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June/July 2021



Hamtramck weddings of yesteryear

BY ROBERT STRYBEL

Weddings have always held a special place in the Polish national psyche, and many of their Old World traditions were brought over by the masses of Polish immigrants who began flocking to America in the latter half of the 19th century. It was my good fortune to have been born and raised in and around Hamtramck, Michigan, Detroit's once predominantly Polish enclave-suburb often referred to locally as "wedding city."

On Saturdays, Hamtramck's churches were booked up months in advance. Come evening, rollicking polka music and the sounds of dancing, singing and laughter poured out of the city's many Polish halls,

These included PRCUA, PNA, Polish Falcons, Alliance of Poles, Polish Sea League, Citizens Club, Kościuszko Club, Plewa Hall, Polish veterans posts. UAW union halls and other such facilities.

Things got started in the morning with the parental blessing at the home of the bride. Musicians, sometimes only a single accordionist, stood on the porch playing "Serdeczna Matko" as the bridal couple set out for church. Brides who wanted to observe the Anglo-Saxon custom of not being seen by the groom before church sometimes improvised. Kathryn Rosypał, former editor of the PRCUA's *Naród Polski* and her husband-to-be received the parental blessing at the altar before the liturgy got under way.

Following the nuptial mass, the bride would take a floral bouquet and place it on the side altar devoted to the Blessed Mother. The newlyweds would get pelted with rice or confetti as they left the church and sped off to the photographer's for their wedding portraits. Guests meanwhile would repair to the reception site to await the arrival of the bride and groom who would be greeted at the entrance with the traditional bread and salt, sometimes also a glass of wine or shot of vodka.

In addition to commanding the kitchen crew, the Kamchatka (female cook) played a ritual role at Hamtramck weddings. It was she who welcomed the newlyweds with bread and salt at the hall entrance. Af-

terwards, the whole company marched to the tables for the wedding breakfast to the tune of "The Polish Wedding March. There was an open bar and the feast included kielbasa z kapustą, pork chops, city chicken and other hearty fare. But we had relatives from the Wołoszyn family in Scranton, PA, where toast, scrambled eggs and bacon, pork usages, orange juice, etc. were served at the wedding breakfast.

After the breakfast, the newlyweds and guests went their merry way to relax and prepare for the main evening celebration. The Hamtramck wedding breakfast was usually a "smaller," more intimate affair for "only" some 100 to 150 family members and close friends. Later in the day, the breakfast guests would be back, now joined by several hundred more distant friends, neighbors, co-workers and sundry acquaintances.

The Hamtramck wedding banquets of my childhood were sumptuous affairs. Even less well-to-do parents had skimped and saved for years to put on a lavish feast. The affair was judged by the number of main meat courses served. These usually included fresh and smoked kielbasa with stewed sauerkraut, roast chicken, pork chops, city chicken, meatballs in mushroom gravy and gołąbki. The father of one of my Pol-Am friends would tell his kids not to fill up on bread and potatoes but to concentrate on the meat.

Desserts included chruściki, babka and an ethnically incongruous addition: strawberry, blueberry, pineapple, banana and other cream pies.

These were placed on the tables for guests to help themselves. I recall that back in the day separate dessert dishes were not provided, so slices of cream pie landed on the dinner plates still containing traces of gravy or sauerkraut juice. In later years, things got more "sophisticated."

During the banquet, time and again the jangling of spoons and forks against glasses and dinner plates filled the hall. Possibly because the original chant of "gorzko, gorzko" (bitter, bitter) was too much of a tongue-twister for non-Polish wedding guests, the jangling custom came into play. Wedding guests would watch when the bride and groom had their mouths full of food, someone would start the jangling and soon hundreds of jangles forced the newlyweds to kiss.

A good Polish orchestra was required to provide entertainment and dance music. I can recall when these were six and more-piece ensembles including a zoom-zoom bass fiddle played with a bow rather than being plucked. But over the years growing costs down-scaled the size of the polka bands. The first dance of the evening was traditionally reserved for the father of the bride and his little, newlywed girl. Years ago, Detroit polka musician John Chrzasz created the "Tatusiu waltz" ("Daddy's Waltz") which is now danced to by brides and their dads across Polonia.

Polkas, obereks, and Polish waltzes dominated the dance floor, but an occasional DP (post-World War II Polonian) might request a Polish tango. Novelty numbers like the Hokey-Pokey, Mexican Hat Dance and Chicken Dance also made the scene, as did rock'n'roll hits requested by the younger set. There was also the money dance, when male wedding guests took turns dancing with the bride and depositing a bill (usually \$5 or \$10) in a basket or cigar box for the privilege. I never witnessed this myself, but the old-timers said the male guest would hurl a silver dollar at a dinner plate, and if it shattered, that meant good luck for the newlyweds. He would then get a cigar and a shot of whiskey before taking the bride for a spin on the dance floor as wedding guests watched and applauded.

As the evening wore on, the younger and middle-aged revelers pounded the dance floor, visiting the bar at intervals for refreshment. But along the walls sat the babcias, older ciocias and neighbor ladies watching the dancers and catching up on family and neighborhood gossip. Meanwhile the dziadeks, elderly wujeks and

continued on p. 3



UPCOMING EVENTS

June 5, 19, July 10, 10:00 AM, and July 21 at 6:00 PM – Polish Workshop with Pierogi Dinner
For more information visit <https://www.airbnb.com/experiences/2556518>

June 6 (1st Sunday of the month), 3:00PM – Polish Mass in Wisconsin Dells
Saint Cecilia Catholic Church, 603 Oak St, Wisconsin Dells, WI.

June 10, 6:00PM – PHS Board Meeting
Denny's, 2884 S Oneida, Green Bay, WI. You are invited!

June 24, 6:30PM – Pulaski Area Historical Society, Board of Directors Virtual Meeting.
For more information visit www.pulaskiwihistory.com

July 4 (1st Sunday of the month), 3:00PM – Polish Mass in Wisconsin Dells
Saint Cecilia Catholic Church, 603 Oak St, Wisconsin Dells, WI.

July 8, 6:00PM – PHS Board Meeting
Denny's, 2884 S Oneida, Green Bay, WI. You are invited!

July 9 – Newspaper article deadline
Submit articles to [Malgosia at malgosiaaugherty@yahoo.com](mailto:Malgosia@malgosiaaugherty@yahoo.com).

July 15-18 – 43rdth Annual Pulaski Polka Days
448 E Pulaski St, Pulaski, WI 54162, check the Band Schedule at www.pulaskipolkaday.com

July 19, 6:30 PM – Newspaper distribution meeting
255 Terraview Dr, Green Bay, WI.



Come celebrate with us the Polish Heritage Society booth in Pulaski at Polka Days, July 27, 2021.

Our long-time volunteers: Mary Drella, Mike Wichowski and Joann Neily at PHS booth during Pulaski Polka Days

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POLISH NEWSBYTES

COMPILED BY ROBERT STRYBEL

POLAND EXTENDS LOCKDOWN, AUTHORIZES NON-PHYSICIANS TO VACCINATE

Polish Health Minister Adam Niedzielski announced that lockdown restrictions would be extended even though the number of new daily cases seemed to drop after Easter. Health experts needed more time to estimate whether the third wave of the pandemic in Poland is actually slowing down. What is referred to as the British variant of SARS-CoV-2 now accounts for 90 proc. percent of all Polish cases. There are also individual incidences of infection with the South African and Brazilian strains of the virus. Nationwide, there was still a reserve of some 20 proc. of available Covid hospital beds and ventilators, but the demand was not evenly distributed. Among the hardest hit was southern Poland's industrial Śląsk voivodeship, where some patients had to be transported by rescue helicopter and ambulance for treatment in neighboring regions. To step up the inoculation campaign, healthcare workers other than medical doctors have been authorized to vaccinate. They include nurses, medical rescuers, lab diagnosticians and pharmacists. If no unforeseen developments occur, Poland hopes to inoculate all willing Poles by the end of August.

BIDEN INVITES POLAND'S DUDA, OTHER LEADERS TO CLIMATE SUMMIT

US President Joe Biden has invited a number of world leaders including his Polish

counterpart Andrzej Duda to a virtual climate summit. Biden wants to convince the world of America's return to the front-line of struggle with man-made climate change, from which his predecessor Trump withdrew the United States. Those invited include the leaders of Russia, China, Japan, Israel, Germany, Britain, France, Italy and Turkey. Poland which now still gets 80 proc. of its electricity from coal-fired powerplants, is committed to shut down its coal mines over the next three decades. Wind farms are being built, solar panels are getting installed and the country's energy sector hopes to develop its nuclear-power potential.

NATO CHIEF THANKS POLAND FOR VACCINATION EFFORT

Jens Stoltenberg, a Dane who heads the North Atlantic Alliance, thanked Poland for volunteering to vaccinate the staff at NATO headquarters. He had requested such assistance, and the Polish side was quick to respond. During its three-day visit to Brussels, a Polish medical team inoculated some 3,500 NATO employees. "Solidarity and flexibility are at the heart of our alliance, and the Polish offer shows just that," Stoltenberg said. "Poland is a highly valued ally that is ready to support NATO in various ways."

COMPOSER PENDERECKI'S STATE FUNERAL PLANNED FOR MARCH 2022

The state funeral of renowned Polish composer Krzysztof Penderecki is to take

place on March 29, 2022, the second anniversary of his death. The postponement was caused by the continuing coronavirus pandemic and his widow Elżbieta Penderecka's state of health. An urn containing the composer's ashes has been temporarily deposited at St Florian's church in Kraków. Until his death, Pen-



Krzysztof Penderecki

derecki, whose legacy included orchestral, choral, operatic and chamber compositions, was regarded by many as the world's greatest living composer. He first gained international prominence in 1961, when his work *Threnody to the Victims of Hiroshima* won a UNESCO prize. His long list of Polish and foreign honors includes the Order of the White Eagle, Poland's highest distinction, as well as several Grammy awards.

POLAND HAS THE EUROPEAN UNION'S LOWEST JOBLESS RATE

According to the latest data from Eurostat, the EU's statistical agency, for the second month in a row Poland has the lowest rate of unemployment in the 27-nation bloc – 3.1 proc. The Czech Republic, which had been the front-runner earlier, was now in second place with 3.2 proc. jobless, and the

Netherlands came third, with 3.6 proc. Average unemployment in the 27-nation bloc is 7.5 proc. At the bottom end of the scale is Spain now suffering the EU's biggest unemployment crisis with 16.1 proc. of eligible citizens out of work. In Greece, 15.8 proc. cannot find jobs.

RESILIENCE OF POLAND'S PANDEMIC-STRICKEN ECONOMY WINS PRAISE

Germany's public broadcaster Deutsche Welle (German Wave) has described the resilience of the Polish economy under pandemic conditions as astonishing. Experts at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) expect Poland's economy to grow by 3 proc. growth in 2021, which would make Poland the only EU member to reach its pre-crisis level by the end of this year. The country has grown from 49 proc. to 70 proc. of the EU's average economic wages since joining the EU in 2004. In November, Poland was again number three in the EU in terms of industrial-production growth. "Many Polish companies have used the pandemic to reorganize themselves, digitize more and step in where other supply chains have been torn down," Poland's Economy Minister Jarosław Gowin told German business daily *Handelsblatt* recently.

HAS POLAND BECOME EUROPE'S WASTE DUMP?

Private Polish waste-management companies import mounds of trash from Britain, Italy and Austria, but it is Germany that accounts for 70 proc. or some 250,000 tons of waste a year. Operators often don't have a permit to accept or re-

cycle the type of waste they receive, and the country's landscape is the worse for it. Trash heaps mar fields, forests and roadsides and gets dumped into disused gravel pits and abandoned warehouses. "We are the waste dump of Europe," remarked Piotr Barczak of Zero Waste, a Polish environmental group. He has criticized the Polish government for not keeping the waste-disposal sector under tighter control.

80-YEAR-OLD GRANDPA COLLECTS WRONG GRANDSON

An 80-year-old man went to a nursery school in the eastern Polish town of Lubartów but mistakenly brought home a strange four-year-old rather than his own grandson. Alarmed by the missing boy's parents, police with tracking dog launched a search operation that scoured the town. The octogenarian did not realize his mistake until police arrived at his house, the authorities said. The four-year-old boy was quickly and safely returned to his parents, and no-one was charged in the case.



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Thank You New members, RENEWING MEMBERS, and Donors!

The Polish Heritage Society of Northeastern Wisconsin wishes to offer our appreciation and gratitude to **Frank Czarnecki, Mark Riemer, Mary Drella, and Sue Dondlinger** for the kind donations they included.

Members renewing include: **Norma Chyka** of Montreal, Quebec, **Richard Kusch** of Seymour, **Shelley Stranz Zahm** of Oconto, the **Roger Pomprowitz Family** of Green Bay, the **Pamela & Scott Janssen Family** of Pulaski, the **Patricia and Gerald Rickman Family** of Neenah, the **Frank & Germaine Czarnecki Family** of Green Bay, **Mark Reimer** of New Franken, **Roger Brzeczowski** of Pulaski, the **Barbara Osuchowski Family** of Sobieski, the **Jim & Rosie Stachura Family** of Pulaski, **Laura Czarnecki** of Appleton, **Theresa Beerntsen** of Green Bay, the **Mary Matchefts Ho Family** of Northfield, Minnesota, **Marv Gorski** of Neenah, the **Robert & Anita Kirschling Family** of Green Bay, **Diane Holytz** of Greenfield, **Mary Drella** of Green Bay, the **Sue Dondlinger Family** of Manitowoc, **Dr. Helen Scieszka** of Chilton, **Jan Sergott** of Green Bay, **Malgosia Daugherty & Aliosha Alexandrov** of Appleton, **Kasia Niemczyk** of Kenosha, **Beth Jarock** of Norfolk, Virginia, the **John & Christine Laka Family** of Appleton, **John Duslack** of Chicago, and the **David & Jann Schonke Family** of Green Bay.

The Polish Heritage Society of Northeastern Wisconsin is pleased to welcome new members: **Peter Rickman** of Milwaukee and **Christian Rickman** of Middleton as gifts of member Patricia Rickman, and **Darleen Kadulski** of Eagle River, and **Jim Sokola** of Maplewood, Minnesota. Congratulations and witamy! It is wonderful to see this organization continue to grow and maintain. Dobrze jest mieć Was z nami!

Thank you to new members, renewing members, and donors. I appreciate the special notes you sometimes include

which I may appropriately share with your Board of Directors. Thank you all for your support and interest in our Polish heritage. If you have any membership status or financial inquiries, please feel free to contact me. Also, your board officers' contact information is listed in this newspaper and on the phsofnew.org website.

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Saints among us (3)

HELEN A. SCIESZKA, PH.D.

Something that some of you might be wondering about is how are feast days chosen for each of the saints. Usually, we celebrate the life of a saint on the day that they died. I have heard it described as the Heavenly Birthday. However, sometimes it is a date that has been celebrated as

But I am a little ahead of myself. St. Albert was born in Igoalomia (Aigolonija), Poland on August 20th, 1845 to a wealthy family and was named Adam Hilary Bernard Chmielowski. Both of his parents died when he was young but he decided to study agriculture so that he could manage the

One more interesting note, St. John Paul II wrote a play about St. Albert in 1949 that became the film "Brother of Our God" in 1997. (This is available online.)

Next, on July 9th we have the feast of the Four Holy Polish Brothers – Saints Andrew, Barnabas, Benedict and Justus. They were biological brothers born in Poland who became Benedictine monks and hermits all of whom died around the year 1008 of natural causes. This seems to be all that is known of their lives.

of the patron saints of Hungary, as well as the Benedictine Abbey in Cleveland, Ohio that is named for him and the Catholic dioceses of Tarnow, Poland and Nitra, Slovakia.

Our final saint is St. Szymon of Lipnica. He was born into the poor but faithful family of Grzegorz and Ann in Lipnica Murowana, Małopolskie, Poland in the year 1437. In 1454 he moved to Krakow to study at the Jagiellonian University where he felt the call to the life of a priest and religious. He joined the Franciscans after completing his bachelor's degree in 1457 making his final vows in 1458 at the monastery of St. Bernard in Stadom, Poland. He was ordained a priest in 1460 and was assigned to Tarnow, Poland but eventually returned to Stadom. He was known for his promotion of special devotions, his preaching and his leadership skills. Because of this he was involved in the Franciscan international gathering in 1478 in Pavia, Italy and was also able to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

He died July 18th, 1842 in Krakow from the epidemic plague of that time while he was tending the sick. So, he is another good saint for us to call upon during our current times.

As we move from the Spring into the Summer months and hopefully continue to make our way out of the pandemic these saints and their lives are good ones to remember and to call upon. St. Szymon of Lipnica, please pray for us as we continue to battle the Corona virus; Saint Albert Chmielowski, please pray for the poor among us and remind us to help them. And finally, Saints Andrew, Barnabas, Benedict, and Justus, the four Polish brothers; Andrew, Benedict and Andrew Zorard, the hermits, please pray for us and help us to remember that which is truly important in our lives.

Note: Information for this article was gathered from various Catholic Saint sites on the web.

Helen A. Scieszka, Ph.D. is a former ad executive, psychologist, college professor, Catholic church pastoral associate, Diocesan marriage & family life director; published author of four novels and stories in "Chicken Soup for the Soul" books. She loves reading, travel, music, photography, art, sports, & family genealogy. Please visit her website drhelenscieszka.com to keep up with news on talks, book sale/signings and new releases!



"Abandoned rectory," painting by St. Albert Chmielowski

their feast for as long as anyone can remember. Or their death date is not known or there are many well-known saints already celebrated on that date, so one is randomly chosen, maybe based upon a significant day in the person's life. For example, as St. John Paul II died on April 2nd which often falls during the Easter season, they instead chose October 22nd, as his feast day which was the date that he was formally installed as pope.

Our first saint for the months of June and July offers another example of this...Saint Albert Chmielowski, who died on December 25th, 1916 in Krakow. But as we know, December 25th is Christmas....so his feast is celebrated on June 17th instead. The only reason I could find for the choice of this particular date is that June 17th was the date of his formal Baptism two years after his birth. Apparently, because of the political upheavals at the time, priests were not always available and so he was baptized a few days after his birth, but not by a priest; that happened two years later.

family estate and he also became a well-known artist. However, it was his interest in the political climate of his time that would determine his future. Fighting in one of the insurrections against Czar Alexander III in 1864 he was injured and in his late teens lost a leg. All of these things allowed him to become even more aware of the struggles of the everyday person...especially those in need. As a result, he gave up everything, became a Franciscan, took the name Albert and began his work in Krakow with the poorest of its citizens. Then in 1887 he founded a religious order for men...Brothers of the Third Order of Saint Francis, Servants of the Poor and in 1891 the same one for women. Their sole purpose is to take care of the poor and homeless. However, it is something that he called everyone to do...especially those who had the financial means to do so. A good reminder for all of us to this day.

St. Albert was originally buried in Rakowicki Cemetery in Krakow, but his body has been moved to a Carmelite monastery.

Our next two saints were also monks and hermits and share the same feast day of July 16th...St. Andrew the Hermit and St. Benedict the Hermit. Both were born in Poland in the 10th century and became Camaldolese monks living in Moravia and Hungary where they were martyred in the year 1020. Again, not much is known of their lives otherwise.

It must be the months for Polish hermits and monks! St. Andrew Zorard another Benedictine missionary hermit in Oława, Silesia and Tropic Poland as well as Mt. Zobar, Hungary feast day is celebrated July 17th (June 13th in Poland). He was born about the year 980 in Opatowiec, Poland. He was well known for his piety and the contemplative life he led and thus in 1003 he was asked by King St. Stephen of Hungary to begin a hermitage in that country where he died in the year 1010. In 1083 his remains were moved to the Cathedral of Saint Emmeram in Nitra, Slovakia at the foot of Mt. Zobar (which was part of the Kingdom of Hungary at the time). He is one

Hamtramck weddings of yesteryear

continued from p. 1

other older gents usually socialized at the bar. The tipplers of choice in this PolAm blue-collar town were shots of inexpensive whiskey chased down with Pfeiffer's, Stroh's or Goebel's beer on tap for the menfolk. The ladies preferred whiskey and ginger ale high balls, and for the kids there were soft drinks from Hamtramck's own Atlas Bottling Co.

Smartly dressed young men in their late teens and early twenties were common gate-crashers at those big Hamtramck weddings where nobody could know everybody. They had a great time, eating and drinking their fill, socializing with gorgeous, dressed-to-kill Polish gals and getting their phone numbers for future reference. After it was all over they gave the newlyweds a sealed envelope containing nothing more than a 10¢ greeting card.

My Babcia used to tell the story of a Polish lady who wrote to her husband temporarily working in another town: "We were at the Kowalski's wedding. It was great, everybody was drunk and got into a fight. Too bad you weren't here!" With so

many liquored and revved up males present, it usually didn't take much to set things off. I recall a wedding in the 1960s when for some reason the fathers of the bride and groom were going at it. Both were post-war arrivals swinging their fists and shouting at each other in broken English: "You damn DP!" – "You too damn DP!"

At midnight it was time for the ocepiny, the be-capping ritual. Originally, I had thought it was odczepiny, because it was mainly a veil-removing ceremony and odczepić means to disconnect. Ocepiny, the proper term, comes from the Polish word czepek (cap). To the tune of *Dwanaście aniołów* the bride had her veil removed, after which the festivities began winding down. But things were not over yet. After guests had slept it off and sobered up many were back the next day for poprawiny, a follow-up celebration. There was nearly always plenty of food and drink left over, and with the musicians on hand, it was like a slightly down-scaled re-run of the wedding all over again.

Robert Strybel



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Polish love affair with the poppy

Most everyone raised in Poland or in an American family with Polish immigrant roots knows the importance of poppyseeds to their ethnic culinary heritage. Poppies were first grown in the Mediterranean region 8,000 years ago, and archeological findings suggest they were among the first crops cultivated by man.

royalty. In Western Europe the seeds were sprinkled on cakes and rolls sparingly as a garnish, so foreign travelers were surprised to see Poles eating a poppyseed filling or pudding (containing nuts, raisins and honey) by the spoonful.

To this day, "mak" (Polish for poppy pronounced like "mock") plays an im-



Poppies made their way to Poland via Hungary and Bohemia in the Middle Ages, like most exotic imports, poppies were quite pricey and therefore their seeds first appeared on the tables of better-to-do nobles, aristocrats and

portant role in various Polish sweet dishes, pastries and cakes. Although available at Polish pastry shops and Pol-Am bakeries all year round, they are especially associated with Christmas. On nearly every Wigilia (Christmas Eve)

table they appear in one form or another as kluski z makiem (poppyseed noodles), makowiec (poppyseed roll cake) and other sweet treats.

As in other cultures, poppyseeds are also used in Poland to sprinkle on breads and rolls before baking. But long before anyone had heard of Omega-6, poppyseed oil was prized for its taste properties and nutrition as a flavoring for different foods such as groats. Interestingly, poppies were once a nutritious fodder crop containing 32 proc. vegetable protein.

In the politico-cultural realm, the song "Poppies on Monte Cassino" commemorated the Polish troops that captured a key German fortress blocking the Allies' road to Rome in 1944. A totally different aspect emerged in the 1970s, when Polish hippies and squat dwellers learned that a crude type of heroin could be made by boiling poppyseed stems. The resultant brown liquid known in the slang of the day as "kompot" (compote) was injected intravenously with a syringe, causing many premature fatalities.

Robert Strybel

5 bizarre things about Polish homes

EWELINA NURCZYK

Every country is different, but in the global world many things look more or less the same: cars, clothing, and even homes. Polish households, however, have a few specifics about them that some foreigners may find rather weird...

Drying racks

Automatic drying machine? No, thanks, not in Poland! Actually, it is not obvious why they are so unpopular in here, maybe similarly to standalone bins there is not enough space for



for Pixabay

them in tiny Polish apartments. Portable drying racks, on the other hand, can fit anywhere! You can put them on the balcony on a sunny day or keep inside if there is a need for that. You will find one tucked away in almost every Polish house, unless somebody has a real laundry room where they also dry their clothes.

No AC

This is a feature usually pointed out by Americans, who are used to having air conditioning in almost all facilities. There is a relatively small number of houses in Poland that have AC – we rely on good old drafts for getting some cool air inside during heatwaves. As extremely hot temperatures occur only for a few days or maximum weeks per year, there is no need for that, but of course it is changing and many new flats or houses are equipped with necessary devices.

Firanki

Covering your windows? Some nations are for, some are against this solution (the Dutch –

for Pixabay

we are looking at you!). Poland, however, has worked out an in-between solution – we have firanki, which are usually white and semi-transparent laceworks that cover the entire window. Unlike curtains, firanki are a bit see-through and their aim is not to protect you from the sun. One may say they serve as a decoration first, but nowadays many people abandon this Polish way of window-covering.

Trash bin under the sink

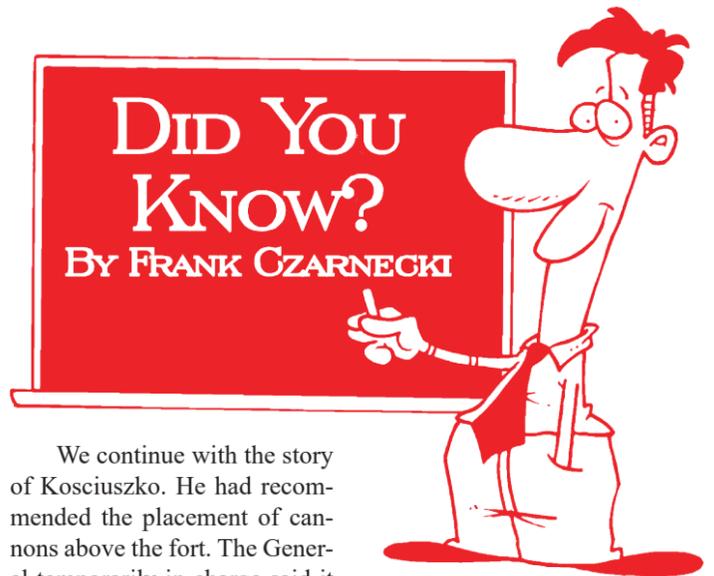
Whenever you visit a Polish house and you want to throw some rubbish out, you may be right to look for the trash bin in one place – under the kitchen sink. In Poland, this is the usual place for storing waste. As Polish flats and houses tend to be quite small due to quite a high density of population, kitchens are also very condensed. The cabinet under the sink is usually full of piping and naturally seemed perfect for storing bins. Of course, you may encounter standard standalone bins, but is it still a fully Polish house you are in?

Slippers

Last but not least – a fan favorite – Polish kaptcie (English: slippers). It is polite in Poland to take off your shoes and your hosts do not want you to feel cold – so they may offer you a pair of slippers previously worn by other guests. Poles usually have a selection of slippers to choose from whenever somebody visits them, but the idea is slightly... controversial. Just go with the flow, embrace the fact that your friends do not want you to catch a cold!



for Pixabay



We continue with the story of Kosciuszko. He had recommended the placement of cannons above the fort. The General temporarily in charge said it was too much trouble. The British placed their cannons there making the fort useless for the colonists. This was a devastating blow for the Revolution. Throughout July, 1777, the army retreated steadily until the colonial army was nine miles from Albany. It became essential that a new and strong defensive position be established on the Hudson River. General Gates returned to the beleaguered troops and ordered the demoralized troops to move northward again. He sent Kosciuszko ahead "to select a position on the west bank of the Hudson, which from its hilly and covered surface, would be best suited for defense."

Once there, they examined the grounds and Kosciuszko immediately decided that that was the proper position for a fortified camp. He asked the number of divisions and regiments and their names. He took a piece of paper, drew in pencil the plan of the camp, and assigned the regiments to specific locations. They were marched to the grounds where they proceeded to erect breastworks and fortifications.

When the British redcoats approached from the north,

Kosciuszko's defenses were ready. The Americans were positioned at a narrow place in the river. The only north-south road was squeezed tight against the river at that point and exposed to gunfire from the hills. On the first day's bloody fighting, the British soldiers with fixed bayonets made charge after charge, but were repulsed. British General Burgoyne waited three weeks for reinforcements which did not arrive. The British retreated and were surrounded in camp near Saratoga. On October 17, 1777, Burgoyne surrendered the entire British force of 6000 troops.

Historians have called Saratoga one of the world's most decisive battles. It changed the course of the American Revolution, persuaded France and Spain to come to the aid of the Americans, and made Independence a reality. The American General Gates was celebrated everywhere. During one speech praising him, the General interrupted to say, "In this case, the great tacticians of the campaign were hills and forests, which a young Polish Engineer was skillful enough to select for my encampment."

(to be continued)

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