

International Polonaise Ball 1997



25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF POLISH CULTURE

ATTENDED BY OVER 450 DISTINGUISHED GUESTS from the United States and Europe, the 1997 International Polonaise Ball was an exciting celebration of the American Institute of Polish Culture's 25th anniversary and an opportunity to honor the Institute's dedicated leaders and volunteers. The Ball's theme, "Romantic Poland and Her People," was selected to emphasize the meaning of love in Poland's history. The event was held on February 1 in the Grand Ballroom at the Inter-Continental Hotel in Miami, Florida, and co-chaired by Lady Blanka A. Rosenstiel, who founded the Institute in 1972, and Dr. Barbara Burzynski.



Dr. Roberto Weill, Lady Blanka,
Mrs. Roberto Weill



Mr. Waldemar Dowiak,
Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Tautkus



Mr. Krzysztof Witek,
Ms. Tanya Dusevic, Lady Blanka



Dr. Barbara Burzynski,
Ms. Loretta Swit, Lady Blanka

"Poland's history is not very much known here because Poland, partitioned by Russia, Prussia and Austria in 1795, disappeared from the maps of Europe, emerging for some 20 years after the First World War," Lady Blanka explained. "Although Poland enjoyed her freedom for some 25 years, during almost 200 years of occupation, the Poles always held their patriotic beliefs alive. And in spite of unjust sufferings, Poland's over one-thousand-year history was predominantly based on love."

As early as 1413, in Poland's Act of Union with Lithuania, it was written, "It is shown to all that man will not attain salvation if he is not sustained by Divine Love ... through that love, laws are established, kingdoms are maintained, cities are set to order, and the well-being of the State is brought to the highest level." This voluntary union unlocked the blessings of peace that presaged the First Polish Republic and established the roots for the democratic system enviable in its independence. The First Polish Republic forswore aggressions against its neighbors and matured into a politically sophisticated and pluralistic society where religious freedom was a consciously adopted principle.

By the time of the Second World War, Poland was home to a population not only of Poles but also Lithuanians, Russians, Germans, Armenians, Estonians, Latvians, Poles, Norwegians, Italians, Jews and the largest expatriate community of Scots in the world, Lady Blanka explained. They represented a dozen religions and considered themselves to be Polish citizens. Nearly 40 percent of all Jews in the world lived in Poland in 1939, some 11 percent of Poland's population.

"During the Second World War, after the invasion by Germans, Poland suffered tremendous losses and, against her will, she was given away at Yalta to again suffer from the Russian communistic regime," Lady Blanka said. "Only thanks to Lech Walesa, who started the 'Solidarity Movement,' as well as His Holiness Pope John Paul II, Central and Eastern Europe regained their freedom."

For this year's celebration of "Romantic Poland and Her Peoples," the Polish American Folk Dance Company of New York performed a Mazur, an International Suite consisting of Israeli, Scottish and Italian dances, and a Krakowiak.

Surrounded by the Silver Anniversary decor, the Master of Ceremonies, Mr. Edmund Sadowski, greeted honored guests and read important messages from the Republic of Poland's President Aleksander Kwasniewski, President Bill Clinton, Senator Bob Graham and Governor Lawton Chiles. Then the traditional Polonaise dance was led by Lady Blanka with Prince Karol Czartoryski, followed by the Honorable and Mrs. Andrzej Jaroszynski, Drs. Barbara and Stanislaw Burzynski, His Excellency Ambassador and Mrs. David Peleg, Ms. Loretta Swit with Dr. Michael Wiczerski, Princess Lada Shuiski with Mr. Robert Coles, Ms. Gina Janiga with Mr. Waldemar Dowiak, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Beaman, Mrs. Harriet Irsay with Mr. Kenneth Gordon. In a perfectly aligned formation, twenty couples followed in the elegant Polonaise walk which ended with a bow and a hand kiss.



Lady Blanka,
Prince Karol Czartoryski



Ms. Gina Janiga,
Mr. Waldemar Dowiak



Mrs. Margareta de Gea,
Mr. Andrzej Pawlikowski

After the anniversary cake was rolled out, Mr. Sadowski called upon Lady Blanka to present 25th Anniversary Medals of Appreciation, but first Mrs. Andrea Lippen, on behalf of the Board of Directors, honored Lady Blanka for her continuous and tireless efforts in the promotion of the knowledge of Poland's history and culture. Lady Blanka accepted a beautiful Waterford Crystal Eagle presented by Mrs. Lippen on behalf of all Board Members, and then decorated the following Board Members with Medals of Appreciation: Mr. Waldemar Dowiak, Dr. Zygmunt Turski, Dr. Horacio Aguirre, Countess Astrid de Grabowski, The Honorable Maurice Ferre, Mrs. Mercedes Ferre, Mr. John Gluski, Mrs. Betty Hageman, Mrs. Harriet Irsay, Mr. Les Kobylinski, Mr. Edward Kruszewski, Mrs. Rose Kruszewski, Mrs. Andrea Lippen, Mrs. Tamara McKeenan Major Marian Nejman, Mr. Edmund Sadowski, Mr. George Sambor, Mr. Jacek Schindler, Mrs. Edna Gene Schofman, Mr. John Schmidt and Mr. John Sullivan. Additionally, Lady Blanka presented medals to Mr. Walter Beaman for his contributions to the Institute's publications; Mrs. Gina Janiga and Mrs. Jadwiga Zielewicz, devoted assistants, and Professor Zdzislaw Wesolowski, Ph.D., former Institute Board Member.



Mr. and Mrs. Jan Zielewicz



Salt sculpture from Royal
Wieliczka Salt Mine
"Our Madonna of Lourdes"

Other Members awarded medals but not present at the Ball were Countess Eugenia de Lewenhaupt, Professor Tadeusz Lapinski, Mr. Egmont Sonderling and Mrs. Marjorie Sonderling, as well as former members Mr. Włodzimierz Grocholski and Mr. George Riabov.

A delegation from the Royal Wieliczka salt mine in Poland, led by Mr. Peter Ferreira, presented a statue of Our Madonna of Lourdes carved out of black salt, posed on a white crystal salt pedestal with the inscription: "To Lady Blanka Rosenstiel. Honoring her outstanding vision as Founder of the American Institute of Polish Culture, on its 25th Anniversary."



Lady Blanka, Mr. Zbigniew Zarebski,
Mr. Peter Ferreira



Polish American Folk Dance
Co. of New York

The Honorable Joe Carollo, Mayor of Miami, presented Lady Blanka with a plaque proclaiming February 1 Polish Day in the city. Also Dade County's proclamation was delivered by the Honorable Maurice Ferre in lieu of Mayor Alex Penelas. The Honorable Andrzej Jaroszynski delivered a brief message on behalf of His Excellency, Ambassador of the Republic of Poland, Mr. Jerzy Kozminski.



Hon. Joe Carollo, Lady Blanka,
Hon. Maurice Ferre

Lady Blanka, Hon. Maurice Ferre

His Excellency, Ambassador of Israel to the United Nations, Mr. David Peleg expressed his appreciation of the event, saying, "I think this evening is also a tribute to the very good relations between my State - the State of Israel - and the Republic of Poland, and a good relationship existing here in the United States between the Jewish and the Polish communities. We have heard a lot about the great work your association is doing. I congratulate you and wish you many years of productive work."

The culminating moment of the 1997 International Polonaise Ball was the presentation of the Gold Medal to Dr. Stanislaw Burzynski. Lady Blanka recognized his outstanding achievements in the field of medicine.

"You follow in the footsteps of another Polish scientist, Marie Skłodowska-Curie, who discovered radium and polonium," Lady Blanka said. "For her discoveries, she was twice awarded the prestigious Nobel Prize. Dr. Burzynski, we all wish you a similar recognition."

Dr. Burzynski expressed deep appreciation for the Gold Medal and in his acceptance speech said, "After years of dedicated laboratory research, I have discovered a set of switches, which I called the antineoplastons. These have already cured hundreds of terminally ill cancer patients." He received thunderous applause and a standing ovation. His wife, Dr. Barbara Burzynski, was presented with a bouquet of red roses.



Lady Blanka,
Dr. Stanislaw Burzynski



Dr. Stanislaw Burzynski,
Lady Blanka, Dr. Barbara Burzynski