

# PROMOTING & LOBBYING

Many of the Council's members are affiliated with national Polish-Australian organisations like the Polish Women's Association of Australia and New Zealand. Others are affiliated with institutions in Poland and internationally. Special interest groups, like the Australia Poland Business Council, have a national or international focus.

The Council **represents** the Polish Canberra community at various Australian and Polish-Australian forums held in and outside the ACT. It **lobbies** for Polish-Australians by raising issues important to their history, culture, language and traditions. It **promotes** the Polish-Australian cause whenever possible. It is affiliated with the Polish Community Council of Australia and New Zealand – the peak Polish-Australian body.

The Council is frequently asked to represent the Polish-Australian community at diplomatic functions, other events and to host visiting Polish dignitaries, academics and artists. In this respect, it has a close working relationship with the Embassy of the Republic of Poland, other federal/territorial agencies, universities and multicultural bodies in the ACT.



STANDARD OF THE POLISH EX-SERVICEMEN'S ASSOCIATION IN CANBERRA AND DISTRICT INC, SUB-BRANCH NO.5

Rosanna Horn Design

# CONTACTS

For more information about any of the listed organisations contact

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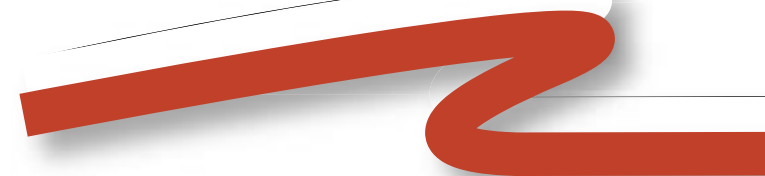
Email: [info@polesact.org.au](mailto:info@polesact.org.au)  
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MONUMENT OF POPE JOHN PAUL II BY WOJCIECH PIETRANIK [INSET]  
POPE JOHN PAUL II POLISH CATHOLIC CENTRE,  
211 GOYDER ST NARRABUNDAH ACT 2604



# POLISH COMMUNITY



**one of the first ethnic communities in the ACT**



Concept and editing: Aleksander Gancarz and Wanda Horky.

Images: A. Gancarz, W.E. Horky, R. Horn, Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Canberra, National Portrait Gallery, Canberra.

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# HISTORY

The Poles began arriving in Canberra in 1948 as displaced persons from World War II and later as migrants.

Poland – Polska – has a long history. It adopted Christianity in 966, was the largest country in Europe during its golden age, it passed the second modern Constitution in the world in 1791 which resulted in her 123 year partition until 1918. In 1989 after almost fifty years of Communism it became the third Polish Republic.

Copernicus the astronomer, Tadeusz Kosciuszko the hero and statesman, Chopin the musician, Marie Curie-Sklodowska winner of two Nobel prizes in physics and chemistry and Pope John Paul II are some of Poland's famous citizens.

In their early years in Canberra Poles worked mainly in the construction industry as builders, tradesmen and engineers. As time went by their fields of employment became much broader and they are now well represented in academia as well as occupations such as astronomy, sociology, the law, medicine, the arts, business and public service.

Today the Polish community is one of the first ethnic communities in the ACT.



SIR PAUL EDMUND DE STRZELECKI (1797-1873) POLISH ARISTOCRAT, EXPLORER DISCOVERED AUSTRALIA'S HIGHEST MOUNTAIN IN 1840 AND NAMED IT AFTER POLAND'S NATIONAL HERO TADEUSZ KOSCIUSZKO. STRZELECKI'S DESCENDANTS LIVE IN AUSTRALIA.



GENERAL TADEUSZ KOSCIUSZKO (1746-1817) ENGINEER, FREEDOM FIGHTER AND CIVIL LIBERTARIAN. HERO OF TWO NATIONS, POLAND AND THE UNITED STATES, HE FOUGHT IN THE WARS FOR THEIR INDEPENDENCE AND IS HONOURED BY THE UNITED STATES, FRANCE AND POLAND.

Images courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery, Canberra and the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Canberra

# MEMBERS

The Council of Polish Organisations in the ACT Inc., established in 1984, is the umbrella body representing approximately 4,500 members of the Polish community in the ACT region.

The Council's membership includes:

- Australia Poland Business Council Inc.
- Cultural Foundation
- *Kronika Polonii* Editorial Board
- Polish Arts & Craft Society
- Polish Australian White Eagle Club
- Polish Folkloric Dance Group Wielkopolska
- Polish Ex-Servicemen's Association in Canberra and District Inc., Sub-Branch No.5
- Polish Historical Institute in Australia Inc.
- Polish Language School, Belconnen
- Polish Language School, Phillip
- Polish Radio Committee
- Polish Seniors Club of the ACT Inc.
- Polish Women's Association
- Pope John Paul II Polish Catholic Centre
- Prof. J. Wilczynski Fund Management Board

Together these groups fulfill the cultural, educational, social, business, religious and welfare needs of the community through a range of activities including regular meetings, weekly radio broadcasts, a journal, church announcements, frequent press releases including emails and via the Internet.

Three of the community's most senior groups are the Polish Ex-Servicemen's Association in Canberra and District (SPK), the Polish Women's Association and the Polish Australian White Eagle Club.

The Polish Australian White Eagle Club in Turner and the Polish Catholic Centre in Narrabundah have premises where the majority of events take place. The Polish Ex-Servicemen's Association has premises in Civic.



POLISH AUSTRALIAN WHITE EAGLE CLUB, 38 DAVID STREET TURNER ACT 2612

# ACTIVITIES & CONTRIBUTIONS

The Council of Polish Organisations in the ACT Inc. with its diverse membership co-ordinates the many activities of the community. It publishes the *Kronika Polonii* (Polish Chronicle) journal which informs and reviews Polish community events held during the year. It manages the Professor J. Wilczynski Fund which provides some financial support to maintain the Polish heritage, culture, traditions and language.

The Polish community in Canberra celebrates its national days with special commemorations, religious and social events. Children and youth are a central part of the activities whether they attend the Polish Ethnic Schools or the Polish Dance Group Wielkopolska which also regularly performs at Floriade and the National Multicultural Festival.

It celebrated Poland's Millennium of Christianity in 1966 by donating a Polonica collection of library materials to the Australian National University.

Over the years the community's organisations have significantly contributed to the ACT economy, social life and culture. It has helped to develop a multicultural Canberra from its inception in the early 1950s.

POLISH DANCE GROUP WIELKOPOLSKA

