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CHRONICLE

40th Anniversary of the Polish Polar Station on Spitsbergen

On 26–27 September 1997 was held in Warszawa the annual XXIV Polar Symposium organized jointly by the Institute of Geophysics and the Committee on Polar Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences, as well as the Polar Club of the Polish Geographical Society. That Symposium coincided with the celebrations of the 40th anniversary of the Polish polar research station founded in July 1957 at Hornsund (77°00'N and 15°33'E) on Spitsbergen, as part of the International Geophysical Year (1957–1958). The station is now a permanent establishment of the Polish Academy of Sciences, situated in the region of traditional Polish polar activities, which were inaugurated there in 1934. It is conducting scientific investigations in the fields of geophysics, geology, geodesy, geomorphology, glaciology, oceanology and biology. Dr. Seweryn Maciej Zalewski, Scientific Secretary of the Committee on Polar Research and one of co-founders of the Hornsund Station, stated in his introduction that “it is today a modern research laboratory conducting permanent observations. (...) It is a hospitable and friendly base for all, who are finding there shelter. It is also the *Polish Home at the Pole*, as it was named by its founder Stanisław Siedlecki.”

After the opening of the festive anniversary session by Professor Jerzy Jankowski, the floor was given to the honorary guests who graced the meeting with their presence. His Eminence Cardinal Józef Glemp, Primate of Poland, who recently visited the Hornsund Station, referring to the experience of his arctic trip, has blessed the Polish polar community. Professor Leszek Kuźnicki, President of the Polish Academy of Sciences, emphasized in his statement the importance of the investigations conducted in both polar regions for the entire Polish science.

Professor Krzysztof Birkenmajer, Chairman of the Committee on Polar Research, outlined in his opening lecture the research work and achievements of the 40 years long scientific activities of the Hornsund Station. Professor Kazimierz Pękala, President of the Polar Club, concentrated in his lecture on the processes and results of the long Polish presence on Spitsbergen in its various aspects.

The ceremonial anniversary session was followed by the regular proceedings of the Polar Symposium, which were going on in the following three sections: Section of Earth Sciences, Section of Biological Sciences, as well as Section of Polar Humanistic and Social Sciences. Polish and foreign scholars from Japan, Norway, Russia and Czech Republic, participating in the Symposium, have submitted and presented over 60 papers covering a wide spectrum of topics in different disciplines concerned with polar investigations. The majority of papers contained results of scientific investigations accomplished by Polish scholars in the two polar regions: Arctic and Antarctic. These results were attained among other during polar expeditions organized by the Polish Academy of Sciences during the period 1978–1997, in particular to the Hornsund Station on Spitsbergen (20 expeditions), to the two Polish Antarctic stations: *Arctowski* Station on King George Island (21 expeditions) and *Dobrowolski* Station in Bunger Oasis on the Antarctic continent (3 expeditions), as well as numerous maritime oceanographi-

cal, biological and geodynamical expeditions, and also expeditions organized to Spitsbergen by Polish universities and research institutions.

During four sessions held by the **Section of Earth Sciences** and chaired by Professors K. Birkenmajer and K. Pękala, as well as Doctors S. M. Zalewski and S. Rudowski, 31 papers were presented, covering a wide range of topics, such as: Polish geological research in Svalbard, 1934–1996. An outline (K. Birkenmajer), Measurements of tectonic mezo-structures in Hornsundnest area (J. Bednarek), Thermochronologic evidence for Late Proterozoic (Vendian) cooling in SW Wedel Jarlsberg Land, Spitsbergen (M. Manecki, D. K. Holm, J. Czerny and D. Lux), Zircon single-grain ages of gneiss-migmatites from NW Spitsbergen (Y. Ohta, A. M. Tebenkov and A. N. Larionov), The mass balance of Hans Glacier in the light of cryochemical investigation (P. Głowacki), Photogrametric documentation on periodical advances of the Hans Glacier, Spitsbergen (L. Kolondra and J. Jania), Variation of air temperature in the non-Russian part of the Arctic in the period 1951–1955 (R. Przybylak), Deglaciation of Sörkapp Land (Spitsbergen) in the 20th century (W. Ziaja), Polish magnetic station in Hornsund Fiord, Spitsbergen (77°00'N, 15°33'E) (W. Glegolski and A. Gnoiński), Sedimentological station Hornsund 1957–1997 (HSP) (M. Górski) Polish seismoacoustic studies in Isfjord, Spitsbergen (S. Rudowski and S. M. Zalewski), Achievements of Polish research in the Kaffiöyra region (NW Spitsbergen) (D. Brykała), Quaternary deposits in Rev Lake (Southern Spitsbergen, Svalbard) (J. Giżejowski), Bottom morphology of the Hans Glacier forefield (Hornsund, South-West Spitsbergen, Svalbard, preliminary report) (J. Giżejowski), Soils associated with different types of sorted circles (West Spitsbergen) (Z. Klimowicz), Physiochemical processes in small water reservoirs on the terminal moraine of the Werenskiöld Glacier (W. E. Krawczyk), Oceanic periglacial of Arctic Ocean seas (G. G. Matishov and L. G. Pavlova), Relieves of surface on subpolar glaciers (M. Pulina), Conditions of the development of niveo-eolic processes with the Polish Polar Station on Spitsbergen (J. Rodzik), Selected problems of the glaciation processes of the Hornsund fiord (S. Rudowski), Spatial and temporal peculiarities of the Arctic and Subarctic glacial system (N. Kaluzhnikova), Mapping of nival-glacial systems of Spitsbergen (Osokin).

No less numerous were papers presented in that section on Antarctic problems, concerning among other such issues as: Tertiary bryozoans of West Antarctica and their ecological and biogeographical implications (U. Hara), Pectinids (Bivalvia) from the *Pecten* Conglomerate of Cockburn and King George Islands, Antarctica (A. Gaździcki and B. Studencka), The seismic architecture and sedimentation of the bottom of the Admiralty Bay, West Antarctica (S. Rudowski and A. Marsz), Dependence of weather conditions and wind direction at the *Arctowski* Station (South Shetland Islands, Antarctica) in 1996 (M. Kejna and K. Láska), Heat balance dynamics of the ground surface layer at King George Island (South Shetland Islands) (A. Zieliński), Seismic structure of the lithosphere in West Antarctica (M. Grad, A. Guterch, T. Janik and P. Środa).

During two sessions of the **Section of Biological Sciences** chaired by Doctors K. Opaliński and R. Ligowski 10 papers were presented, covering among other such topics as: Results of preliminary research on the *Myodocopina* (Crustacea: Ostracoda) of Admiralty Bay (King George Island, South Shetlands) (M. Błażewicz and A. R. Parker), Dental trace element concentrations of historical Pomor hunters and animals from Svalbard (H. Gołąb and K. Szostek), The floristic comparison of moss floras from the Svalbard and Canadian Arctic Archipelagos and Influence of the Crusoe Glacier on the adjoining vegetation (W-central Axel Heiberg Island Canadian Arctic Archipelago) (M. Kuc), Variability of the Maritime Antarctica geoecosystems (S. Rakusa-Suszczewski), Tintinnid loricae – fascinating structures (A. Wasik), A new method of segregation of Copepoda (Crustacea) from bottom sediments (B. Wiśniewska), Seasonal dynamics of chlorophyll content in selected plants on King George Island (A. Barci-



Opening of the anniversary session – speech by the President of the Polish Academy of Sciences Professor Leszek Kuźnicki.

Photo by Halina Giżejewska



Plenary meeting hall.

Photo by Halina Giżejewska



Marek Kamiński and Wojciech Moskal are presented by Professor Krzysztof Birkenmajer with the Diploma of the honorary membership of the Committee on Polar Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

Photo by Halina Giżejewska



Honorary guest, Cardinal Józef Glemp, Primate of Poland.

Photo by Halina Giżejewska

kowski and P. Loro), Productivity of land plant communities in the vicinity of the *Arctowski* Station (A. Barcikowski, P. Loro and K. Zarzycki), Arctic islands Hopen and Bjørnøya and their importance to biogeography (M. Węśławski, M. Zajączkowski, J. Wiktor and M. Malinga).

The Section of Polar Humanistic and Social Sciences, has inaugurated its activities for the first time at the XXIV Polar Symposium with 8 papers presented during two sessions chaired by Professor Jacek Machowski, on such issues as: Inuit – the rise of a nation (J. Machowski), Images of NE and NW passages on old maps in 17th century (Y. Ochta), Russian-Polish-Norwegian explorations in Recherchefjorden (V. E. Starkov), The Pomor sites of Edgeøya (V. I. Zavyalov), Tourism at Antarctic *Arctowski* Station (P. Ciaputa and K. Salwicka), *Baranowski* glaciological station (J. Perejma, M. Pulina and J. Řehak), Poland's presence in the work of the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS) (J. Sarul), 40 years of the Polish Polar Station on Spitsbergen (S. M. Zalewski).

All papers delivered at the Symposium will be published in a special volume of *Polish Polar Studies*.

At the poster session organized during the Symposium, 12 large – scale illustrations prepared by 28 authors from Poland, Norway, Russia, and Czech Republic, containing photographs, drawings, maps, diagrams etc. on the Arctic and Antarctic regions were displayed.

The Symposium was accompanied also by two artistic events: an exposition of photos by Szymon Barna, entitled *My Spitsbergen* and an exposition of land scape printings and impressions from Spitsbergen by Iwo Birkenmajer.

On the first day evening a social party took place, gathering members of the Polish polar community, its foreign guests and representatives of the scientific circles. During that party two Polish conquerors of the geographic poles – Marek Kamiński and Wojciech Moskal – were honoured with handing them over the diploma of the Honorary Membership of the Committee on Polar Research awarded to them on 28. XI. 1995 and Medals of the Polish Geographical Society for reaching on 23. V. 1995 The North Pole on ski and sledge without external support. It should be noted that Marek Kamiński has also reached on 26. XII. 1995 by land the South Pole, becoming the first explorer who set foot on both geographical poles in the same calendar year. He has reached the South Pole for the second time on 14. I. 1997 on his transantarctic route.

On the second day of the Symposium, the sessions of the specialized commissions of the Committee on Polar Research were held and the annual Plenary Meeting of the Polar Club took place. At that meeting the new Executive Board of the Club was elected and Professor Kazimierz Pękala was re-elected its President. During the discussion Professor Stanisław Rakusa-Suszczewski has informed about the cruise of the naval research vessel *ORP Arctowski* to Antwerp with Polish polar explorers on board, to mark the centennial of the departure on 16. VIII. 1897 from that port to Antarctica of the *Belgica* Expedition, in which two Polish scholars Henryk Arctowski and Antoni Bolesław Dobrowolski have participated. On arrival in Antwerp, Polish polar explorers have joined the Belgian centennial celebrations of the *Belgica* Antarctic Expedition (1897–1899). The cruise of *ORP Arctowski* was part of the centennial celebrations taking now place in Poland.

At the closure of the meeting it was agreed that the next, XXV Polar Symposium will be convened in September 1998 to celebrate at a solemn session in the Warsaw Royal Palace the centenary of the *Belgica* Expedition.

Jacek MACHOWSKI
Warszawa