



Polish Community Council of Australia Inc.
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Ms. Ernestyna Skurjat-Kozek
President, Kościuszko Heritage Inc.
Sydney

Dear President
Dear Guests and Friends

Unveiling of the Sir Strzelecki Plaque in Welaregang and celebrations at Tumbaramba

On behalf of the Executive Board of Polish Community Council of Australia (PCCA) I extend my congratulations to Kościuszko Heritage Inc., a member organisation of PCCA, on the occasion of another event organised to commemorate a distinguished Pole, an explorer, geologist and philanthropist, Sir Paul Edmund Strzelecki. Every celebration which reminds us of Paul Strzelecki's work and achievements deserves a prominent display because his accomplishments constitute a very important element of Australian history and are part of the cultural heritage of the Polish community in Australia.

The first half of March 2021 once again coincides with yet another, this time the 181st anniversary of discovery of the highest peak of Australia by Strzelecki and the naming of Mount Kosciuszko in honour of the Polish and American national hero, Brigadier General Thaddeus Kosciuszko. For these acts, the Kościuszko National Park with Mount Kościuszko proudly reaching the sky in its midst assume a special meaning for Poles and Polish community living in Australia. Mount Kościuszko is an exceptional symbol in the history of Polish-Australian relationship.

The Kościuszko National Park is also recognised as part of Aboriginal cultural heritage and as such becomes part of Australian national identity. Sir Paul Strzelecki understood the plight of First Nations; he was strongly opposed to slavery and suffering. It is therefore, not surprising that he chose the proud name of a Polish freedom fighter, a democratic leader for Australia's highest mountain. Thaddeus Kosciuszko, as patron of the Park was placed in a remarkable location. His actions in North America towards abolition of slavery put him among the precursors of antiracist social movements which remain alive today.

I join you in a moment of recognition and reflection on two remarkable Poles who, thanks to their notable names and extraordinary deeds, left a lasting impression not only on the past but the present and future of Poland and Australia.

Małgorzata Kwiatkowska
President
Polish Community Council of Australia

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