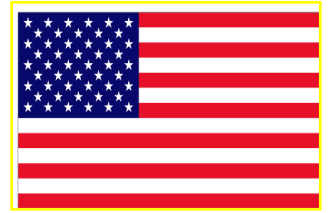




A Brief Outline of Polish and Polish American History - Part 1



120,000 B.C. - First records of Protoslavic cultures in the Ojcow region of Poland.

1300 B.C. - First evidence of Lusatian culture, the progenitor of modern Polish and Slavic cultures.

700 B.C. - Biskupin Settlement is built in central Poland in what is now the voivodeship of Torun. It is now a museum in Poland featuring the oldest settlement.

100 A.D. - Contact with Roman Danubian provinces made by Slavic peoples, although Rome never expands into their territories.

500 - West Slavic tribal federations begin to form.

850 - Polanie and Wislanie tribal groups appear, eventually merging together into the first state of Poland.

966 - Duke Mieszko accepts Christianity for himself and for Poland and the documented history of Poland begins.

1000 - The foundations of the Catholic religion 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.

1253 - Poland's patron, St. Stanislaw Bishop of Cracow, is canonized.

1364 - The University of Cracow is founded under the direction of the Roman Catholic Church.

1410 - Polish-Lithuanian forces defeat the Teutonic Knights at Grunwald. This collaboration between the two nations would lay the seeds for the creation of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

1473 - The "Father of Modern Astronomy," Mikolaj Kopernik (Nicolas Copernicus), is born.

1543 - Copernicus' revolutionary work "The Revolution of Heavenly Spheres" is published shortly before his death, the first strike against the theory that the sun revolved around the Earth.

1569 - The merger of Poland and Lithuania into the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth takes place. (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, on the English ship Mary and Margaret. They were craftsmen invited by Captain John Smith to establish a glass industry in the Jamestown Colony. They opened a glassblowing shop, which became the first American industry. After fulfilling the needs of the new Jamestown colony, the Polish settlers produced glass, pitch and tar for export to England. These products became the first commercial items to be exported from America to Europe.

1619 - After being denied participation in the new Virginia Assembly, the Polish settlers staged the first labor strike in America. The strike was not for wages or working conditions but for the right to participate in the newly-formed House of Burgesses. Recognized for their vital role in the Jamestown settlement, the Poles were granted the same voting privileges as those enjoyed by the English.

1683 - John Sobieski defeats the Turks at Vienna.

1745 - Casimir Pulaski is born in Poland.

1746 - Thaddeus Kosciuszko is born in Poland. He attended school in Lubieszow and later the Cadet Academy in Warsaw and then undertook engineering studies in Paris.

1776 - Thaddeus Kosciuszko came to America to offer his services to General George Washington. He was appointed engineer of the Continental Army with the rank of Colonel. He distinguished himself throughout the American Revolutionary War. His engineering and fortification skills along the Delaware River and at Saratoga, N.Y., helped win battles for the Continental Army. Kosciuszko is well known for his fortification at West Point, which is the site of West Point Military Academy. The name General Thaddeus Kosciuszko is listed on organizations, bridges, schools, and other local and national landmarks.

1777 - Count Casimir Pulaski arrives in the United States and is welcomed by General George Washington to serve in the Continental Army. Using his own money, Pulaski formed the first cavalry unit in the Continental Army. He became the Father of the American Calvary. For his service the U.S. Congress appointed him Brigadier General in charge of Four Horse Brigades. General Pulaski, distinguished himself in several key battles during the American Revolutionary War.

1779 - In October, General Casimir Pulaski was killed during the Battle of Savannah. The British, amazed by his courage, tended to his wounds before he died. Across America many organizations, bridges, streets, schools, and other landmarks are named after General Casimir Pulaski.

1791 - The Constitution of May 3rd, the first democratic constitution in Europe and the second in the world, after the United States Constitution, is adopted. This event is commemorated annually as "Polish Constitution Day."

1794 - The Kosciuszko Insurrection occurs in Poland to protest Russia's interference in Polish politics. Kosciuszko, after successfully assisting the United States in its fight for freedom, attempted to help his homeland restore its independence.

1795 - The Third Partition of Poland by Russia, Prussia and Austria eliminated Poland from the political map of Europe. Despite the efforts of the partitioning powers, the Polish language and customs continued to flourish throughout the years of partition.

1797 - Kosciuszko returns to Philadelphia greeted by a hero's welcome. He resided at 3rd and Pine Streets, which today is called Kosciuszko House, a national monument to Tadeusz Kosciuszko, operated by the U.S. National Park Service.

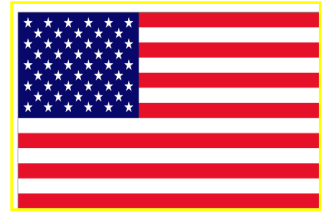
1830 - The November Insurrection occurs - the first of several unsuccessful Polish attempts in the 19th century to regain independence.

1863 - The January Insurrection against Russian rule in Poland takes place.

1867 - Marie Sklodowska Curie, the first scientist in history to win a Nobel Prize in both chemistry and physics, is born in Warsaw.



A Brief Outline of Polish and Polish American History - Part 2



1870-1920 - Millions of Poles immigrated to the United States seeking better economic opportunities. They settled in Polish American neighborhoods, built churches, schools, and cultural organizations in major American cities to preserve the heritage of their homeland for their descendants Polish Americans continue to add to the way of life in America and every aspect of society.

1873 - The Polish Roman Catholic Union of America, the first Polish Fraternal Life Insurance organization in the United States, is founded. It continues to provide life insurance and other benefits to Polish Americans.

1908 - Polish American Social Services is established in Philadelphia to welcome Polish immigrants coming to America through the Washington Avenue Port of Entry in South Philadelphia. Large numbers of immigrants from many European countries were processed at the Washington Avenue Port of Entry between 1872 and 1914. Polish American Social Services, also known as PASS, sponsors United Social Services and remains a well-known social service agency assisting the general population in Southeastern Pennsylvania.

1918 - At the Treaty of Versailles, Poland regains its independence after 123 years of political partitions.

At the close of World War I, supporters of Poland's interests, such as famed Polish activist Ignacy Jan Paderewski and President Woodrow Wilson, advocated Poland's political restoration. On November 11, 1918, the last day of World War I, an Armistice Agreement was signed that restored Poland's Independence and rightfully restored Poland on the political map of Europe.

On May 3 and on November 11 each year, Polish people all over the world mark two historic events in Polish history. May 3rd marks the anniversary of Poland's 1791 Constitution, the second oldest written democratic constitution in the world. November 11, 1918, marks the Restoration of Poland to the political map of Europe, a historic event known as Poland's Independence Day.

1920 - The newly-independent Second Polish Republic drives back the Red Army at the Battle of Warsaw, destroying Lenin's objective of bringing all of Europe under Communism.

1939 - September 1 - World War II begins as Hitler's German troops invade Poland.

September 17 - Soviet troops seize the eastern territories of Poland in agreement with Nazi Germany.

1940 - Soviet Agents murder nearly 22,000 Polish military officers, police, and intellectuals in the Katyn Forest on the orders of Josef Stalin.

1945 - The Yalta Conference between the US, USSR, and UK occurs, with the Western Powers allowing Poland to come under Soviet Communist control.

1945-1989 - An additional large wave of Polish immigration came to the United States following World War II and the fall of Communism. They added to the already strong presence of Poles active in American Society.

1952 - The Polish People's Republic comes into existence.

1966 - Poland observes the 1,000th anniversary of its Christianity and statehood.

1970 - The Polish government attempts to raise prices of basic foods, leading to protests and deadly confrontations.

1978 - Cardinal Karol Wojtyla is elected Pope John Paul II, to the great celebration of Polonia across the world.

1980 - Solidarity is founded under the leadership of Lech Walesa, starting protests at the Lenin Shipyards in Gdansk.

1981 - General Wojciech Jaruzelski, accompanied by the Military Council of National Salvation, declares martial law in Poland.

1981 - Polish American Heritage Month was established in Philadelphia, celebrated during the Month of October. In 1981, it became a national celebration in conjunction with thousands of Polish American groups including, organizations, churches, schools, and radio, print and electronic media. The main goal is to promote Polish and Polish American history, culture and pride. PolishAmericanHeritageMonth.com.

1983 - Martial law is lifted in Poland.

1988 - Polish American Cultural Center Museum opens in Historic Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to welcome tourists from across America and around the world.

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 World War II.

1997 - Poland adopts a new constitution to replace the modified Polish People's Republic 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.

2013 - Pope John Paul II is officially canonized as Saint John Paul II.

2018 - Poland marks the 100th anniversary of its restoration on the map of Europe. Despite invasions and occupations, that at times, removed Poland's boundaries, the population remained intact.

Throughout its history, the people of Poland have fought for the freedom of not only their own homeland, but for the freedom of other nations. The Polish language, culture, and history are kept alive not just in Poland, but across the world wherever people of Polish heritage live. Polish communities outside of Poland are known as Polonia. In the United States, millions of people of Polish heritage live and maintain thousands of organizations that keep Polish and Polish American heritage alive for Polonia in America and for future generations.

Submitted by Michael Blichasz



For more information visit the Polish American Cultural Center Museum, 308 Walnut Street Philadelphia, PA 19106, Located in the Heart of Historic Philadelphia, America's Most Historic Square Mile.

Visit us on the Internet at:

PolishAmericanCenter.com



**Polish People Throughout the World
Celebrate the**

**1,054th Anniversary of
Documented Polish History**

966 AD • 2020

**Polish Americans Mark the 412th Anniversary
of the First Polish Settlers at Jamestown, Virginia
on October 1, 1608**

For more information, visit:

PolishAmericanCenter.com

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.

From the Desk of

Michael Blichasz, President
Polish American Cultural Center

308 Walnut Street • Philadelphia, PA 19106
(215) 922-1700

Internet: PolishAmericanCenter.com



Dear Members, Friends, and Supporters,

Polam Month, 2020

As the founder of Polish American Heritage Month and the chairman of the committee, I would like to thank everyone for their participation over the last 39 years. From the time I suggested the idea of a month-long Polish American Heritage Month celebration in Pennsylvania in 1981, this effort has been a rewarding one for me. I want to compliment the leadership of the Polish American Cultural Center and Polish American Congress, Eastern Pennsylvania District, for helping me get this idea off the ground and for joining forces with Polonia across Pennsylvania to make this effort a state-wide success. After five years of Heritage Month celebrations in Pennsylvania, the national leadership of the Polish American Congress, in 1986, joined with the Polish American Heritage Month Committee to expand this event to a national celebration of Polish history, culture and pride. Over the years Polish American organizations, churches, schools and individuals have become united in celebrating the history, culture and pride of the Polish people.

The Polish American Heritage Month Committee, headquartered at the Polish American Cultural Center Museum at 308 Walnut Street in historic Philadelphia, works closely with its participating groups, and the national affiliates of the Polish American Congress. Together, we work to coordinate everyone's efforts by providing information packets with ideas on sponsoring local celebrations, coloring and essay contests, and suggestions that highlight great men and women of Polish descent, as well as great moments in Polish history. Now available on the Committee's Internet site.

I also want to thank the leaders of the national Polish American fraternal organizations who help encourage the celebration of Polish American Heritage Month among their members and supporters through their newspapers and group representatives. Compliments also to the organizations, churches, schools, libraries and individuals who continue to work on this effort for the purpose of preserving Polish history and culture for future generations. I want to also thank the Polish American press and radio for helping get the word out about Polish American Heritage Month to the general public. Everyone's efforts are appreciated and very much needed. We live in an ever-changing time, and it is vital for ethnic groups in America to continue to highlight their individual heritage so the great mosaic of America remains vibrant.

On behalf of the members of the National Polish American Heritage Month Committee, I thank you for 39 years of cooperation and participation and urge everyone to continue sponsoring activities in your local community during October, Polish American Heritage Month.

Visit our Internet site at: PolishAmericanHeritageMonth.com

October "Polish American Heritage Month"

A National Celebration of Polish History, Culture and Pride!

From the Desk of
Michael Blichasz, President
Polish American Cultural Center
National Chairman
Polish American Heritage Month Committee
308 Walnut Street • Philadelphia, PA 19106 • (215) 922-1700
PolishAmericanHeritageMonth.com



Dear Members, Friends and Supporters,

Since 1608, when the first Polish settlers arrived at Jameston, VA, Polish people have been an important part of America's history and culture. In 2020, Polish Americans will mark the 39th Anniversary of the founding of Polish American Heritage Month, an event which began in Philadelphia, PA, and became a national celebration of Polish history, culture and pride. During 2020, we will also mark the 241st Anniversary of the death of General Casimir Pulaski, Father of the American Cavalry and the honor American Revolutionary War Hero Thaddeus Kosciuszko, Hero of Poland and America.

You are asked to spread the word about Polish American Heritage Month events in your local community and invite people to view the information which is linked below, including:

- [First Polish Settlers in America](#)
- [241st Anniversary of the Death of General Casimir Pulaski](#)
- [Tracing Your Heritage](#)
- [Some Reasons Why Polish Americans are Important to America](#)

There is always something happening in the Polish American community across the United States. It's great to see that Polish American history and pride are well represented in the "**Great Mosaic of America**". One way that you can help us spread the word is by welcoming family and friends to join the Museum's email list. The [guest book registration form](#) is on the home page of the Museum's Internet site at: PolishAmericanCenter.com.

As you read the articles in the [Polish American News](#), I ask that you spread the word to others. Your participation is always appreciated. **My best wishes to you and yours for an enjoyable Polish American Heritage Month celebration!**

October

“Polish American Heritage Month”

A National Celebration of Polish History, Culture and Pride

News Release

Dear Editor

PolAm Month, 2020

Kindly make the following announcement for our organization:

Polish Americans Celebrate During October

Since 1608, when the first Polish settlers arrived at Jamestown, VA, Polish people have been an important part of America’s history and culture. **In 2020, Polish Americans will mark the 38th Anniversary of the founding of Polish American Heritage Month**, an event, which began in Philadelphia, PA, and became a national celebration of Polish history, culture and pride. **During 2020, Poles will mark the 412th Anniversary of the First Polish Settlers** who were among the first skilled workers in America. **On July 30, 1619, the Polish settlers accomplished another noteworthy achievement by staging the first labor strike in America.** We, therefore, will also **Salute All American Workers** and urge people to purchase the products and services offered by American workers. **Polish Americans will also mark the 241st Anniversary of the death of General Casimir Pulaski, Father of the American Cavalry, and General Kosciuszko, Hero of Poland and America.**

For additional information about these historic events and Polish and Polish American history, visit the Museum’s Internet site at: PolishAmericanCenter.com.

Information about ways to celebrate Polish American Heritage Month can be obtained by calling the Heritage Month Committee, Monday through Friday between 9 A.M. and 5 P.M. at **215-922-1700**.

-30-

Thank you for including this press release in your newspaper. If you need further information, kindly contact me at the telephone number listed below. Your cooperation is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Michael Blichasz

Chairman

Polish American Heritage Month Committee

National Headquarters: **Polish American Cultural Center**

308 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Telephone: (215) 922-1700 • Internet: PolishAmericanCenter.com
or PolishAmericanHeritageMonth.com

*412th Anniversary of the Arrival of the
First Polish Settlers in America on October 1, 1608*



On October 1, 1608, the English ship Mary and Margaret arrived at Jamestown, Virginia. Aboard the ship were several persons of Polish descent who had been hired by the Virginia Company of London, at the request of Captain John Smith, leader of the Jamestown Colony. Captain Smith, who had first learned of the Polish craftsmen's work while traveling in Eastern Europe, invited them to Jamestown for the specific purpose of helping to establish a glass industry in the colony. Upon their arrival, the Poles made a vital contribution to the survival of the colony by digging a well to provide fresh drinking water, which was seriously lacking in the colony.



The next accomplishment was the building of a furnace to produce glass products, which became the first factory in America. In addition to producing glass products, the Polish settlers also produced pitch and tar, vital building materials for expanding the new colony. Despite many hardships due to the climate and living conditions, the Poles and their fellow settlers persevered and eventually were able to produce enough glass, pitch and tar for export to England. These products became the first commercial items to be exported from America to Europe.

On July 30, 1619, the Polish settlers accomplished another noteworthy achievement in the Jamestown colony by staging the first labor strike in America. After being denied participation in the first Virginia assembly, the Polish settlers conducted a labor walkout, not for wages or better working conditions, but for democratic rights. The newly formed House of Burgesses quickly acknowledged the vital role of the Poles in the settlement's well being and granted them the same voting privileges as those enjoyed by the English.

The arrival of the first Polish settlers in America marked a humble, yet significant event into American history.

Over the years, people from Poland continued to immigrate to America. Today Poles are the sixth largest ethnic group in America, residing in all fifty states and participating in every aspect of American life. Poles comprise a significant portion of the tens of millions of immigrants who have come to America from all over the world and now proudly call this nation their home. The 412th anniversary of the first Poles in America provides an excellent opportunity for persons of all national origins to reflect on the journey of their immigrant ancestors who continue to add shape and color to the American mosaic.

For more information, visit the Polish American Cultural Center Museum, 308 Walnut Street in Historic Philadelphia, and the Museum's Internet site at: PolishAmericanCenter.com.



- [The First Polish Immigrants \(They were here before the Pilgrims\)](#)
- [Polish People in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania](#)
- [Teacher's Lesson Plan - The Polish Experience at Jamestown](#)
- [Polish American Heritage Month](#)




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in Polish](#)

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Polish American Cultural Center Museum

PolishAmericanCenter.org

The Polish American Cultural Center Museum invites you to “Trace Your Heritage.” America is a great mosaic of many nations. However, much of our family history is undocumented. This brief outline will help you collect and organize information about your family and your heritage.

“Tracing your Heritage”

Family Name _____ Date _____

1. Where is your family's point of origin (town/region)?

2. What was your family's means of transportation to America?

3. Where was your family's port of entry and original place of settlement in America?

4. How many of your family members immigrated to America?

5. Why did your family members immigrate to America?

6. What challenges has your family had to overcome?

7. What other family members remained in their country of origin?

Detailed family information:

My Mother

Name _____

Date of Birth _____ Place of Birth _____

Her Father's Name _____

Her Mother's Name _____

Other Information _____

My Father

Name _____

Date of Birth _____ Place of Birth _____

His Father's Name _____

His Mother's Name _____

Other Information _____

Brothers and Sisters

List Names, Dates and Places of Birth:

Other Information:

Information About Myself

Name _____

Date of Birth _____ Place of Birth _____

Other Information _____

Grandparents (Mother's Side)

Grandfather's Name _____

Date of Birth _____ Place of Birth _____

Other Information _____

Grandmother's Name _____

Date of Birth _____ Place of Birth _____

Other Information _____

Grandparents (Father's Side)

Grandfather's Name _____

Date of Birth _____ Place of Birth _____

Other Information _____

Grandmother's Name _____

Date of Birth _____ Place of Birth _____

Other Information _____

Brief Story of My Family

What stories can you tell about your family, and what special customs do you celebrate?

Why are you proud of your heritage?

**During October We Salute Our
Friends and Neighbors Celebrating**

Polish American Heritage Month



**A National Celebration of Polish History, Culture, and Pride
in Cooperation with Polonia Across America**

For more information visit: PolishAmericanCenter.com

October "Polish American Heritage Month"

A National Celebration of Polish History, Culture and Pride!

308 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Telephone: (215) 922-1700 • Internet: PolishAmericanCenter.com

Pride in Our Heritage

The Polish American Journal proudly joins Polish American organizations, schools, churches, libraries, and cultural groups throughout the United States in celebrating **Polish American Heritage Month**. As Polish Americans, we have so many outstanding accomplishments of which we can be proud. The most influential religious leader on Earth, Pope John Paul II, shares our heritage. Throughout the 1970's and 80's Poles stood alone in their struggle for freedom against communist tyranny; they became the beacon of hope for all other Eastern bloc countries and proved it was possible for small countries to receive their national identity and break away from the U.S.S.R. The contributions which Poles have made to science, technology, music, art and literature are outstanding. Yes, indeed we can be proud of our Polish American heritage.


The concept of designating a special month in which to celebrate our heritage was begun in Pennsylvania in 1981 at the suggestion of Michael Blichasz, a Polish American activist in Philadelphia. At that time, August was designated Polish American Heritage Month and it was only celebrated in Pennsylvania. However, in 1986, Blichasz, president of the Eastern Pennsylvania District of the Polish American Congress and of the Polish American Cultural Center in Philadelphia, made a proposal at a national PAC meeting that Heritage Month be celebrated nation wide. His proposal was adopted, however, the month was changed to October, which coincides with the death of General Casimir Pulaski. The celebration in October is also more practical because it allows school children to participate in activities which would not be possible during the summer month of August. Today, all Polish American communities celebrate Heritage Month.

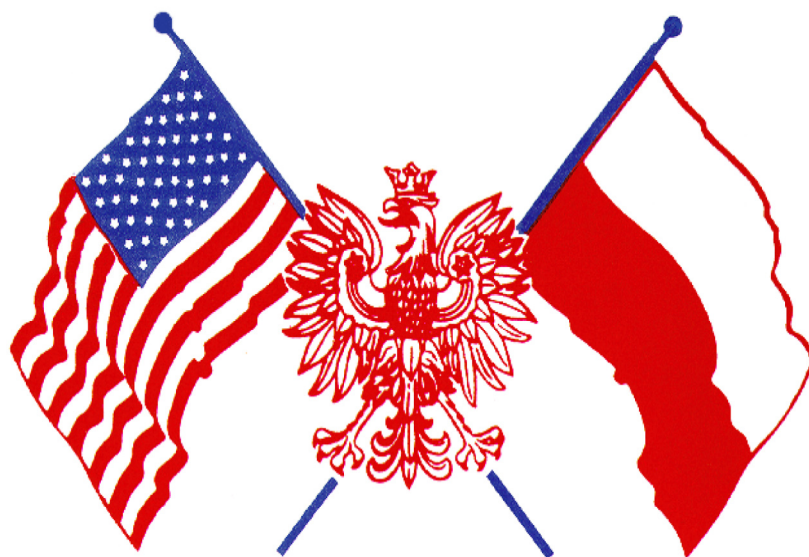
Because of active participation by Polish Americans across the country, more and more children are learning about the contributions of Poles and Polish Americans. These take the form of guest speakers at schools, exhibits within schools, ceremonies at town and city halls and memorials, exhibits and displays in shopping malls, and social events such as dances and food festivals. Do you volunteer at any such event? If not, you should. You will be doing your part to help spread the good word about Poles, and help to preserve our heritage here in the United States. It is up to us as parents, aunts, uncles, and grandparents to instill Polish pride in the younger generation. If we don't do it, no one else will, and that would be a tragedy and the end of a lineage strong in faith, family and community. One of the greatest benefits of Polish American Heritage Month is that it causes us to take time from our daily routine to pay special attention to our heritage.

Regardless of what we do to celebrate this month, make a promise to yourself to do something special because you are special, you are a Polish American!

This article first appeared in the Polish American Journal - October, 2002

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More than 20 million Americans share full or partial Polish heritage.

Polish Americans are part of every aspect of life in America. They are well known for their contributions to the Arts, Music, Education, Politics, Engineering, Communications, Medicine, Religion, Travel, Sports, Research and Development, and community events. They are inventors, builders and professions that make up the Great Mosaic of America.

Polish American Cultural Center Museum



Map found on NationsOnline.org