

CANADA-POLAND – Strategic Partners of the Twenty-First Century

The XXIII Annual Polish-Canadian Business Dinner in Windsor , 23.11.2018

Last year, Canada celebrated her 150th anniversary. It was a major event for Canadians of Polish heritage, living in their new homeland, Canada. This year, on November 11, we celebrated the 100th anniversary of Poland regaining independence after 123 years of servitude. Poles later had to fight for nearly half a century more to gain real freedom and democracy. This resulted in success in 1989, among other things thanks to the greatest freedom movement in Europe, "Solidarity". Poland has a very rich history, with Polish roots dating back to Eurasian people, who settled along the Wisła and Bug rivers about 3,000 years ago. The Polish monarchy, in existence since the Polish Baptism of 966, played an essential role in Europe for several centuries, up to the times of the partitions of Poland by our neighbours in the years 1772-1795. Modern Canada has historical connections to Poland and Polonia. An example of this is the authorization and training during World War I of over 22,000 soldiers from the U.S.A. and Canada at the Polish Army Camp "Kościuszko", at Niagara-on-the-Lake. Likewise, although on a much smaller scale, during World War II, there was recruitment into the Polish Army at Windsor and training at Owen Sound. Poles and Polonia have good reason to be grateful to Canada. Today, Poland is a free, democratic and economically well-developed nation. She is often called "the Green Island" of Europe because of her economic successes. She is an attractive, global partner. For her part, Canada had the greatest economic growth among the G7 nations in 2017 and is an attractive business partner. Canada has signed an agreement with the EU (CETA). These facts open the doors to unlimited possibilities for expanding a strategic partnership of the XXI century between Canada and Poland.

PROGRAMME	
6:30 p.m.	Welcome Jerry Barycki, President, Polish-Canadian Business and Professional Association of Windsor
	Greetings Tracey Ramsey, M.P., Essex Percy Hatfield, M.P.P. Windsor-Tecumseh Drew Dilkens, Mayor, the City of Windsor Barbara Lemecha, Executive Vice President, the Polish American Congress, Michigan Division, USA
7:00 p.m.	Dinner
8:15 p.m.	Keynote Speaker H.E. Andrzej Kurnicki, Ambassador of Poland to Canada
8:25 p.m.	Guest Speakers Natalia Kusendova, M.P.P. Mississauga-Centre Stephen MacKenzie, CEO, Windsor-Essex Economic Development Corporation Michał Gajewski, Past President, the Polish-Canadian Students' Association of Windsor
8:45 p.m.	Awards and Recognition
9:00 p.m.	Performances, Closing Remarks and Group Picture "Taty" Song and Dance Ensemble performing: Gołaski (7:31) and Seradz (6:07)



From left: Zbigniew Pona, Jerzy Barycki, Dr. Andrzej Kurnicki



Julia Zalewska, MC

Our guests extended their greetings



Nadine Abiraad, Community Outreach Assistant, representing Tracey Ramsey, MP Essex



Percy Hatfield, MPP Windsor-Tecumseh



Fred Francis, Councillor, COW, representing Mayor Drew Dilkens



Barbara Lemecha, PAC Michigan



Karen Majewski, Mayor, Hamtramck



Rev. Canon Mieczyslaw Kamiński, offered a prayer



Zbigniew Pona raised a toast



Youth with VIPs

This was the theme presented by speakers at the XXIII Annual Polish-Canadian Business Dinner in Windsor on November 23, 2018, in the Dom Polski Club with the participation of close to one hundred guests. Jerzy Barycki, co-founder and President of the Association since 1995, gave the opening address. He emphasized the initiatives of the Association in creating the collection of the nine displays Canada 150 – Poland 100, the possibility of a mission to Poland in 2019 and unwavering support for Polonia youth. He introduced a third-year student at the University of Windsor, Julia Zalewska, who with ease and grace took charge of the proceedings. The Keynote Speaker was H.E. the Polish Ambassador, Dr. Andrzej Kurnicki. In a most accessible manner, he presented a report on the good economic realities of Poland as an attractive investment partner. It was an interesting presentation with illustrations that helped the audience to follow and understand the subject.



Presentation by Ambassador of Poland,
Dr. A. Kurnicki



Steve MacKenzie, CEO, Windsor Essex Economic Development Corporation, in his presentation promoted Canada and our local Windsor-Essex region. He mentioned that there are plans for an economic mission to Poland in May 2019. The delegation will be made up of representatives of educational institutions, such as the University of Windsor and St. Clair College, business people, representatives of the Windsor Essex Economic Development Corporation, as well as a Polonia lobby, represented by the Polish-Canadian Business and Professional Association of Windsor. Natalia Kusendova, the recently elected MPP for the riding Mississauga-Centre, spoke of her "birthday wish" for her thirtieth birthday: next year's business mission from Ontario to Poland. In a certain sense, Natalia is our "Windsor child"; she has participated in our business dinners since 2011 and she says that she regards Windsor as her home. Natalia is one of the best-known Polonia youth leaders in Canada. She was a participant in and co-organizer of the Quo Vadis conferences for young leaders since 2010. The next conference, Quo Vadis X, will take place in Toronto in September 2019. She was an active member of the Head Council of the Canadian Polish Congress for two terms. She participated in the IV Conference of the World Polonia in Poland in 2012, where she effectively reported on the organization of the I Conference of Polonia Youth of the World. Natalia has great potential; she is an example for others and our great hope for the future of Canada and Polonia. The final speaker was Michelle Gajewski, Past President of the Polish-Canadian Students' Association of Windsor, which is celebrating its tenth anniversary. She enriched her presentation with a film about the PCSAW and Polish memorabilia in Windsor. There were greetings from individuals representing federal, provincial and city politicians as well as a representative of the Polish American Congress in Michigan and our good neighbours from Detroit, Michigan. They all emphasized the service that our Association brings to the life of Polonia in Windsor, Ontario and Canada.



Guest speakers , from left: Natalia Kusendova with greetings from Premier D. Ford, Stephen Mackenzie and Michelle Gajewski



Józef Palimąka awarded the Gold Medal of Polonia Windsor



Awarded Hon. PCBPAW Memberships, Natalia Kusendova and Frank Simpson



CPC Diploma to Julia Zalewska, President, PCSAW



Honorary Bronze Pins of the CPC, from left: Ania Barycka, Stanisław Bęben and Michelle Gajewski



Award Winners and Guest Speakers with VIPs

The exhibition about the Polish Army Camp “Kościuszko” at Niagara-on-the-Lake in Canada during World War I provided a connection to the 100th anniversary of the rebirth of Poland. From it more than 22,000 soldiers recruited from the U.S.A. and Canada were transported to France, where they became a part of the 100,000-strong “Haller’s Blue Army”. It fought at the side of the Allies and after the war was assigned to the defence of Poland’s eastern border and was triumphant in the “Battle of Warszawa” in 1920. It became known among the Allies as a confederated army and this fact was a fundamental advantage in the creation of the nation of Poland in 1918. It is noteworthy that one of the recruits at Camp “Kościuszko” was Franciszek Poleski, of Chicago. He followed the trail of war of “Haller’s Blue Army” and then returned to America, before settling in Windsor. His son, Tadeusz Polewski, founded the company “Eagle Press and Equipment”. He was a well-known action-taker in Polonia and among other things co-founded the housing development “Polonia Park”, offering the citizens of Windsor 342 apartments and condominiums. His sons, Mark and Ted, to this day run the company and have strong ties to the life of the Polonia community in Windsor. The presentation of them to the participants at the dinner was an emotional link between the past and the present that was rewarded with a strong round of applause. Acknowledgements and awards were the next part of the evening’s activities. Honorary Member of our organization, Józef Palimąka, a mechanic with the famous Squadron 303 of the Royal Air Force during World War II, was awarded the Centennial Gold Medal of the Windsor Polonia. Prof. Frank Simpson and Natalia Kusendova each received Honorary Membership of our Association. Ania Barycka, Michelle Gajewski and Stanisław Bęben received Honorary Bronze Awards of the Canadian Polish Congress for their community work over many years. According to tradition, thanks were given to our sponsors; like our speakers and honoured guests, they received on pen drives an electronic collection of the Canada 150 – Poland 100 displays, all nine exhibitions, each of them in three languages, namely Polish, English and French. Special thanks were directed to our sponsor for many years, the Polonia Centre (Windsor), Inc. At the end, the Song and Dance Ensemble “Tatry” in beautiful costumes performed with great energy two folk dances, the “Sieradz” and “Góralski” (“Mountaineers”) dances. Each year, the beautifully dancing and joyful young people invoke a great deal of emotion and a storm of applause. Bravo, “Tatry”!



Song and Dance Ensemble “Tatry”





Our Sponsors

This was the most recent, very interesting gathering of the Polish-Canadian Business and Professional Association of Windsor. It is appropriate to emphasize the significant contribution of our Association to Canada, Polonia and Poland. Our exhibitions have been shown in many Canadian cities and on several occasions in the Federal and Provincial Parliaments; several of them have been shown in Poland. They awaken enduring interest. In October of this year, President Barycki presented the entire collection of displays at the V Conference of the World Polonia in Warszawa, in the Hall of the Senate of the Republic of Poland, at the Culture Forum in a lecture, titled Promotion of the cultural heritage of Poland and Polonia in countries of settlement, using the example of the exhibition "Polonia for Canada on her 150th anniversary". On this occasion, participants in the conference from more than forty countries were given pen drives with the collection of displays. As we are emphasizing many times over, all the displays to greater or lesser extents are linked with the 100th anniversary of "Our Independent [Poland]".



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Many thanks to our supporters and sponsors for their generosity and to Dom Polski for hosting our event.

Summing up, one can say that our small organization from a relatively small Canadian city is able to make a significant contribution to the life of Polonia, Canada and Poland. Our guests emphasized our already 18-years-old, active collaboration of the twin cities Windsor-Lublin and the planned Windsor-Essex-Canada business mission to Poland in 2019. We hear from representatives of Polonia and from other Canadians that our exhibitions are a very interesting source of information and that in particular they present lesser known facts and emphasize the connections between our nations. It is a historical fact that Canada always gave support to Poland's aspirations for freedom and nowadays in times of peace is interested in greater cooperation in commerce, learning and culture. A strategic business partnership of Canada and Poland in the XXI century has doors wide open for limitless possibilities of cooperation – this is a good option for the future.

Ewa Barycka

Windsor, 26.11.2018

Translated by Frank Simpson

Windsor, 27.11.2018