

# Key Dates in Polish History

- 180,000 B.C.** Prehistoric man lives in Ojcow region.
- 1300 B.C.** Lusatian Culture begins.
- 550 B.C.** Biskupin Settlement is built in central Poland. It is now a museum in Poland
- 100 A.D.** Contacts with Roman Danubian provinces made.
- 500 A.D.** West Slavic tribal federations take form.
- 850 A.D.** Polanie and Wislanie tribal groups appear.
- 966 A.D.** Mieszko accepts Christianity for himself and for Poland and the documented history of Poland begins.
- 1000** The foundations of the Catholic hierarchy are laid with the establishment of the Archbishopric of Gniezno and three suffragan sees.
- 1025** Boleslaw the Brave becomes the first Polish King.
- 1138** Boleslaw Wrymouth's order of succession starts the dynastic division of Poland instead of circumventing it.
- 1253** Poland's patron, St. Stanislaw Bishop of Cracow, is canonized.
- 1364** The University of Cracow is founded with papal approval.
- 1410** The great victory of Polish-Lithuanian forces over the Teutonic Knights at Grunwald.
- 1473** A movable type printing press is set in Cracow. The 'Father of Modern Astronomy', Mikolaj Kopernik (Nicolas Copernicus), is born.
- 1569** The merger of Poland and Lithuania (Lublin Union).
- 1596** The Union of Brzesc unites most of the Orthodox Bishops of Poland – Lithuania with Rome – the largest, most successful reunion movement in the history of the Catholic Church.
- 1608** The first Polish settlers arrive in Jamestown, Virginia, and become the first to demand civil rights by striking for citizenship soon after.
- 1683** The victory of John Sobieski over the Turks at Vienna.
- 1772** First partition of Poland by Prussia, Russia and Austria.
- 1791** The Constitution of May 3rd adopted.
- 1794** The Kosciuszko Insurrection.
- 1795** The Third partition of Poland by Russia, Prussia and Austria eliminated Poland from the political map of Europe.
- 1830** The November Insurrection – the first of several unsuccessful Polish attempts in the 19th century to regain independence.
- 1863** The January Insurrection.
- 1867** Marie Sklodowska Curie, the first person in history to win a Nobel Prize in chemistry and physics, is born.
- 1918** Poland regains its independence after 123 years of political partition and servitude.
- 1939** Sept. 1, - Hitler's attack on Poland.  
Sept. 17, - Soviet troops enter the eastern territories
- 1944** The Polish People's Republic comes into existence.
- 1966** Poland observes the 1,000 anniversary of its Christianity and its statehood.
- 1970** The Polish government attempts to raise prices of basic foods, leading to protests and deadly confrontations, an event repeated in 1976.
- 1978** Cardinal Karol Wojtyla is elected to the papacy as Pope John Paul II.
- 1980** Solidarity is founded under the leadership of Lech Walesa.
- 1981** General Wojciech Jaruzelski, accompanied by the Military Council of National Salvation, declares martial law in Poland.
- 1983** Martial law is lifted in Poland.
- 1990** The Polish People's Republic and Polish government-in-exile from World War II dissolve on December 9, 1990, as Lech Walesa becomes the first democratically elected President of Poland since before the Second World War.
- 1997** Poland adopts a new constitution.
- 1999** Poland joins NATO.
- 2004** Poland joins the European Union.
- 2010** The crash of the Polish presidential aircraft kills President Lech Kaczynski, members of his cabinet and high-ranking Polish civilian and military officials during a flight to Smolensk to attend a ceremony to commemorate the Katyn Massacre.

Kindly share this outline of Key Dates in Polish History with others. Everyday there are historic events that take place in Poland and in communities around the world where people of Polish heritage have settled. People of Polish heritage make ongoing contributions to every aspect of life including: math, science, medicine, history, literature, sports and many other fields that enable us to live our lives as we do today.

Everyone is encouraged to learn more about their Polish heritage. There are Historic Reflections highlighting great men and women of Polish heritage on the Internet, which are outlined in the Historic Reflections in each issue of the Polish American News. For more information visit: [PolishAmericanNews.com](http://PolishAmericanNews.com).