



Sangs an Clatter / Piosenki i Gwar

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E Rychlik-Sharp

On Saturday 28th of May, the SPCA organised Sangs an Clatter / Piosenki i Gwar, reviving our annual celebration of Robert Burns and his Polish contemporaries, in the beautiful setting of Broughton St Mary's Church. We were also joined by the Association of Ukrainian in Great Britain, Edinburgh (AUGB) and Help Ukraine Scotland, to raise money for the DEC Ukraine appeal and to show the support of the Scots-Polish community for our Ukrainian friends after the horrifying invasion of the country by the Russian Federation.



Generously funded by the Consulate of the Republic of Poland, the evening began with a few words from SPCA chair Izabella Brodzińska and Consul Łukasz Lutostański, followed by a varied programme of Scottish, Polish and Ukrainian poetry, song and music. In the first half we heard contemporary Ukrainian and Polish songs, Scottish folk tunes and the poetry of Juliusz Słowacki, rounded off by Ukrainian traditional songs from the AUGB choir and a short comedy performance. After a short break the

evening continued with more folk music, an extract from a new play by actor and writer Dave Robb and a recital of Burns' The Twa Dogs, finished with the anthem of Ukraine and a Scots-Polish Auld Lang Syne. Afterward, delicious refreshments – provided by SPCA, AUGB and HUS members - were enjoyed in the church's Garden Room. In total, over three hundred pounds were raised for the DEC appeal.

Our thanks to Consul Lutostański and Head of Cultural Affairs Sylwia Spooner for the Consulate's funding and support, to the staff of Broughton St Mary's, to all performers and those who helped with ticketing, directions and refreshments, and to our friends from AUGB Edinburgh and HUS. We hope that our organisations and communities can continue to work together in promoting Polish and Ukrainian culture in Scotland, and that soon we can come together to celebrate a Ukraine at peace, free and entirely intact.



If you would like to support the DEC Ukraine appeal, their website can be found at <https://www.dec.org.uk/appeal/ukraine-humanitarian-appeal>

Keith Mullins-MacIntyre

Dates for your diary!!!

More online and live events will take place in 2023 but there are not yet confirmed dates

All paid up members will receive full details by post or e-mail.

Check our website for updates

www.scotpoles.co.uk



The Scottish Polish Cultural Association would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy & Healthy New Year

Spring Recital

The Spring recital at the Polish House on 7th May marked the SPCA's return to live events after a hiatus of well over two years. It was the first public performance on the historic Yaniewicz and Green square piano, following the two invitation concerts hosted by the Consulate immediately after the instrument was brought to its new home in November 2021. (For more information on the piano and these events, see the previous issue of this Newsletter, and the website yaniewicz.org.)

Fittingly, the Spring recital was given in memory of Dr Colin Kingsley - a distinguished pianist, and the SPCA's Honorary President for almost a quarter of a century - who had died at the beginning of the pandemic.

The recital was given by Dr John Kitchen, who for many years worked alongside Colin at the University of Edinburgh's Department of Music. He had participated in the SPCA Zoom meeting that was a key event in the successful crowdfunding campaign for the purchase of the piano and had himself made a generous donation. A well-kent figure in the city's music life for the past 35 years, John is a versatile keyboard player who, as City Organist and University Organist, regularly performs on two of Edinburgh's musical behemoths - the organs in the Usher Hall and the McEwan Hall. Yet, as he was keen to point out, he finds it equally satisfying to play both medium size and small-scale instruments. Indeed, among his own collection at home is a Clementi square piano that is very similar to the one in the Polish House. This provides additional evidence to support the theory that the latter is almost certainly a product of the Clementi factory that was customised by Yaniewicz and Green for a client in Liverpool.



John's carefully chosen programme was designed to give an idea of the sort of recital that would have been performed in the drawing rooms of early 19th-century Edinburgh. It was enhanced by his erudite notes and his

familiar practice of introducing each item by giving appropriate musical and historic background information and - where appropriate - relating an amusing anecdote. He began with one of the many Sonatinas (short sonatas) by Clementi, who had a varied career as a composer, pianist, conductor, teacher and publisher as well as a manufacturer of pianos. This was followed by the Adagio in G, a profound masterpiece by Haydn, Clementi's slightly older contemporary.

The centrepiece of the recital was a transcription of the famous four-movement String Serenade by Mozart commonly known as *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* (A Little Night Music). As an illustration of just how popular this work is, John recalled that a group of his students who raised funds for their studies by busking found that, once they started playing this work, it was almost impossible to move on to something else, as they were met with continual demands for it - and the first movement in particular - to be played again. The keyboard transcription, made by the 19th century pedagogue Ludwig Stark, is remarkably (and perhaps surprisingly) successful at presenting the work in an effective keyboard guise while preserving the original character and textures.

Polish and Scottish musical forms were showcased in the final part of the recital. Firstly, John played two of the set of four Polonaises *Melancoliques* by Mozart's son Franz Xaver, who was born shortly after his father's death and likewise marketed as a child prodigy. However, his career was derailed by ill-health and the melancholic temperament that is reflected in these pieces. By way of contrast, the last two works on the programme illustrated the vogue for foot-tapping Scottish folk music among European composers of the late 18th Century. These included the Italian Domenico Corri - who for many years lived in Edinburgh, serving as the city's main musical impresario prior to Felix Yaniewicz's assumption of the role - and his Czech son-in-law Jan Dussek, an associate of Haydn. Dussek's Variations on *Within a Mile of Edinburgh*, and Corri's Rondo on *The Banks of Doon*, proved to be inventive and entertaining examples of familiar Scottish melodies being deployed as the basis for elaborate keyboard compositions.

After the Spring recital, the square piano was moved the short distance to the National Trust for Scotland's Georgian House on Charlotte Square, where it took the place of the instrument normally displayed in the first-floor drawing room. It featured in a series of concerts and lectures given in conjunction with the four-months-long exhibition installed on the floor above - *Music and Migration in Georgian Edinburgh: The Story of Felix Yaniewicz*. This featured Yaniewicz's inlaid double violin case, owned by the University of Edinburgh, but empty apart from a box of desiccated rosin and a note confirming the ownership. The fate of the violins - one a Stradivarius - remains a mystery, albeit one that might yet be solved. Another highlight, lent by the Royal Albert Memorial Museum in Exeter, was a beautiful if fragile lyre-shaped guitar that was probably, like the piano, made by Clementi and customised by Yaniewicz.

After the exhibition closed, the square piano was moved back to the Polish House, where it is hoped that annual recitals will be held.

Gordon McLachlan

Young Talent Concert 2022



On Sunday afternoon, 11th September 2022, members and friends of the Scottish Polish Cultural Association came together to enjoy another wonderful Young Talent Concert. Held in the Edinburgh Society of Musicians' beautiful concert room in Belford Road, four young pianists performed for us at this musical event.

Memories of the covid pandemic and sadness at the late Queen Elizabeth II's passing were briefly lifted as we were treated to some wonderful music from all over the world. This ranged from baroque through classical, to romantic, to contemporary and on to music composed by one of our young performers.

Lily Grabsztunowicz was first to play, representing historical Poland with Feliks Rybicki's "At Twilight" and then Stanislaw Moniuszko's "The Spinner". To round off her programme, she performed her own composition, "Keys of Love" which took us on a most enjoyable voyage all around the piano.

Our next performer, Julia Zawislak, played music by two living composers. She first demonstrated the lovely, mellow side of this Steinway piano's character with "Moonbeams" No.1, by Austrian Barbara Arens. Then, from the UK came Ben Crosland's jazzy "I Hear What You Say", which was delightfully cool to listen to.



Matilda Clarke then played two contrasting pieces from different countries. With Robert Schumann's "The Merry Peasant", she conveyed to us a tuneful picture of 19th century Germany. After that came Jean Francois d'Andrieu's "Gavotte en Rondeau", a vigorous French baroque dance which she played with panache.

Finally, Julia Hyder took us around the world, setting the scene in baroque Germany with George F. Handel's Toccata in G Minor. Then from romantic Spain, she played George Nevada's "Starry Dome"; and the concert ended on an up-beat note with 20th century American William Gillock's "Mister Trumpet Man".

This had been a most welcome afternoon of music-making by four young musicians who lifted our spirits and put a song in our hearts.

Nicky Fraser

Book Launch

On 8th October 2022 Maria Chamberlain, with Jenny Robertson, presented her new book, a dramatic family memoir: "Never Tell Anyone You're Jewish". Published May 12, 2022 by Vallentine Mitchell

This is a story of two Jewish families in Nazi-occupied Poland during the Holocaust. They were joined by marriage after the war and Maria was born soon after. Not surprisingly her mother initially urged her to hide her Jewishness. In old age she relented, recognising that testimonies make history, and the lives of those who perished should be celebrated. The book is compiled from survivor memories, unfinished memoirs, letters, photographs, and historical archives.



Dr Maria Chamberlain is the daughter of Holocaust survivors. Born in Kraków, Poland the family emigrated in 1958 when she was eleven years old and settled in Edinburgh. Her mother Jadwiga was a keen member of the Polish 'Kombatanty' - often contributing trays of open Polish sandwiches for events such as this. Both parents and Maria pursued academic careers at the University of Edinburgh, Her father Artur as a geneticist, her mother as a biochemist, and Maria as a biologist.

Jenny Robertson has authored a collection of poems, *Ghetto* (Lion Publishing, 1989, read in the Edinburgh Book Festival that year); also *Don't go to Uncle's Wedding, voices from the Warsaw Ghetto* (SPCK/Azure, 2000).

Jenny also contributes to *PRISM*, the journal for Holocaust educators and students, Yeshiva University, New York.

The launch was very well attended and afterwards quite a few copies of the book were purchased while chatting to Maria and enjoying some refreshments.

Krystyna Szumelukowa

Lecture on Polish Soldiers in Britain after WW2

On Saturday 20th October the Scottish Polish Cultural Association presented another interesting lecture by Mr Robert Ostrycharz. The event took place in the smart looking interior of the Polish House at 11 Drummond Place and was organised by Keith and Kiro from the SPCA Committee. The subject of the lecture focused on the Polish Soldiers in Britain in the immediate aftermath of the Second world war. Robert undertook a mammoth subject of the history. The estimated number of Polish soldiers who found themselves on the British soil was tens of thousands. After the WW2 ended, they faced no choice but to continue their lives in a foreign land and the political reality changed so dramatically and made impossible to return. By 1945 Poland who fell under the Soviet Communist sphere of influence and power was not the same country that those soldiers left in the onset of the war in 1939.

Mr Ostrycharz painted a great picture of Poles who arrived in Scotland and England and slowly adjusted their lives according to different environment and circumstances. Nonetheless the Polish soldiers proud and determined carried a huge baggage of experience but most of all their heritage and enthusiasm for new life in Britain. Wherever they stationed they made themselves noticed and forged strong links with local communities.

We learnt that Polish soldiers while stationed in Scotland had free access to cinemas and they did not pay fees. Lord Provost of Glasgow Patrick Dolan was instrumental in making lives of Poles much more inclusive and comfortable. There were camps in Biggar, Douglas where the Lancers stationed, and the conditions improved. 5th August 1940 was the date when Polish forces went under British command. UK government agreed to equip Polish Armed forces by giving credit to Polish Government.

The Polish Army Choir were in popular demand and gave numerous concerts across Britain. For example, in Douglas West Hall or Lesmagow where the locals enjoyed the performance of the choir. Sport activities were a common ground of getting together with local communities. Biggar, Lanark there were many other places where blending between Polish and Scottish took place. Lord Hamilton was quoted to address General Sikorski the Commander of Polish forces in Britain: "if you teach us Polish lesson we teach you Scottish country dancing." 28 June 1940 General Sikorski offered immediate assistance to British. Shortly after the arrival of Polish forces at Johnston Town Hall marked the change in control of Scottish command. The speaker called it "a friendly invasion."



Poles were eager to get to know their second homeland. They learnt English, played football, sang in choirs, performed for local communities across Scotland and England. The soldiers had identity cards and were allowed to use public baths twice a week. There were practice sessions of dance called Mazurka in Paisley Town Hall. The artist Antoni Wasilewski drew unforgettable caricatures of Polish soldiers and others. When the Cromwell invasion was imminent General Maczek arrived in Glasgow in October 1940. The Polish soldiers were able to go and enjoy the Ice rink in Glasgow. The Polish choir gathered over 1500 seats and crowds were turned away. Johnson Globe was a popular venue for Polish troops performing there. The concert in Paisley raised funds for a war fund.



Many broken hearts were left behind when the Polish troops moved to Forfar, they must have made more than a good impression on some locals. In October 1940 they moved to Perthshire, Angus.

Mr Ostrycharz gave a very engaging lecture how Polish soldiers had adopted Scotland or England as their second homeland. No doubt that the memories will stay with us.

Jola Debicka-MacLennan

Remembering our Departed Members

Maria Musur-Grieve



Maria died on the first day of spring (21.03.2022) after living her life to the fullest. She was 89 years old. In the last two years of her life, she was very ill and she lost her sight. She knew that this life isn't eternal and told me: "When I die, don't cry for me for too long. I lived a very good life. I achieved all my goals, fulfilled all my dreams. I am ready to go." The memorial Mass was held in the Jesuit Sacred Heart Church in Edinburgh. She was buried in Poland at the North Cemetery in Warsaw. Her daughter Ewa, son Thomas and 5 grandchildren: Kasia, Małgosia, Agnieszka, Agata and Rafał together with the extended family and many friends attended the funeral ceremony.

Maria was born on 31 August 1932 in Poznań, Poland. She spent her childhood and youth in Gdynia and Bydgoszcz. In 1954 she became one of the first people to receive higher education as a physiotherapist, graduating from the Warsaw Academy of Physical Education (AWF). In 1973, she was awarded the degree of Doctor of Physical Culture in the field of physiotherapy. She spent 20 years working at the Rheumatological Institute in Warsaw, where she was an assistant professor at the Department of Rehabilitation.

In 1982 she married a Scotsman Robert Grieve and came with him to Edinburgh. My mother loved her new home and the garden. She was delighted with Scotland. She enjoyed being involved in social activities. She worked on a voluntary basis at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh and Princess Margaret Rose Hospital. In 1987 Maria became a member of the renewed Scottish-Polish Cultural Association and in 1992 she was elected as the chairperson of the Scottish-Polish Cultural Association for 4 years and for the next two years, until 1997, she was the vice president. Since 1998 she was a member of the Board. She was also the Secretary of the Polish Women's Union of Edinburgh. From 2001, for eleven years, she was the Editor-in-Chief of the Edinburgh News Bulletin (The EBI was published from 1949) issued by the Council of the Polish Associations in Edinburgh (Rada Polskich Stowarzyszeń w Szkocji).

For her professional and social work, she received in 1972 Golden Badge of the Society for Combating Disability. In Scotland in 2005 she received Knight's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland and in 2015 the "Outstanding Pole in Scotland" award in the category "Personality".

She loved life and showed everyone how interesting it can be. She was an inspirational woman who was curious, enjoyed challenges and for whom no topic was ever off the table. She was the kind of person who always tried to get people closer together. It was clearly visible when she successfully worked to connect the new wave of Polish migration after 2004 with the already present Polish society. Maintaining positive and caring relationships between people were her top priority. She was hilarious and full of energy, always happy to share her vision of new creative events. She initiated the annual carnival "Dinner Dance". She danced as a member of the Polish traditional dance group "Ojczyzna". She pursued her various passions such as pressed flowers, photography and theatre. She was sensitive to beauty and made everything beautiful around her. Everyone enjoyed her company. She left us with admiration and warm memories

Ewa Kiersztejn

Czesław Kruk



We regret to inform you that Czesław Kruk passed away in July 2022, aged 80. The funeral service took place in the Warriston Crematorium in Edinburgh. Czesław was born in Poland. He graduated from the Academy of Physical Education in Warsaw and was a physiotherapist by profession. He travelled a lot after his study. It was very exciting time for him. He visited France, Sweden, Canada, Mexico, India, Syria, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Peking and Moscow. When he came to Scotland, he met a woman of his life, Ina, married her and in 1977 settled in Edinburgh. Besides his professional passion, which was physiotherapy, his favourite hobby was golf.

He took part in many international championships winning cups. His interests extended to golf history and in 2009 he compiled a book "155 Years of Golf in Portobello".

He was very involved in the life of the Polish community in Edinburgh. He was the first editor of the Newsletter of Scottish-Polish Cultural Association, which was first published in 2000. He was also very active supporting Poles during the Solidarity time in Poland by raising money for medical equipment for Polish hospitals as well as acquiring the medical equipment and arranging its transport.

He was very kind; you could always count on his help. He personally brought gifts to Poland. The conversations with him were always full of interest in other people and looking for the best solution to the problem.

His death was unexpected, it took everyone by surprise. Let us remember him as a cheerful and joyful man.

May He rest in peace.

Izabella Brodzinska

Mikołajki December 2021



Just a year ago we celebrated the tradition of St Nicholas called, in Poland, Mikołajki (pronounce like Mikoyalkee). Last year exactly on Sunday 5th December the Scottish Polish Cultural Association organised the Mikołajki party at the Scouts Hall near Cameron Toll. Our partner in organising the event were the groups of Scouts under the leadership of Agnieszka Wojtkowiak. The programme was varied and included singing Christmas Carols, reciting poetry, mainly in Polish with some exceptions of traditional English carols. Mrs Izabella Brodzinska welcomed all guests and was delighted to see such great crowd of the Scouts who provided the entertainment.

There was a professional photographer Basia Ostrowska who took lots of fantastic photographs showing happy faces of those little performers who were receiving chocolate Santas from the

hand of Santa Claus. The children were dressed in Christmassy costumes and were enthusiastic about their singing and performing. They successfully captured the minds and hearts of the audience. The music accompaniment was provided by the three senior Scouts: Agnieszka Wojtkowiak, Hanna Retecka and Krzysztof Retecki who sang the Carols with such panache that they pulled in the audience to sing along. Younger children while making Christmas decorations were carefully supervised by the older Scouts leaders. One of our members was highly impressed with the quality of performance and the enthusiasm and joyfulness displayed by the young Scouts.

Refreshments were served, donations were kindly received as there were no tickets.

Since the event was so successful, I'm looking forward to this year's edition of Mikołajki on Sunday 4th December at the same venue, Scouts Hall near Cameron Toll. Hope that you will be there to join us.



Jola Debicka-MacLennan

Membership

£10.00 per person for lifetime membership.

If you would like to join the Scottish Polish Cultural Association, please send us your details using the form on our website:

<http://www.scotpoles.co.uk/join-us/>