



The roots of the Polish Association in Texas date to the beginning of 1958. On January 30 of that year Janina Sławik, together with Eugenia Korfanty and Władysław Jarosz send out an invitation to Dallas Polonia for a meeting which was planned for February 9<sup>th</sup> at the “Old Warsaw” restaurant on 3914 Cedar Springs in Dallas. The restaurant was opened by Stanisław and Janina Sławik in 1951 and was one of the first “European” restaurants in Dallas. It was very popular among Dallas elite but also played a great role in integrating Dallas Polonia.

During the mentioned meeting participants had decided to create an organization “Samopomoc Polaków w Teksasie” (Polish Self-support Organization of Texas). Janina Sławik was elected the President, Władysław Jarosz as a Secretary and Eugenia Korfanty as a Treasurer. The purpose of the Organization was “to associate all Poles living in Dallas and the other localities in Texas” and “offer moral support and material help to the Poles living here or just arriving”. As of March 1958 the list of the “Samopomoc Polaków w Teksasie” contained the following names: Alexander Bujalski, Mrs. Bujalski, Rev. Antoni Gajda, Jan Głowacki, Maryla Granowska, Rev. Johnn Gulczyński, Ryszard Grzegorzewicz, Elizabeth Grzegorzewicz, Władysław Jarosz, Ignacy Kollupailo, Rev. Józef Kopczewski, J. Koncewicz, A. Koncewicz, Zbigniew Korfanty, Eugenia Korfanty, Henryk Kucharczyk, Zygmunt Lipka, Helena Lipka, Marian Maciejczyk, Rev. Stan Stachowicz, Malvina Palejus, Zygmunt Pęcherzewski, Julian Schenk, Stanisław Sławik, Janina Sławik, C.T. Śmieciński, E. Śmiecińska, Jan Tyloch, Ignacy Urbanek, Bazyl Janicki, Kamil Kahan, Jakub Kaszuba, Wlesław Kłobukowski, Irena Kłobukowski, Marta Macy, Kazimierz Malina, Margaret Malina, Jerzy Wędrychowski, Parry Wędrychowski, Jadwiga Ward Wachowiak, Jan Zakrzewski, and Helena Zakrzewski.

On April 14, 1958 the Organization was formally registered with the County Clerk of Dallas as **Polish Association in Texas**. From the very beginning, the Association was heavily engaged in charitable activities, in particular helping newly arrived Polish families to settle down. Another goal of the Association was to promote Polish culture and traditions. It organized many patriotic events commemorating various Polish national and religious holidays.

Very important aspect of these activities was related to religious services. Since practically all Poles living in Dallas at that time belonged to the Association, they often



met and pushed for masses in Polish language. Mr. Sławik participated in many talks with Dallas Diocese and the Society of Christ for Poles Living Abroad to establish the Polish language service. Occasionally, such services were held in various churches in Dallas. In January 1986 Bishop Tschoepe proposed the St. Peter parish as a new place for worshipping in the Polish language. This was the first African-American parish in Dallas, dated back to 1905. Rev. Czesław Domaszewicz became the administrator of the joined Polish and American communities of the parish. All the buildings in the parish, the church, school building and the rectory were in disarray and required massive renovations. Members of the Association put in countless hours of manual labor and the Association helped financially to bring the parish buildings to the usable conditions.



St. Peter the Apostle Parish, Dallas, TX



Over the years the cooperation between the St. Peter parish and the Association grew and resulted in numerous cultural and social activities. Children were taught Polish, religion and folk dances, sporting and scouting groups were created, theatre performances were produced. People gathered at many Christmas Dinners (“Opłatek”), Easter Breakfasts, New Year’s parties and picnics on a lake. Artists and other important representatives of Polish culture were brought in.



Nativity Play, St. Peter the Apostle Church, Dallas, TX (1992)



Polish artist, author and comedian, Jacek Fedorowicz, on stage (1990)



Polish artist, Jan Pietrzak, sings for the audience, St. Peter Catholic church, Dallas, TX (1988)

This was achieved by a handful of dedicated individuals, who gave their time, effort and, very often, financial aid for the common good of the Polish community.

Today the Association, which celebrated its 60<sup>th</sup> “birthday” in 2018, faces different challenges. New immigrants still need help, but not to the same extent as 60 years ago. Global media and the Internet made it possible to access all aspects of Polish life at any time in ones own home. Possibility of free traveling brings people together more often. Therefore the role of Polish Association in Texas has to be redefined. As the country we live in – the USA – has been created by immigrants, so were the customs, art and culture, social behavior, business, etc. Poland is one of the countries who created this nation, the nation which many historians call “an unfinished nation”. We have a moral obligation to make our contribution known to the general public. Polish history is tightly associated with the history of the USA. Polish art and culture are part of the global art and culture and needs to be presented as such. Polish customs and traditions are colorful and joyful. Polish science and business need to be tapped into and introduced



to the appropriate communities here in the DFW area. Cooperation needs to be established which would benefit both sides.



100th Anniversary of Poland Independence Celebration Ball, 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Polish Association in Texas, Dallas, Oct. 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018. Standing from the left: Dr. Andrzej Brudnicki, MD (IMiD, Warsaw), Ms. Martyna Kowalczyk (event host), Ms. Bozena Niemczyk-Drania, Esq., Consul General of the Republic of Poland Mr. Robert Rusiecki, Mr. Jan Wojciechowski (event host), Krzysztof Gajda (President of the Polish Association in Texas).

We need to attract leaders with best possible education acquired in this country, but also those with great sensitivity to their Polish roots, knowledge of language, history and culture, and willingness to contribute to the Society a little more.

#### Chronology of Presidents of the PAT:

Janina Sławik	1958 – 1968
Wiesław Kłobukowski	1968 – 1972
Stanisław Sławik	1972 – 1987
Edward Górecki	1987 – 1993
Jan Golonka	1993 – 1996
Krzysztof Żuraw	1996 – 2002
Zygmunt Zawojski	2002 – 2004
Leszek Nazarko	2004 – 2008
Marek Nowak	2008 - 2009
Idalia Jędrzejczyk	2009 - 2010
Jerzy Meciński	2010 - 2015
Andrzej Jesionek	2015 - 2016



Idalia Jędrzejczyk 2016 – 2017  
Krzysztof Gajda 2017 - present

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December 2018, a General Meeting of the Polish Association of Texas took place. During the mentioned meeting the members of the Association elected its Board of Directors. Since the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December of 2018 the Board of Directors of the Polish Association of Texas consists of the following members:

Board President – Krzysztof Gajda,  
Board V-ce President – George Kowalczyk,  
Board Secretary - Jan Wojciechowski,  
Treasurer - George Kowalczyk,  
Director - Ewa Pysiak,  
Board Members - Beata Wojciechowska,  
- Katarzyna Koster,  
- Anna Pates.

We are inviting everybody who live in the greater Dallas – Fort Worth area to join our organization and contribute their talents, time and skills for the common good of the community, to contribute to the events that we host and organize!  
We will welcome you warmly to our Association! Join us!