Latham PolishFest Releases 2016 Cultural Program

Latham’s 14th Annual PolishFest has an exciting cultural program. PolishFest 2016 will be held at the Blessed Virgin Mary of Czestochowa Church at 250 Old Maxwell Road, Latham, NY on from Friday, June 3 to Sunday, June 5.

A one page write up has been included for some of the following categories:

**Music:**
- Tony’s Polka Band
- The Rymanowski Brother’s Orchestra
- Chopin Piano Recital
- Slavic Folk String Concert

**Dance:**
- Participatory Polka
- St. Adalbert’s Polish Folkdance Troupe
- The BVMC Polish Dancers

**Literature:**
- Author, Donna Urbikas *My Sister’s Mother* (University of Wisconsin Press)

**History:**
- Polish Hussar Armor Display
- The History of Poland Told Through the Polish Flag

**Genealogy:**
- Workshop on using on-line databases to trace Polish Heritage

**Culinary:**
- Cooking Demonstrations by the Chefs Zeranski
- Kielbasa making demonstration by John Kowalski, Dean of the Culinary Institute of America

**Arts:**
- Polish/Slovak Easter Egg (Pisanki/Kraslica) and Paper Cutting (Wycinanki) Demonstrations
- Exhibition of Jan Styka and Zofia Styka Paintings
- Slavic Arts and Crafts Vendors
Author Donna Urbikas Discusses Acclaimed Memoire on WWII-Era Polish Exile and Refugees at Latham PolishFest

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Donna Solecka Urbikas will be discussing My Sister’s Mother, A Memoir of War, Exile, and Stalin’s Siberia (University of Wisconsin Press) on Saturday, June 4 at 1 PM and Sunday, June 5 at 2:30 PM. Ms. Urbikas’ book is a searing tale of war, trauma, and survival. It provides an important window on what it is like to be an exile and a refugee, told from a perspective that may help readers better understand current world events.

Ms. Urbikas grew up in the Midwest during the golden years of the American century. But her Polish-born mother and half-sister had endured dehumanizing conditions during World War II, as slave laborers in Siberia. War and exile created a profound bond between mother and older daughter, one that Donna would struggle to find with either of them.

In 1940, Janina Ślarzynska and her five-year-old daughter Mira were taken by Soviet secret police (NKVD) from their small family farm in eastern Poland and sent to Siberia with hundreds of thousands of others. So began their odyssey of hunger, disease, cunning survival, desperate escape across a continent, and new love amidst terrible circumstances.

But in the 1950s, baby boomer Donna yearns for a “normal” American family while Janina and Mira are haunted by the past. In this unforgettable memoir, Donna recounts her family history and her own survivor’s story, finally understanding the damaged mother who had saved her sister.

Ms. Urbikas was born in Coventry, England, and immigrated with her parents and sister to Chicago in 1952. After careers as a high school science teacher and environmental engineer, she is now a writer, realtor, and community volunteer. She lives in Chicago with her husband.

For the complete press kit: https://uwpress.wisc.edu/books/5503.htm.
Music at Latham PolishFest 2016

Latham’s 14th Annual PolishFest has an exciting cultural program. PolishFest 2016 will be held at the Blessed Virgin Mary of Czestochowa Church at 250 Old Maxwell Road, Latham, NY on from Friday, June 3 to Sunday, June 5.

Tony’s Polka Band: The award winning Tony’s Polka Band will be headlining PolishFest on Saturday night, June 4, from 5 PM to 9 PM. With an original blend of music consisting of Eastern, Honky, German, Chicago, and New England style polkas with the influence of Country, Disco, Pop, Latin, and Rock, Tony’s Polka Band delights audiences of all ages and any culture. Bring your dancing shoes! Link to Tony’s Polka Band Full Color Press Kit: http://www.tonyspolkaband.com/tpbepromo.pdf.

The Rymanowski Brother’s Orchestra: The Capital District’s favorite polka band, the RBO, will be headlining PolishFest on Sunday afternoon, June 5, from 2 PM to 6 PM. Headlined by the popular WVCR Polka Spotlight Show radio personalities, Dennis and Gerry Rymanowski, the RBO plays the best in Polka music and a wide variety of American Pop and American Standards to please just about everyone. Link to RBO’s web site: http://www.rbomusic.com/history.html.

Capital District Council for Young Musicians Chopin Piano Concert: Winners of the 2015 Capital District Council for Young Musicians, Inc. (CDCYM) Annual Chopin Piano Competition will perform a Chopin Piano Recital on Saturday, June 4, at 2:30 PM. For more information on CDCYM and the 2016 competition winners, please visit the CDCYM web site: http://www.cdcym.org/2015-winners.html.

Slavic Folk Music String Concert: Slovak-American, Tania Susi, BM, MM, The Juilliard School, has travelled the world performing classically as a soloist and chamber musician. She has performed everywhere from Carnegie Hall in NYC to Suntory Hall in Tokyo, Japan. On Sunday, June 5, at 1 PM, with her daughter, Sonia Susi, Tania will share a program of Slavic folk music from many Eastern European countries. Tania’s full biography can be found at the Spa City Duo web site: http://www.spacityduo.com.

In addition to these headliners, Disc Jockey Mark Ives will be keeping people dancing on Friday, June 3, and Saturday early afternoon, June 4. Strolling violinist, Eden Susi, will be performing folk music throughout the festival. And, as is PolishFest tradition, on Friday, June 3, trumpet player, Katherine Alberti will open the festival with the Krakow signal bugle call, or Hejnal Mariacki.
Experience Polish Culture through Food at Latham PolishFest

Latham’s 14th Annual PolishFest has an exciting cultural program. PolishFest 2016 will be held at the Blessed Virgin Mary of Czestochowa Church at 250 Old Maxwell Road, Latham, NY on from Friday, June 3 to Sunday, June 5. One of the best ways to experience a culture is through its cuisine. PolishFest 2016 will have its most exciting menu ever and cooking demonstrations so that festival goers can recreate the experience in their own kitchens.

Cooking Demonstrations:

Learn to make classic Polish recipes with Laura and Pete Zeranski in in the PolishFest Demonstration Tent every day of PolishFest. Laura and Pete are a husband-and-wife team that has been cooking and eating classic Polish food together for almost forty years. Peter was born in Europe to parents that were born and raised in Poland and emigrated west soon after World War II. Peter’s mother, Alina Zeranska, wrote The Art of Polish Cooking in 1968, which served as the foundation of the family's love for Polish food. They will also be selling their cook books at the festival.

PolishFest is also proud to have award winning Culinary Institute of America professor, Chef John Kowalski, providing a kielbasa making demonstration. Chef Kowalski has been chef at the Publick House Restaurant, Sturbridge, MA, and La Côte Basque, NYC. His awards include Faculty Member of the Year, CIA, 2010, the Marc L. Sarrazin Cup (CIA team), Grand Prize, Salon of Culinary Arts, NYC, 2003, 1997, 1996, the First Prize for Cooking, Salon of Culinary Arts, NYC, 1995 and many others. Chef Kowalski’s demonstration will be on Friday, June 3, time TBA.

Pierogi Bar: PolishFest will feature a pierogi bar this year featuring 10 varieties of Plumpy’s Pierogies: Potato & Cheese, Sauerkraut, Farmers Cheese, Mushroom & Cabbage, Potato Cheese & Jalapeno, Bacon Cheese Burger, Buffalo Chicken, Pulled Pork, Kielbasa & Sauerkraut, and Honey Crisp Apple.

Polish Platter: The popular sampler platter is back this year, for people who want to try a little of everything!

A la Carte Menu: Get as much as you want of your PolishFest favorites: Kielbasa Sandwich served in a rye roll with kapusta; Polish Pizza; Kielbasa on a stick; Bigos (Hunterstew) served in a traditional rye bread bowl; Polish Stuffed Green Peppers; Golabki (pigs-in-the-blanket) cabbage rolls made of cabbage leaves stuffed with a mix of rice & beef; Borscht (Polish Beet Soup); Placki Ziemniaczane (Potato Pancakes); Pierogi; Bowl of Kapusta (cabbage, sauerkraut and mushrooms) with Rye Bread; and Haluski (Polish Bacon, Cabbage and Noodles).

Polish Beer: PolishFest will offer a variety of hard to find Polish beer and malt beverages.

Polish Desserts: PolishFest will offer Chruściiki (Deep-Fried Pastry), Polish Crepes, and Cheesecake.
Explore your Roots at PolishFest 2016

Latham’s 14th Annual PolishFest has an exciting cultural program. PolishFest 2016 will be held at the Blessed Virgin Mary of Czestochowa Church at 250 Old Maxwell Road, Latham, NY on from Friday, June 3 to Sunday, June 5. Many people in the Capital District have Polish roots. PolishFest offers a unique opportunity to connect to the past, not only through food and music, but through genealogy, historical presentations, and craft demonstrations.

**Genealogy Workshop:** Local genealogist, John Szypulski, will lead two seminars reviewing internet databases and resources, and other sources and methods for researching your Polish ancestry on **Saturday, June 4 at Noon and Sunday June 5 at 3:30 PM.** The focus this year will be on geneteka.genealodzy.pl. An informational handout will be provided. Bring a pen and a notebook!

**Meet the Winged Hussar:** Eryk Jadaszewski will be exhibiting Polish Hussar armor and giving talks about the Hussars in the Demonstration Tent. Since 2002, Eryk Jadaszewski has been helping living historians and re-enactors develop 16th, 17th and 18th century Eastern European kits consisting of period arms, armor and clothing. His specialty is the colorful and famous Winged Hussar knights of the ‘Old Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.’ He also construct kits for a wide variety of other Central and Eastern European warriors for folks around the world. Over the years he has developed good relationships with craftspeople, tailors and boot makers in the US, Poland, Ukraine and Belarus and other countries. For more information: [http://www.polishhussarsupply.com/](http://www.polishhussarsupply.com/)

**Polish/Slovak Easter Egg (Pisanki/ Kraslica) and Paper Cutting (Wycinanki) Demonstrations:** Join Slovak-American teen, Sonia Susi, and Polish-American teen, Grace Alberti, on **Saturday June 4, at 1:30 PM and Sunday, June 5 at 3 PM** as they demonstrate some of our most beloved Slavic crafts, egg decorating and paper cutting. You will have the opportunity to try your hand at these activities as part of the demonstration.

**The History of Poland through the Polish Eagle:** Katherine Alberti, BA Slavic Studies, has created a historical exhibit that will be on display throughout PolishFest exploring the history of Poland through the evolution of the Polish eagle emblem. Katherine will be discussing the exhibit on **Friday, June 3, from 6 PM to 8 PM and Sunday, June 5 from 11:30 AM to 12:30 PM.**

**Jan and Zofia Styka Art Exhibit:** PolishFest is proud to present an exhibit of art donated by the family of philanthropist and friend of Polish Culture, Dr. John A. Cetner, upon his death. The exhibit contains a work by notable Polish painter, Jan Styka, and several pieces painted by his daughter, Zofia Styka. The significant painting, “Madonna,” will be on display. This painting is one of a group of paintings by Jan Styka illustrating scenes from “Quo Vadis”, a novel by Henryk Sienkiewicz. The date of this painting is unknown, but it was purchased from Janina Styka, Jan’s widow, in 1939 by Edward Witkowski and given as a gift to Dr. Cetner in 1971.