

London celebrates the 90th anniversary of Poland's Independence

On Saturday afternoon November 8th 2008 Polish Londoners and their British friends will celebrate the 90th anniversary of Poland's Independence with a parade led by the Polish Navy Band from Westminster Cathedral to a rally in Trafalgar Square. Speakers at the rally will include prominent Poles and distinguished British parliamentarians.

The parade will follow a Mass of Thanksgiving in the Roman Catholic Westminster Cathedral with a homily given by Poland's Primate, Cardinal Józef Glemp.

Mr Janusz Sikora-Sikorski, Chairman of the Organising Committee says: "It is the first time that this Polish anniversary is being celebrated in such a public way in the UK. Many young Poles in this country wanted to participate in such a large-scale colourful event. War veterans will attend with their battle standards. Polish organizations and trade union branches will march behind their banners. Young and old will march proudly together."

Polish Independence Day commemorates the date, November 11th 1918, when Poland regained its sovereignty at the end of the First World War. In fact, Poland had first been a sovereign nation more than a thousand years ago

after it had embraced Western Christianity. However in 1795 it lost that sovereignty and endured 123 years of bitter struggle for freedom against three partitioning powers.

When Polish leader Józef Piłsudski was able to proclaim the rebirth of a strong independent Poland in 1918 it was important news not only for Poles themselves, but for Europe too. Barely 2 years later the newly independent land was able to defeat the Soviet Army in 1920 at the gates of Warsaw and thus saved Europe from revolution and tyranny.

In 1939 Poland was also the first country to say "No" to Hitler's demands. Then its pilots, sailors and soldiers fought shoulder to shoulder with Britain as its most long-lasting wartime ally.

Poland paid a terrible price for its defiance of tyranny. 6 million were killed and its major cities destroyed. There followed 44 more years of struggle and deprivation under Soviet rule. Poland only regained its independence again in 1989 thanks to the Solidarity movement and the guiding spirit of Pope John Paul II. Now Poland is a member of NATO and the EU. It is again a democratic state with a successful modern economy and has restored Polish Independence Day as a national holiday.

Timetable for November 8th 2008:

1330 hrs. Mass in Westminster Cathedral. Concelebrated by Cardinal Józef Glemp, Archbishop of Gniezno, Primate of Poland Music with Martin Baker, Master of Music at Westminster Cathedral, and combined Polish choirs from South London directed by Dr. Jurek Pockert.

1500hrs Parade forms up in Ambrosden Avenue, alongside the Cathedral. At the head of the parade - Polish Navy Band. Followed by wartime veterans.

1515hrs March proceeds along Victoria Street, then Parliament Square and Whitehall.

1615hrs Rally begins in Trafalgar Square. Speakers: HE Jan Borkowski, Secretary of State, Polish Foreign Ministry, HE Barbara Tuge-Erecinska, Ambassador of the Republic of Poland, HE Dr Ryszard Kaczorowski, last President of Polish Government in Exile, Rt Hon Dr Denis MacShane MP for Rotherham, former Minister for Europe, Mr Greg Hands, MP for Hammersmith and Fulham.

Polish patriotic songs and hymns by the Polish Navy Band, the "Ave Verum" Choir and the Balham Polish parish choir 1700hrs Polish and British national anthems - end of Rally.

For further details please contact: Janusz Sikora-Sikorski, committee chair e-mail jansikorski@theagencygroup.com, mobile: 07710 525 672. □

A Rebuttal to Ms. Justyna Ball's "Pit Bull with lipstick" article

By: *Edmund Rusinek*

Normally, I do not respond to articles reflecting the author's political beliefs or opinions. However, the vicious article by Ms Justyna Ball in the September 2008 issue of the News of Polonia cannot go unanswered. She is pleased with the Democratic Party convention and the leaders that spoke there including "Uncle Teddy", Sen. Obama and Michelle Obama. And even had a kind word for Sen. Biden. She then turns her vitriolic guns on the Republican leaders and in a most vile manner tries to destroy their patriotism, their honor and their ability to lead.

Let's take another look at all these splendid folks in the Democratic leadership. Good old "Uncle Teddy" Kennedy was kicked out of Harvard for cheating. In shame, he enlisted in the Army during the Korean War. His father arranged to have him sent to a quiet post in Germany and, shortly later, "bought" his way out of the service. He goes on to become a United States Senator.

Although married, he attends a "private party" of five men and five girls from their political campaign office.

He convinces one of the girls to "go to the beach" with him and, in a drunken state, drives off of a narrow bridge into the Chappaquiddick Pond. He swims out of the sinking car, she does not. In the ensuing ten hours before the police are alerted, Mary Jo Kopechne dies a slow, gasping death. So much for "Uncle Teddy".

Senator Obama belonged for twenty years to an African Christian church where the pastor punctuates repeated sermons with the phrase "God Damn America" to the foot stomping, cheers and applause of the congregation. Yet, Senator Obama never heard these things. Did I mention that the African Christian Church is probably one of the most racially prejudiced function in America today.

During one of his speeches where Senator Obama lectured us on learning to speak French, he also mentioned that he wants a strong military army and a strong civilian army. He never mentioned who this strong civilian army is to fight! However, the last time I saw a strong civilian army, they were called "Brown Shirts" and, later, the Gestapo. Their leader was Adolf Hitler.

Then there is Michelle. She found nothing good about this country until her husband was chosen as the candidate for the Presidency. Both, she and her husband attended the finest universities in the country on scholarships which are not even offered to exceptional White students but she hates all you White folks that made this possible!

Finally, we have Ramblin' Joe Biden. He tells us that when the Democrats are elected, they will raise our taxes and we should pay them gladly because it will make us more patriotic. At a recent Democratic rally, he told a paraplegic politician to stand up and take a bow. Don't be surprised if Joe "is thrown under the bus" before election day.

Now comes the anger in Ms Ball regarding Governor Sarah Palin. She is an unknown person who successfully manages the largest state in the country with a 46 billion dollar yearly budget, keeps taxes down and destroys crooked politicians whether they are Democrats or Republicans. Ms Ball doesn't like her because she has five children. She doesn't like her because her latest child has Downs syndrome and the Palins chose to keep him rather than having the birth doctor drive a screw driver in the back of his head! She doesn't like her because Sarah's daughter is pregnant out of wedlock and she plans to have the baby instead of an abortion. She doesn't like Sarah because she has a handsome husband that is totally supportive of her career.

Ms Ball now turns her anger on Cindy McCain. She portrays Cindy as the Republican Mother Teresa who adopted a child in Bangladesh. Big Deal! Well, it is a big deal. Cindy was visiting Mother Teresa when she handed Cindy a baby and said, "Take her or she will die!" Without

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88th National Conference for the Social Studies

By: *Jo Louise Winters*

Each year thousands of educators and curriculum decision makers from around the country gather for the three-day National Conference for the Social Studies. This year the event will take place in Houston, Texas with the theme of "Embrace the Future." Educators attend this conference looking for new ideas and strategies to use in the classroom; they visit the exhibit hall looking for new materials – and the "Polish Perspectives" exhibit by the American Council for Polish Culture (ACPC) stands ready to take advantage of this opportunity. It is the all-important opportunity for Polonia to provide information and resources that teachers can use to engage students and motivate them to explore Polish history and culture. The ACPC goal is to provide teachers with materials relating to Polish/Polish American history and culture, thereby reaching and encouraging young students to discover and examine factual historical data available to them.

The ACPC exhibit coordinators for this immensely important program are Barbara Lemecha and Henrietta Nowakowski. Their combined talents and skills in reaching out to Polonia organizations and individuals for the necessary financial and resources support as well as their finesse in organizing and managing the exhibit have been continuously sharpened and improved over the past several years. The team spends months in planning, soliciting funding and resource materials, creating posters and resource CDs, shipping cartons of books, pamphlets and CDs to the conference site and managing the booth for three days with able assistance from other individuals and ACPC members. It is important to mention that the members who man the booth cover their own travel, lodging and other expenses and all donated funds are used strictly for the exhibit.

Participation in this Conference is very costly, but with generous financial support and donations of books and audio/visual materials for distribution to the visitors by ACPC members as well as non-members and Polonia organizations at national and local levels, the Council is determined to continue this vital program (this will be our ninth consecutive year). Each year our presence at the Conference produces new benefits. For example, our presence at a Conference motivated the University of Virginia's Center for Politics to prepare a lesson plan that highlighted the contributions of the Polish craftsmen 400 years ago at the Jamestown VA Settlement. Last year we were asked by a teacher visiting our booth for a lesson plan on Pułaski and Kościuszko. Thankfully, we now have a History Lesson Plan developed by Meg Huebeck of the University of VA Center for Politics, on the Revolutionary War featuring Kościuszko and Pułaski. **Both of these lesson plans are on the ACPC website (www.polishcultureacpc.org) and will be distributed to teachers visiting our booth.**

This year our focus at the conference will be on the Jamestown 400th Anniversary story and World War II. Educators are seeking material for the following school year. Since 2009 marks the 70th Anniversary of the beginning of World War II, we plan to present information about the vital role Poland played in the Allied Victory, featuring the Polish people's contributions, determination and perseverance.

All Polish American organizations and individuals are earnestly invited to join the American Council for Polish Culture in this effort, which will benefit our youth – tomorrow's leaders! Please make your contributions payable to ACPC/NCSS and mail to: Henrietta Nowakowski, 23354 Longview, Dearborn Heights, MI 48127. A full accounting of what transpires at this year's Conference in Houston will be publicized along with a listing of all the donors who contributed monies or resource materials to make Polonia's valuable participation in this event possible. With regard to offerings of resource materials or questions regarding the project, please contact Mrs. Nowakowski at www.ciocianusia@aol.com or (313) 565-7625. □



Janek's Corner

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Modern museums, the same history

When history is described, it happens that two people have different views on certain events. My grandfather, who was a soldier during WWII, used to tell me that, "There is the history, and there is a history." He has never revealed parts of his breath-taking story, because he felt that it would not be parallel to what is being taught. No one is able to imagine what it must have been like during WWII and no one really wants to have similar experiences.

However, history affects national identity greatly and it is imperative for each and every one of us to be aware of our past. To achieve that, we commonly read books, listen to our grandparents speaking about their childhood or watch historic movies. In addition to this, we popularly attend various historic events which are being organized annually by city councils or by the government. Nevertheless, museums top the list of the sources from which we obtain our knowledge about history. In this article I would like to familiarize you with newly opened museums of the modern history of Poland.

The Warsaw Uprising Museum has quickly become the top destination of every field trip around Warsaw. It is located in the centre of Warsaw, easily connected with the Central Warsaw train station, and it can be also easily seen from long distances thanks to its tower with the famous sign known as "Polska Walcząca" or "Kotwica," of the Home Army and Polish Secret State, which existed under the Nazi occupation. It is not only its location that attracts hundreds of visitors daily, but more importantly it is its incredible interior and interactive exhibitions that make the Warsaw Uprising Museum a landmark spot in Warsaw. From the very entrance to the museum one is being attacked by various technological advances that generate millions of stimuli which are being transferred into one's imagination. One is suddenly a part of the sixty-two-day-long activities of insurgents of Warsaw who tried to save themselves and their city. One can be on the phone with the actual Warsaw Uprising fighters speaking about their own experiences. To understand the importance of this uprising it is crucial to note that women and children in large numbers were involved. Speaking of children, an absolutely stunning collection of the letters, post stamps and postal memorabilia from the Warsaw Uprising is being shown in the big hall. The letters of ordinary people who lived in Warsaw during the Uprising were delivered by hundreds of youngsters who worked as postmen. They were traveling around Warsaw, trying to deliver as many letters and notes as possible. A part of the museum is dedicated especially to them. This space includes a meticulously constructed drain pipe that was used as their way of getting around Warsaw. All objects shown in the Warsaw Uprising Museum are thoroughly described, which allows visitors to follow each day of the Uprising on their own. Various movies and audio texts highlight the complexity of this risky venture that unfortunately ended up sadly. These are only a few amazing examples of what the Warsaw Uprising Museum has to offer.

A very similar to the Warsaw Uprising Museum in type is the Poznań Museum of June 1956. It is dedicated to commemorate a famous workers' uprising that took place in Poznań in June 1956. It is located in the centre of Poznań, namely in ZAMEK, the centre for culture. Although the museum is quite small, one can be really amazed with a number of socialist objects that are being stored here. The space is divided into two parts; the first part being a socialist flat, and the second part being the street in June 1956. Even before one comes in the

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