



Online guest lectures/talks in 2021

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E Rychlik-Sharp

In the first half of this year, the SPCA organised a series of online talks for members and the general public. With in-person events impossible due to Covid-19, it was decided to take the opportunity to invite speakers who under normal circumstances would have to travel, with guests from England and Poland as well as from Edinburgh and the surrounding area.

The talks began in January when Jenni Grant – an historian specialising in the Polish Armed Forces in the West – spoke about 1 Polska Dywizja Pancerna / the 1st Polish Armoured Division, who were stationed in eastern Scotland for much of the Second World War and whose commander, General Stanisław Maczek, lived in Edinburgh for over fifty years. Click [here](#) to see the talk again.

In March we had David Cameron, Keith Burns and Maja Kozłowska from Mapa Scotland speaking about the Great Polish Map of Scotland at Barony Castle near Peebles – how this immense outdoor map of mainland Scotland and the Western Isles came into being, its restoration over the last decade, and the future of this unique relic of the wartime Polish presence in Scotland. Click [here](#) to see the talk again.

On the 4th of May we returned to the theme of the Second World War when Magdalena Grzymkowska, journalist and managing editor at the London-based Polish weekly newspaper *Tydzień Polski*, talked about the artists and performers of the II Polish Corps, how their commander, General Władysław Anders, promoted artistic activities amongst his troops, and how this impacted the cultural life of the post-war Polish diaspora in England, especially London.

Finally (at least for the moment), Professor Waldemar Kowalski of Uniwersytet Jana Kochanowskiego joined us from Kielce on the 8th of June, sharing his extensive knowledge of the Scottish communities of Poland and Lithuania from the medieval period to the seventeenth century. Click [here](#) to see the talk again.

Keith Mullins-MacIntyre

Dates for your diary!!!

More online talks/lectures and hopefully live concerts will take place in 2022 but there are no yet confirmed events and dates

All paid up members will receive full details by post or e-mail.



**Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year 2022**



Maria Skłodowska-Curie Lecture

SPCA organised a series of online lectures from January to June 2021 and it was a part of that series. The online lecture was delivered by myself on 8th March 2021. The subject was the life and work of Maria Skłodowska-Curie, the Nobel prize winner and famous scientist born in Warsaw and adopted France as her home country. The fascination with Maria and her life began many years ago when I read the first book about her written by her daughter Eva. We all heard about Skłodowska -Curie, but I discovered that in fact I knew very little. Disappointing but true. In order to make up for such lack of knowledge about my famous countrywoman I set off on a discovery journey and exploration of the life and work of Maria Skłodowska Curie.

The opportunity to share my findings about Maria Curie came by accident: there was a guest lecturer who pulled out and left a vacancy for a lecture. When I was working on the lecture I broke my leg during the fantastic winter in February 2021. There was an unexpected benefit: the fascinating work on Maria had a therapeutic effect on my accident. The Committee kindly approved my suggestion to give a lecture as usually it was only guest lecturers invited to deliver talks online.

The first surprise about Maria was how much hardship she experienced before she set off to Paris. She worked as a governess for four long years saving up money for her future studies. Maria always displayed determination and drive to achieve goals in her life despite the odds.

In the political situation of the partitioned Poland in the late XIX century Maria was unable to study. She knew that the only way to succeed was to study physics and chemistry in France before embarking on a lifelong journey of discovery. Maria's personal life was equally dramatic and full of events sometimes tragic like the death of her beloved husband and partner in science Pierre Curie. Maria was a happy mother of two daughters Irene and Eva, however she admitted that she struggled a lot to balance her career with being a mother and running the house. Without support of her close family Maria admitted that she would not have been able to cope with her scientific research and teaching. Undoubtedly Maria was a genius in her own right. It is unique to find all these things in a one person: double Nobel prize winner, the first female professor at Sorbonne, a single mother who dedicated her life to science.



Photo from the Nobel Foundation archive

Every strand of Maria's life presents a new angle to look at her personality and achievements. She was the celebrity of the early XX century in the scientific world. When Maria was ready to embark on a fundraising trip to America in 1921 the French authorities organised a high brow event in the Paris Opera where the famous actress of that time Sarah Bernhardt recited an Ode to Madame Curie. Not many scientists could mention such appreciation in their CVs. Maria made two fundraising trips to America: first one in 1921 and the second in 1928. Both extremely successful because they achieved the objective: gathering sufficient funds to buy a gram of radium for the Institute of Radium in Paris and then the Institute of Radium in Warsaw. She never forgot her homeland and her last trip to Warsaw was in 1931 when she took part in laying the foundations of the Institute of Radium.

One of Maria's best scientific friends was Albert Einstein. Their friendship lasted for over 20 years till her death in 1934. Maria was a referee for Albert when she recommended him for a university job in Switzerland. The two families shared many happy holidays in the French Alps. Albert Einstein was one of her supporters when Maria suffered a depression in 1910 after the Langevin affair.

Before I started my work on the lecture, I had been asked why I'm doing it and whether there was any connection to Scotland. I didn't know the answer then but through my research about Maria I made a fascinating discovery: yes, there is a link between Maria and Scotland. Maria was made a Honorary Doctorate of University of Edinburgh in 1907 and similarly Glasgow University in 1934. She was awarded a Cameron medal for her work in medicine and therapeutics by the University of Edinburgh in 1931 when she came to Edinburgh to receive the honour.

I made preliminary contacts with the Records department of the University of Edinburgh and received a very interesting email with the minutes of the Award of Honorary doctorate in 1907. These awards given by Edinburgh University are further proof that Maria sent shockwaves through the scientific community in the world. Scotland was one of the first to appreciate the magnitude of her discoveries.

Another strand of Maria's heritage is the application of radium in medicine and treatment of cancer, the jewel in the scientific crown of Maria.



Photo from the event of the Fields of Hope in Krakow in 1998. Courtesy of Mrs Izabella Brodzinska

Radiotherapy became a successful treatment in cancer patients. The Marie Curie Cancer Research – the charity in the UK decided to export its fundraising model of cancer research and treatment to other countries like Poland. This is just another example of the scientific heritage of Maria. The fundraising initiative called Pola Nadziei – in translation: the Fields of Hope were introduced to Poland the first time in Krakow in 1998. The lecture talked about the history and development of setting up the first Polish hospice in Krakow and how the fundraising model was adopted across Poland by other hospices.

I can't stress enough how much enjoyment and satisfaction came from the research on Maria Skłodowska-Curie's life. Discovery of her astonishing achievements in conjunction with her difficult personal life and total commitment to work and science remains a perpetual inspiration to many of us. PS. I still need to follow Maria's footsteps in Edinburgh. Maybe there is another story to discover..... In 1995 French President Mitterand presided the ceremony of burial of Marie and Pierre Curie in Pantheon, Paris. France paid its respect and appreciation to her adopted daughter.

Last but not least no wonder that Maria became an iconic subject of many films, books, medals and pictures. One of the recent film productions is: "The Courage of Knowledge" by Marie Noelle 2017 and "The Radioactivity" by Marjane Satrapi with Rosamund Pike in 2020. Despite my worries the lecture about Maria was well received and I met with positive feedback.

Jola Debicka-MacLennan

Polish Consul Generals at the Polish House

A regretful farewell to the Consul General Ireneusz Truszkowski and a warm welcome to the new Consul Lukasz Lutostanski took place on Thursday 18 August 2021 in the Polish House at Drummond Place in Edinburgh. For Consul Ireneusz Truszkowski the event marked four years of service as the Consul General in Edinburgh and had drawn his term to the end. Mr Truszkowski gave a farewell speech thanking various Polish organisation for support during his term in office. He enjoyed working in Edinburgh and Scotland through the challenging times of the pandemic and organising high profile events like Polish Parliamentary or Presidential elections. The enthusiasm and drive of Consul Truszkowski in helping to organise many events involving Polish organisations was vital in creation of various events and concerts.

The SPCA Committee members along with others were invited to the event at the Polish House in Drummond



Place which hosted the first official event after a long refurbishment. Our Chairperson Mrs Izabella Brodzinska gave a personal thanks to Mr Truszkowski for valuable support and guidance to our organisation. She expressed a long standing commitment and loyalty in promoting Polish culture in Scotland and making every effort to familiarise Scottish culture in Poland. She pointed out that the help of the Consul General is vital when it comes to organising various cultural events. SPCA as a voluntary organisation would not have been able to organise and promote a long list of events without the support and help of the Polish Consulate.

SPCA Committee at the event in the Polish House, 18 August 2021. From left: Keith Mullins-MacIntyre, Jola Debicka-MacLennan, Marek Straczynski, Kiro Zabinska-MacIntyre, Chairperson Izabella Brodzinska, Consul General Mr Ireneusz Truszkowski, Elizabeth Rychlik-Sharp, Michael Borland.



From left: Consul Lutostanski, Consul Truskowski, Mr Straczynski, Mr Sagan and Mrs Sylwia Spooner.

Speeches were made by the outgoing Consul Mr Truskowski as well as by the newly appointed Consul Mr Lutostanski. Consul Lutostanski graduated in Law & Administration at Warsaw University and obtained his PhD in Economics at the Academy of Leon Kozminski in Warsaw. He started his career with the Ministry of Foreign affairs in 1998. In years 2000 to 2011 He worked as a lecturer at the Academy of Social Psychology in Warsaw. He was a Consul General in Manchester from 2013 to 2017. Before he become a Consul general in Edinburgh, he held a post of Director General in the Department of Consular affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He speaks fluently in English and Russian, his hobbies are mountains, sailing and cycling.

New Consul General Lukasz Lutostanski was warmly welcomed by the Polish Club president Mr Marek Straczynski. Mr Lutostanski expressed his commitment to establish good working relationship with various Polish organisations. He expressed that his intention is to support and work together with such organisation in the future to elevate the profile of Poland, its business and culture.



*Mrs Sylwia Spooner, Mr Marek Straczynski and Mr Chris Sagan being decorated with honours.
From left: the new Consul, Mr Lutostanski, Mr Straczynski, Consul Truskowski, Mr Sagan, Mrs Sylwia Spooner.*

There was a special occasion for two guests: Sylwia Spooner and Mr Chris Sagan, Chairman of the General Sikorski Club in Glasgow. They were both awarded the Honour of Cross of Poland for their services to Poland. The Chairman of the General Maczek Polish House, Mr Marek Straczynski was also awarded the Cross. Both Consuls decorated the honoured individuals. After speeches the guests had the opportunity to meet with others and catch up with the news. Many guests expressed enjoyment that the Polish Club, now re-named General Maczek Polish House, has become a long-awaited venue for functions, events and meetings of involving Polish community. We are hoping that this particular event will be just a beginning of many other events which bring Polish and Scottish communities together.

Jola Debicka-MacLennan

Yaniewicz piano in Edinburgh – two concerts

The historical musical instruments housed in Edinburgh are of an importance rivalled by very few other cities in the world. While the vast majority are owned by Edinburgh University and kept in the specialist museum in St Cecilia's Hall, a significant new addition to the patrimony has been given a new home at the recently renovated Polish Ex-Combatants' House on Drummond Place. This is a well-preserved and immaculately restored square piano made around 1810. Such instruments were for long an essential component of any fashionable drawing room, but relatively few have survived, let alone in such fine condition. The piano has a cartouche with a label bearing the name of the firm of Yaniewicz and Green, with addresses in Liverpool and London. A once renowned but long neglected composer, violinist and impresario, Felix Yaniewicz (originally Feliks Janiewicz) was born in 1762 in Vilnius, then one of the great cosmopolitan cities of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. His early professional career was spent as a member of the orchestra of the Commonwealth's last monarch, Stanislaw August Poniatowski, who sent him to Vienna, where he met Haydn and Mozart. He subsequently moved successively to Italy, France, London and Liverpool, prior to settling in Edinburgh in 1815. In the same year he co-founded the first Edinburgh Festival and he remained a resident of the city until his death in 1848. From 1823 onwards he lived at 84 Great King Street - just round the corner from the piano's new home - where a commemorative plaque can be seen.

This piano was in storage for two decades prior to its restoration, whereupon it was put up for sale. Fortuitously, the advert was noticed by Josie Dixon of Winchester, a direct descendant of Yaniewicz. She founded a charity named The Friends of Felix Yaniewicz, whose first task was to crowdfund the purchase of the piano. As Edinburgh was deemed to be the most suitable new home, this was done in partnership with the Scottish Polish Cultural Association, whose Zoom meeting of 7th April was a key stage in raising the necessary funds.



The Polish Consulate generously provided funding for two concerts by internationally acknowledged experts in historical keyboard performance to celebrate the acquisition of the piano.

That on 12th November was given by Steven Devine - who had the additional responsibility of transporting the piano to Edinburgh immediately beforehand. His programme was entitled *Felix Yaniewicz and his European contemporaries*. It featured compositions by Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven as well as the Czech Jan Dussek and the Italian Muzio Clementi, who spent most of his life in London, becoming the leading piano manufacturer of the time. He was both a musical and business associate of

Janiewicz; evidence suggests that this piano was made in Clementi's factory and subsequently customised for the purchaser by the firm of Yaniewicz and Green. Two intriguingly-titled compositions by Yaniewicz himself were featured in the recital: a set of variations on the once-popular song *Hope told a Flattering Tale* and a rondo, *Indian War Hoop*. For an encore, Steven Devine played Beethoven's *Ecossaises*, a set of six brief Scottish-inspired dances.



Two days later, Polish-born, London-based Pawel Siwczak played a programme entitled *Polish Inspirations* that was the perfect complement to the earlier recital. It was bookended with Mazurkas by Chopin, whose own recitals were predominantly given in similar salon-type conditions and on instruments that were far closer in sound to this than to the modern concert grands on which they are usually played nowadays. A Mazurek by Yaniewicz - who died just before Chopin's visit to Scotland - was also included, as well as an arrangement of his First Violin Concerto by the aforementioned Jan Dussek.

Pieces by Polish comp composers Maria Szymanowska, Franciszek Lessel and Michal Oginski were also on the programme, while the encore was a Polonaise by Chopin's teacher Jozef Elsner. This features a prominent incorporation of *God Save the King*, thereby providing a neat link back to the first recital, which had opened with Dussek's variations on the same tune.

Both events were enormously enhanced by the presentation of the two performers, who made informative comments about each piece that was played, as well as about the piano itself. Although it has a relatively gentle tone, the sound easily fills the first-floor hall, being clearly audible even at the back. It is an instrument of real character; not only does it enable the masterpieces of great composers to be heard in a similar way to that in which they were experienced by their original audiences, its distinctive voicing and subtle range of colours are of inestimable benefit in maximising the appeal of slighter pieces of the same era. Moreover, it is an exquisite piece of furniture in its own right.



Next year, the piano is due to be the centrepiece of a special exhibition at the National Trust for Scotland's Georgian House on Charlotte Square. Thereafter, it is hoped that recitals will be held on an annual basis. The Scottish Chamber Orchestra also intends to play a part in rehabilitating Yaniewicz's music, with one of his violin concertos scheduled to be performed at concerts in both Edinburgh and Glasgow next December.

Much more information can be found on the excellent website of the *The Friends of Felix Yaniewicz* - <https://www.yaniewicz.org>

Gordon McLachlan
Photos: Barbara Ostrowska

COLIN KINGSLEY

For nearly 25 years until his death, the Honorary President of the Scottish Polish Cultural Association (SPCA) was Dr Colin Kingsley (1925-2020), an Edinburgh-based pianist and former Senior Lecturer at Edinburgh University.

In 1965, following a suggestion by one of his students, Colin gave an informal concert at 10 Warriston Crescent, Edinburgh, where Chopin had stayed in 1848. This led to Tadeusz Ziarski and Colin founding the Edinburgh Chopin Circle, which gave about three concerts a year at the house until 2003, thanks to the generosity of the owners, Mr and Mrs John Burnett until 1979, and then Miss Jane Kellett, who had an early piano from around Chopin's time. The Chopin Circle invited not only established professional pianists to play, but also promising young pianists from far and wide. Many of the recitals were given by Colin himself. The music was largely by Chopin, but on occasion included works by his contemporaries and by other Polish composers such as Szymanowski, Lutosławski and Bacewicz.



Colin had no Polish ancestry, but through the Chopin Circle he developed close links with the wider Polish community in Edinburgh. There were numerous concerts organised for Polish functions, such as the visits of the Polish Echo Choir to St. Andrews and concerts commemorating Armistice Day. Dr Kingsley, Tadeusz Ziarski and the Chopin Circle brought a bust of Chopin from Poland, carved by Jozef Murkiewicz, and persuaded the Council to place it in the Usher Hall. Colin made two professional visits to Poland: in 1975, to attend the International Chopin Competition in Warsaw, and in 1999 to give lecture recitals and master classes in Tarnów at the International Piano Teachers' Seminar. In recognition of his contribution to promoting Polish culture, in 1983 Colin was awarded the Knight's Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta.

From the early 1990s, Colin was involved with the Scottish Polish Cultural Association and was made Honorary President in 1997. He played a key role in arranging several high-quality concerts each year, whether by guest artists from Poland, or with himself as performer, as soloist or as accompanist to singers or instrumentalists. From 2000 for as long as he was able, he also organised an annual Young Talent Concert; this has become a successful fixture in the Association's calendar. In parallel with his Polish connections, Colin had a long association with the Edinburgh Society of Musicians, where he also gave many recitals and promoted pianists and other instrumentalists from many nationalities, including Poland; he served as its concerts' organiser and latterly President for many years.

Colin Kingsley had a long and varied career as a pianist, teacher and lecturer, beginning in the 1950s when he gave many concerts and broadcasts as a free-lance solo pianist and accompanist. He was a solo pianist with the Royal Ballet and the Ballet Rambert and taught at the Royal College of Music in London, where he met his future wife, Jean. In 1964, he joined the Music Faculty of Edinburgh University and was a Senior Lecturer there until his retirement in 1992. He also obtained his doctorate from the University in 1968.

Colin had an encyclopaedic knowledge of the piano and chamber-music repertoire, from early Classical to contemporary music. He often performed the works of early 20th-century English composers and his later broadcasts included a series of five lecture-recitals on them. Of living composers, he particularly championed the piano works of Peter Racine Fricker and commissioned a major piece ("Anniversary"), which he performed at the Cheltenham Festival in 1978 and subsequently broadcast. He also promoted the works of fellow Londoner John White and recorded several of his sonatas. He performed at festivals in Vancouver and Hong Kong, and delivered a lecture at the Edinburgh International Festival. Further performances were given at the Julliard School of Music in New York and the Toho Gakuen in Tokyo.

For many years, Colin was an examiner for the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. Tours abroad included Singapore in 1959 and Rhodesia before 1966. He maintained links with ex-students as far afield as Japan (he even learnt some Japanese), Geneva and Kuala Lumpur, visiting the last two even in his nineties. He continued to teach privately at the university until his eighties and at home thereafter. After his wife died in 2003, he gave concerts in private homes and churches for charity, but also regularly accompanied two young singers in concerts, and gave a recital at the Edinburgh Fringe in his 90th year.

He passed away peacefully a few weeks short of 95, ironically in his first Edinburgh house, which had been subsequently converted into a care home. Although outwardly formal, Colin was unassuming, even self-effacing, and had a great generosity of spirit. He is remembered with affection by his past students and pupils; as one put it: "I will always be grateful for his support and remember him as a kind and quietly thoughtful gentleman with an ocean of knowledge."

Robert Fraser, August 2021

Memory of Joasia Jabłonska

The sad news about Joasia Jabłńska's death reached us in the middle of November 2021. She was a member of Scottish Polish Cultural Association for many years as well as a frequent member of the Polish Combatant House at Drummond Place where she would come every Sunday with her mother and giving support by taking turns to make and sell cakes for the benefit of the Polish House.

She was a quiet unassuming person, with wide interests particularly in photography. She dedicated her life to support elderly people. She was supportive of our work and therefore we would like to express our sincere condolences on her untimely departure from this world. She will definitely be missed. The funeral will take place on Thursday 2 December.

SPCA committee

Teresa Dzikowska R.I.P

The Funeral Service of Mrs Teresa Dzikowska took place on the 8th of July 2021 at St. Mary's Cathedral in Edinburgh.

Teresa Dzikowska was popularly known as Pani Teresa (Mrs Teresa)



Teresa had lived in Edinburgh for over 60 years and was one of the original members of the Scottish Polish Cultural Association.

She was very active member for over 50 years popularising Polish Culture among Scottish friends.

In 1980 due to General Strike in Poland and introduction of Marshal Law the activities of SPCA were suspended.

Thanks to Teresa's initiative among Polish Community and past members in Edinburgh, after seven years SPCA restored its activities with more new members especially younger generation and new emigrants.

She was Secretary till 1995 and later the Honorary Treasurer till 2009.

During that time her health deteriorated so she passed on the treasurer function to younger members of SPCA. She was still active member and keen to give advice and help to the younger members.

In 1990 she was presented with Gold Medal of Merit by the Polish Government as recognition for her work in Edinburgh. She was also election committee member in the Polish Consulate in 1990 when the first free presidential elections

were taking place in Poland and a few more times in later years.

Scottish Polish Cultural Association and the Edinburgh Polish Community will be forever grateful to Teresa for her leadership in emigrant and cultural activities.

We send sincere condolences to Teresa's family in Edinburgh and Bialystok in Poland.

Rest in Peace Dear Friend

Czesław Kruk

Dinner Dance 2020



Competition for best costume

The most recent SPCA dinner dance was held on 22nd February 2020, when there was still no hint of the lockdown restrictions that were to be introduced the following month. Celebrating the association's 50th anniversary, it was a themed event based on the Roaring 1920s, complete with a period-type band and a competition for the best costume of this era. The guests of honour included Susan and Patrick Stirling-Aird, founders of the Jane Stirling Festival with which the SPCA has been much involved; well-known arts impresario Richard Demarco; and representatives from the Polish Consulates in Edinburgh and Belfast.

Sadly, this was to be the last SPCA event attended by Witold Brodzinski, a staunch supporter of his wife of 50 years, Iza Brodzinska, throughout the quarter-century she has chaired the SPCA. He died on 1st November 2020, and is much-missed by his family and by the wider Polish community and their friends. In common with many Poles of his generation, he had a remarkable early life: it was not until the age of 30 that he finally met his father, the long-time chairman of the Glasgow branch of the Polish Ex-Combatants. He settled happily in Edinburgh and enjoyed a 35-year career as a highly respected civil engineer with the East of Scotland Water Board.

Izabella Brodzinska



Witold Brodzinski with his daughter Megan at the dinner dance in 2020

Membership

£10.00 per person for lifetime membership.

If you would like to join the Scottish Polish Cultural Association, please send us your details using the form on our website:

<http://www.scotpoles.co.uk/join-us/>