

PAC Oplatek and Awards from 3

see it published soon. John fondly remembered how his dad loved to make bigos and serve them to friends. They hosted many Polish parties in their Westminster home and bigos was a must. Stanley's last days were spent in a comatose state, but on Easter many family members and friends came to visit. Among them was Stanley's favorite artist, cellist Janice Foy. When she played, he came out of his coma, pointed to her, and shook hands with all in the room. He died two weeks later.

The next award was to Elizabeth Rudzińska, for her many years of service as a former Polish National Alliance Commissioner and the Director of the Helena Modrzejewska Polish School in Yorba Linda. Elizabeth was/is very instrumental in the organizing of many Polish functions in the Orange Country area. Her dedication and service continues in organizing fundraising events for the school and other Polish organizations. Her award was presented by her daughter Monique Wright and Michael Dutkowski.

As Richard Wideryński walked to the stage to receive his award, he was very surprised when his wife Karen was walking behind him. She was the presenter of his award. Karen talked about how Richard's family has always been very important to him. His father fought in the Polish Army at Monte Cassino. Many members of his family were sent to the gulags of Siberia (Rich participates in a group called "Sybiraki"). He is a graduate of the Polish National Alliance sponsored Alliance College. He is a student of Polish history and thoroughly Polish. Karen said she has learned more about Polish history from him than she ever imagined. He is a "man on a mission." Richard served for six years as President of Polish American Congress - S. Cal. and six years as a Polish National Alliance Commissioner. After receiving his award, Rich reminded the audience, "Let us never forget the pride we have in being Polish."

Outstanding entertainment was provided by the previously mentioned Janice Foy on the cello and Kasia Wróbel on the piano.

Ms. Foy began with a collage of Polish hymns and dances. The suite consisted of the Polish National Anthem, Through the Polish Land Krakowiak, Polonaise, and Kujawiak. She then played some of Stanley's other favorites: They Call the Wind Mariah, Malaguena, and Echo Serenade Flamenco.

Janice Foy is a very accomplished cellist. She has played for many ethnic groups and has served as principal cellist for many orchestras. She has recorded music for and appeared in many television programs, as well as promoting after-school programs. She wishes to share her love of music globally.

Kasia Wróbel has long been playing the piano for Polish audiences. Kasia was very involved in the Polish Community during the 1970s as the Choreographer of the Orange County Mazur Dancers. Her participation in the community has been curtailed by motherhood. Kasia and Janice were classmates in the Ethnomusicology Dept. at UCLA. Kasia provided the accompaniment to the singing of kolędy, led by award winners Richard Wideryński and Elizabeth Rudzińska. Unfortunately, this part of the program was altogether too short, but very enjoyable.

A 50/50 raffle was held. The money was divided three ways and the first prize winner was Gene Kellner, who came from San Marcos (near San Diego) for the occasion. (It was remarked that the money would pay for his gas expense. He wants his aunt in New Jersey to read about this.)

The afternoon concluded with the popular gift exchange. All departed happily with their gifts and memories of a wonderful event. If you were not there, be sure to come next year. (Submit your Polonia Award nominations before the PAC's September meeting.) □

Gen Emil Fieldorf from 7

has never forgotten and now, it seems, she may finally win justice for her late father.

Twice Mrs Fieldorf-Czarska has campaigned for and won warrants for Mrs Brus's extradition from England to face the Polish courts. Twice the British government has refused to implement them on humanitarian grounds. But last week, a Polish court issued a European arrest warrant for Mrs Brus (under her maiden name of Wolińska), charging her with sending a war hero to his death.

The warrant need only be rubber stamped by a British court, which would force Mrs Brus, now a British citizen, to be extradited within 90 days.

Should she be found guilty by the Polish courts, she could face a 10-year jail sentence.

"It could not come a moment too soon," says Mrs Fieldorf-Czarska, gazing at the medal resting on her knee. It is the Polish Order of the White Eagle, the country's highest honour, which was posthumously awarded to her father last year. "This," she says, gently lifting the medal, "is the true measure of my father. He is acknowledged worldwide as a Polish patriot, who fought nobly to defend his country from the Nazis. Yet this woman, herself persecuted by the Nazis, whose family died at their hands, signed his death warrant in effect when she had him arrested.

"He endured an eight-hour show trial, during which his heroic name was besmirched. Then he was hung and his body dumped. To this day I don't know where my father's grave is. She took his life and my family's life. My father devoted his life to Poland. I, willingly, have devoted mine to seeking justice for his memory. If that woman is made to face her crime, I will have honoured my beloved Papa."

The extraordinary circumstances surrounding the case came about as a result of the split in the Polish resistance after the German invasion of Russia in 1941. Gen Fieldorf joined the Home Army: Helena Wolińska signed up to the Communist resistance, the People's Guard, and rose quickly through its ranks.

After the Soviet occupation at the end of the war, the Home Army leaders were purged as "bandits" and "fascists". Gen Fieldorf was first arrested in 1945, falsely accused of being a currency smuggler, and sent to a Soviet concentration camp. When he returned home, he was kept under surveillance by the secret police, who arrested him three years later. His family never saw him again. "It's painful still to think of those days," says Mrs. Fieldorf-Czarska, as she leafs through a dog-eared photograph album. "Look, here: Christmas 1947," she says, pointing to a family portrait. In the centre is a smiling Maria, her arm around her father's shoulder. "He was such a kind, fun father," she says. "He loved practical jokes. Before the war, he would go to Paris on business and bring back jokes, such as plastic beetles he would leave under food on one of our plates."

When Germany invaded Poland in 1939, Emil Fieldorf was a 44-year-old officer in the 51st division of the Polish army. He and two fellow officers fought their way out of a gun battle and he fled to England. There he joined the

Polish resistance. He returned home to train young fighters, and later worked in espionage using the name "Nil".

While he fought for the underground, his wife, Janina, and daughters, Maria and Christina, helped nurse injured resistance fighters. "It was dangerous, we knew that," says Mrs Fieldorf-Czarska, "but it is what a patriotic family did. We did it for our country."

Twice her mother was arrested by the Nazis on suspicion of helping the resistance. The girls had to go into hiding because the Nazis threatened to imprison them, too.

When the war ended and Stalinists took control, the general was arrested on the orders of Helena Brus, known as "Warsaw Delores". "Father was devastated to be accused of being a Nazi collaborator. Everyone knew they were trumped-up charges, but for a proud man who had risked his life for his country over and over, it was heart breaking."

The general's wife attended his show trial, knowing that her husband was likely to be imprisoned. "She was not prepared for the death verdict," says Mrs Fieldorf-Czarska. She fainted in the court room.

"Every day I would go to the court begging for news of my father. I remember going around noon on February 24, in 1953. They said they knew nothing. That afternoon, at 3.10, he was hanged. No one told us. The next time I went to the court they said: "Don't bother coming again. Your father is dead."

When she asked if there were any mementoes she was told "No", and handed a bundle of shabby clothes. She was also told: "His last words were to tell his family he is dead. This we are doing." When she asked what had become of her father's body she was told: "He was deprived of his civil liberties."

Mrs Fieldorf-Czarska looks down, again, at the medal entwined in her fingers. "Father knew, I think, what his fate would be. He fashioned a cross out of bread crusts and hung it around his neck. The day a guard taunted him for his faith and pulled it off, he knew he would die."

After the general's execution, a rabbi imprisoned with him told the family he had bravely withstood hours of interrogation, but would never admit to the false allegations. The general had kept up other inmates' spirits and more than once saved fellow prisoners from fierce beatings.

Years later, one of the court officials at his trial said he had faced his death with dignity. As he walked to the gallows, he paused to stare into the man's eyes. "There was no hatred. But that look haunted me, made me ashamed," the man said.

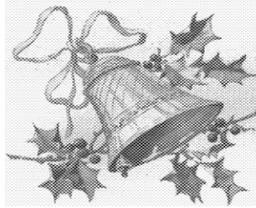
After his death, life became more difficult for the general's family. Mrs Fieldorf-Czarska, a talented economist, was given only poorly paid clerking jobs because of her family name. Her personal file was stamped: "Enemy of the people. Fire her as soon as a replacement is found."

As for Helena Brus, she rose to the rank of general, but after Stalin's death the old-guard Communists were themselves purged. She was made a primary school teacher.

Ultimately, she and her husband, Włodzimierz Brus, a Jewish professor, emigrated to England, where he became an Oxford don.

Today, she rarely leaves her 1930s apartment block. Through her intercom she would say of the warrant only: "I will not speak of this thing." She has, however, recently been more forthcoming about the warrant on Polish radio. "I can only laugh about it," she said to an interviewer last week. "You should, too. I will never be returned to Poland."

Her words have had little effect on her nemesis, Mrs Fieldorf-Czarska. "I believe she feels no guilt, no shame," she says. "Yet this woman has blood on her hands. For the sake of my papa, my hero, I will campaign, until I die, for her extradition to face justice. The justice my papa was denied." □

**Merry Christmas**

and a

Happy New Year

from the

members and officers

of the

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