full-time. So he had to make a decision, "I had to make a choice. Did I want that one-on-one with a student or did I want to serve the whole student population? I made the choice to serve the whole school, but still, I enjoyed teaching." Walter retired from Bedford in 1999.

Walter began working as a substitute librarian at the Bedford branch of the Monroe County Library System in 2006, and continues with one day a week, as he puts it, to keep him in the mix of things.

The Goats of Poznan

Legend has it that in 1511, the cook in charge of the town hall's inauguration banquet unfortunately let the meat burn. Two goats were brought in but, unwilling to finish up on the grill, they escaped to the top of the building and confronted each other in front of the confused crowd. The governor took this as a good omen and ordered mechanical effigies of the goats be coupled to the clock so that the event could be celebrated daily. So, since then, the mechanical goats have been replying to the twelve strokes at noon by butting their horns twelve times.

Drabik Memorial Marker

The Drabik family and friends dedicated an Ohio Historical Society Marker on Saturday, May 28, 2011 in honor of **Alexander Drabik**, the first Allied soldier across the Rhine River during WWII and the first soldier of an invading army across the Rhine since Napoleonic Wars.

The marker tells Drabik's life story, and focuses on his heroic leadership of March 7, 1945 when he led ten soldiers of Company A of the 27th Armored Infantry Battalion of the 9th Armored Division across the two-track Ludendorff railroad bridge from Remagen to Erpel, Germany on the east bank of the Rhine. Drabik was awarded the *Distinguished Service Cross* for heroism and bravery during WWII.

-Jackie Koraleski Konwinski

The TPA made a donation for this historical marker.

Poznan Sites For the Tourist

A city of about 600,000 people, Poznan lies in the western part of Poland and is the capital of the region known as Wielkopolska (Greater Poland). It is a relatively flat region. Poznan has an interesting history and is rich in places of interest that reflect that history: churches, palaces, museums and monuments. It is also a flourishing metropolis known the world over for its trade fairs. For those interested in tourism, the city offers many historical landmarks that are well worth seeing.

Poznan lies on the Warta River and the most ancient part of the city is the Cathedral Island or, as it is to this day rendered in archaic Polish, Ostrow Tumski. It is on this island that there once stood the castle of Prince Mieszko I who accepted Christianity on behalf of the Polish nation in 966, and his son, Boleslaw the Brave, Poland's first crowned king. The tombs of father and son can be viewed in the Gold Chapel of the gothic cathedral that stands on the island to this day. Near the cathedral stands the Museum of the Archdiocese. It houses, in

addition to gold chalices and monstrances from the churches of Wielkopolska, Poland's only paintings by Anthony Van Dyck. The observation terrace of the Economics Academy's skyscraper, 260 feet high, offers an excellent view of Ostrow Tumski and the cathedral.

To the west of the river is the center of the old city, the Stary Rynek (Old Market Square), in the middle of which stands the Renaissance Town Hall. Until 1939 it housed the city's government. Today, the building is home to the Poznan Historical Museum. At noon, two mechanical billy goats clash horns on the Town Hall tower. Inside is a lavishly decorated Great Hall. The fronts of the houses surrounding the square, and the ones next to the Town Hall, once homes of the wealthiest residents, feature Renaissance and Baroque motifs. Three of these buildings now house the Museum of Musical Instruments, with exhibits from all over the world and from many musical eras.

Not far from the Stary Rynek stands Poznan's most beautiful church of St. Stanislaus, commonly referred to as the Fara Church. This is one of Poznan's most mysterious buildings, since parts of the crypts have not yet been explored. Rumors say that crates of sketches by the great Polish painters Jan Matejko and Wojciech Gerson, purchased for the Poznan City Museum just before WWII, were hidden here. Every day during the summer, organ concerts are held in the church with the proceeds going towards the renovation of its historic organ.

On the hill next to the Market Square is the foundation of the castle of Przemysl II (1257-1296), Duke of Wielkopolska, who was crowned King of Poland in 1295, only to be assassinated by agents of the Brandeburgs a year later. Built in the second half of the 13th century, the castle remained a royal seat for many years. It was here in 1493 that King Jan Olbracht accepted the homage of the grand master of the Teutonic Knights. The building fell into ruin in the 18th century, and on its foundations the Prussians later erected a new building. It was destroyed in 1945, reconstructed after the war, and now houses the Museum of Applied Art.

Further west is another Poznan square that should be explored, namely the Plac Wolnosci (Liberty Square). It is dominated by the Raczynski Library, a public library founded in Poznan in the early 19th century by Edward Raczynski. Its façade is an architectural reference to the eastern façade of the Louvre. Also located on the square is the Poznan National Museum which boasts Poland's largest collection of works by painter, Jacek Malczewski. Its permanent exhibition of Gothic art is also worth viewing. From the west, the square is completed by the former German theater where Teatr

Osmege Dnia (The Theater of the Eighth Day) is located today.

Next door to the building that once housed the Bazar Hotel is the Okraglak, Poland's only round department store. Its windows offer an excellent view of the Opera, which is referred to as the Teatr Wielki, or Grand Theater. It was Poland's first permanent opera house dating from 1910. Today it stages excellent productions and has a prominent decorative element, a winged horse Pegasus.

The new city center's main building is still the Imperial Palace built in neo Romanesque style by Kaiser Wilhelm II. This was the last royal residence of such size built in Europe. In the courtyard is the Lion Fountain, replica of the famous sculpture from the Alhambra. The Kaiser, who visited his castle just twice, received guests in the throne room, which today houses a movie theater.

For those who enjoy longer outings, the Wielkopolski National Park, just a dozen or so miles from Poznan, is an excellent choice. A stroll around Poland's oldest and largest palm house or a visit to one of two zoos is ideal for those who don't have time for longer trips.

Poznan has no shortage of artistic attractions. In January, many choirs give concerts of Christmas carols. In late June there is the Malta International Theater Festival or a concert by the excellent boys' choir, the Poznan Nightingales. Organ concerts are held in St. Stanislaus Parish from July to September at 12:15 p.m.

*-Polish Academic Information Center,
University at Buffalo*

Thus ends our tour of sites to see in our Sister City of Poznan. It is a wonderful place to visit!

Tour of Poland is being planned for July 2012 By Kathy Gabel

This amazing tour will thrill you with excitement when you read the itinerary and realize that some of the castles and palaces that we visit will be our "royal residences" for the night. Yes, we are staying overnight in castles and palaces! Some of them are reminiscent of English castles from the Elizabethan era.

We will also be treated to sumptuous feasts that were only served to Polish royalty, and we will be entertained by local folk groups. The complete itinerary is still being finalized and it will be available shortly. If you are interested in this amazing tour, please contact Kathy Gabel at 419-385-8516.