

## The Brit-Polonian Connection

By: **Robert Strybel**,

Polish/Polonian Affairs Writer

Over the past four years, since Poland's joined the European Union, more than two millions Poles have found work abroad, mainly in the British Isles. The result has been the emergence of a completely new Polonia. New Polish publications, Web sites, businesses and organizations have been set up. Many previously poorly attended or nearly-defunct Catholic parishes have been revitalized, and thousands of Polish babies have been born. In those parts of England, Wales, Scotland, Ulster and Ireland where Polish migrant workers are concentrated, they are often sufficiently numerous to influence their surroundings. In the future, the recent influx of Polish immigrants may become a significant political force in the United Kingdom and Ireland. Whatever the case, there are now enough new-wave Poles in the British Isles to warrant a closer look at some of their activities.

**Who are the Britain-bound Poles:** Poles account from two-thirds to three-fourths of the Central and East Europeans who have been flooding into the British Isles since those countries entered the European Union in 2004. Most fall into the 18-34 age bracket, and average age of the Polish immigrant is popularly estimated at 28. The large majority of these are single, but many are expected to choose their future spouses from amongst fellow-migrants. The usually reliable Centre for Economics and Business Research calculates that the average migrant worker earns £20,000 per year (about \$40,000), roughly six times more than the average wage in Poland. Much of it is sent back to families in Poland. Unlike the initial wave of Polish migrants who mainly found menial jobs as construction workers, janitors, cleaners, truck drivers, waitresses, care-givers and domestics, more and more are now working in banks and offices or going into businesses for themselves. Some plan to settle permanently, others intend to return to Poland after setting aside a nest-egg, but a great many are keeping their options.

**Ealing – London's "Greenpoint":** Many demobilized Polish World War II soldiers and other DPs settled in this London borough which continues to attract a successive wave of Polish newcomers. Today, the average young Polish immigrant lives there and in the surrounding area with other young Poles, watches Polish television and listens to Polish Radio, reads Polish news on the internet, communicates by phone with family and friends at home for little or nothing, travels back cheaply by coach or air for holidays or family celebrations, goes to mass at the local Polish church, shops in one of the innumerable "Polskie Delikatesy" where Polish delicacies and Polish newspaper and magazines are available. He or she also tends to socialize in Polish cafés, pubs and clubs. Some Britons resent the Poles' ethnic solidarity, but from a purely sociological point of view this is only yet another Polonian community in the making.

**Reaching Brit-Pols via "Polish Express":** Since being established October 2003 "Polish Express" has into the UK's biggest Polish weekly newspaper. With a circulation of 60,000 copies, it provides some 250,000 readers with Polish, Polonian, British and world news, sports, entertainment, information on jobs, careers and property as well as classified ads. The online edition of "Polish Express" ([www.polishexpress.co.uk/en/newspaper.aspx?id=3](http://www.polishexpress.co.uk/en/newspaper.aspx?id=3)) is available in both Polish and English-language versions. Those interested in targeting the UK's Polish community or obtaining more information may contact: [sales@polishexpress.co.uk](mailto:sales@polishexpress.co.uk) or phone: 0 208 96 444 88, extension 401.

**Catholic Poland in the UK:** The arrival of well over a million Poles has significantly influenced the religious life of the United Kingdom. Polish Catholic Mission for England and Wales recognizes 83 Polish communities with 163 center where mass is celebrated in Polish. Besides the spiritual benefits of attending Sunday mass in their

native tongue, for Poles it is also a social occasion—an opportunity to meet friends and enjoy various cultural activities offered by the parishes. There are arrivals are alone and seek the familiarity of the church and presence of fellow Poles. There are 12 Polish Parishes in London, the most popular being Mother of the Church Parish in Ealing, Our Lady of Częstochowa (Islington), Christ the King (Balham) and St Andrew Bobola (Hammersmith.) Other parishes have increased their number of masses to meet the growing Polish demand.

**Poles at British universities:** More and younger Poles are now seeking an academic education. At present some 7,000 young Poles are enrolled at British universities, a 56 percent increase over 2007. Poles now rank in sixth place among the European Union at British institutions of higher learning, ahead of students from Italy and Spain. According to university official Emma Short, "Poles are ambitious, diligent, intelligent and have an excellent command of English."

**"Daily Mail" accused of defaming Poles:** The Federation of Poles in Great Britain, the British Polonia's main umbrella organization, has filed a complaint to the Press Complaints Commission accusing the "Daily Mail" of defaming Polish residents in the United Kingdom. The FPGB claimed the paper had a deliberate policy aimed at encouraging discrimination against immigrants, in particular Poles and their families. However, a spokesman for the Daily Mail, dismissed these charges, claiming, Britain's second-largest newspaper provides balanced reporting about Poles. "We do reserve the right to criticize bogus asylum claims, benefit cheats and tax dodgers no matter where they were born," he added.

**Scotland fears Poles' departure:** A study carried out at Strathclyde University has warned that the economy of Scotland, which has become highly dependent on Polish migrants, could suffer when they return home. The most vulnerable to the future withdrawal of the migrant workforce include the hospitality, construction and food-processing industries as well as agriculture. Of the Poles who came to work in Britain last year, 60% said they intended to stay in the country for several months and only eight percent planned to remain for more than two years. The soaring value of the euro against the British pound means Scottish wages are now less attractive as a source of funds to send home to relatives in Poland. High euro-paying Germany could siphon off many of the Poles when it opens its labor market to migrants workers in 2011.

**Polonizing the British bobby:** A decade ago the Thames Valley Police used to spent around £80,000 (\$160,000) a year on translation, but with the influx of large number of Poles into such areas as Slough translation costs have risen to about £1 million (\$2 million). Policemen have also been enrolling in Polish-language courses and a booklet containing basic phrases encountered in police work has been issued. Polish immigrants have been hired by the police to answer emergency phone calls from their compatriots. Across the British Isles the demand for Polish policemen has increased.

**English girls bully Polish rivals:** Pretty Polish girls have become targets of jealousy and bullying by British schoolgirls who claim their classmates no longer pay much attention to them. Polish girls are especially vulnerable in classes where they are greatly outnumbered. In addition to name-calling and other forms of mental abuse, attractive Polish schoolgirls sometimes get pushed around so badly that they have to change schools.

**Young Irishman kills two Poles:** A seventeen-year-old Irishman has been arraigned by a Dublin juvenile court on charges of killing two Polish immigrants during an argument. The Poles, Paweł Kalita, 29, and Mariusz Sz wajkos, 27, died of multiple stab wounds with a screwdriver after they refused to buy alcohol for a gang of underage Irish toughs. The crime triggered widespread outrage across Ireland, prompting Irish President Mary McAleese to attend the Poles' funeral mass celebrated by Dublin Archbishop Diarmuid Martin. □

### Did you know that from 13

\*\*\* Poland's national anthem is called as "Mazurek Dąbrowskiego" ("Dąbrowski's Mazurka") and is better known to many by its first words: "Jeszcze Polska nie zginęła..." ("Poland has yet to perish...").

\*\*\* Nearly 97% of Poland's 38 million people are ethnic Poles. The remaining three percent are accounted for by Germans, Belarussians, Ukrainians, Gypsies, Russians, Lemkos, Lithuanians, Slovaks, Jews, Armenians, Czechs and Tartars.

\*\*\* Poland's military personnel, police and other uniformed services salute one another with two fingers, and only two fingers are raised when taking an oath.

\*\*\* The Polish flag displayed upside down (with the red field at the top and the white one at bottom) is exactly the same as the official flags of Indonesia and Monaco.

\*\*\* Hippocrene Books is America's foremost publisher of Polish dictionaries, phrasebooks, cookbooks, folk art, legends and fiction including Henryk Sienkiewicz's famous "Trilogy" in English. See what's available at: <http://www.hippocrenebooks.com/browsecat.aspx?id=1081>

\*\*\* Poland, which is on Central European Time, switched from winter time to summer time (known in the US as daylight-saving time) on March 30<sup>th</sup> by pushing the clock ahead one hour.

\*\*\* Poland's 10 most popular last names are: Nowak, Kowalski, Wiśniewski, Dąbrowski, Lewandowski, Wójcik, Kamiński, Kowalczyk, Zieliński, Szymański and Woźniak.

\*\*\* America's biggest Polish festival is the Polish Fest held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. It differs from the typical "mainly polka" events in that its entertainment often includes a folk-music, classical, jazz, rock and youth stage. See: [www.polishfest.org](http://www.polishfest.org)

\*\*\* Poland's tallest peak is Mount Rysy in the High Tatra Mountains which soars to a height of 2,499 meters above sea-level.

\*\*\* Snuff-taking has long been a part of the heritage of the Kashubians, an ethnic subgroup of farmers and fishermen inhabiting Poland's Baltic Coast. When the government banned snuff production, the Kashubs took to growing and processing their own according to age-old recipes.

\*\*\* The closest thing Polonia has to Ireland's fabled Riverdance and similar performing groups is the Chicago-based Lira Ensemble. This talented, multifaceted performing group includes a women's, mixed chorus and children's chorus, a chamber orchestra and the colorful Lira Dancers. Contact 6525 North Sheridan # Sky 905, Chicago, IL 60626; phone: (773) 539-4900;

\*\*\* A distinctly Polish piece of headwear is the visored four-cornered hat which is part of the regulation dress uniforms of the military and other uniformed services. It is based on the traditional "rogatywka" which forms part of the men's Krakowiak outfit.

\*\*\* The world's largest oil painting is the "Crucifixion", painted by Polish artist Jan Styka and first displayed at the 1904 St Louis World's Fair, may be viewed in a specially built pavilion at Los Angeles' sprawling Forest Lawn Memorial Park (cemetery).

\*\*\* On the control panel of a Polish elevator 1 is the American second floor (the floor above the ground floor), the P is the ground floor (parter) and the 0 is the basement. If you see 00, that means there is a below-basement level such as an underground parking garage.

\*\*\* The hue of red specified for the Polish flag is vermilion (in Polish: "cynober") a bright-red pigment made from mercuric sulfide. The flag with a crowned white eagle on a red shield in the white upper half is flown by the President of Poland, Polish diplomatic legations abroad and Polish ships at sea. □

## Canada Gets Buddy-Buddy with Poland

By: **Jeff Davis**

Relations between Canada and Poland reached a high-water mark last week with Prime Minister Stephen Harper's visit to Poland after the NATO summit in Bucharest.

Mr. Harper met with Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk in Gdańsk, thanking him for supplying helicopters to Canadian Forces in Afghanistan. In return, Mr. Tusk thanked Canada for lifting visa requirements for Polish travellers last month.

And it wasn't just a mere love-in as the two countries signed a number of agreements.

Polish Labour Minister Jolanta Fedak and Canadian Ambassador to Warsaw David Preston signed a deal on social security and pensions.

The two countries also pledged to negotiate a Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement and a Young Citizens' Mobility agreement, which could grow into a full-on bilateral working holiday program

Mr. Harper also paid a visit to former Polish president and leader of the anti-Soviet Solidarity movement Lech Wałęsa. After chatting with the famed revolutionary, the prime minister dropped in to visit Wawel Castle in Krakow, where he scoped out some prized 15th century tapestries, a part of the Polish royal treasure kept safe from marauding Nazis by Canada during the Second World War.

Mr. Harper was accompanied throughout the visit by Władysław Lizon, president of the Polish Canadian Congress. Mr. Lizon told Embassy that between Mr. Harper's decision to tour Poland and the recent visit of Polish Foreign Minister Radek Sikorski to Ottawa earlier this year, relations are looking great and Polish Canadians, a significant voting bloc in Canada, are pleased as punch. □

### Music News from 3

great contribution to his legacy. Their excellent presentation will surely bolster to the effort to return Stojowski's music to the concert repertoire.

[Historical details for this review were taken from Joseph A. Herter's Zygmunt Stojowski: Life and Music (PMHS Vol. 10) – published by the Polish Music Center and Figueroa Press, 2007. More details are also provided in Mr. Herter's "Liner Notes" for this recording. Commentary by Mr. Herter for this review was given via email, on May 12 and May 29, 2008.] □

### Legal from 3

waived. The inspector prepares another form based on the question and answer session. Upon signing these documents, the individual is returned to his or her country.

The Government keeps individuals detained throughout the expedited removal process. There is no possibility to post bond and get out of custody. The arriving person will also not be able to communicate with family, friends, business associates, or a lawyer, which makes it difficult to prove status or any previous presence in the U.S. The only exception to this procedure is for people with a fear of returning to their home country.

### What are the consequences of receiving expedited removal?

If an individual receives expedited removal because they did not have the proper documents to enter the U.S., she will receive a five-year bar to re-entering the U.S. Again, this could possibly include people with *valid visas*. If an individual is charged with misrepresentation or fraud, he is permanently barred from coming back to the U.S.

The second part of this article will discuss ways that some people can avoid expedited removal. □