

Polish American Cultural Center Museum in Philadelphia, PA

Museum's Historic Reflections Project October / November

The Polish American Cultural Center Museum in Historic Philadelphia presents Historic Reflections from Polish and Polish American history on the Polish American Radio Program. The reflections are organized in a daily format. Some of the dates may be the birthday or death date of a prominent person. Other dates may celebrate a milestone in a prominent person's life such as a career promotion, invention date, or some accomplishment that contributed to science, medicine, sports, or entertainment history. Other dates may be an anniversary of a historical event in Polonia or Poland's history.

You can hear weekly historic reflections on the Saturday edition of the Polish American Radio Program at 11 A.M. on 1540 AM Radio from Philadelphia. Listen to rebroadcasts 24 hours a day at PolishAmericanRadioProgram.com.

For your information, we have listed a selection of historic reflections for the months of October and November.



October 1, 1608 - First Polish Settlers in America (Event)

The first Polish settlers arrived in Jamestown, VA, on the ship Mary and Margaret. They were glassmakers from Poland hired by the Virginia Company of London to establish a glassmaking industry in the new American colony of "Virginia".

The glass products they produced became the first products made in America, and also the first products made for export to Europe for sale.

October 2, 1922 - William Swiacki (Born)

William Adam Swiacki was an American football end in the National Football League for five seasons for the New York Giants and Detroit Lions. He played college football at Columbia University and was drafted in the sixteenth round of the 1946 NFL Draft by the Boston Yanks.



October 3, 1923 - Stanislaw Skrowaczewski (Born)

Stanislaw Skrowaczewski was born in Lwow, Poland, and became best known for his work with the Minnesota Orchestra. In 1997, one of Skrowaczewski's works was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize. He also led the Cleveland Orchestra and was the composer-in-residence for the Philadelphia Orchestra.

October 4, 1705 - Stanislaw Leszczyński (Coronation)

Stanislaw Leszczyński was the first Polish king crowned in Warsaw, Poland.



October 5, 1861 - Antoni Fijalkowski (Died)

Antoni Melchior Fijalkowski was the Archbishop Metropolitan of Warsaw and spiritual leader of the nation during the Partitions of Poland.

October 6, 1873 - Sir Pawel Strzelecki (Died)

Sir Pawel Strzelecki was an explorer of the Australian continent. He named the largest mountain in Australia after American and Polish freedom fighter, Tadeusz Kosciuszko.



October 7, 1943 - Eugeniusz Bodo (Died)

Eugeniusz Bodo was born Bohdan Eugene Junod. Eugeniusz changed his name to Bodo, a stage name, which he used at many theaters, eventually opening Cafe Bodo in Warsaw, Poland. With WWII raging, Eugeniusz Bodo ended up in the Soviet Union and was sent to a Gulag where he was executed.

October 8, 1910 - Maria Konopnicka (Died)

Maria Konopnicka was a poet, novelist, translator and essayist from Lwow, Poland. Her writing touched on many issues that beset the people in Poland during the late 1800's. She often used the pen name "Jan Sawa." Maria Konopnicka writings influenced generations of Polish poets and novelists.



October 9, 1779 - General Casimir Pulaski Mortally Wounded (Event)

General Casimir Pulaski, Father of the American Cavalry, was mortally wounded while leading his troops in the Battle of Savannah, Georgia in 1779. Pulaski has parades and holidays in his honor until this day as well as parks, schools, bridges, towns and countries named after him.



October 10, 1979 - Joel Przybilla (Born)

Joel Przybilla is a professional basketball player in the National Basketball Association. He went to the University of Minnesota and played for several NBA teams. He currently plays for the Portland Trail Blazers.

October 11, 1903 - Kazimierz Kordylewski (Born)

Kazimierz Kordylewski was an astronomer born in Poznan, Poland in 1903. In 1956, Kordylewski discovered clouds of dust, believed to be particles left over from our moon. These clouds are now named after him.



October 12, 1915 - Helena Modjeska (Born)

Helena Modjeska was a Polish actress of international fame who immigrated to the United States in 1876. She became a star of American stages for many years with her portrayals of Shakespearean characters. Modjeska was the mother of Ralph Modjeski, the builder of the Benjamin Franklin and Tacony Palmyra Bridges in Philadelphia and several others across America.

October 13, 1926 - "Killer" Kowalski (Born)

Professional wrestler Wladek Kowalski is known as "Killer" Kowalski to his long-time wrestling fans. He wrestled in over 6,000 matches from 1947 to 1977, winning great popularity in TV matches during the 1960's and 70's against foe, Bruno Sammartino.



October 14, 1864 - Stefan Zeromski (Born)

Stefan Zeromski was a Polish novelist who was given an apartment in the Royal Castle of Warsaw in recognition of his artistic abilities. He wrote over fifteen major works.

October 15, 1817 - Thaddeus Kosciuszko (Died)

After the struggle for America's Independence, General Thaddeus Kosciuszko returned to his homeland of Poland. He swore an oath in the Krakow market place to fight for Poland's liberty and took command of the Polish uprising in 1794, urging all men to take up arms to defend Poland.



October 16, 1726 - Daniel Chodowiecki (Born)

Daniel Niklaus Chodowiecki was a Polish-German painter and printmaker with Huguenot ancestry, who is most famous as an etcher. He spent most of his life in Berlin, and became the director of the Berlin Academy of Art.

October 17, 1849 - Fryderyk Chopin (Died)

Fryderyk Chopin, Polish composer and pianist, was born in Zelazowa Wola, Poland in 1810. At age 7 Chopin wrote his first composition, the Polonaise in G minor. At age 8 he presented his first public concert. Fryderyk Chopin's music continues to be played throughout the world.



October 18, 1922 - Richard Stankiewicz (Born)

Richard Stankiewicz was born in Philadelphia, grew up in Detroit, and had a presence in several prestigious art galleries in New York City during his career. He became internationally known in the 1960's for his trend setting work by welding pieces of scrap metal. He died in 1983 at his home in Worthington, Massachusetts.

October 19, 1984 - Fr. Jerzy Popieluszko (Died)

Fr. Jerzy Popieluszko, the Solidarity Priest, was murdered by Communist internal security agents. His murder only solidified the resolve of the Polish people to gain their freedom. Pope John Paul II visited the grave of Fr. Popieluszko during one of his visits.



October 20, 1948 - Honorable Robert Borski (Born)

Honorable Robert Borski, former United States Congressman, represented the people of Northeast Philadelphia for many years. We thank him for his many years of service.

October 21, 1969 - Wacław Sierpinski (Died)

Wacław Franciszek Sierpinski was a Polish mathematician known for outstanding contributions to set theory (research on the axiom of choice and the continuum hypothesis), number theory, theory of functions and topology. He published over 700 papers and 50 books. Three well-known fractals are named after him (the Sierpinski triangle, the Sierpinski carpet and the Sierpinski curve), as are Sierpinski numbers and the associated Sierpinski problem.

