

THE  
POLISH COMMUNITY  
IN  
BRANTFORD

The year 1774 marked the beginning of Polish immigration to Canada. Fleeing the oppression of Russia, Prussia and Austria, great numbers of patriots moved to Canada to enjoy the freedom it had to offer. They become the vanguard of succeeding waves of farmers and artisans who saw Canada not only as a great, free country, but also as a land of tremendous opportunity. The early Polish immigrants settled mostly in the Western Provinces. Later second and third generation immigrants, moved East to Ontario and Quebec, attracted by the growing industry and the general economic development of these two provinces.

Brantford, as a major centre of farm-implement manufacture, lured many Polish immigrants. Outside of isolated cases of families settling in Brantford before 1900, the first great wave of immigrants from the "cradle of Slavdom" to Brantford came at the turn of our century, and continued until the start of World War I. From 1902 we find in the Brantford Directory names of families, which are well-known today. To list a few of these pioneering families, there were, the Neziols, Kempas, Bulanda, Rosieckis, Konefals, Dostals, Gumi-niaks, Sekulas, Ciochs, Rejdychs, Wiaceks, Floreks, Murzyns, Mrozs, Stachurskis, Porembas, Dudlinskis, and Bialkowskis. Others, as the Tatkos, Cempuras, Losinskis, Gancarszyks, Majdas, Golanskis, Szrameks and Wisniewskis, have disappeared from the Brantford scene.

This was already a sizeable community. It warranted in 1905 the existence of a little grocery store on Sydenham Street, just a few doors from Pearl Street. The proud owner of that store was a Mr. Korbut.

Naturally, these were difficult years for the Polish community. Not knowing the English language, the Polish immigrant still managed to find work so that he could raise his family and build for himself a home. In those early years you would find him working at Canada Glue Co. and Brantford Cordage Co. A greater number were hired by the old Pratt and Letchworth Co., later known as the Canadian Car and Foundry Co. The Pole worked hard and enjoyed what this great country had to offer. He was happy to be here.

Being predominantly adherents of the Roman Catholic Church, the Poles have always been close to their priests. In her turn, the Roman Catholic Church has endeavoured to be solicitous about the spiritual welfare of her Polish people. Wherever they have gone, the Church has tried to follow quickly.

And so it was in Brantford. Through the efforts of the Rev. E. M. Brady, vicar at St. Basil's church of Brantford, the services of the

Rev. L. M. Dogorski, a Polish priest from Pennsylvania, U.S.A., were obtained for the Polish community in 1916. He took up his residence at the church of St. Basil's, using the old chapel, and later the old parish hall, for his services.

The Poles were assuming now a growing identity in the community. They even had their own little Polish dairy — The Beaver Dairy, owned by Mr. Walter Szramek — and a grocery store, on the North East corner of Pearl and Niagara Streets. The proprietor was Mr. Frank Wisniewski, who, by the way, was also the first owner of a Model-T Ford among the Poles.

In the following years, through the united effort of the Polish people, a little wooden church was built on Lyon's Avenue, just North of Terrace Hill Street. Here Father Dogorski gathered his little flock and conducted his services. At first the church prospered. But the signs of trouble were in the air in the year 1927. Prices began to sky-rocket while wages remained at their low level. Brantford began to feel the first winds of the depression which was to engulf the world after 1928. In this atmosphere, the little Polish church, burdened by a heavy financial debt, which carried with it near to 8% interest payments, had to close its doors. It was the summer of 1927. The Polish community, many of whose members were themselves heavily in debt because of the homes they had bought or were in the process of building could offer no help.

Fortunately, the Polish Mutual Benefit and Friendly Society of Brantford, founded earlier that year, stepped in to fill the vacuum caused by the closing of the church. On February 17, 1927, seven members gathered in the Parish Hall of St. John's Ukrainian church at 100 Terrace Hill Street to consider organizing a club that would serve to unite citizens of Polish descent in their social and cultural activities. The meeting proved successful. Five of these men became the original executive of this society, namely: President, John Neziol; Thomas Mech, recording secretary; Frank Mroz, financial secretary; Bronislaw Spychaj, treasurer; and Peter Wiacek, organizer. The other two who helped in the planning were Andrew Mroz and Michael Neziol.

The membership of the Polish Mutual Benefit and Friendly Society increased steadily and in October, 1927 a Young People's Group was added to the organization. A Polish language school was established and, with other social activities, was conducted in rented halls throughout the city.

The year 1928 saw the start of the second great wave of Polish immigration to Brantford, and this flow was to continue, although on

a minor scale, until the beginning of World War II. With so much new blood entering the Polish community in 1929, some members of the Young People's Group decided to form another youth group, called at that time, The White Eagle Association. It was from this Association, as we shall see later, that Branch No. 10 of the Polish Alliance of Canada came into existence in Brantford.

In the meantime, in October, 1931, The Polish Mutual Benefit and Friendly Society purchased property at 152 and 154 Pearl Street for future development as a Polish Hall. The existing building at 154 Pearl Street became the temporary location for the meetings of the Society and its Polish school. In May, 1932, a Provincial charter as a Mutual Benefit Society was obtained with the valuable assistance of Mr. W. Ross Macdonald, popular local lawyer and future M.P. and Senator. Seventy-five members qualified for the available sick and death benefit insurance. This number, of course, did not include the other social members, as well as the Young Peoples Group.

On December 7, 1933, the members decided to erect a new building which would serve as a Polish Hall. The building committee was headed by Adam Gadawski, who arranged with the Summerhayes Construction Company to erect the building at a cost of \$6,500. The construction company provided three skilled workmen, but most of the work was done without remuneration by members of the Society.

On November 25, 1934, the new Polish Hall was officially opened by the Polish Consul General, Dr. Adamkiewicz, who came from Ottawa for the occasion. The building was blessed by a priest from St. Basil's church in the presence of its president, Michael Gielarowski, the Polish Vice-consul J. Pawlica of Winnipeg, the Rev. Dr. T. Tarasiuk of Hamilton, and some 350 members of the Polish community. The opening ceremonies featured a parade to the cenotaph, where eight veterans in Polish cavalry uniforms joined with police officers under Chief Stanley as a guard of honour, while the Consul General placed a wreath. The banquet that evening was attended by many local dignitaries and out-of-town guests, as well as several hundred members of the local Polish community.

Due to the zeal of its members, the Society grew steadily, despite the difficult economic conditions of the mid-thirties. Key events held at that time in the new Polish Hall included a memorial service following the death of Poland's popular Marshal Joseph Pilsudski in 1935, and the burning of the mortgage in March, 1937.

As the Second World War loomed on the horizon, the Polish Mutual Benefit Society became increasingly occupied with providing

financial assistance to Poland. On July 21, 1939, a cheque for \$560 was sent to the Polish government via the Polish Consulate in Montreal. With the outbreak of war, a charter (C-980) was obtained from the Canadian Government authorizing the collection of funds to assist Poland. In June, 1941, an ambulance was purchased and presented to the Polish Army units training in Windsor, Ontario. A cheque for \$202 followed in October of the same year. Four young men from Brantford joined the Polish Army as volunteers.

Besides regular gifts from the Society to members of the Armed Forces, various campaigns between 1939 and 1946 provided funds in excess of \$25,000 to such needy groups as the Polish Army, prisoners of war, the Red Cross, the victims of the Battle of Britain, as well as the Greek and Chinese refugees. Following the war another \$5,000 was sent to aid the needy in Poland.

In the fifties and the sixties, the Polish Mutual Benefit and Friendly Society continued to take an active part in the local support of Polish culture and traditions. Scholarship funds were set aside for the education of the sons and daughters of its members. In 1958 the members decided to enlarge and modernize their hall at a cost of \$65,000 and the project was completed in October, 1960. On the occasion of the burning of the mortgage in October, 1964, a donation of \$1500 was pledged to the Community Civic Arena Fund. In 1966 active support was given to the committee responsible for the commemoration of Poland's Millenium of Christianity and similar enthusiasm is expected during this Canadian Centennial Year. The Polish Mutual Benefit and Friendly Society has truly shown itself to be a responsible element in the Polish community of Brantford. At present, Mr. Philip Kolodziejak is the President of the Society.

As mentioned previously, in 1929 another Polish youth group was formed, under the name of The White Eagle Association. Its purpose also was to carry on the cultural and educational activities among the Polish people in Brantford. The Association existed until April 9, 1932, when, upon the initiative of Mr. Marcin Sasiela, the majority of the members made the decision to join the Polish Alliance of Canada, an organization existing in Ontario for over 20 years and having nine branches in different districts. A week later, all the formalities were taken care of and a new branch of the Polish Alliance of Canada began its existence with 16 members. It became Branch No. 10, with Mr. Tadeusz Stachurski as its first president.

The first years of this organization were difficult, burdened as it was with financial problems, as the capital of the previous Association was frozen. The money was badly needed for financing an English and



BRANTFORD'S POLISH SENIOR CITIZENS 1967 CENTENNIAL YEAR

Front Row — Mrs. S. Wolski, 88; Mrs. A. Smierciak, 90; Mrs. A. Drozd, 77.  
Second Row — Mr. Peter Wiacek, 77; Mr. Stanley Neziol, 93; Mr. Joseph Wiacek, 82.



POLISH DANCE — "KRAKOWIAK"



POLISH MUTUAL BENEFIT & FRIENDLY SOCIETY  
154 Pearl Street, Brantford  
"HALL"



Polish school. Until 1938, dances, concerts and shows were held in rented quarters to provide a fund for educational purposes.

By the end of 1938 the decision was made to purchase a house for Branch No. 10 of the Polish Alliance of Canada, and in January of 1939 the building at 126 Albion Street was bought for the amount of \$2,500. This building was enlarged in 1950, with \$125,000 spent on the addition. Again in 1965-1966 another \$185,000 was contributed towards further enlargement and improvements. At present the total value of the Polish Alliance Branch No. 10 property at 126 Albion Street, the Polish School at William Street, parking lots and a summer resort is well over \$400,000.

In 1934 the Ladies' Circle of Branch No. 10 was formed and is very active in the development of the organization. It is a member of the local Council of Women as well as of the Head Executive of the Polish Alliance Ladies' Circle in Ontario. Since the purchase of the Polish Home a Youth Circle was also formed. The Club provides a place for them to meet socially. In this way, all members of the organization, young and old, can engage in social and cultural activities.

It was this Youth Circle of Branch No. 10 which was responsible for the publication of a monthly magazine, "Jak Tarn Idzie," (How Goes It There?). It began in 1954 as a local project, but its popularity grew so rapidly that, before long, copies were being distributed throughout Ontario and Quebec. Some even reached far away countries.

Of approximately twenty pages, its contents covered club activities, news and articles of interest by many qualified people. It proved to be so successful that in 1959 its publication was taken over by the Central Executive of the Polish Canadian Alliance Youth and is now a permanent part of that organization.

As with all the youth groups of Polish organizations in Brantford, the Polish Canadian Alliance Youth Club sought opportunities to develop leadership qualities in its members and to become an asset to the community as a whole. An example of their own valuable contribution in this regard is a Polish radio program they originated. It was carried for two years on Brantford's radio station, CKPC. The entire program was written and directed by the young members of the local Polish Canadian Youth Club. One can surmise from this what an important segment of the Polish community are its young people.

Mindful of the future of this young generation, Branch No. 10 of the Polish Alliance has set up scholarships and a bursary for the

children of its members attending universities. And it was for the sake of these young people that the Alliance sponsored a Polish School, providing music and dancing lessons. Through the years two orchestras have been formed. In addition, the Polish Library started by the former White Eagle Association still functions well. The present value of it, books and facilities is \$1,500.

The Alliance also extends a helping hand to the new immigrant. This was one of the reasons why, at the beginning of 1958, a Credit Union was organized, with Mr. Stanislaw Bednarz as its first president. The Credit-Union is bi-lingual and has 300 members. Net profit has grown in nine years from \$998.17 to \$16,733.93 yearly. Since the start of this venture, 350 loans have been granted for an amount well over \$600,000. It is now under the direction of Mr. Joseph Kwoka.

Members of Branch No. 10 of the Polish Alliance belong to the Shrine Club of Brantford and numerous other organizations. They join with the rest of Brantford in contributing towards worthy causes. From 1939 to 1966 a total of \$18,000 has been donated to various charitable organizations, including the Brantford Shriners, Red Cross, both local hospitals, Community Chest, and many others.

In 1966 the Polish Alliance also took part in the celebration of 1,000 years of Christianity in Poland and contributed greatly towards the Canadian Polish Millenium Fund set up for educational and cultural purposes of Polish Canadians.

"Brotherhood, tolerance and education" are the basic aims of Branch No. 10 of the Polish Alliance, and, judging by their deeds, they are not empty words. Mr. Frank Niedziolko is the present head of this Branch No. 10.

Returning to the years which preceded World War II, as the number of Polish immigrants increased in Brantford, the need of accommodating them with a Polish-speaking priest became urgent. In 1936, the Most Rev. Joseph F. Ryan, J.C.D., D.D., bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Hamilton, appointed the Rev. Thomas Tarasiuk, Ph.D. to organize a parish for the Poles in Brantford. Previously to this, Father Tarasiuk had been in charge of the Roman Catholic parish of St. Stanislaus in Hamilton. He arrived in the Telephone City during November of 1936 and took up residence in the rectory of St. Basil's church, using again its old chapel for his religious services.

In February, 1938, Father Tarasiuk was in a position to purchase an abandoned church at the corner of Brant Avenue and St. James Street. Cost of the property and the building was \$10,000. Within a

few weeks, necessary alterations were made within the building, an altar was added, and the church edifice was dedicated by Bishop Ryan on February 27, 1938. At the same time, Dr. Tarasiuk purchased the property adjacent to the church. The small home on this property was converted into a rectory. Actually the house was so small that it was necessary to use the office as a bedroom.

It may sound trite by this time to say that the beginnings of this new Catholic church in Brantford were difficult. But it was true. The church was no exception. It had to undergo the same financial difficulties which afflicted the Polish lay organizations in their beginnings. But it survived. Through the entire thirteen-year pastoral ministry of Dr. Tarasiuk in the Polish parish of St. Joseph's there is visible the thread of continual sacrifice and hard work by him and his people.

Due to the serious illness of Father Tarasiuk in 1947, the Rev. Joseph Wisniewski of the Fathers of the Congregation of the Resurrection, came from Chicago, Illinois, to assist in the pastoral duties of St. Joseph's parish. After the death of Father Tarasiuk the parish remained under the care of this same Congregation of the Resurrection.

On January 1, 1949, the Rev. John A. Poreda, C.R. became pastor of St. Joseph's. With the arrival of the Rev. Mitchell J. Tadla, C.R. as an assistant to Father Poreda, more living space was needed. With this in mind, Father Poreda purchased the property on 235 Brant Avenue. This is still the present rectory. Improvements were added to the old rectory and it became a convent for two Felician Sisters. Eventually, though, these nuns left Brantford when it became evident that no elementary school would be attached to St. Joseph's.

The church was badly in need of renovation, but it was not until 1954 that something could be done about this. On January 1, 1954, the Rev. Walter L. Baran, C.R. was inducted as pastor of St. Joseph's. It was his good fortune to commission a gifted immigrant Polish artist, Charles Malczyk, to do a series of historical scenes from Poland's religious life. Mr. Malczyk, also a new arrival in Canada and residing in Windsor, had been touring Ontario in the hope of finding some work for his artistic talents. And so it was a happy encounter for Mr. Malczyk and the parish of St. Joseph's. Unfortunately, Father Baran's tenure at the parish was short. On August 29, 1954, the Rev. Edward J. Gira, C.R., Ph.D., D.D., was reassigned from his post as professor at St. Louis University, St. Louis, Missouri, to the pastorship of St. Joseph's. It was under his guiding hand that the renovation of the church took place.

In a short time St. Joseph's took on the breath-taking splendor of the churches in the Old World. Using a combination of light and shade and vivid color, Mr. Malczyk's work was a reminder of Poland's glorious past, at the same time inspiring the viewer with a hope for a great future. This was the purpose of the gifted 46-year-old Polish painter. He wished to strengthen the morale and bolster the courage of these Polish people who had suffered so much for the country and their Faith. This is especially evident in the mural down the centre of the church, depicting the ruins of Warsaw in the Second World War where Poland kneels symbolically in the figure of a monk before the Crucified Christ. Striking also among the paintings is the mural of the Last Supper. It is often the main attraction for visitors to the church.

It must be emphasized that the renovation of St. Joseph's church was also a common effort of the Polish community in Brantford. It offered its talents, of which there was an abundance, and was generous with its time and labor, for the Pole is a member of a proud nation whose citizens have accepted for centuries as their own the motto, "For God and Country." He deeply honors and respects that title.

The re-decoration of the church took one full year to accomplish and, when it was completed, it was followed by a solemn ceremony of re-dedication, conducted by Bishop Joseph F. Ryan on January 6, 1955. The Polish community was now the proud possessor of a beautiful church.

Through the years other changes have been made in the church to enhance its beauty. The church grounds have been landscaped and now offer, especially in summer and fall, a charming view to visitors entering the city. Having under its pastoral care, in one way or another, over 3000 Polish people within a fifteen-mile radius of Brantford, St. Joseph's church has proven to be the steadying element in the Polish community. The Rev. Edward J. Gira, is still the pastor of St. Joseph's.

When the Second World War broke out the Polish community was ready to come to the aid of the country which its parents had adopted. It is unknown for a Pole to be a pacifist. And there were no exceptions in Brantford. One hundred young men and women from the Polish community enlisted. This number was remarkable since these were first-generation Poles who were giving up the opportunity of furthering their higher education and the possibility of becoming future leaders in the Polish community. Three of this number lost their lives in action. They were: J. Czach, Army; A. Zatonski, Air Force; and J. Dubicki, Navy.

At the end of the Second World War it was natural that the surviving young men, having the common bond of war experience should group themselves into a veteran's organization. Thus it was that in 1947 the Polonaise Veteran's Club was organized in Brantford. Mr. Leo Drozd was installed as its first president. Other members of the executive were: Vice-president, Adam Neziol; secretary, Adolphe Wiacek; treasurer, Joseph Dostal.

Besides offering a gathering place for Polish Canadian veterans of the Second World War, the Polonaise Veterans became a valuable asset in the youth movement of the Polish community. By sponsoring a program of baseball, basketball and hockey, they aided in the development of a "sound mind in a healthy body" of the Polish youth. This has been and is still one of the Club's main activities. Neither have they neglected the educational field. The Polonaise Veterans also have scholarships for their young people attending universities.

The Polish-Canadian veterans have not restricted their activities to their own circle. Cooperating with other veterans' organizations in the city, they have competed annually in golf, Softball, cribbage and bowling, winning at one time or another championships in each of these sports.

They also possess a proud record of financial assistance to community projects, as well as an excellent history of supporting the activities of the other Brantford Polish-Canadian organizations. During 1966 the Club's members provided valuable aid to the committee promoting the Commemoration of the Polish Millenium of Christianity in the Brantford area. With Mr. Edward Mech as their president, the Polonaise Veterans are participating enthusiastically in the Centennial programme of 1967.

Corresponding to the Polonaise Veterans is the Polish Combatants' Association in Canada, Branch No. 4, an important element in the community life of the Polish ethnic group here in Brantford.

Originating in far-away Italy, the nucleus of the Polish Combatants' Association consists of former soldiers of the Second Polish Army Corps which formed a part of the Allied Eighth Army during the Second World War. Refusing to return to their native land as a protest against the Communist regime imposed on Poland, they chose rather to settle in the Free World. These soldiers entered under an agreement with the Canadian authorities, to work for two years on farms. The Federal Government guaranteed at least a minimum wage and reasonable living conditions.

Many Polish ex-servicemen worked out their contracts in the vicinity of Brantford. Problems immediately arose. As there were no

pre-set daily or weekly working hours, the farmers paid only a minimum wage which became the maximum. To obtain some protection these ex-servicemen decided to form a local branch of the Polish Combatants' Association.

Consequently, on February 7, 1947, Branch No. 4 of this Association was established in Brantford despite lack of accommodations for its quarters and the serious problem of transportation which faced its members. Its first officers were: Mr. John Jezowski, president; Mr. Anthony Szymczak, vice-president; Mr. Andrew Michalski, secretary; Mr. Zygmund Drzewianowski, treasurer.

When the terms of the contracts were completed, most of these Polish veterans settled in Brantford, thus giving Branch No. 4 a permanent basis for its existence. As other Polish veterans arrived in Brantford, singly or in larger groups, the organization grew in strength. Also, many of its initial problems were alleviated by the cooperation of Brantford's Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 90. This generous action has never been forgotten by the local branch of the Polish veterans. In general, this relationship between the Polish Combatants' Association and the Canadian veterans, a relationship which began on the battlefields of Europe, has always been cordial and sincere.

In 1960 a Ladies' Circle became affiliated with Branch No. 4 of the Polish Combatants' Association. Mostly wives of ex-servicemen, they have been most helpful in the organizational work and social life of the Association.

The Association encourages financial help and effort to ensure that its young people through education obtain a better start in life. Also, it teaches them the Polish language and culture. Social life is not neglected. Clubs, dances, social evenings and lectures keep the young and old busy. Propagating loyalty to their adopted country and the conscientious observance of the duties of Canadian citizenship, it also organizes celebrations of Polish national and military anniversaries. Together with the Canadian veterans, the Polish Combatants' aid those disabled in the war, comrades from the field of battle, invalids whose injuries have made them incapable of obtaining useful employment. Remarkable were the fund-raising drives conducted for that purpose by the Polish Combatants' Association in the years 1951 to 1954 inclusive. Using the facilities of Brantford's radio station CKPC, they made their appeal to all the Poles within listening distance of that station. The response of the Polish colony in Brantford and its environs was heart-warming, far surpassing any expectations. Through the money thus raised, packages were sent to war invalids

throughout the world. Thus it was that in many corner of the world Brantford acquired a reputation as a humanitarian city.

The Polish Combatants' also contribute to the upkeep of the graves of their fallen comrades-in-arms. "Decoration Day" for them is truly a "remembrance day," keeping alive, "on a soldier's honor," the memory of those who gave their lives for freedom. The yearly evidence is there to prove it.

This, in short, is how the manifold activities of the Polish Combatants' Association, Branch No. 4, present themselves, carried out gladly by its members of all ranks, with the fullhearted help of their wives in the Ladies' Circle. Their cooperation with all the other Polish organizations in Brantford is well-known. Many a community project was ably assisted by their willing participation in it. The Polish Combatants' Association, Branch No. 4, in Brantford, with Mr. Joseph Pacyk as its president, is carrying that same willing spirit into our centennial year.

As the number of Polish lay organizations, with their particular objectives, increased in Brantford through the years, the need arose of avoiding duplication and conflict of activities where the Polish community as a whole was concerned. For better development of this community a concentration of its strength was also desirable.

The Canadian Polish Congress, with such a purpose in mind, existed on the national scene. It was decided, therefore, to form a local branch of that Congress in Brantford. This was done on January 9, 1955, with the following chosen as its first executive body: Honorary president, Rev. Edward J. Gira, C.R., Ph.D., D.D.; Joseph Walaszczyk, president; Joseph Lachik, first vice-president; John Stec, second vice-president; John Debicki, secretary; Stanley Bednarz, financial secretary. All the Polish organizations were represented on the board by two delegates from each organization. This was the beginning of the Brantford Branch of the Canadian Polish Congress.

Without disturbing the autonomy of each organization, the Canadian Polish Congress was able to utilize the united strength of these organizations in matters of major concern to the Polish community in Brantford. Thus, in its desire to uphold national traditions, the Congress has organized national concerts, shows and films, both Polish and Canadian. Each year it has assigned financial aid to Polish veterans and their families who were in need.

Of major importance was the contribution made by the Brantford Branch of the Canadian Polish Congress to the Millenium Fund in Canada. In 1958 the Head Executive of the Congress instigated a drive

throughout Canada to establish a million dollar fund, the interest from which would be used for cultural, social and scholastic purposes among the Poles in Canada. The principal of this fund was never to be disturbed. Thus far, the Brantford Branch has contributed over \$6000.

In 1966, through the efforts of the Canadian Polish Congress, the Polish community of Brantford was able to observe successfully the Polish Millennium, marking 1,000 years of Christianity in Poland. The Congress established the committees which organized the banquets, concerts and religious activities of this celebration. In its files are films, photographs and writeups of these events for the use of future generations. Under the presidency of Mr. Richard Krolack, the Brantford branch of the Canadian Polish Congress is now actively participating in Canada's centennial program.

As we gather from this short history of the Polish community in Brantford, the Polish people have become deeply assimilated into the life of their adopted country. For the freedom and the generous opportunities Canada has offered the Polish immigrants, they, in return, are trying to contribute to this young country's culture the achievements of their own thousand-year past which they have brought with them.

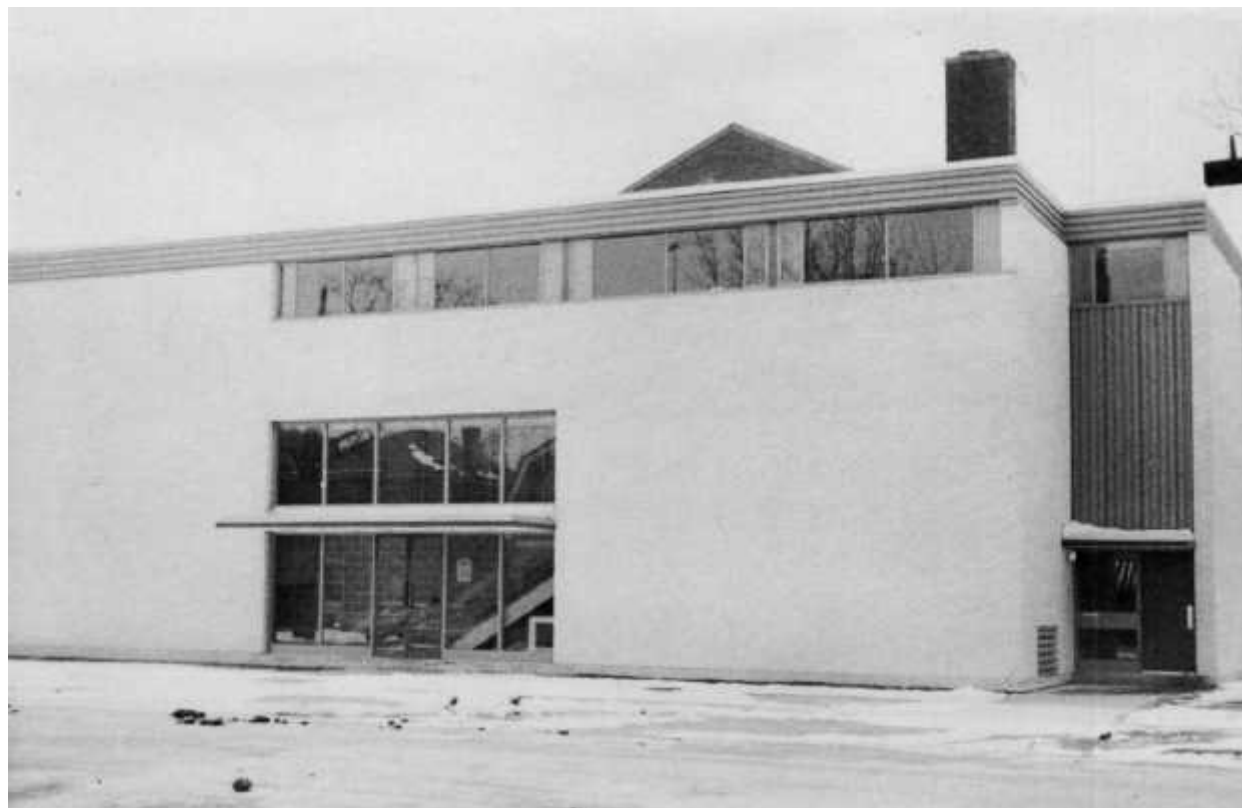
Due to their spirit of enterprise and thrift, they are achieving, often by means of hard work, personal prosperity, enriching in this manner the general standard of living. As we enter the centennial year, there are in Brantford twenty-nine business ventures, from small to large, under Polish ownership.

The Polish immigrant, prizing education, has urged his sons and daughters to take advantage of the opportunities offered them for higher studies. And the results have been beyond one's expectations. Considering only the span of the last ten years, the Polish community in Brantford can point to twenty-two young men and women who have entered the teaching profession alone. In this short space of time, it has amazingly produced graduates with university degrees in the following professions: Dentistry, Chemical Engineering, Aerospace Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Pharmacy, Dietetics, Sales, Languages, Social Work, Town Planning and Nursing. Two of the community's members have received their doctorates in medicine, namely, Dr. Stanley R. Iwan, Neurosurgeon, and Dr. Mary Gwizdal, now continuing her studies in Obstetrics and Gynaecology. And as recently as 1966, Dr. Wilhelmina W. Wiacek received her Doctorate of Letters from the University of Paris, France. If our research is correct, she is the only person in Brantford's history who has received a doctorate from the University of Paris, France.





ALICE KUCZEJKO AND DAVID POWESKA — DRESSED AS MOUNTAINEERS  
FROM "ZAKOPANE", SOUTHERN PART OF POLAND



POLISH ALLIANCE HALL, BRANCH 10 — 126 Albion Street, Brantford, Ontario  
Large, beautiful new front addition to the main Polish Alliance Hall, including Polish  
School Room, modern Lobby and Offices for organizational use. Year 1965 -1966.



In the foreground is the Millenium symbol which was made of live flowers and which was donated by the City of Brantford.

The Polish Combatants Association Branch 4, and the Polonaise Vets with the Colour Party and Band of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 90 are seen celebrating 1000 years of Poland's Christianity, 966 -1966. Wreaths were placed at the Brant County War Memorial by the Polish-Canadian Congress and the Polish Veterans of Brantford.



POLONAISE VETERANS CLUB ROOM  
154 Pearl Street



HONOUR ROLL  
of Polish Veterans World War I 1914-18  
OF BRANTFORD

POLSKY WETERANI II EJ WOJNY SWIATOWEJ ROK 1914-18 Z BRANTFORD



This is a rich history for the short time that the Polish immigrant has been in Brantford. He has contributed the work of his hands, his talents and his skills to the land that welcomed him. Now, also, he contributes his educated sons and daughters to further enrich this Canadian land.

This contribution was recognized by Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson in his speech commemorating the 1,000 years of Christianity in Poland. To quote: "... the qualities of the Polish people add something of great value to our own national character; these qualities of courage, strength, tolerance and high spirit that have enabled them to overcome misfortune and refuse to accept defeat; never to admit that a cause is lost or a loyalty impossible; steadfast in belief and indomitable against oppression; above all, the quality of determination to keep burning the unquenchable flame of freedom without which there can be no enduring peace that has a meaning for men."