



NEWSLETTER

POLISH CULTURAL CLUB OF GREATER HARTFORD, INC.

Established 1976

www.polishculturalclub.org

March 2015

An Affiliate of the American Council for Polish Culture

The PCCGH cordially invites all members and friends to join us for
a Lecture and Slide Show to celebrate Spring

“Gardens of the World — Emphasizing Eastern Europe”
and
“Lotusland created by Madame Ganna Walska”

Speaker: Richard Benfield
Professor of Geography at
Central Connecticut State University
and Author of the Book Garden Tourism



Asian Lotus

Thursday, March 26, 2015

6:30 p.m. (brief meeting)

7:00 p.m. (lecture/slide show)

Polish National Home
60 Charter Oak Avenue
Hartford, CT

Free Admission



Lotusland

Lotusland is the historic estate of Madame Ganna Walska and current location of a Botanical Garden in uniquely designed landscape gardens located in Montecito near Santa Barbara, CA. Madame Ganna Walska, a well-known Polish opera singer and socialite, purchased the estate in 1941 and spent the next 43 years creating Lotusland. The spectacular collections of exotic plants throughout the 37-acre property are a very personal expression of Walska's penchant for the dramatic, the unexpected, and the whimsical. After her death in 1984, Lotusland became a nonprofit botanical garden and opened to the public in 1993. (See page 3 for more on Madame Walska.)

For further information, call (860) 659-0356.



CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

Dear Club Members:

There can be no doubt that all of us are counting down the days to Spring as we near the end of this extremely difficult winter. As a jump-start to warmer days, we invite you to join us for a garden-themed slide show lecture on Thursday, March 26 on "Gardens of the World—Eastern Europe" and "Madame Ganna Walska's Lotusland." The speaker will be Richard Benfield, Professor of Geography at CCSU. Please see page 1 for further details on the program and page 3 for information on Madame Ganna Walska.

You will find several enclosures in this Newsletter. The first is a 2015 PCCGH Scholarship application, which we hope you will share with a deserving scholar. As a PCCGH member, you may sponsor such a student. Second, thank you to everyone who paid their dues so promptly; membership cards are enclosed. Lastly, we are most excited about the new venture which Nancy Yiznitsky and Carol Phelan have collaborated on with the assistance of Krystyna Farley and Anna-Mae Maglaty — a Polish Find-the-Word Puzzle on Foods and Beverages of Poland, the third enclosure. It is a fun way to stimulate the thinking processes while at the same time reviewing some Polish words. The grid word answers, including English translations, will appear in the next Newsletter.

If you get a chance, check out the Photo Gallery on the Club's website: www.polishculturalclub.org. Photos from several recent events have been added.

In closing we wish everyone a Happy and Blessed Easter —

Wesołych Świąt Wielkanocnych!



Please remember that you may contact either one of us if you have any questions. We are proud and honored to serve as your Co-Presidents.

Patcja Kaczynski

(860) 677-0628

Fran Pudlo

(860) 659-0356

COULD YOU DO US A FAVOR? We would like to have the ability to send electronic communications in the future. Please send an e-mail to: francespudlo@att.net with your e-mail address and any other address or telephone number changes, and we will update our membership contact information. **THANK YOU!**



**WELCOME / WITAMY
to NEW MEMBERS**

Roger and Linda LeMay of Hartford

Najpiękniejsza jest wiosna, gdyz pachną w niej wszystkie nadzieje . . .

The most beautiful is spring, for it holds the scent of all our hopes . . .

From: Polonia Biweekly Newspaper

JENNIE MARCONI-JAVORSKI SCHOLARSHIP

Sponsored by the Polish Cultural Club of Greater Hartford, Inc.

Deadline: May 1, 2015



Scholarship applications, along with all requested materials, **must be received and postmarked no later than May 1, 2015**. An application has been inserted as part of this Newsletter. Applications can also be downloaded from the Club's website:

www.polishculturalclub.org.

Please visit the ACPC website www.polishcultureacpc.org for additional scholarship opportunities: "Scholarship for Study in Poland," "Pulaski Scholarships for Advanced Studies," and "Skalny Scholarship for Polish Studies."

Florence Langridge and Virginia Pudlo, Scholarship Co-Chairs

MEMBER NEWS

Congratulations to **Krystyna Słowikowska Farley** and **Mary Mazurek Heslin** who were honored by the American Council for Polish Culture for their many past and ongoing efforts in promoting Polish culture and political involvement. Marion Winters presented the "Polish American Achievement Awards" on behalf of the ACPC in a surprise ceremony held during Wigilia on December 12, 2014.



Krystyna Słowikowska Farley

L to R: Clifford Archie (PCCGH Co-President), Marion Winters (ACPC) and Mary Mazurek Heslin

(photo by Brian Winters)

Special Get Well wishes are sent to **Patricia Archie**, who suffered a broken hip in a fall. Cards can be sent to Manchester Manor, Room 2023, 385 West Center St., Manchester, CT 06040.

Condolences are extended to Cheryl Pietrycha, President of the SS. Cyril and Methodius Ladies Guild, whose husband, John, passed away unexpectedly in February and also to the family of his sister, **Janice Pietrycha LaPenna**. The **LaPenna family** also suffered the additional loss of Lucille LaPenna, Lou LaPenna's mother, in February. Sympathy is expressed to member **Eugene Kowalczyk** on the loss of his father, Eugene Kowalczyk on March 5, 2015.

NEWSLETTER STAFF

Editor:	Frances Pudlo	(francespudlo@att.net)
Assistant Editor:	Anna-Mae Maglaty	
Staff:	Carol Bogon Phelan, Nancy Yiznitsky	



DID YOU KNOW . . . That Madame Ganna Walska was an Opera Singer, Socialite, and Garden Designer?



"I'm an enemy of the average"
- Ganna Walska

The woman who was to become the extraordinary Ganna Walska had quite ordinary origins. Born Hanna Puacz in 1887 in Brest-Litovsk, Poland, she took the stage name of Madame Ganna Walska at the beginning of her musical career — Ganna is a Russian form of Hanna, and Walska was reminiscent of her favorite music, the waltz. Over the next decades, Madame Walska pursued a career as an opera singer despite her apparent renown for having a lackluster voice. This did not deter her from singing in New York and Paris and touring America and Europe, however, while attracting the attention of audiences, critics, and gentleman admirers on both sides of the Atlantic. During a performance of Giordan's *Fedora* in Havana, it is reported that she veered so persistently off key that the audience pelted her with rotten vegetables. It was an event that Orson Welles remembered and used to inspire aspects of the screenplay for *Citizen Kane*. Roger Ebert, in his DVD commentary on *Citizen Kane*, suggests that the character of Susan Alexander, the newspaper publisher's second wife, was based on Walska.

Ganna Walska had six husbands:

- ◆ Arcadie d'Engorn, a Russian Baron who was killed early in World War I. Their two year marriage had been dissolved.
- ◆ Dr. Joseph Fraenkel, a New York Endocrinologist. He died after four years of marriage.
- ◆ Multimillionaire sportsman and carpet tycoon Alexander Smith Cochran. They divorced after two years.
- ◆ American Industrialist Harold Fowler McCormick. They married in 1922 and divorced nine years later.
- ◆ English inventor of a death ray, Harry Grindell Matthews. They married in 1938; he died in 1941.
- ◆ Theos Bernard, a scholar of yoga and Tibetan Buddhism and book author. They divorced after four years.

Madame Walska authored an autobiography, [Always Room at the Top](#), and continued to study both vocal music and spiritual teachings in search of creative fulfillment and personal enlightenment. Ever the socialite, in 1926 Walska purchased the Duchess of Marlborough Fabergé egg that had been offered by Consuelo Vanderbilt at a charity auction. It was later acquired by Malcolm Forbes as the first Easter egg in his Fabergé egg collection.



After residing in Paris and New York, Madame Walska turned her sights toward California's sunny climate and free-thinking residents. At the encouragement of Theos Bernard, her sixth and last husband, she purchased the 37-acre Cuesta Linda estate in Santa Barbara in 1941, intending to use it as a retreat for Tibetan monks, and renamed it "Tibetland." The Tibetan monks never appeared because of restrictions on wartime visas and sometime later, after divorcing Bernard, Madame Walska changed the name of her estate to "Lotusland" in honor of the flower held sacred in Indian and Tibetan religions, the lotus, *Nelumbo nucifera*, as well as the lotus growing in several of her garden's ponds. She then began what would be a gradual transformation from well-known socialite to garden designer. Most of her energy and resources were poured into creating a botanical garden of rare plants using her natural artistic talents to create a fantasy world of exquisite beauty. To accomplish this, she worked with a number of landscape architects and designers, including Lockwood de Forest, Jr., Ralph T. Stevens, William Paylen, Oswald Da Ros, and Charles Glass.

Madame Walska herself was a talented designer and is well regarded for distinctive gardens of exceptional creativity. She especially loved to mass single species of plants together. She wanted the best, the biggest, and the most unusual plants available and was often willing to pay any price to get them. So determined was she to finish the work she had begun that in the 1970s she auctioned off some of her jewelry in order to finance her final creation — the cycad garden. Up until the last few years of her life, she was the feisty, intractable "head gardener" of Lotusland. Ganna Walska died on March 2, 1984, at Lotusland, leaving her garden and her entire estate to the Ganna Walska Lotusland Foundation, to ensure that her gardens would remain her legacy.

During her life, Ganna Walska received the following honors: Gold Cross of Merit from the Polish Government in 1931, Légion d'honneur order from the French government in 1934, and L'Ordre National des Arts et des Letters from the French government in 1972.

Co? What? Gdzie? Where? Kiedy? When?

MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2015 6:30 p.m.

“Genealogy Lecture” with Polish Genealogist Aleksandra Kacprzak
Polish American Foundation, 27 Grove Hill, New Britain, CT

Contact: Dorena726@yahoo.com FREE

SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 2015 5:00 p.m.

“Golqski Supper” Sponsored by Towarzystwo

St. Stanislaus Church Hall, 510 West Street, Bristol, CT

Information: (860) 583-4242 Tickets: \$10.00 p.p.

SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 2015 7:00 p.m.

Concert: “Prayer in Opera” presented by the CT Virtuosi Orchestra

The Cathedral of Saint Joseph, Farmington Avenue, Hartford

Information: (860) 325-CVCO or info@thevirtuosi.org

THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2015 6:30 p.m.

PCCGH Event: “Gardens of the World—with emphasis on Eastern Europe and Madame Ganna Walska’s Lotusland”

Lecture by Prof. Richard Benfield, Prof. of Geography at CCSU

Polish National Home, 60 Charter Oak Avenue, Hartford

Members and Guests Welcome FREE

Information: (860) 659-0356 (See pages 2 and 3 of newsletter)

SUNDAY, MARCH 29, 2015 8:30 a.m.—11:00 a.m.

“Ladies Guild Pancake Breakfast” (Fundraiser for Scholarships)

SS. Cyril and Methodius Church, Lower Hall

55 Charter Oak Avenue, Hartford, CT \$5.00 p.p.

SUNDAY, MARCH 29, 2015 1:00 p.m.

Family Event: “Pisanki and More”

Learn to make pisanki and enjoy Polish Easter crafts, Polish Easter Cartoons, food, and entertainment

Polish National Home, 60 Charter Oak Avenue, Hartford FREE

SUNDAY, MARCH 29, 2015 3:00 p.m.

Movie: “Ida” (2015 Oscar Winner for Foreign Language Film)

CCSU, Torp Theatre, located in the Davidson Building

Information: (860) 832-3010 FREE

FRIDAY, APRIL 17, 2015 7:00 p.m.

“Wycinanki Lecture and Exhibition” given by Susan Urban

Polish Center of Discovery and Learning

33 South Street, Chicopee, MA

Tel. (413) 592-0001 or E-mail: polishcenter@elms.edu FREE

Pączki na Karnawał — A New Venture



Nancy Yiznitsky with Adrian Sylveen

Each year, members of the Polish Cultural Club of Greater Hartford anticipate, prepare, and execute plans for the highly successful Szopka Festival held on the Sunday following Thanksgiving. A small cadre of members reviewing the Mission Statement of the Club, which states that it is necessary “to preserve and promote the culture and customs of Poland” began to discuss “something new” that could be introduced during the Lenten/Easter season. Thus, “the Pączki na Karnawał” (Pączki on Mardi Gras) was born.

In many Polish areas on the Tuesday before the beginning of Lent, *Tłusty Wtorek* (Fat Tuesday), people can eat these delicious donuts (pączki) to one’s heart’s content, after which it is customary to set them aside until after Easter.

In the Club’s plan, pączki were ordered with prune, raspberry, and apple fillings from a local bakery and would be sold in the lower hall of SS. Cyril and Methodius Church. On that Sunday, February 15, everything was in readiness except the weather. Heavy snows fell. What to do? The intrepid volunteers who planned the event decided to proceed since the pączki were available and ready for pickup. Bountiful prayers were offered for customers to show up, and, in spite of adversities, the pączki were a sellout.

Next year (2016), “Pączki na Karnawał” will not only be continued, but expanded. Our rallying cry will be, “Come one, come all — try them, you’ll like them. We guarantee it!”

Anna-Mae Maglaty



L to R (standing): Elizabeth Sikorsky, Gini Pudlo, Lou Maglaty, and Anna-Mae Maglaty (seated)

FRIDAY, APRIL 24, 2015 7:00 p.m.

“Annual Monte Carlo Whist” Sponsored by Ladies Guild of

SS. Cyril and Methodius Church — Lower Church Hall

Cash Prizes, Door Prizes, Raffle Prizes, Refreshments \$5.00 p.p.

SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 2015 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

“Learn to Make Polish Paper Cutouts (Wycinanki)” (Bring scissors)

Polish Center of Discovery and Learning, Chicopee, MA

Tel.: (413) 592-0001 or E-mail: polishcenter@elms.edu FREE

SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 2015 8:00 p.m.

“Performance by Popular Polish Satirist Marcin Daniec”

Trinity-on-Main Arts Center, 69 Main Street, New Britain

Tickets: (860) 826-5477

2015 EXCURSIONS TO POLAND:

Pampered Poland Tour—September 19—October 3, 2015

Christmas Markets of Central Europe—Nov. 27—Dec. 10, 2015

Contact J&D Tours at (412) 835-0539 or e-mail: contact@janddtours.net. Space is limited. Register by March 31 for discount. Tour Hosts: Dave Motak and Jack Samuels.



Polish Cultural Club of Greater
Hartford, Inc.
P.O. Box 380699
East Hartford, CT 06138

We’re on the Web!

www.polishculturalclub.org