



POLISH AMERICAN **n**ews

August / September, 2006



Benjamin Franklin Bridge Celebrates 80th Anniversary

A portrait of Modjeski hangs in the Polish American Cultural Center Museum, 308 Walnut Street, historic Philadelphia, just a few blocks south of the Benjamin Franklin Bridge.

Ralph Modjeski, considered "America's greatest bridge builder", was born in Bochnia, near the city of Krakow, Poland on January 27, 1861. He immigrated to America at the age of 15 with his mother, famous Shakespearean actress, Helen Modjeska, in July, 1876. Even though Modjeski seemed destined to become an accomplished concert pianist, he went on instead to become a highly successful civil engineer and "one

of the twentieth century's most famous designers and builders of bridges". In 1929, Modjeski was awarded the John Fritz Gold Medal, the highest American engineering medal, with a citation for his genius in combining strength and beauty. He was also honored by the Pennsylvania state legislature in 1966 by a resolution citing him as one of America's "greatest inventors".

Despite his busy engineering career, he found time to relax playing the piano for several hours daily.

He remained professionally active until 1936 and died in 1940. The bridge engineering consulting firm established by Modjeski in 1893 continues to operate under the name of Modjeski and Masters, with offices in Pennsylvania and several other states.



Polish American Cultural Center
308 Walnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106
(215) 922-1700

When You're in Philadelphia's Historic District Visit The **Polish American Cultural Center Museum Exhibit Hall**
308 Walnut Street
Featuring Polish History and Culture
Open 10 AM to 4 PM
FREE ADMISSION

January through April
Monday to Friday

May through December
Monday to Saturday

Gift Shop is Open During
Regular Exhibit Hall Hours

Closed on Holidays

Visit the Polish American Cultural Center Museum on the Internet at: www.PolishAmericanCenter.org

Featured on the web site are brief outlines of Great Men and Women of Polish Heritage, information about Polish customs and traditions, and information about organizations and activities in the Polish American Community.

"41st Annual"

Polish American Festival

September 2,3,4 (Labor Day), 9,10, 2006

Sat. Sept. 2nd

Charm City Sound
Wislanie 90
Henry & the Versa J's

Sun. Sept. 3rd

Polish American String Band
Wislanie 90
Dyna Brass

Mon. Sept. 4th

Labor Day
Tommy Thomas & Trio
Wislanie 90
Lenny Gomulka & Chicago Push

The National Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa
654 Ferry Road - Doylestown, PA
www.PolisShrine.com

7.00 Per Person Admission
Includes:
Free Parking
Midway Rides
Stage Shows
Polish Art Exhibition
Special Events
For info - call:
215-345-0600

Sat. Sept. 9th

Jersey Polka Richie
Dennis Polisky & the Maestro's Men

Sun. Sept 10th

Eddie Derwin & the Polka Naturals
Ray Jay & Carousels

Festival Hours • 12 Noon to 8 P.M.

Museum Gift Shop on the Internet

You can visit the Museum's **Internet Gift Shop** and print out the order form from the home page of the Cultural Center's Internet site at: PolishAmericanCenter.org.

To receive a mail order form, call the Museum at (215) 922-1700.

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Newsletter

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