

PAHA News



Tuesday, January 9, 2018

PAHA's 2017 Awards Presented at its 75th Annual Meeting in Washington D.C.



The Ambassador Prof. Piotr Wilczek welcomes guests, Photo by Marcin Szerle.

The 75th Annual Meeting of the Polish American Historical Association in Washington D.C. featured PAHA's Awards Ceremony held on January 6, 2018 at the Residence of the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland, Prof. Piotr Wilczek. The event began with a welcome by the Ambassador himself who praised PAHA for its contributions to scholarly research and promotion of Polish American history and culture. Ambassador Wilczek reminded the audience that the year 2018 marks the centennial of Poland's independence.



Ambassador Wilczek with art installation honoring Paderewski

PAHA President, Prof. Anna Mazurkiewicz of the University of Gdansk, presented the rich and fruitful history of PAHA and its role in stimulating and expanding the field of research into Polish American topics - history, culture, sociology, politics, and more. Prof. Mazurkiewicz stated: "2018 is a very special year – it marks the centennial of Poland's rebirth. It also marks 75 years since the establishment of PAHA. During our meeting tonight we shall begin to celebrate both. In my capacity as PAHA's President I would now like to officially inaugurate the observance of the 75th Anniversary of PAHA's founding. That is, the founding of the oldest, continuously existing, scholarly organization devoted to the study and promotion of the Polish American experience."



Prof. Anna Mazurkiewicz, PAHA President. Photo by Marcin Szerle.

Prof. Mazurkiewicz also reminded the listeners that "The membership in PAHA is not restricted to historians. One does not have to be an academic. One does not have to be of Polish origin to join. Polish language is not required either. What is required is the passion for the study, preservation and promotion of the Polish experience in the Americas."



Prof. Mazurkiewicz presents PAHA History edited by James S. Pula. Photo by Marcin Szerle

Finally, she discussed current PAHA projects and the ways the organization will celebrate its 75th Anniversary: "Among the anniversary celebrations we have planned for 2018 there is: a conference at Loyola University in Chicago which will be held on September 7-9, 2018. There is also a special Anniversary publication initiated and edited by James Pula, published with the support of the PAHA Board that covers the entire history of PAHA . The 75th years described in this volume are presented through the eyes of PAHA members at various periods of Association's history – including texts by former presidents who continue their work for PAHA, Prof. John Bukowczyk, Prof. Anna Jaroszynska-Kirchmann and the editor of the volume Prof. James S. Pula. Together with appendices listing the former officials and awardees – for the first time gathered in a single publication, I am not shy to say, we have a complete account of the 75-year long history with all the historical flavors of the times and phases this organization went through."



Dr. Maja Trochimczyk reads Paderewski-themed poems, with Paderewski piano rolls as decoration.

Prior to presenting PAHA Awards and Awardees, Prof. Mazurkiewicz invited Dr. Maja Trochimczyk, PAHA Board Secretary and Communications Director to present a program: "Poland 1918-2018: Remembering Ignacy Jan Paderewski." The presentation featured Paderewski playing Paderewski on piano rolls recorded on CD and in a fragment of "The Moonlight Sonata" film of 1937, a display of Paderewski piano rolls and vintage postcards, and a recitation of Paderewski-themed poetry celebrating his advocacy on behalf of Poland that resulted in adding Poland's independence as point 13 to President Woodrow Wilson's 14 Points for the Paris Peace Conference in 1918. Poignantly, Paderewski's last composition was the 1917 hymn for the Polish troops gathered in Canada and the U.S., "Hej Orle Bialy!" He sacrifices his musical talents to serve the Polish cause. His role as Poland's "savior" was praised by American poets Robert Underwood Johnson, John Huston Finley and Charles Phillips. (See the images and full text of this presentation on Trochimczyk's Chopin with Cherries blog, or watch Paderewski play in the film *The Moonlight Sonata* of 1937).



Assisted by PAHA's Executive Director, Prof. Pien Versteegh, PAHA President presented the following Awards and Prizes to distinguished individuals selected by the Awards Committee chaired by PAHA's Second Vice-President and Executive Director of the Pilsudski Institute, Dr. Iwona Drag-Korga.



Katalin Kadar Lynn accepts Halecki Prize for Joanna Wojdon. Photo by Maja Trochimczyk.

1. OSKAR HALECKI PRIZE - DR. JOANNA WOJDON

The Halecki Prize recognizes an important book or monograph on the Polish experience in the United States. Eligibility is limited to works of historical and/or cultural interest, including those in the social sciences or humanities, published in the two years prior to the award. The 2017 Halecki Prize was presented to Joanna Wojdon for *White and Red Umbrella: The Polish American Congress in the Cold War Era 1944-1988* (Helena History Press, 2017). The award was received by the publisher, Katalin Kadar Lynn, Publisher of Helena History Press and faculty member at Eotvos Lorand University. (For the list of past winners visit this page of PAHANews blog)

The *White and Red Umbrella* recounts the goals and everyday activities of the Polish American Congress under the presidencies of Charles Rozmarek (1944-1968) and Aloysius Mazewski (1968-1988) who

shaped the organization's image in the Cold War era. It deals with the issues of both the effectiveness and ineffectiveness of the PAC in representing Polish American interests, as a coordinator of various Polish American endeavors, as a lobbying organization, and as an institution providing cultural and social unity for Americans of Polish descent in America. It discusses internal and external factors that influenced the Congress and portrays the personalities of its activists and examines the PAC's achievements and failures.

Joanna Wojdon is an Associate Professor at the Institute of History, University of Wrocław. The history of Polish Americans after World War II is one of her major research interests, alongside the history of education under communism. Her research in the Polish American archives was made possible thanks to a Kosciuszko Foundation Fellowship(2003) and a Fulbright Senior Award (2014).



2. MIECISLAUS HAIMAN AWARD - DR. JOANNA WOJDON

The Mieczysław Haiman Award of the Polish American Historical Association is "offered annually to an American scholar for sustained contribution to the study of Polish Americans." These Awards commemorate a historian, writer, journalist, translator and Polonia activist, Mieczysław Haiman (1888-1949), who was the first director of the Polish Museum of America, and the first historian of American Polonia. (For the list of past winners visit this page of PAHANews blog).

The Haiman Award Joanna Wojdon's seminal works on the Polish American Congress ["W imieniu sześciu milionów..." Kongres Polonii Amerykańskiej w latach 1944-1968 (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, 2005) and "W jedność siła!" Kongres Polonii Amerykańskiej w latach 1968-1988 (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, 2008)] have both been reviewed positively and are major contributions to the understanding of that organization. In addition, some of her other works over the years have also addressed with excellently documented research issues essential to understanding the Polish American experience. Not the least of these is "Polish Americans in the Press of the People's Republic of Poland (1952-1989) [Polish American Studies, Vol. LIX (2002), No. 2] which reverses the usual view of studying the Polonia press in order to see how Polonia was actually portrayed abroad, and "The Image of Tadeusz Kościuszko in Postwar Polish Education" (The Polish Review, 2014).



Dr. Marta Cieslak accepts her Swastek Prize from Dr. Anna Mazurkiewicz
Photo by Marcin Szerle.

3. JOSEPH SWASTEK PRIZE - DR. MARTA CIESLAK

The Swastek Prize is awarded annually for the best article published in a given volume of *Polish American Studies*, the journal of the Polish American Historical Association. This award, established in 1981, is named in honor of Rev. Joseph V. Swastek (1913-1977), the editor of *Polish American Studies* for many years, and a past president of the Polish American Historical Association. (Read the list of past winners posted on this blog).

For the Swastek Prize for the best article in volume 73 (2016) of *Polish American Studies*, the Editorial Board nominated Marta Cieślak's "Crossing the Boundaries of Modernity: The Post-Abolition Journey of Polish Peasants to the United States." As some of the board members noted, this original piece is based on the author's 2014 dissertation and does not only reflect extensive archival research but also a thorough understanding of the social and economic conditions in mid-19th century Poland, of the transatlantic migration, and the social and economic situation of emancipated slaves in the postbellum South. Cieślak's argument is original and compelling, and constitutes a historiographically significant project.



Dr. Kozaczka with Dr. Mazurkiewicz and her Award, Photo by Marcin Szerle.

4. JAMES S. PULA DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD - DR. GRAZYNA KOZACZKA

Given occasionally to a member of PAHA who has rendered valuable and sustained service to the organization, the Distinguished Service Award was renamed in 2017 to honor Prof. James S. Pula, a long-time editor of the *Polish American Studies*, PAHA's past president, current treasurer, awards recipient, and the editor of two PAHA flagship publications, the critically acclaimed *Polish American Encyclopedia* (McFarland, 2011) and *PAHA: The 75th Anniversary of the Polish American Historical Association* (PAHA, 2017). (For the list of past winners visit this page of PAHANews blog).

Professor of English at Cazenovia College in New York state, Dr. Kozaczka is a long-time PAHA Board Member, PAHA President in 2015-2016 and a faculty member at Cazenovia College since 1984. She currently directs the college-wide Honors Program and took a leadership role in securing trademarks for PAHA's logo and name, organizing many PAHA conferences, and representing the organization at international events, especially in Poland. Dr. Kozaczka's research interests include ethnic American literature, women's literature, literature of the Holocaust as well as traditional Polish folk dress and adornment. She has published scholarly essays, short fiction and popular articles in both English and Polish. She is currently working on a monograph devoted to the representation of immigrant and ethnic women in Polish American literature after World War II.



Robert Synakowski discusses his award with Dr. Mazurkiewicz. Photo by Marcin Szerle

5. SKALNY CIVIC ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS - JERALD RACHFAL AND ROBERT SYNAKOWSKI

The Skalny Civic Achievement Awards honor individuals or groups who advance PAHA's goals of promoting research and awareness of the Polish-American experience and/or have made significant contributions to Polish or Polish-American community and culture. The two 2017 Skalny Awards were presented to Jerald Rachfal and Robert Synakowski. (For a list of past winners visit this page).

5a. SKALNY AWARD - JERALD RACHFAL

For many years now, Jerry Rachfal has been a recognized leader of the Rochester, NY Polonia. He has been associated with the Polish Historical Society of Rochester, NY and currently serves as board member of this organization taking an active role in promoting Polish history and culture. As a close associate of Dr. Frederic Skalny, he has also been associated with the Skalny Foundation and Charitable trust. Jerry Rachfal's commitment to serving others goes beyond his involvement with the Polish American organization. He is a former member of Boler School of Business Advisory Committee at his

Alma Mater, John Carrol University and together with his wife Janice Rachfal, works with the Flower City Habitat for Humanity in Rochester, NY.



Robert Synakowski (center) with Prof. Neal Pease, Dr. Ewa Barczyk, Prof. Grazyna Kozaczka, Dr. Maja Trochimczyk, Mr. Stanley Kozaczka. Photo by Marcin Szerle.

5b. SKALNY AWARD - ROBERT SYNAKOWSKI

Robert Synakowski has dedicated his life to promoting Polish American culture and serving Polish American communities in New York State and nationwide. As the President of The Polish Home in Syracuse, NY he works tirelessly to both secure the physical well-being of this historic home and to make it into a welcoming educational space for Polish Americans and their friends. Under the directorship of Robert Synakowski, The Polish Home became a new location for the Polish Heritage Society of Syracuse which Robert also leads as its president. His focus on education is also evidenced in his involvement with The Polish Scholarship Fund which annually awards college scholarships to students of Polish descent. Robert Synakowski also serves his second term as a PAHA board member and as the First Vice-president of American Council for Polish Culture, a national organization uniting groups and individuals in cities across the United States in promoting Polish culture, heritage and history, and intercultural understanding.



Therese Clarke receives Amicus Poloniae Award from Dr. Mazurkiewicz. Photo by Marcin Szerle.

6. AMICUS POLONIAE AWARD - THERESE CLARKE

The Amicus Poloniae Award recognizes significant contributions enhancing knowledge of Polish and Polish-American heritage by individuals not belonging to the Polish-American community. (For a list of past winners visit this page of PAHANews blog).

Therese Clarke was born in Buffalo NY to an Irish Father and French Mother. Therese graduated from D'Youville College with Honors in Buffalo NY and Majored in French Education. She was a career French Teacher in the Williamsville NY School District. A founding member, (the only original member actively involved since 1990) of the 1990 creation of Pomost International, a local organization which has been sending volunteers annually to Rzeszów, Poland, Buffalo's Sister City. Therese went to Rzeszów alone (not knowing any Polish) to make the arrangements. She returned 15 times as leader of the program. Since 1991 more than 125 Americans (many non-Poles) have gone to Poland to facilitate a two-week Intensive English Language and American Culture. Therese regularly attends the Chopin Singing Society Concerts, UB Polish Student's Association, Polish American Congress of WNY & Polish Arts Club of Buffalo Wigilias and Swieconkas. Dyngus Day, Paczki Day, Dożynki, Kosciusko Foundation of Buffalo, Orchard Lake Seminary Fundraising, Polish Businesswomen's Association, Casimir Pulaski Association, Polish Genealogy Associations.



7. CREATIVE ARTS PRIZE - DR. CZESLAW KARKOWSKI

PAHA's Creative Arts Prize, established in 1999, "recognizes contributions in the field of creative arts by individuals or groups who have promoted an awareness of the Polish experience in the Americas." (For a list of past winners visit this page of PAHANews blog).

Czeslaw Karkowski philosopher, journalist, novelist and an academic, has been a prolific writer authoring novels, memoirs, collections of essays, and creative nonfiction. His long and distinguished career as a journalist began in the early 1980s in Berlin where he found himself with other political exiles of the Solidarity era, and was followed up by many years in the editorial offices of the New York City's Polish language newspaper, *Nowy Dziennik*. His publications include contemporary interpretations of *The Iliad* by Homer, a historical novel entitled *Drugi w Sztuce*, as well as a novel of immigrant experience *Kamienna Drabina*. This immigrant experience returns in his *Dziennik Jednego Roku* and *Na Emigracji*. Czeslaw Karkowski using his own emigrant/immigrant experiences provides a sensitive commentary on immigrant identity and the immigrant connection to the home country.



Sarah Moxy Moczygeba receives Travel Grant from Dr. Mazurkiewicz. Photo by Marcin Szerle

8. GRADUATE STUDENT TRAVEL GRANT - MS. SARAH 'MOXY' MOCZYGEMBA

Established in 2008, the Graduate Student Research Paper Award recognizes outstanding research into Polish-American history and culture by a young scholar in the humanities or social sciences. In 2017, it was replaced by the the Graduate Student/Young Scholar Travel Grant. The winner receives a travel grant to present the paper at the PAHA Annual Meeting. (For a list of past awardees see this page).

Sarah "Moxy" Moczygamba is a Religious Studies doctoral student at the University of Florida. Her dissertation will focus on ethnic identity, historical memory, and Catholicism in the Silesian Polish Texan community. Ms. Moczygamba presented a lecture during PAHA conference in Washigton DC in January 2018 exploring the relationship between space and memory in the contemporary Polish American Catholic community in South Texas associated with the Panna Maria settlement, focusing on efforts to remember and commemorate the experience of immigration by emphasizing its historical and present-day ties to Roman Catholicism.



Dr. Grazyna Zebrowska of the Polish Embassy and Dr. Maja Trochimczyk. Photo by Marcin Szerle



Attendees with award winners or their representatives at the Awards Ceremony. Residence of Ambassador Wilczek, Washington. D.C.