

# Kopernik Memorial Association Newsletter

Member of Polish American Congress  
American Council for Polish Culture  
Kosciuszko Foundation  
Oneida County History Center

Website: [cnykopernik.com](http://cnykopernik.com)

## OFFICERS

Richard Noga -President  
Gary Moszak- Vice-President  
Valerie Elacqua -Treasurer  
Mary Currie—Recording Secretary  
Dan Jadowski - Corresponding Secretary  
Susan Moszak—Cultural Center Director



Summer Newsletter 2022

Issue 31



## DON'T MISS IT!

Last chance to see the Szymański Tapestries - de Ropp Polish Art Collection at the Le Moyne College Library before being returned to Poland after 64 years.

Closing July 3, 2022

Pictured at left: Jan Sobieski  
The Arrival at Vienna by The Brotherhood of St Luke

A collection of historic Polish paintings and tapestries is being exhibited at Le Moyne College in Syracuse until July 3rd. Seven paintings and four large tapestries will be returned to Poland, to be displayed at their new home, The National History Museum in Warsaw, which is expected to open later this year.

They depict important scenes from Polish history, highlighting the country's contributions to democracy in Europe. Among others, the scenes include: the establishment of the first Writ of Habeas Corpus in Krakow in 1430; the 1573 Warsaw Confederation, which granted religious freedom in the Polish-Lithuanian commonwealth; and the Polish Army repelling the Ottomans from Vienna in 1683.

The paintings and tapestries were exhibited in the Polish Pavilion at the 1939-1940 World Fair in New York City. Baron Stefan de Ropp, Commissioner of the Polish Pavilion, donated the art pieces to LeMoyne College, where he was an adjunct professor. The prime motivating factor of the donation was for their preservation, as returning them to Poland would have risked their destruction at the outbreak of World War II.

The exhibit dates and hours are listed on our Bulletin Board. Located at the Noreen Reale Falcone Library at Le Moyne. For more information call (315) 445-4153.

## BULLETIN BOARD

Now until July 3, M-Th 8am-5pm

Fri. 8-4:30 Sat & Sun 8-5 **Szymański Tapestries, de Ropp Polish Art Collection**  
LeMoyne College Library Free

Sun. July 10, 10:00 mass Holy Trinity Church **luncheon honoring Sr. Julia Bargiel, final Sister of the Holy Family of Nazareth which served this Polish parish for 112 years.**

Immediately following mass, Holy Trinity Gym

Sat. Aug. 20 4-10pm, & Sun. 21 1-7pm  
**Polish Days** Polish Community Club

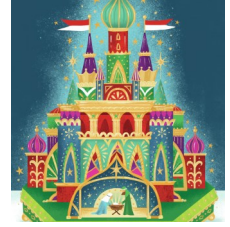
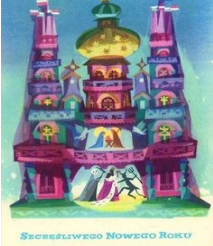
Polish food, dancing and more

Sun. Aug. 28, 3:00 pm **Mass in honor of Our Lady of Czestochowa.** Auriesville, Shrine of the North American Martyrs, Come in Polish costume if desired

Sun. Sept. 11, 12-3 **\$15. Holy Trinity Polish Festival Dinner** 1206 Lincoln Ave. Utica

Mon. Sept. 12, 6pm **Kopernik Meeting**

# SZOPKA 2022



## Thank you Good News Foundation



Christmas in March !  
Thanks to the generosity of the Good News Foundation and the patience of our supporters, the Kopernik Association was finally able to bring to fruition the long awaited, Covid delayed, Szopka production 2022. Under the direction of John James Hickey, theater professional from Los Angeles CA, a 20 member cast and crew brought to the stage, the beautiful story of the birth of Christ with Szopka puppet theater and live actors. An enhanced script written by John Hickey as well as dazzling costumes including puppets matching the live action characters told a touching story of the Good Shepherd boy bringing his offerings to the baby Jesus. Along his journey he charitably gives his gifts intended for the baby Jesus to those in need during his long trek but manages to bring a repentant robber to the feet of the infant King. Puppeteers from ages 8 to 16 danced and sang Polish koledy (carols) to the delight of the audience who even joined in singing along. The explosion of beautiful Polish Costumes from a variety of regions enhanced the production greatly.

Row 3 L to R : Pawel Dworak, Matthew Franco, Adam Zemanek,  
Row 2 : Patrick Stevens, Olivia Ranieri, Teresa Hensel, Jenna Herron, Bing Zhang, Anna Zhang , Jan Stevens, John James Hickey, Row 1: Mark Ranieri, Julianna and Antonio Hensel

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In preparation, the performers participated in acting class exercises to help them visualize and develop distinct attributes for each character the actors portrayed. Puppeteers were trained to use a variety of puppets, taught puppet dances as well as practiced live action choreography for the production.

Many of the performers expressed an interest in performing in other Kopernik productions and we hope to bring them back for Polish Heritage month in October.



John James Hickey (robber) and Patrick Stevens (Good Shepherd Boy) with matching puppets



Special Appearance by Baa Baa the black sheep played by Francis Ranieri



Sunday, April 10 marked another successful Palm Sunday workshop for the Kopernik Association. The spacious gym at Holy Trinity school was again the site for this year's event which as always included butter lamb making, Pisanki (Polish decorated Easter eggs), palm weaving, a variety of children's crafts and activities with lots of room for the kids to run in the other half of the gymnasium.

Plenty of families were on hand, including many grandparents with their grandchildren happily sharing these age-old traditions with the next generation.



Thanks to Virginia, Matthew and Alaina Franco who demonstrated the art of butter lamb making, Michelle Holbrook and Susan Moszak at the palm weaving table, Valerie Elacqua presenting pisanki and Eileen Waskiewicz and Karen Slocum staffing the children's craft table, Denise Tan for the hand created stained glass children's craft and to all of our additional volunteers including Ed Nowak, Rich Noga, Stan Ossowski, Sue and Gary Moszak.



The winner of our hand-painted Polish floral designed Adirondack chair was Karen Sikora and runner up Kelly Manley.

Thank you Val Elacqua for the beautiful donation and all who supported our raffle .

We are grateful to Fr. John Mikalajunas and the good people of Holy Trinity for partnering with us in this important work of preserving and sharing our Polish heritage.



## Kopernik Scholarship Awards



Our deadline for Scholarship submission is July 18, 2022.  
Please access the scholarship form at our website  
[cnykopernik.com](http://cnykopernik.com)

Good Luck! We look forward to reviewing your application.

### ELECTION RESULTS: OFFICERS

Richard Noga -President  
Gary Moszak— Vice-President  
Valerie Elacqua –Treasurer

Dan Jadowski - Corresponding Secretary  
Susan Moszak—Cultural Center Director

Mary Currie—Recording Secretary



### OUR WORK IS NEVER DONE....PLEASE VOLUNTEER !

*Volunteers are our most valuable commodity!*

- Assistance in preparing Open House displays before August 20 exhibit and Polish Heritage month in October and for refreshments for these events.
- Help with newsletter preparation and mailing  
Call Val at (315) 725-1651 Many Thanks!

### Notre Dame Students Giving Back to the Community

Students from Notre Dame Junior Senior High School in Utica volunteered on a variety of occasions at the Kopernik Cultural Center by preparing displays for our upcoming Open House during August and for October's Polish Heritage Month.

Senior Emily Lyga spent months creating a sculpture of the Trumpeter of Kraków for the focal point of one of the displays in the Polish folktales room. Students Cody (7th) and Katie Grabinski (8th) Jenna Herron (8th) and Logan Shedd (8th) prepared a variety of backdrops including a woodland scene for the Saint John's Eve display and the Holy Trinity Stained Glass Treasures exhibit. They costumed a variety of mannequins and worked on the brick tower that was designed by Kopernik member Gary Moszak. We are grateful for their energy, creativity, and civic-mindedness.

Dziekuje!



# Book Reviews from the Polish American Journal

by David Trawinski

**The Ładoś List**  
**Jakub Kumoch (editor) et al.**  
**Copyright 2020**  
**The Witold Pilecki Institute of Solidarity and Valor**

**Tutti's Promise by K.**  
**Heidi Fishman**  
**Copyright 2017**  
**MB Publishing**

## ***With patronage by the World Jewish Congress***

This month we will review two very different but significantly interconnected books. The first is best described as a historical reference document. The second is a very tenderly written testimony to the life-saving impact that the group behind the first book accomplished.

“The Ładoś List” is the reference book published by the Witold Pilecki Institute of Warsaw. Most will remember the Institute’s namesake as the courageous Polish Home Army officer who volunteered to enter Auschwitz and then escaped to report on the horrific ongoing there. This book is just as heroic, only in a more nuanced manner. You see, during the Second World War, a group of Polish diplomats, led by Aleksander Ładoś, the Polish Envoy in Bern, Switzerland, purchased illegal passports and certificates of citizenship from the countries of Paraguay, Honduras, Haiti and Peru.

The Ładoś Group, working with two Jewish organizations - The World Jewish Congress and Agudat Yisreal (Union of Israel) - forged these documents with the sole intent of saving Jews caught behind the borders of Nazi occupied countries. If Jewish people could show they had foreign citizenship, they had markedly better chances of surviving deportation to concentration or death camps. The entire process is described in detail in the book’s first 51 pages, complete with much photo-documentation included. Space limits my describing the details here, but it is safe to say that the enterprise was as complex as it was heroic.

The next hundred or so pages form the true “Ładoś List.” It details each person by name, their country of origin, the year of their birth, and the type of document issued by the Ładoś Group. Most sobering is the last column, entitled “Fate,” where each soul is listed as Survived, Unknown or Perished. Of 3,059 documents known to have been issued, 776 were known to have survived (25.4%), but unfortunately in 1,377 (45%) cases the fate was unknown. Sadly, even with these forged documents 906 (29.6%) souls were known to have perished. But the list is far from complete in cataloging the entire efforts of the “Ładoś Group,” as detailed records could not be kept for fear of their being captured. War historians believe some 8,000 to 10,000 Ładoś documents were issued. In that case, extrapolating the survivors’ statistics would yield some 2,000 to 2,500 lives saved, not including those who might have survived in the unknown status group.

This brings us to our second book, “Tutti’s Promise” by K. Heidi Fishman. It is a remembrance of her mother’s experiences during World War II. Tutti’s father had moved their Jewish family from Germany to Amsterdam before the war, only later to become entrapped when the Nazis overran the Netherlands in May 1940. Tutti’s father was able to procure a “Ładoś Group” Passport, but it did not preclude the family from becoming collected up and sent first to a transit camp in the Netherlands, and then on to the Theresienstadt Camp in Nazi-controlled Czechoslovakia. In fact, Tutti’s father was selected for transport to Auschwitz-Birkenau, a most certain death sentence, when upon boarding the train, he one last time presented his Paraguayan “Ładoś Group” passport. He was amazed when he was pulled from the boarding line and presented with a slip of paper bearing his name and the German word “Ausgeschieden,” meaning “Withdrawn.” The passport not only allowed his rejoining his family that day, but facilitated their survival to be liberated from that camp seventy-seven years ago this month.

A few words are in order for Fishman’s writing style. This work of 214 pages (endnotes excepted) was targeted for young readers, age 10 and up. I found it to be excellently written, mostly from young Tutti’s perspective. It conveys the importance of the subject with tremendous respect, but without being overly graphic in its descriptions. I can think of no better way for a pre-teen to have a “safer” first learning experience about the Holocaust. In fact, I would recommend all parents to keep a copy of “Tutti’s Promise” in their homes for them to read with their children as an introduction to this horrific topic.

The chapters are very short, perhaps two to four pages, and one or two a night would be a fantastic shared read for parent and child. And from page 104 of “The Ładoś List,” entries 1526 - 1529, we know that the story of the Lichtenstern family of Tutti, her brother, and her mother and father comes with a positive ending. Most fittingly, their family’s passport image graces the cover of “The Ładoś List.”

Kopernik Memorial Association  
P.O. Box 911  
Utica, N.Y. 13503

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*Kopernik Association*  
1973-2023

**50**  
*Years*  
**ANNIVERSARY**

Join the Celebration Committee  
Mon. Sept. 12, 6pm Kopernik Meeting



*The Stained Glass Treasures  
of Holy Trinity Church  
125th Anniversary display*

*Holy Trinity Church is the seat of Polish identity  
in Utica  
and the surrounding Mohawk Valley*

And

*Legends and Folktales of Poland*

**Coming October 2022  
Kopernik Cultural Center**