

ANNUAL REPORT 2010 – 2011



THE PULS POLONII
CULTURAL FOUNDATION





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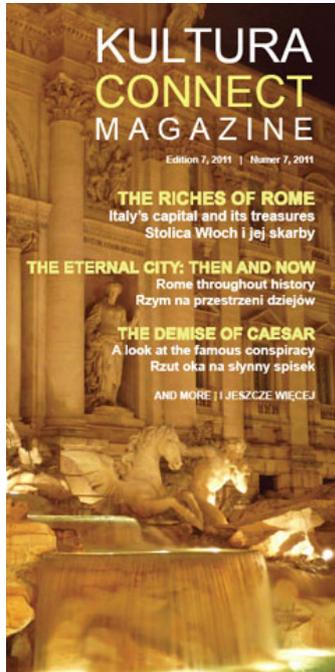
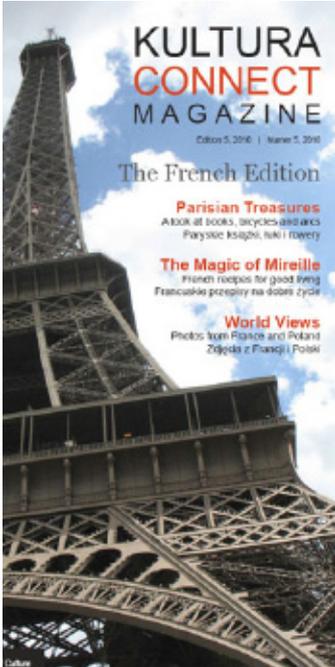
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About the Foundation

Overview

The Puls Polonii Cultural Foundation Inc. was registered in Sydney, NSW, on April 13, 2007. Its ABN number is 95144689914. The Foundation currently has eight members who work on a voluntary basis. Its President is Dr. Ernestyna Skurjat-Kozek and the Deputy President is Ursula Lang.

The Foundation is the sister organisation of Puls Polonii, Australia's largest Polish-English internet newspaper.

Objectives

The Foundation has six principal objectives and goals. They are:

- The promotion of the contribution made by local and international leaders, particularly Sir Paul Strzelecki and General Tadeusz Kosciuszko, whose name is borne by the highest peak of Australia, Mt Kosciuszko;
- The organisation of cultural events to be held in Jindabyne, Cooma, and other suitable locations;
- The production of radio, press and internet publications, as well as video documentaries, promoting the heroes and the events;
- The promotion of the contribution made by inspirational and influential individuals - particularly Polish migrants - to Australia's history and cultural heritage;
- The preservation of Polish culture for younger generations of Poles; and
- The promotion of the Polish contribution to the exploration of Australia's natural features (such as the Snowy Mountains and the Strzelecki Track in South Australia) and the inclusion of the Polish contribution in appropriate references in Heritage Listings at the National and World Heritage levels.

The Foundation's objectives were amended at its 2010 Annual Meeting

Good news was received from a Jindabyne journalist, Carole Thomas. A newly-established Youth String Orchestra, conducted by Maryanne Simpson, agreed to host (billet) the guests from America during their stay in Jindabyne, and to have joint music workshops. Both were to perform in Charlotte Pass Village as part of the Day of Fun at Kosciuszko Run event.

Activities from July 2010 to August 2011

July 2010

Ernestyna and Andrzej Kozek took part in NAIDOC celebrations in Jindabyne and Dalgety, meeting with the NPWS Director, Dave Darlington, and Ngarigo Elders and their relatives. Ernestyna and Andrzej also met with Kevin Blyton, the Head Leasee of Charlotte Pass Village, to discuss K'Ozzie Fiesta 2011 at this new venue. They also met with the Kosciuszko Chalet Manager, Michelle. Kevin pledged assistance and support, and even sponsorship (payment for radio adverts); contact was to be via Michelle. However, following a period of no responses to emails and queries relating to planning for the event, the event was in question. Finally, in late September, a response was received from Michelle that Kosciuszko Hotel would be closed during the festival (owing to renovations). The main question at the time was: "How do we organise power for the PA system?" The organising committee was unaware at the time of the scope of the required approvals from CPV and NPWS (with further requirements), being a pre-requisite for the event to proceed. Leaflets featuring Kosciuszko Hotel as a sponsor and promoting Polish-Aboriginal paragliding had already been printed.

October 2010

Ernestyna attended workshop in Jindabyne for organisers of regional events. The proposed meeting with a lady from NPWS/NSW Tourism failed, as the lady had left after the first session. Ernestyna met David Moretti of Regional Flagship Event Grants. (NB: This grant application, submitted in July 2011, proved unsuccessful.) The workshop participants enjoyed a dynamic performance by the Pilsko Folkloric Group visiting Jindabyne at the time to see/climb Mt Kosciuszko. The performance was organised by Ursula Lang, who was assisting Pilsko at the time.

October 2010

During the same trip, Ernestyna met with three NPWS Directors (Steve Redden, Andrew Bond and Arthur Willis). Consent for paragliding was withdrawn, as the activity involves fuel, which is prohibited in the Kosciuszko National Park. Otherwise, the Directors were helpful and supportive. Ernestyna met with the management team of Pygmy Possum Lodge in Charlotte Pass Village, who were very encouraging and supportive of the proposed event, including an exhibition at the Lodge. Back in Jindabyne, Ernestyna contacted Kevin's secretary at the 2XL Radio Station, who promised to talk to Kevin. Kevin subsequently agreed that power for the event would be provided by cables fed from Kosciuszko Hotel.

November 2010

As the paragliding plans were unable to proceed, Ernestyna concentrated on securing festival guests from Chicago, USA, who advised they would attend with 25 people (the Paderewski Symphony Orchestra). Ernestyna asked Marysia Rosiak to help organise their visit, including the organisation of concerts to cover the cost of food and accommodation. Ernestyna offered that FKPP would pay for bus hire and fuel. New leaflets were printed.

December 2010

Good news was received from a Jindabyne journalist, Carole Thomas. A newly-established Youth String Orchestra, conducted by Maryanne Simpson, agreed to host (billet) the guests from America during their stay in Jindabyne, and to have joint music workshops. Both were to perform in Charlotte Pass Village as part of the Day of Fun at Kosciuszko Run event. A big marquee and a stage was required for the two young orchestras. The organising committee considered building a stage, but were not sure if Kevin would give permission to use the outdoor venue. It was necessary to continue to make alternative preparations in case permission was not forthcoming, and in the case of bad weather. Mick Wykrota offered to build a stage at the Village, as big (or as small) as required. He also promised to provide some people to take part in traffic management and drive a shuttle bus from Kosciuszko Road, which would be required due to limited parking in the Village.

January 2011

Ursula and Tony Lang visited NPWS and Kevin Blyton stated that he did not want to have further dealings with Ernestyna because she (allegedly) spoke inappropriately to his manager and he had no intention of letting the festival go ahead; as the Head Leasee, he legally had this right. Ursula convinced Kevin to reconsider, on the understanding that all negotiations with the new Village Manager, Lachlan Maclean, would be handled by her. The negotiations took many weeks, largely due to delays caused by Kevin, his manager Lachlan, their solicitors and a lack of appropriate documentation on the site area being made available by the Head Leasee, Kevin Blyton. However, due to the imminent arrival of guests from the USA, it was not feasible to call the festival off. Another reason was that it was a twin event with Kosciuszko Run, which was already advertised. FKPP was also advised that it would be required to pay for the use of an outlined area (a grass area in front of Kosciuszko Hotel) for the show and picnic. As the budget was very tight, the Polish Consulate decided to help out by paying over \$2,000.

Due to the various uncertainties, an increased focus was placed on having the event indoors in Pygmy Possum. With negotiations still going on, and uncertainty about the Head Leasee's ability to control the event happening even within Pygmy Possum, no VIPs were invited, including Aboriginal Ngarigo friends. In fact, negotiations continued until Friday the 11th of February, 2011, and the Final Agreement was signed by Ernestyna and Andrzej at 1pm, half a day before the festival.

January 2011

Further preparations continued in spite of a long vacation and problems in communicating with people and offices during the January school holiday period. Ernestyna appointed Zosia Kaszubska of Melbourne to the role of artistic coordinator, to prepare a program, including her special song for the winners of the Kosciuszko Run. A message was received that the guests from America had been invited to perform – a day before the festival! – for the National Multicultural Festival in Canberra. Felix Molski (a member of the Foundation) volunteered to drive the bus, with his brother, John, driving extra people in his passenger car. Arrangements also became necessary to hire violins for the members of the Paderewski Orchestra, as they may not have been able to bring so many instruments with them. A tour plan for the Paderewskis was finalised. It was planned that they spend a few days in Sydney, and then in Jindabyne. Plans were later changed due to heavy snow storms in the United States and guests being unable to board planes until a week later than scheduled. All plans needed to be changed at the last minute to accommodate the change in arrival dates.

Ursula made successful arrangements with Banjo Patterson Inn to have a Lajkonik performance and Polish Lunch there on Sunday (the second day of festival) to support Polonez Smallgoods in consideration of its support of the festival over many years and in the hope that the Lajkonik youth would get to meet the Chicago youth and that some joint performance could be arranged on the Sunday morning. This plan proved to be a failure because the Paderewski Orchestra had to take part in the rescheduled music workshop and gala concert at the Jindabyne Central School.

February 2011

The last days before February the 12th continued in uncertainty due to the contract with Kevin Blyton still not being signed, or final conditions being advised. Ursula continued with negotiations, hoping Kevin Blyton would not decline to finalise the contract. It was hoped to get access to the grand piano (as originally promised). Susan Collins (Head of Violins at the Newcastle Conservatorium of Music) offered to come and play for free with the great piano star Tamara Scislowski. This offer was not realised due to Kevin denying access to the piano. Again, despite further uncertainty, and intervention by Chuck Hahn directly to Kevin, final arrangements for the Kosciuszko Beer and Kosciuszko Wine tasting were made, as well as for Polonez Smallgoods to have a food stall. Some two days before the festival, Kevin Blyton advised that access to the toilets in Hotel Kosciuszko was granted, but not to the covered veranda. No permission was given for a proposed photo exhibition in the Hotel. There was a request to bring the festival's own (certified) cables, and so Ernestyna subsequently arranged for a PA expert, Andrzej Strzelecki, to hire a van full of equipment to serve both indoor and outdoor areas.

February the 11th – 12th, 2011

Most of the FKPP organising committee arrived in the Village on Friday, with rooms booked at Pygmy Possum. Due

At a morning meeting with Kosciuszko Hotel Management, Polish, Aboriginal and Australian flags were hoisted. The weather was sunny and the PA system was installed outdoors, in front of Kosciuszko Hotel. John Harding and Pawel Gospodarczyk commenced the Kosciuszko Run event. Polonez Smallgoods occupied the marquee. Chuck Hahn arrived with a barrel of Kosciuszko Beer.

to many days of rain, the Valley was flooded. Ernestyna and Andrzej met with Lachlan (the Village Manager) and his wife Rachelle (the Hotel Manager) at 1pm. Still arguing and clarifying the Terms of the Agreement, Ernestyna and Andrzej were advised to pay \$2,000 for the grass (entertainment) area regardless of weather. In heavy rain, Jindy Hire team brought stacks of chairs and tables, and pitched a huge marquee. An exhibition was mounted on the ground floor of Pygmy. The first floor area was prepared with PA and decorations for an indoor show. In heavy rain and fog, the festival volunteers, camera crew and other people could not find the way to the Village, so the last person arrived around 4am. The rain ceased around 5am.

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Sunday the 12th of February, 2011

Lajkonik and John Hospodaryk performed at the Polish Lunch in Jindabyne, with Polonez Smallgoods providing Polish food on the verandah. An informal debriefing session was held afterwards, involving some interested community activists from Melbourne who had come to the festival.

March 2011

A disagreement occurred between John Harding of the Australian Mountain Running Association and Pawel Gospodaryk of Strzelecki Heritage Inc. FKPP stepped back from its association with Strzelecki Heritage.

April 2011

Ernestyna prepared audio, photo and other festival reports for publication in *Puls Polonii*.

May 2011

Ernestyna received the Golden Cross of Merit from the Polish Government, presented by the Consul-General, Daniel Groman, during 3rd of May celebrations in Sydney.

June 2011

Tax time for FKPP meant gathering documentation. Final reports for the Blum Foundation and Wspolnota Polska were prepared by Ernestyna.

June 2011

An invitation was received from Jindabyne's Carole Thomas to come to a fund-raising concert featuring the great pianist Chris Malek. Ernestyna travelled with Bogusia Filip. During this trip, Ernestyna, apart from covering the concert, did some research regarding the heritage-listed church in Moonbah that was restored by a Polish priest, the late Fr Wally Stefanski. A week later, Ernestyna travelled to Jindabyne with Ursula and Tony Lang to take part in NAIDOC celebrations. There was a rare opportunity to talk to Dave Darlington and discuss a range of matters with him, including future FKPP events, such as flights over Mt Kosciuszko. Ernestyna and Ursula talked to Ngarigo elders who approved of the flights project. Ernestyna and Ursula also interview Neen Pendergast and Bonita Pendergast,

gathering more material about the Moonbah Church, Fr Wally and his role in the Snowy Mountains area. Some planning occurred regarding a future event in 2013, being the 100th anniversary of what is believed to be the first mass on Mt Kosciuszko.

July and August 2011

Andrzej and Ernestyna travelled to Northern NSW to visit Dr Janusz Rygielski, the new President of the Polish Community Council of Australia, to discuss future co-operation between the Council and FKPP, mainly in the areas of preserving Kosciuszko and Strzelecki heritage, but also a possible future affiliation.

The Foundation's AGM meeting was set for the 20th of August, 2011, as decisions had to be made quickly regarding deadlines to apply for new grants.

Written by Ernestyna Skurjat-Kozek

Sydney, August 14, 2011

