



40 YEARS OF THE POLISH POLAR STATION ON SPITSBERGEN



Polish Polar Station at Hornsund
($77^{\circ}00' N$; $15^{\circ}33' E$)

Photo by Jerzy Gizejewski

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It is already forty years since the Expedition of the Polish Academy of Sciences on board of two ships, OH *Batory* and S/S *Ustka*, arrived in Hornsund on Spitsbergen and landed on the shore of Isbjörnhamna in July of 1957. The Expedition was organized within the Polish National Program of participation in the International Geophysical Year 1957–1958. In the Expedition, led by Stanisław Siedlecki, participated the scientists representing various Polish institutions such as universities and the Polish Academy of Sciences. Apart from the scientific activity, the main task of the Expedition, was to build the polar station in which ten persons would have to live and work in the total seclusion for one year, including the polar night as well. None of us, those days, would think that the station which had been built for one expedition and one overwintering only, was to exist for the next 40 years and would be visited by dozens of different expeditions. Moreover, the station was named the Polish Polar Station at Hornsund on Spitsbergen in 1978 and it became a permanent research laboratory and a part of the Institute of Geophysics of the Polish Academy of Sciences. All year round crews have been working at the station for twenty years and there were groups of scientific explorers working on their own research projects in the different seasons of the year. The region of the station is the main area of working on particular research projects related to geology, geodesy, geomorphology, glaciology, oceanology and biology in the summer time. The very first Polish research program in this region was carried out in 1932.

The Polish Station at Hornsund on Spitsbergen is a modern laboratory where permanent observations concerning the changes of the geophysical fields and the condition of the natural environment are conducted. It is a hospitable and friendly station for everybody who finds shelter there. Moreover, it is *The Polish House at the Pole* as it had been named by Stanisław Siedlecki, its founder.

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