



# POLISH EMBASSY NEWSLETTER 1/2012(5)

CANBERRA, EASTER 2012



## FROM THE AMBASSADOR



Dear Readers!

On 20 February 1972 Australia and Poland signed an agreement to establish diplomatic relations. As we are celebrating the 40th anniversary, this newsletter includes a short summary of the bilateral contacts and precedes a special joint publication by the respective embassies in Canberra and Warsaw.

Poland and Australia enjoy a significant tradition of cooperation that reaches beyond that official date. A shared commitment to an active role in building institutions that support democracy and prosperity in regional economies has been a vital part of the relationship. The Polish-Australian partnership aims to share experiences and knowledge in cultural, educational, scientific and technological fields. A vibrant Polish community in Australia has

contributed significantly to flourishing relations between two peoples. In addition, an increasing number of citizens are visiting and gaining personal experience of each other's countries. A letter of Radosław Sikorski, Polish Foreign Minister, to Foreign Minister Bob Carr well illustrates excellent relations between Australia and Poland.

In this issue you will also find information about the latest events organized by our Embassy and about some of my most recent visits, e.g. to Perth, where a new Polish Consulate was opened. On a personal note, I am happy to introduce you to my home town Lublin – a picturesque historic city founded at the crossroads of Western and Byzantine cultures. I would also draw your attention to our regular columns and the news from our Consulate General in Sydney.

Easter is traditionally a very important event in Poland. It is a symbol of the revival of life and hope. On my own and my wife's behalf, and also on behalf of all the staff of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Canberra, I would like to wish you a wonderful, very reflective Easter time, spent with family and friends in a peaceful and joyful atmosphere.

With kind regards,

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## 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN POLAND AND AUSTRALIA



Minister  
of Foreign Affairs

Warsaw, 14<sup>th</sup> March 2012

Dear Minister,

On 20 February 1972 our two countries established diplomatic relations. This event forty years ago marked a key moment in the long history of Polish-Australian relations. Two hundred thousand Polish Australians bear witness to this deep-rooted affinity.

Looking back at our bilateral relations, it is with particular gratitude that I recall the support that Australia provided to Poland during the darkest days of our contemporary history: when you declared war on Nazi Germany three days after its invasion of Poland in September 1939, and when your pilots flew night-time missions to airlift Allied aid destined for Warsaw's fighting inhabitants during the 1944 Rising.

Today we have the opportunity to build on the productive relationship already established between our two countries, which share fundamental geopolitical conditions and foreign policy goals. As globalisation spurs on the international economic interests of Poland and Australia, our companies and investors are ever keener to look beyond long-established markets in our immediate vicinity. Poland and Australia are also actively pursuing robust neighbourhood policies, both in respect of traditional partners and emerging regional superpowers.

I also very much appreciate the significance that the Australian government attaches to fostering ties with the European Union. Close relations with the EU serve as an excellent platform for advancing our bilateral cooperation.

Both our countries promote regional interests and pursue a global perspective. I am confident that Polish-Australian cooperation will see great success in the years ahead and will contribute to strengthening still further the Polish and Australian positions on the international stage.

Allow me to take this opportunity to wish you every success in all of your endeavours.

Yours faithfully,

His Excellency Mr Bob Carr  
Minister for Foreign Affairs  
The Australian Commonwealth  
Canberra

## The Beginnings

The first Pole known to have settled in Australia was Joseph Potaski who arrived in Port Phillip, Victoria, in 1803 as a convict from Great Britain. Over half a century later, the first group of Poles settled in South Australia, creating in the Seven Hills area (later re-named Polish Hill River) a distinctly Polish community, which cultivated their language, customs and traditions. Gradually, more and more Poles came to Australia: natural history scholars, noblemen, political refugees, farmers, gold miners, artists and explorers. Many of them left a permanent mark on the history of Australia. Paul Edmund Strzelecki, for example, a Polish explorer who travelled across Australia in the 1840s, named several famous Australian landmarks, including the continent's highest peak Mount Kosciuszko.

Prior to the First World War there was already a significant number of Poles or people of Polish descent living in Australia. Yet, it was only after the Second World War that



Monument to Sir Strzelecki in Jindabyne, Poland's present for the Bicentenary of Australia

Poles started to arrive in significant numbers. The first of two main waves of Polish migration took place in 1947-54, when Australia, seeking a labour force, accepted over 50 000 Polish veterans and displaced persons, along with other migrants of diverse ethnic backgrounds who were looking for a new home away from war-torn Europe. The second wave, which started in 1980 and ended in the early 1990s, comprised over 25 000 "Solidarity" migrants: young

and educated Poles, who arrived in Australia seeking political asylum. The most recent arrivals are mainly students and professionals. According to the 2006 census, over 160 000 Australians have Polish ancestry.

## Official Australian-Polish relations

The official establishment of formal Australian-Polish relations took place in February 1972. However, the history of political contacts between the two countries started much earlier. In 1932 Thomas M. Burke became the Consul of the Republic of Poland in Melbourne. The following year, as a result of the increasing number of Polish citizens on the continent, another consular position was created and Władysław Noskowski was appointed a Consul of Poland in Sydney, becoming Consul-General in 1939. After the outbreak of the Second World War Noskowski established the Rescue Committee with the aim of helping Poland as it fought the Nazi regime. The Polish Consulate General in Sydney existed till July 1945 when the British government declined to continue recognizing the exiled Polish government in London. In March 1948 the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of Poland decided to create a new Polish Consulate General in Sydney but no action was taken. Nine years later the Polish Consulate General in Sydney was re-appointed. Its district covered the entire territory of Australia. The agreement on consular relations between Poland and Australia was signed in May 1991.

The Polish Embassy, one of the newest additions to Canberra's diplomatic skyline, sits solid and massive on the brow of a hill in the Embassy Belt. The building was designed in Australia, three designs having been submitted to Warsaw in 1974 before the version constructed here was chosen. The chancery is large enough to cater for future growth but is smaller than it appears, being only one storey high at the rear while it wraps around the crown of the hill. The off-white colour of the brick and precast concrete, ...provides a pleasing contrast through the darker gum trees. The rooflines, long sunhoods and an overhanging first floor give the building its appearance of handsome strength while this type of construction also serves in a practical way to prevent sun entering during the hot half of the year. Windows deep and narrow and the use of light - coloured, hemlock ceiling timbers give the entrance foyer an airy, open appearance. The receptionist here controls movement to all sections of the building and extensive walls serve as a gallery for Polish arts and crafts. Stairs lead to a large reception hall to the east, capable of seating 150 people, and during functions the offices to the west can be completely isolated. Flats at the ends of both wings provide security for the complex. Behind the chancery is the two-storey residence designed in the same style and using the same shaped precast concrete panels. The salon has a timber ceiling matching the chancery's entrance foyer.

**Graeme Barrow, Canberra's Embassies, ANUP, Canberra 1978**

As a result of the official establishment of diplomatic relations, in 1972 Ryszard Hoszowski was appointed the first Chargé d'Affaires of Poland in Canberra. The current building of the Embassy (7 Turrana St, Yarralumla) was opened in 1977. The Ambassador of Poland in Canberra has a dual accreditation to Australia and Papua New Guinea and, till the opening of the Embassy in Wellington, also represented the Polish Government in New Zealand. Apart from the Consulate General in Sydney, Poland has a number

of consulates headed by honorary consuls: in Melbourne (the Consulate General), Darwin, Adelaide, Brisbane and, since February 2012, in Perth.

**MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND**

LET IT BE KNOWN that, considering it proper and useful in the interest of maintaining and developing the relations of friendship which exist between the Republic of Poland and the Commonwealth of Australia to appoint and establish Mr Paul BITDORF in the capacity of Honorary Consul of the Republic of Poland in Perth, with jurisdiction over the territory of Western Australia,

for these reasons and ends resolves hereby to appoint and establish him in this office and requests all those it may concern and, in particular, the Authorities of the Country in which he is assigned to reside, that they afford him goodwill and confidence necessary to exercise his functions and orders Polish citizens to show him respect and obedience due to him under the existing laws and regulations.

In testimony whereof these Letters have been signed and the seal of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland has been hereunto affixed.

Given at Warsaw, on the 25 of November, 2011

(-) Radoslaw SIKORSKI

The first (non-resident) Australian Ambassador to Poland was Lawrence John Lawrey, who was also the Australian Ambassador to the Soviet Union. Francis Hamilton Stuart was the first Australian Ambassador to Poland with an office in Warsaw (from September 1973). The Australian Ambassador to Poland is also accredited to the Czech Republic. Visa and migration issues are handled by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship office in Berlin.

## Australia's support for Poland

The support expressed and given by Australians to the "Solidarity" movement in Poland is a great example of a constructive and valuable liaison between the two countries. Malcolm Fraser, Prime Minister of Australia (1975-1983), publicly protested against the imposition of martial law in Poland and criticized its communist government. He became a patron of the National Committee for Relief to Poland which was created by the

Federal Council of Polish Associations in Australia to provide assistance in the collection and dispatching of food and medical supplies to Poland. In addition, Fraser introduced a special political asylum program with a package of social assistance to refugees from Poland. Fraser's successor Bob Hawke (1983-1991) continued providing support for social initiatives in Poland. In public speeches he emphasized the importance of the "Solidarity" movement in the fight for freedom and democracy in Poland. During his visit to Australia, Lech Wałęsa, the leader of "Solidarity" and the former President of the Republic of Poland, expressed his gratitude to Australian friends of the movement for their unwavering trust and support. In June 2009, on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the first free elections in Poland, the

In November 1981, only weeks before martial law was declared, the very first visit of an Australian Foreign Minister to Poland occurred. The Foreign Minister, Tony Street, came on an official visit for a few days. The situation in Poland by then was very fluid and Street was able to have substantial meetings with Prime Minister and First Secretary of the Party, Jaruzelski, Primate Glemp and Solidarity's Lech Wałęsa, who were then the key figures holding the future of the country in their hands. I was in Sosnowiec, not far from Poland's southern border, on the night of 12th-13th December 1981. I was as surprised as anyone by the declaration of martial law. My wife, our four young children and I had stayed the night in a hotel on our way to a much anticipated skiing holiday in Austria. We heard the news on the BBC at six o'clock in the morning while still in bed. When I went down to the lobby of the hotel, Jaruzelski's declaration of martial law was being broadcast over and over again through the public address system. There were quite a lot of people in the lobby but, in my memory, they were all very still, stunned, listening to the broadcast. Some were weeping... We drove back to Warsaw that morning.

**John Burgess, former Australian Ambassador to Poland**

Parliament of Australia passed three resolutions that recognized the importance of Polish efforts in fighting for sovereignty and overthrowing communism in Europe.



### In recognition of the 20th Anniversary of Poland's first free elections

On Tuesday, 16 June 2009,

In the Senate of the Parliament of Australia

Senator Gary Humphries (Australian Capital Territory) at 3.49pm-

I move:

That the Senate -

- (a) notes that 4 June 2009 was the 20th anniversary of the first free elections in the Republic of Poland since World War II;
- (b) acknowledges Poland's tremendous contribution to the fall of communism in Europe and notes Poland's democratic achievements, particularly that the citizens of Poland resolutely voted to restore their Senate and reinstate the accountability and transparency of their government; and
- (c) notes the 40 years of struggle and hardship endured by those who fought to assure the independence of judges and the courts, to assure that Poles could freely form associations and clubs, and to bring about an overhaul of the economy.

Question agreed to.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date 16.6.2009

## High-level bilateral visits

Over the years, diplomatic relations between Poland and Australia have become closer and stronger, owing to high-level bilateral visits. They include numerous visits by distinguished guests. For instance, President Aleksander Kwaśniewski participated at the opening ceremony of the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney; the Deputy Prime Ministers John McEwen, Tim Fisher visited Poland; the Deputy Chairman of the Polish Council of State Tadeusz Witold Młyńczak visited Australia; the Foreign Ministers Anthony Street, William Hayden, Gareth Evans, Alexander Downer, Stephen Smith visited Poland; and the Foreign Ministers Emil Wojtaszek, Marian Orzechowski, Krzysztof Skubiszewski and Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz visited Australia. There is a regular exchange between the parliaments both on the level of the presidents and speakers as well as the members of Polish-Australian parliamentary

groups.

In October 2009 the Australia-Poland Social Security Agreement was signed during the visit to Warsaw of the then Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon. Stephen Smith. The Hon. Alan Griffin MP, Minister for Veterans' Affairs, visited Poland in September 2009 to represent Australia at the 70th anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War. The Minister for Defence, the Hon. Joel Fitzgibbon MP, also visited Poland in February 2009 to participate in NATO talks on Afghanistan which were hosted by Poland. The then Minister for Climate Change and Water, Senator the Hon. Penny Wong, visited Poland in December 2008 to lead the Australian delegation to the United Nations Climate Change negotiations in Poznań. South Australian Premier, the Hon. Mike Rann MP, attended the associated Climate Leaders summit in Poland at the same time.



The Foreign Ministers Radosław Sikorski and Stephen Smith, Warsaw 2009



Former President Lech Wałęsa and the then Prime Minister John Howard, Canberra 2003



Former Foreign Minister Prof. Bronisław Geremek receiving the honorary doctorate of UNSW

The recent reelection of Donald Tusk's centrist Civic Platform Party is the first time since the fall of the Berlin Wall that any political party has achieved successive terms. When Poles look over their shoulders, they no longer fear the rumble of tanks or the heel of the oppressor. This reflects their optimism, and the optimism of the Australian Polonia, and the growing ties between two countries who shine in their very different spheres - one in the Asia Pacific, the other in Europe.

**Michael Danby MP, AIPA  
20th Anniversary Dinner,  
25.02.2012 (see page 7)**

## Economic cooperation

Poland and Australia's bilateral business relations are continuously developing. They are currently focusing on cooperation in the resource sector and mining services, including coal, copper and minerals mining, as well as on expanding knowledge-based initiatives such as clean coal and carbon capture and storage, IT, education, agribusiness, food security and advanced processing technologies, and consulting services.

Australian companies have already explored the opportunities for running their businesses in Poland. These businesses are concerned with packaging, real estate and commercial property development, construction, infrastructure development, traffic management and speed control technologies, as well as security and early fire warning systems.



The Foreign Ministers Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz and Alexander Downer, Warsaw 2002

Among the Australian companies successfully operating in Poland are Amcor, Macquarie Group, Mincom, Meydan Group, Bovis Lendlease, Goodman and Redflex.

One of the most important Australian investments in Poland is the recent development of the Deep-sea Container Terminal (DCT) in Gdańsk by Macquarie Group (Global Infrastructure Fund II),

and the adjacent port's "Pomeranian Logistics Centre" by the Australian Goodman Group. Another recent important Australian investment is the \$A 500 million investment of the Australian Industry Funds Management (IFM) through co-owned company Dalkia Poland in a central heating

Agreement between Australia and the Republic of Poland for the avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income

[http://www.mf.gov.pl/files/\\_podatki/umowy\\_miedzynarodowe/australia\\_konwencja\\_tekst\\_angielski.pdf](http://www.mf.gov.pl/files/_podatki/umowy_miedzynarodowe/australia_konwencja_tekst_angielski.pdf)

network (SPEC) in Warsaw, the largest district heating network in the European Union.

Poland supplies Australia with modern technical equipment and machinery, goods and passenger vehicles and auto-parts, household equipment, furniture, mattresses and cushions, medicaments (including veterinary medicines), telecom equipment, soap and cleansers, as well as new Polish export products – luxury yachts and boats. Despite the global financial crisis and generally difficult trade conditions, Poland's exports to Australia in 2011 gradually increased. Major imports from Australia include medicaments (including veterinary medicines), alcoholic beverages, raw hides and skins, fruits and nuts, vehicle parts and accessories, measuring and analysing instruments and crude minerals. There are increasing opportunities for Australian wine, foodstuffs, meat, sheepskins, education, IT, environmental and waste-management technologies in Poland.

Prof. Gareth Evans on a visit to Poland

<http://www.msz.gov.pl/>

[Prof.Gareth.Evans.on.a.visit.to.Poland.32243.html](http://www.msz.gov.pl/Prof.Gareth.Evans.on.a.visit.to.Poland.32243.html)



Radosław Sikorski and Gareth Evans, Warsaw 2009

Poland realizes that Asia is one of the key areas of foreign policy for both Europe and Australia. No wonder, after all Asian states are significant partners in cooperation covering many fields. China and India are newcomers to the club of world powers, playing a bigger and bigger role in international relations. At the same time Asia is a continent of huge contrasts. On the one hand, there is an immense economic development potential and advanced democratization process under way. On the other hand, there are regions affected by conflicts, crises, and thus representing threats to peace and security, both in the local and in the global dimension. In addition to this, we follow with concern and anxiety the existence of Asian movements supporting the international terrorist activities. The European Union attaches high priority to political and economic relations with Asian states, especially with China, India, Japan, South Korea and the Association of South-East Asia Nations (ASEAN). The dialog in the framework of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) which deals with security issues is also very important. Poland hopes to be incorporated into these and other for a of Euro-Asian cooperation and the active dialog in their framework. ... We deeply hope that cooperation between Australia, Asia and Europe will be beneficial for all the parties involved in the process and will encompass an increasing number of issues, ranging from trade and economy, fight against international terrorism and organized crime to cultural cooperation.

**Polish Foreign Minister Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, ANU, 5 March**

## RECENT EVENTS

### The opening of the Polish Consulate in Perth

During his recent visit to Western Australia on 23 February, the Ambassador ceremonially opened the new Polish Consulate in Perth and nominated Mr Paul Bitdorf, a renowned businessman with Polish roots, as Honorary Consul of the Republic of Poland in Perth with jurisdiction over Western Australia. At the celebration which took place in the Consulate's building, the



following participated: Minister for Local Government, Heritage, Citizenship and Multicultural Interests John Castrilli; Deputy Leader of Opposition MP Roger Cook; Senator Louise Pratt; Senator David Johnson; representatives of Perth's municipal authorities, Director of the state office of DFAT Michael Wood; Dean of the Consular Corps; Consul General of Malaysia along with other consuls, and representatives of the Polish Community. The event was a solemn occasion. The presence of many distinguished guests was testimony to Consul Paul Bitdorf's exceptional organizational capabilities and much activity is expected in the future.

### The Ambassador's visit to Melbourne

The chair of The Pratt Foundation, Jeanne Pratt, invited the Ambassador to participate in the annual lunch organized by the Israel-Australia Chamber of Commerce on 1 February in Melbourne. During lunch, Prime Minister of Australia, Julia Gillard, delivered a speech about the government's economic program for 2012. The meeting brought together a number of ministers, over 900 representatives of the most important corporations and companies, several presidents of universities located in Melbourne, as well as media representatives. The Ambassador was the only representative of the Diplomatic Corps. The Pratt Foundation, one of the largest Australian foundations, was established in 1978 by Richard and Jeanne Pratt (both with a Polish background). The foundation sponsors charity and educational programs in Australia, Israel and lately in Poland.



### AIPA 20th Anniversary Dinner

On 25 February the Ambassador was an honorary guest at a dinner at the Windsor Hotel in Melbourne to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Australian Institute of Polish Affairs (AIPA). The keynote speaker was MP Michael Danby (Melbourne Ports), chairman of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade and chairman of the Australian-Polish Parliamentary Group. Other speakers were the president of AIPA Professor Jan Pakulski and Bernard Korbman-Brzegowski, president of the Australian Society of Polish Jews and

Michael Danby's speech:

<http://www.danbypm.com/recent/1686-speech-michael-danby-to-aipa-20th-anniversary-dinner.html>

Their Descendants. After his speech, the Ambassador handed a "Certificate of Recognition" to the president of AIPA, for his contribution to the development of Polish – Australian relations. AIPA brings together Polish born scientists, who organize visits by outstanding personages from Poland, such as Jan Nowak-Jeziorański, Władysław Bartoszewski, Bronisław Geremek and recently Adam Rotfeld. AIPA plays an important role in promoting in Australia Polish-Jewish dialogue and understanding. In collaboration with AIPA the Embassy organized many events such as the worship evening of Henryk Sławik in Melbourne, the Czesław Miłosz Year celebrations as well as seminars on European and Australian multiculturalism in several universities in Australia.





## Classical music concerts at the Embassy

On 20 March Michał Buczkowski gave a violin recital at the Embassy. He was accompanied by the pianist Wojciech Wiśniewski. The program included compositions by Karol Szymanowski, Henryk Wieniawski, Cesar Franck, Jules Massenet and Ernest Bloch. This event attracted around 120 people, including the Speaker of the House of Representatives Peter Slipper, representatives of DFAT and other departments, ambassadors, representatives from artistic communities, the media and the Polish community. The performance was a greatly appreciated by the audience. Michał Buczkowski studied

at higher education music institutions in Gdańsk, Maastricht and Brussels. Between 2009-2010 he was a scholarship holder of the governments of Poland and Belgium. Wojciech Wiśniewski is a graduate of the Frederic Chopin University in Warsaw and a winner of several Polish piano competitions.

On 3 and 4 March concerts were organized at the Embassy by the music entrepreneur and pianist Carl Rafferty. The program included several Chopin's compositions, and Puccini and Verdi opera arias. About 260 Canberra lovers of music attended the concerts.



Michał Buczkowski: <http://michalbuczkowski.weebly.com/photos.html>

Wojciech Wiśniewski: <http://www.concertpianist.com.au/>



## Poland at the National Multicultural Festival and „Windows on Europe” film festival

From 10 to 12 February 2012 the annual Multicultural Festival was celebrated in Canberra, where the cultural achievements of nations from all round the world were presented. On Saturday, 11 February, the Delegation of the European Union and the embassies of EU member states once again presented "Europe Street" in Ainslie Place, Civic.

Our Embassy operated a stand, where visitors could obtain information about spending holidays in Poland and visiting our country while travelling around Europe. Brochures about tourist attractions, studying, and doing business in



Poland, were available for those who were interested in more detailed information.

Some material was also available on the biggest sporting event in Poland – the

European Football Championship EURO 2012 (organized together with the Ukraine).

Poland was also represented in the "Windows on Europe" European Union Film Festival, which took place in Canberra during the Multicultural Festival, and later on in Sydney and Brisbane. The „Suicide Room” by Jan Komasa, a winner of many awards at the Polish national Gdynia Film Festival, was screened in Dendy Cinemas.



### Opening of the exhibition

#### “Courage to care.

#### Ordinary People – Extraordinary Acts”

On 9 February the Ambassador took part in the official opening of the exhibition “Courage to care. Ordinary People – Extraordinary Acts” at the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House. During the opening a special certificate of recognition was presented to Stasia Dabrowski, a Polish-born nurse, in appreciation of her long-

standing support of the homeless on Canberra’s streets (The Soup Kitchen).



Read more:

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/people/741059?c=people>

<http://www.abc.net.au/tv/myfavouriteaustralian/dabrowski.htm>

<http://moadoph.gov.au/blog/who-is-your-local-hero/>



## The visit of Prof. Bogusława Skulska and Dr Przemysław Skulski to Canberra



The Department of International Economic Relations, Wrocław University of Economics has become one of the new academic centres in Poland focusing on international marketing and management and issues of business and security in the Asia-Pacific region. Scholars from Wrocław have published extensively on economic competitiveness and international security in Asia-Pacific and participated in numerous seminars and programmes relating to those issues.

Professor Bogusława Drelich-Skulska and Dr Przemysław Skulski of the

Department of International Economic Relations visited Canberra from 13 to 17 February presenting Polish research on economic and security issues in Asia-Pacific.

Dr Skulski gave a lecture at the ANU Centre for European Studies on the internationalisation of the European armaments industry. Prof. Skulska delivered a paper at an Asia-Pacific conference at the ANU. The Ambassador hosted a dinner for Prof. Skulska and Dr Skulski which was attended by representatives of academia and the diplomatic corps.

## Polish art exhibition in Brisbane



On 17 February the Ambassador opened an art exhibition called „Cierpliwość papieru/Patience of Paper” at the Queensland College of Art, Griffith University in Brisbane. The exhibition presented over 100 art works by students and teachers from the Institute of Art UMCS in Lublin. The exhibition was organized as part of the student exchange between Queensland College of Arts and Polish universities. Two years ago an exhibition from Australian schools was presented in Wrocław, Warsaw and Lublin. The preview brought together over 120 people including the Dean of the Queensland College, the Honorary Consul of Poland in Brisbane, Brian Kilmartin, and members of Brisbane’s artists’ community and the media.

## Other public appearances and lectures by the Ambassador

„Australia and Europe in Conversation” is a series of talks which will be held every month this year with Heads of Missions from EU countries, together with Australian Ambassadors to Europe who gather at the ANU Centre for European Studies to discuss why their countries joined the EU, their current position and their relations with Australia. The first talk took place on 29 February and was broadcast on Radio National’s “Big Ideas” on 7 March at 8.00 pm.

The Polish Ambassador, H.E. Susanne Shine, Ambassador of Denmark, and H.E. David Daly, Ambassador of the EU were the first to share their thoughts while Mr Paul Barclay from Radio National acted as moderator.

More:

<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/bigideas/eu-one-segment/3857904>

The Ambassador was Special Guest Speaker at a University of Western Sydney Forum on 29 March. He gave a lecture “Where Dreams and Reality Begins. The Future of Europe” to an audience which included Hon Laurie Fergusson, MP and Hon John Aquilina, former Speaker of the NSW Parliament. A lively discussion followed on the current situation and the future of Europe which covered political, social and cultural issues. The address was broadcast by TVS (Television Sydney). The UWS Open Fora series, which started in 2008, deal with topical contemporary issues and are currently organized by Dr Sev Ozdowski, Director, Equity and Diversity, University of Western Sydney.

On 30 March the Ambassador took part in a public seminar at Monash University’s European and EU Centre in Melbourne, delivering a lecture on the Common Security and Defence Policy and the EU Neighbourhood. The other speaker was Prof. Marko Pavlyshyn who spoke on the EU, Russia and the Rest of Europe. The guest speakers were introduced by the Director of MEEUC, Dr Natalie J. Doyle.

The Ambassador invited a group of 30 secondary school teachers working in Australia and New Zealand to a lunchtime talk in the Polish Embassy on 17 January. The visit was part of The European Summer School focusing on contemporary issues in Europe and was jointly organized by the ANU Centre for European Studies and the Monash European and EU Centre, with assistance from the European Commission. The Ambassador talked about Poland’s road to the EU, its role in Europe and the achievements of the Polish presidency. Prof. Jacqueline Lo, head of the programme, when thanking the Ambassador for hosting the lunch and giving the lecture wrote that “It was a highlight for many of the teachers. Most of them have never been inside an embassy, much less had lunch with a distinguished Ambassador!”



On 27 February the Ambassador was a guest at a meeting of the Christian-Jewish Council of Victoria in Melbourne. He gave a lecture on the Polish-Jewish dialog in Poland after 1989. The meeting was attended by members of the Jewish community, including those with a Polish background. The meeting was chaired by the President of the Council Pastor James McLaren and Manny Waks, chairperson of the Capital Jewish Forum.

## CAN WE UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER - ANNA WIERZBICKA'S THEORY OF UNIVERSAL HUMAN CONCEPTS

### From Poland to Australia

Anna Wierzbicka is Professor of Linguistics at the Australian National University. She was born in Poland, and studied at Warsaw University. In 1964 she heard a lecture given by Professor Andrzej Bogusławski, in which he raised a seminal question: are there any concepts which can be found as words in all languages? Anna Wierzbicka found this question fascinating and she decided to devote her life to trying to solve it. In 1972, having married an Australian, slavist and political scientist John Besemeres, she moved (with her husband and baby daughter, Mary) from Poland to Australia, where she continued her research.

Wierzbicka's book "Semantic Primitives", published in the same year, launched a new, meaning-oriented approach to linguistics. The search for universal concepts has led to the creation of the Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM), which Wierzbicka developed in collaboration with her Australian colleague and former student Professor Cliff Goddard. In 2010, Wierzbicka was awarded the Polish Science Foundation's Prize for the Humanities and Social Sciences and the Russian Academy of Science's Dobrushin Prize, usually awarded only to mathematicians. Throughout her career, Wierzbicka has been building bridges between linguistics and other disciplines including anthropology, psychology, philosophy and cognitive science. She has published over twenty books and three hundred scholarly articles.

In 2004 Professor Wierzbicka received an Honorary doctorate from the Marie-Curie Skłodowska University in Lublin, and in 2006 from Warsaw University. To quote from the address given by Professor Jerzy Bartmiński on the occasion of the first of these doctorates: *"Anna Wierzbicka is an inspiring example of a Polish emigrant who, living at the intersection of two cultural worlds, Polish and Anglo-Saxon, enriches each of these cultures with her work. Living far away in Australia, Anna Wierzbicka has never cut her ties to her homeland. She plays an active role in Polish scholarly life. Every year she visits Warsaw and gives lectures for students and academics. She publishes articles in Polish academic journals. ... She is an ambassador for Polish culture in the world ... She works hard to bring the Polish cultural, historical, linguistic and religious experience into the treasury of widely known and shared human values."*

### Universal human concepts

The NSM theory addresses fundamental questions concerning language, culture and cognition. The theory is based on an assumption that in every language there exists a set of very simple

and fundamental concepts which cannot be defined any further and which are the fundamental building blocks for all other meanings and ideas in all languages. These indefinable expressions are called semantic primes. The number of these primes has been gradually growing since 1972, when Professor Wierzbicka proposed an initial list of fourteen. The current estimate is sixty four, which is believed to be the full set. They constitute the semantic bedrock of any language and can be used as a basis for intercultural communication.



### Is cross-cultural understanding possible?

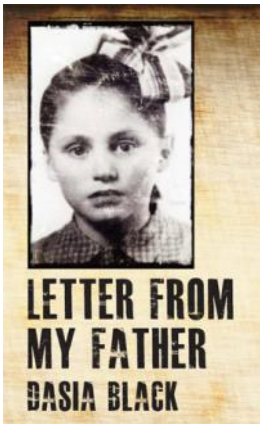
Wierzbicka's work on conceptual universals is closely linked to her work on linguistic and cultural diversity, which aims to advance cross-cultural understanding. In 2007, together with her daughter, Dr Mary Besemeres, she published a book titled "Translating Lives: Living with Two Languages and Cultures", a collection of personal stories tracing the experiences of twelve bilingual Australians. Contributors show how their experiences of language colour the way they relate to people and the way they see the world. The editors, Wierzbicka and Besemeres, each contribute a chapter about their Polish-Australian experience. Award-winning writer Arnold Zable described "Translating Lives" as "a journey through an Australia composed of a multiplicity of languages and therefore, many inner worlds", and a "book of revelations".

In a recent article in the Australian magazine "Quadrant" (December 2011), titled "Moral absolutes and the multiplicity of languages", Professor Wierzbicka writes: "studying key moral concepts could be one way (among others) to approach the formidable task of moral education in multicultural countries, and in the global world ... In many cases, value concepts developed in one particular cultural context will not be seen as relevant, inspiring, or persuasive to people living in very different existential and conceptual environments. But in some cases they will".

She concludes that *"lessons drawn from the multiplicity of languages can have an important role to play in a pluralist moral education open to moral absolutes. ... The shared currency of universal human concepts can facilitate 'moral exchange' between people from different cultural backgrounds while helping them to find absolute moral values on which to stake their lives"*.

To read more about Professor Anna Wierzbicka:  
<http://www.une.edu.au/bcss/linguistics/nsm/wierzbicka.php>  
<http://languages.anu.edu.au/story/professor-anna-wierzbicka-receives-dobrushin-prize>  
<http://www.une.edu.au/bcss/linguistics/nsm/>  
<http://languages.anu.edu.au/staff/professor-anna-wierzbicka>

## BOOKS OF INTEREST



**Dasia Black,**  
**“Letter from my Father” –**  
**Memoir of a journey from**  
**survival to fulfilment**  
 Brandl & Schlesinger  
 2012

“Letter from my Father” is a powerful story of a young child's struggle to survive the loss of her parents, her name and identity. Dasia Black tells of her life's journey from her childhood in

Nazi-occupied Poland to Stuttgart in liberated Germany, then to her teenage and adult years in Australia.

**Glazer Cesha & Carolyn Robertson**  
**„Cesha's story”**

Sydney:  
 Sydney Jewish Museum. Holocaust and Australian Jewish History, 2011

It is a autobiographical survey of life in wartime Poland. The author was born in Serock, Poland, in 1923. She stayed in Poland until 1958 when she emigrated to Australia.



**Beata Zatorska & Simon Target**  
**“Rose Petal Jam,**  
**Recipes and Stories from a**  
**Summer in Poland”**  
 Tabula Books  
 2011

The book has been awarded a prestigious ‘Best in World’ prize at the Gourmand Awards in Paris. Published in Australia by Tabula, the book describes Sydney doctor Beata Zatorska’s childhood in rural Poland, and includes her grandmother’s traditional Polish recipes. Edouard Cointreau – founder of the Gourmand Awards 17 years ago, and descendant of both the famous Cointreau and Remy Martin families – described Rose Petal Jam as 'a truly beautiful book'. He cited big growth this year in investment and quality in culinary book production to the East of Europe – including Poland.

<http://easteuropeanfood.about.com/b/2012/03/10/rose-petal-jam-takes-first-place-in-world-cuisine-at-gourmand-awards.htm>  
<http://easteuropeanfood.about.com/b/2012/03/10/rose-petal-jam-takes-first-place-in-world-cuisine-at-gourmand-awards.htm>

## UPCOMING EVENT



### THE EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND



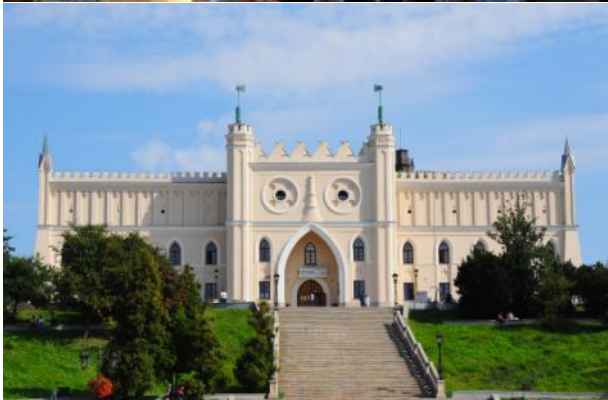
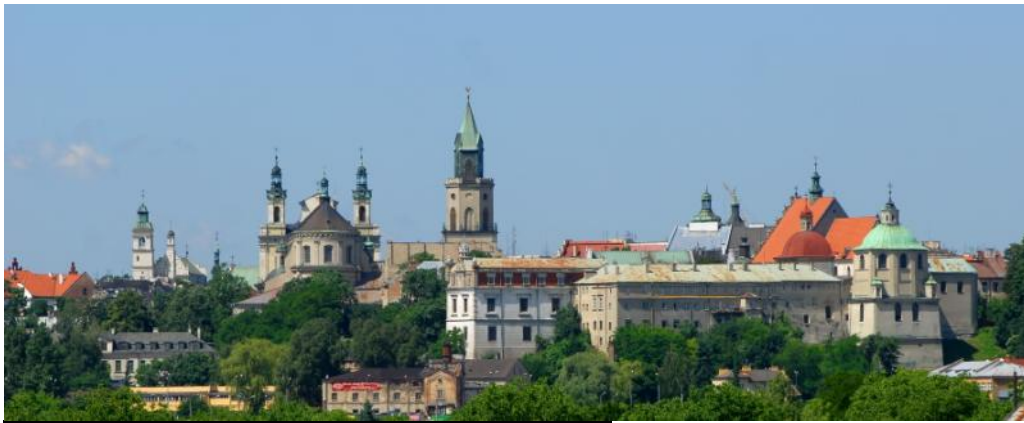
has the pleasure in inviting you and your guest to

**the Australian premiere**  
**of the film “Zero” by Paweł Borowski**  
**which opens the Embassy film series**  
**“Under Polish Eyes”.**

The screening will be held  
 at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland  
 7 Turrana Street, Yarralumla  
 on Wednesday 18 April 2012 at 6:00 p.m.  
 and  
 will be followed by a reception.

Please bring this invitation with you

**RSVP (acceptances only) 16 April**  
 e-mail: malgorzata.krakowiak@msz.gov.pl  
 phone: (02) 6272 1000



## OFF THE BEATEN TRACK - LUBLIN

Founded in the 14th century, Lublin, for many ages, has been a blend of nations, a junction between East and West. In the 16th century Poland and Lithuania signed in Lublin the Union Treaty which established one state – The Commonwealth of Two Nations. Its multicultural character was symbolized by Lublin itself which became a melting pot, inhabited by Catholics, Protestants, Orthodox Christians, and Jews. In the late 18th century the city became one of the centers of Hasidism – a spiritual movement of Judaism.

Lublin's cross-cultural character and fascinating history can be experienced on its streets. Rich spiritual and religious life is reflected in the city's stunning and unique architecture. One of the first stops during a tour must be the Old Town, which is the best preserved medieval town in Poland. It is situated on the edge of the escarpment leading up to the Gothic-style Cracow Gate which is the symbol of the city. In the center of the Old Town is the Market Square surrounded by historic houses decorated with Mannerist and Baroque facades. The neoclassical Old Town Hall dominates the Square. An expansive view of the Town can be admired from the top of the 19th century Trinitarian Tower. In the Tower's neighborhood one can find the 16th century cathedral which is recognized as a triumph

of Baroque art with its trompe l'oeil frescoes. Another impressive sacral building - the Dominican Church – is located nearby.

Almost 700 years of Lublin's history can also be learned from its secular architecture. The symbol of the longevity of the town is a stone-built defensive tower dating back to the 13th century. As it is a real historic city Lublin has a castle. Dating originally from the 14th century, it was built as a king's seat. Later, its facades were remodelled in the Neo-Gothic style. But it has much more to offer inside. There is the Chapel of the Holy Trinity which is covered with extraordinary Russo-Byzantine frescoes from the early 16th century portraying saints, angels and King Władysław Jagiełło who founded the chapel.

The city is equally attractive to those who come here to contemplate the history and unique heritage of this part of Europe as well as to those who come here just for a while to enjoy Lublin's atmosphere or to experience the richness of Lublin's culture. The city's unusual spirit has inspired many artists and given birth to unique enterprises. A cultural landmark is a theatre scene with The Theatrical Research Centre "Gardzienice", Provisorium Theatre or The Visual Stage of Leszek Mądzik as examples among many others. Although their art is not main stream, the theatres have gained a wide recognition on the international stage.

Today, the city is the biggest academic centre in eastern Poland, with six institutions of higher education. The Catholic University of Lublin (1918) and the University of Maria Curie-Skłodowska (1946) offer foreign students special summer programmes of Polish language

Read more about Lublin:

<http://www.lublin.eu/en>

<http://www.lublin-online.eu/en/>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lublin>

## Polish Easter traditions and customs



Easter is very important in Polish tradition and it is widely celebrated throughout the country. In the early days of Christianity in Poland, there were numerous pagan ceremonies and rituals, many of which were adapted to the Christian celebrations. Unlike in Australia, the Polish Easter takes place in spring, when nature wakes up after a long winter hibernation. In pagan times an egg used to be a symbol of nature's rebirth, of life and reproduction. Christianity adopted the

egg as the symbol of an exceptionally important tradition in this religion – the resurrection of Christ. Already in pagan times, eggs were adorned with symbolical magic and spring symbols, and decorated with flowers. Christians borrowed this custom, and that is why a multitude of eggs bearing intricate colours and patterns is to be found on Easter tables. Before Easter celebrations begin, there is Lent, a 40-day fasting period when most Christians avoid eating meat dishes on Fridays. Families who follow tradition provide no parties or other festive celebrations during this period. It is a reflective spiritual season, when people go to make confessions, pray and go on a retreat. Traditionally, Polish people also undertake a general cleaning of their homes from top to the bottom to have them perfectly neat for Easter. Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday, when people bring bouquets of wild flowers called palms to church to be blessed. This is to commemorate the triumphant entry of Jesus to Jerusalem. These palms are later taken home, where they remain until the next year. Holy Week used to be the time of extensive preparations for Easter. Traditional Easter dishes are prepared. This includes decorating eggs. Church bells fall silent on Holy Thursday and remain soundless until Easter Sunday. Good Friday is observed by the faithful by fasting and attending church services. This day commemorates Jesus' crucifixion and is the most solemn feast day of the Christian year. In Polish churches a reconstructed tomb is placed in a special place with the faithful praying constantly and keeping watch. People visit those tombs and pray. There is a tradition of bringing a basket of food to church on Holy Saturday. This basket, called *święconka*, is taken back home after being

specially blessed by the priest. A traditional *święconka* consists of: hard boiled eggs (usually decorated - called *pisanki*) as a symbol of Christ's resurrection, life's victory over death; bread, ensuring good fortune, which in Christianity is first and foremost a symbol of Christ's body; a lamb made of cake or sugar – *Agnus Dei* (Lamb of God); salt, which represents purification and was once believed to keep away all evil; horseradish, as a symbol of the bitter sacrifice of Christ and of physical fitness; smoked meat (ham or sausage) – a symbol of health and fertility; cheese, which represents friendship between man and nature; and cake, which symbolises



skills and perfection. The content of *święconka* varies, according to family and regional traditions, but the lamb figurine, eggs, bread, sausage and salt are always there. According to tradition all house work should be finished at home before *święconka* is brought back from the church, which remains untouched until Sunday morning. After the Resurrection Mass on Easter Sunday the whole family sits down at a table covered with a snow-white tablecloth, with green cress compositions, spring flowers, catkins and the essential Easter lamb made of cake or sugar. The table is lavishly laid with hams, sausages, pâtés, roulades, roast pork loins, a variety of poultry dishes, eggs, *mazurek* (special Easter cake), cheesecakes, etc. Hot dishes include *zur* with white sausage or smoked bacon, horseradish soup with a hard-boiled egg and white sausage. Traditionally blessed food is consumed first. Members of the family start with an egg, wishing each other the best of health and happiness. Celebrating Easter starts in the morning, but it is a day



when the family sits at the table for many hours, eating Easter delicacies. Easter Monday, *Śmigus-dyngus*, is a day when boys sprinkle girls with water. This is an ancient custom and its original meaning was

probably purification to ensure fertility.

### For more Embassy news + information:

EMBASSY OF POLAND  
7 Turrana Street  
2600 ACT  
[www.canberra.polemb.net](http://www.canberra.polemb.net)

FEEDBACK + COMMENTS  
Witold Krzesiński  
newsletter editor  
[Witold.Krzesinski@msz.gov.pl](mailto:Witold.Krzesinski@msz.gov.pl)

### PHOTOS IN THIS ISSUE:

AIPA  
Australian Embassy in Warsaw  
Krzysztof Bajkowski  
Capital Jewish Forum  
Lublin.pl  
Tom Koprowski  
Polish Press Agency PAP  
Poland.gov.pl  
Queensland College of Art  
Andrew Sikorski



## End of Summer on Mt Kosciuszko

Mount Kosciuszko, Australia's highest peak named after a Polish hero, has increasingly become a focus for the Polish community. Various events commemorating Tadeusz Kosciuszko and the Polish explorer Sir Paul Edmund Strzelecki, who named the mountain in 1840, have been organised in recent years. Two of them are taking place in 2012. *End of Summer on Mt Kosciuszko* was a three day event organised by the [Strzelecki Heritage Inc.](#) and [Strzelecki Hiking Club](#) which took place in mid February. It gave the participants an opportunity to learn



*Waltzing Matilda on top of the mountain*



*Kosciuszko Run*

about the history and geography of the Snowy Mountains region and to have a lot of fun together.

The participants, who included members of the Polish community from Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne and Perth, could choose one of the four ways to conquer Mt Kosciuszko: Strzelecki Hike – a three day bush walk via a difficult trail; Kosciuszko Run – an 11 km mountain run starting from Charlotte Pass Village, Strzelecki Walk – taking Main Range Track or Kosciuszko Ride – a non-competitive ride on mountain bikes.

When the whole group met on top of the mountain, the Australian National Anthem and a number of popular Polish and Australian songs were performed. The event continued in Jindabyne in the afternoon, with a concert by Paulina Caine, a renowned Polish-Australian singer from Perth.



*Group picture after conquering Mount Kosciuszko*

*(All photos on this page: Chris Bajkowski)*

## Who was Tadeusz Kosciuszko?



Tadeusz (Thaddeus) Kosciuszko (1746-1817) is a Polish and American national hero. He fought in the American War of Independence and later on struggled for the freedom of Poland leading the 1794 Kosciuszko Uprising against Imperial Russia and the Kingdom of Prussia.

In words of Alex Storozynski, author of his classic biography, Kosciuszko was a prince of tolerance who stood up for the rights of European serfs, African Slaves, Native American Indians, Jews, women and all groups that were disenfranchised. Even Thomas Jefferson called him "the purest son of liberty I have ever known."

### *In Poland ...*

- He fought for freedom and independence.
- He led a Revolution to free the peasants from serfdom and end feudalism.
- He was joined by a black man named Jean Lapiere who tried to help him to free white slaves.
- The Jews started a Jewish "Bearded cavalry" to fight alongside him and a Jewish cavalry leader called him "a messenger from God."

### *In the United States ...*

- He tried to buy Thomas Jefferson's slaves and free them.
- He designed the blueprints for West Point, which Benedict Arnold sold to the British.
- He planned the Battle of Saratoga, the turning point of the American Revolution.
- He stood up for the rights of Native Americans, and the chief of the Miami Indian tribe gave him a tomahawk/peace pipe as a sign of appreciation.

### *In France ...*

- The French Revolutionaries made him an honorary "Citizen of France."
- He warned these same revolutionaries about Napoleon Bonaparte; barely three weeks later Napoleon staged a coup d'etat and took over France.

(adapted from [www.thekf.org/about/peasant\\_prince/](http://www.thekf.org/about/peasant_prince/))

Find out more about:

Past, upcoming and future events on and around Mt Kosciuszko



**Over the Moonbah Festival**  
14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> April 2012  
[www.kosciuszkoheritage.com/moonbah/](http://www.kosciuszkoheritage.com/moonbah/)  
[www.koziefest.com](http://www.koziefest.com)

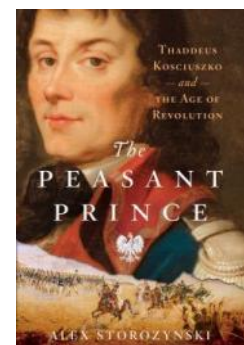


**Kosciuszko Run 2013**  
**Strzelecki Walk 2013**  
& other events  
9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> February 2013  
<http://kosciuszkorun.com.au>



[www.strzeleckiclub.com](http://www.strzeleckiclub.com)

Tadeusz Kosciuszko



[www.peasantprince.com](http://www.peasantprince.com)



## International Tennis Stars at the Polish Consulate



Małgorzata Kwiatkowska and Andrzej Lubieniecki from Australian-Polish Sports Masters



Agnieszka Radwańska



Mariusz Fyrstenberg, Sabine Lisicki and Łukasz Kubot



Monique Adamczak

A host of international tennis stars descended on the Polish Consulate on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> January for a meeting with the members of the Polish community in Sydney. They all had a Polish connection: they either play for Poland, as is the case of Agnieszka Radwańska (No. 5 on the WTA Singles Ranking List as of 5<sup>th</sup> March 2012), Alicja Rosolska, Łukasz Kubot (No. 52 on the ATP World Tour Singles Ranking List) and Mariusz Frystenberg (No. 13 in the ATP Doubles Ranking), or they boast of Polish roots, even though they represent other countries – like Sabine Lisicki of Germany (No. 13 in WTA Singles Ranking) or Monique Adamczak of Australia (No. 236).



Sabine Lisicki



Mariusz Fyrstenberg

The meeting, organised by the Consulate in cooperation with the Australian-Polish Sports Masters association, brought together dozens of fans as well as some of the coaches and family members of the players. Presentations of each player were followed by a lively interaction with the public, which included a questions and answers session and a quiz in which it was the players who asked the questions. Animated conversations continued long into the night over drinks and snacks.

*(All photos on this page: Tom Koprowski)*



Łukasz Kubot



The audience



Alicja Rosolska



Agnieszka Radwańska and Consul General Daniel Gromann

## Poland: The Soccer Capital of Europe 2012

In February the Polish Consulate in Sydney and World Aviation Systems - General Sales Agent for LOT Polish Airlines hosted an event for the local travel agents called *Poland: The 2012 Soccer Capital of Europe*. Presentations on tourist attractions and dynamic life of today's Poland as well the offer of LOT were followed by lucky door prize drawing and cocktail reception. The programme of the evening included a special guest appearance by Dr Karl, who has recently obtained Polish citizenship thanks to



Dr Karl with Consul General  
(Photo : Tom Koprowski)

his family roots.

The UEFA EURO 2012 tournament will take place in Poland and the Ukraine from 8<sup>th</sup> June to 1<sup>st</sup> July this year. It will be the first time ever that the European Football Championship will be organised in Central and Eastern Europe. In Poland the group stage matches will be played in four cities: Warsaw, Gdańsk, Poznań and Wrocław. Two of the quarter-finals will be played in Warsaw and Gdańsk and one the semi-finals – in Warsaw. The Polish cities will be offering state-of-the-art stadiums, built especially for the EURO 2012, comfortable hotels and an attractive entertainment package, including *Fan Zones* – international centres for fans and 'street stadiums' with giant video screens showing the matches. It is estimated that 670 000 spectators will watch the EURO 2012 matches in Poland, including 420 000 supporters from abroad.

## Diplomas for the Higher School Certificate in Polish

New South Wales students who obtained the Higher School Certificate (HSC) in Polish in 2011 gathered at the Consulate in February to receive the customary Consul General's commemorative diplomas. The ceremony, organised in co-operation with the Polish Teachers' Association in NSW, brought together also their teachers, parents, other family members and friends, including some guests from Newcastle. Adelia Fuller, Principal of the Saturday School of Community Languages NSW Curriculum & Learning Innovation



Centre was present as well and congratulated the students on their excellent performance.

The Higher School Certificate (HSC) is the highest award in secondary education in New South Wales. To be eligible for the award, students must complete Years 11 and 12, satisfy HSC course requirements and sit for the statewide HSC examinations. 42 students obtained HSC in Polish in New South Wales this year, many of them with very high results (over 90%).



Both photos in this section: Chris Bugaj