

POLISH POLAR RESEARCH	16	1-2	105-106	1995
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CHRONICLE

XXI Polar Symposium, Warsaw, September 1994

The XXI Polar Symposium was held in Warsaw (September 22–23, 1994) to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the first Polish Scientific Expedition to Spitsbergen; it was attended by 200 participants. Apart from regulars, the symposium was attended by guests from abroad: Marcelo A. Reguero and Sergio F. Vizcaino (Argentina), Marian Kuc (Canada), Josef and Josef Jr Rehakovic (Czech Republic), Hilda Richardson and Simon Ommaney (England), Hans Peter Blume, Manfred Bölter and Lorenz King (Germany), Jon Ove Hagen, Yoshihide Ohta, Sigmund Spjelkavik and Björn Wold (Norway), Andrej Glazowski (Russia). The sessions took place in beautiful halls of the Staszic Palace which created suitable atmosphere for this special occasion.

The Institute of Geophysics of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw was responsible for the organizing of the Symposium, with the active concurrence of the Department of Polar and Marine Research of this Institute, under the direction of Dr. S. Maciej Zalewski.

The symposium was opened by Professor Aleksander Guterch, who also conducted the sessions. Professor Krzysztof Birkenmajer, President of the Committee of Polar Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences, provoked vivid interest when presenting the history of Polish research in Spitsbergen.

The main theme of the symposium *60 Years of Polish Research of Spitsbergen* recalled to mind the first Polish Scientific Expedition to this area which initiated a research, continued to the present day. Most moving was the testimony of a participant of this memorable expedition in 1934, Professor Stanisław Siedlecki. Others, taking part in this expedition to the region of Van Keulen Fjord in Torell Land were: Stefan Bernadzikiewicz, Witold Biernawski, Henryk Mogilnicki, Stefan Zbigniew Różycki, Sylwester Bogdan Zagajski and Antoni Rogala-Zawadzki. Among their achievements there were reconnaissance of geological structure and the first topographical map of the area.

During the plenary sessions, the Polish Section of the International Glaciological Society was officially opened by the President and Secretary General of the International Glaciological Society — Björn Wold (Norway) and Simon Ommaney (England). Hilda Richardson (England), who for many years was the Secretary General of the Society and whose assistance proved to be invaluable as regards the beginnings of the Polish glaciology, was also present. The participation of Poland in the works of this distinguished Society is a fact of great importance. Professor Jacek Jania (University of Silesia) is the President of the Polish Section of the International Glaciological Society.

55 reports were given in of geology, palaeobiology, geophysics, geomorphology, physical geography, pedology, hydrography, glaciology, meteorology and climatology, biology, as well as concerning problems connected with man's presence in the Arctic. All papers were published in a special volume *XXI Polar Symposium — 60 Years of Polish Research of Spitsbergen* (edited by S.M. Zalewski, Warszawa 1994: 371 pp). The majority of the papers were presented during specialist and poster sessions. They were chaired by Krzysztof Birkenmajer and Stanisław Rudowski (Earth Sciences), Maria Olech and Stanisław Rakusa-Suszczewski (Biology) and S. Maciej Zalewski (*Varia*).

An important item of the program was the Annual Meeting of the Polar Club of the Polish Geographical Society. The present committee of the Club was acquitted of its responsibilities, its activity was ascertained to be in order and it was also suggested that the same committee should remain in office for another term (1994 – 1997). The board of the Polar Club includes therefore: the chairman Kazimierz Pękala (Lublin), vice-chairman Dariusz Bogucki (Gdańsk), secretary Janina Repelewska-Pękalowa (Lublin), treasurer Jan Reder (Lublin), other members: Jacek Machowski (Warszawa), Marta Stańkowska-Radziun (Szczecin), Bogdan Czarnecki (Łódź). 23 new members were introduced into the Club — mainly participants of the polar expeditions in 1993 and 1994.

Tradition was upheld with the usual informal meeting which enabled all generations of the Polish polar researchers to enjoy themselves in a friendly and stimulating atmosphere.

The next symposium, in honour Professor Alfred Jahn, founder of the Polar Club and its first chairman to commemorate his 80th birthday, will be organized by the University of Wrocław.

Kazimierz PEKALA
Lublin