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.