



OGNIWO Polish Museum Society Inc.
Polskie Towarzystwo Muzealne OGNIWO

1417 Main Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2W 3V3 204-586-5070
www.polishmuseum.com info@polishmuseum.com

2021 Annual Report

This year, despite some interruptions, we were happy to be able to deliver the community-focused content we are so passionate about sharing, with the health and safety of our visitors and staff always at the forefront of our minds. In 2021, we brought you the following programming:

Events and exhibits

On March 21st, Christine Tabbernor offered an interactive Pisanki webinar. Participants were encouraged to buy kits at the museum and join along with the virtual session to learn the art of traditional Polish egg decorating.



Spring 2021 brought with it resurgent restrictions that forced the postponement of our first exhibit. After several delays, the highlight of the summer was the launch of “ART: SOUL THERAPY” exhibit, curated by Wanda Slawik (whose work is pictured left). The exhibit featured the talent of local Polish artists across a variety of media. Artists displayed included Joanna Bulowska, Wioletta Los, Wanda Slawik, Margaret Switala, Mirek Weichsel, and Julianna Zwierciadlowska-Rhymer. The Free Press Community Review (July 23, 2021) featured coverage of the event. This exhibit was the first opportunity in almost a year to open our doors to visitors. Museum volunteers, together with

the featured artists, were able to fill the museum space with colours and textures, which were widely appreciated by our audience. Positive comments were received from many visitors on the artwork and its ability to ‘heal’ their souls after months of pandemic restrictions.

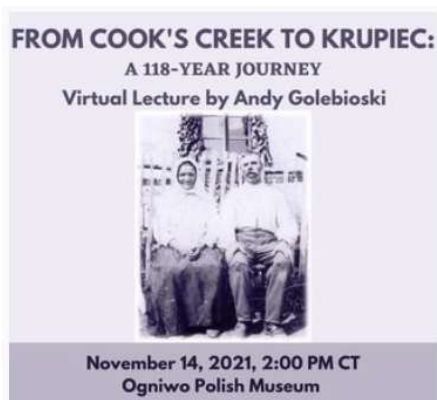
Culture Days 2021: This strictly digital event allowed us to showcase our Polish artists again, this time as a video tour of our art exhibit, featuring the videography of Mirek Weichsel.

The main exhibit of 2021 was “Smacznego! Polish Food Traditions, Then & Now” which explored the historical, social, and cultural impacts of Polish cuisine on our communities. The theme of our exhibit reflected the new social trends developed during the pandemic: gardening, baking, and



preserving food experienced a revival amongst people of all generations. Curating the exhibit was a great community collaboration and it extended beyond our volunteer base. Katarzyna Rdzanek Hodor recorded audio interviews with local meat store owner Jan Leszczynski and with the owner of Anna's Food Store, Anna Nabrzeska. Mirek Weichsel created beautiful photographic illustrations of Polish food, which were put together into an audiovisual

presentation by Iwona Gniadek. Elaine Taylor Turczyn wrote a series of cookbook reviews, which served as promotional material for the exhibit. A special thank you goes to all volunteers who donated artefacts and guided our guests. The exhibit was featured on Radio Polonia, Sokol Winnipeg program *"Info w Locie"*.



November's virtual lecture "From Cook's Creek to Krupiec: A 118-Year Journey" featuring Andy Golebioski's journey of genealogical discovery was attended by 70 guests from not only Winnipeg, but various locations across Canada, the UK and Europe.

We continued the work of accessioning, describing, cataloguing, preserving, and sharing our collections: Artefacts, Library, and Archives. We were especially proud to receive an Award of Excellence from the Association of Manitoba Museums for our involvement in the development of a new

collections database system that will be used by many heritage institutions across the province.

University of Manitoba Polish Program student Michael Kaminski was hired to help with the backlog of cataloguing / data entry of processed archival holdings.

Ogniwo took part in the annual Museum Week 2021, creating a series of social media posts, thanks to Marta Dabros and Alycia Walichnowski.

In the Community

In 2021, Ognio signed on as a partner to the Winnipeg Indigenous Accord. The members of Ognio Polish Museum have committed to starting on a meaningful path of learning and examination of our role in colonization and reconciliation, followed by concrete actions.

On October 24th, leaders of Polish organizations in Winnipeg attended the official opening of the "Smaczno! Polish Food Traditions, Then & Now" exhibit. A major component of the opening was a special presentation by Archivist Marta Dabros, who outlined Ognio's policies and procedures regarding acquisition, preservation, and access to the archival collection. Invited guests had the opportunity to tour our library, archives, and collections storage areas. This presentation resulted in an initiative to collaborate with the Polish Combatants' Association Branch #13 in the preservation and digitization of some of their archival materials.

Giving & Receiving: Grants, Endowment Fund, Scholarship



The Honourable Cathy Cox, Minister of Sport, Culture & Heritage, toured Ognivo on September 9th and presented us with a Heritage Grant for our planned exhibit "They Left a Legacy." Thank you, Minister Cox, for supporting small, community-driven museums and archives. Pictured left (L-R): Cathy Cox, Magda Blackmore, and Christine Tabbernor.

Financial Update

Although the Covid 19 pandemic restricted many activities for a second year in a row, we were very fortunate that both provincial and federal governments recognized the need to protect heritage institutions around the country. As a result, Ognivo was able to weather these months while closed to the public, while still carrying on the work that must still occur and to reverse the small financial losses that occurred in 2020. We were also able to see continued growth in our Endowment Fund, managed by The Winnipeg Foundation.

Thank You!

The museum is a non-profit charitable organization and we could not have done any of these things without the hard work of our volunteers and the continued support of the community around us. We thank you for your continued support and look forward to bringing you more community programming in 2022.

