



Report on the activities of the Museum of the Second World War in 2012



Museum of the Second World War

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of the Museum of the Second
World War in 2012**

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*Professor Dr hab. Paweł Machcewicz,
director of the Museum of the Second World War*

A history museum must begin with an idea. Next come the script and the scenography for its exhibition. To become a living creature that conjures emotions, the museum must be authentic. No learned treatises, no fancy multimedia solutions can guarantee that it will be able to begin a dialogue with the sensitive modern visitor; rather, it needs exhibits that can serve as footprints made by the people and events whose stories it wants to tell. We at the Museum of the Second World War believe that it is extremely important to collect such footprints. Of the nearly 20,000 objects we have already gathered, many came from individuals who entrusted their most precious family memorabilia to us. It is these objects that will help us to create the living message of the story we want to tell.

Architecture will be an important element in our message. The museum's building speaks with its symbolic, eloquent form, which engages the visitor. Its construction began in the summer of 2012, and the foundation stone was laid on 1 September. Its form will affect our visitors on many levels and in many ways: through historical facts, emotions, art.

Paweł Machcewicz
Director of the Museum of the Second World War





The most important
events of 2012

29 January

“Battle of the Bulge ’44”, an educational re-enactment

30 January

Fifth meeting of the Advisory Board of the Museum of the Second World War

16 February

Seminar for Polish and German historians and museum directors

7 March

Opening of the exhibition “June 1941. The deepest cut

25 March

“Pomerania ’45”, an educational re-enactment

11 May

Vice-president of the European Commission, Siim Kallas, visits Westerplatte

12–16 May

First International Festival of History, “Anamneses”, Wrocław

19 May

European Night of Museums on Westerplatte Peninsula

24 May

Inaugural meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Museum of the Second World War

26 May

Outdoor games on Westerplatte Peninsula during the Tenth Baltic Science Festival

30 May

Archaeological exploration preceding the construction of the museum ends

5 June

Cooperation agreement is signed between the Museum of the Second World War, and the Croatian History Museum and the Public Institution Jasenovac Memorial Area

15 July

A Sherman Firefly tank, restored by the Museum of the Second World War, is presented during the fifth rally of the “Strefa Militarna” re-enactment association in Gostyń

31 July

Contract is signed with Soletanche Polska to begin the first phase of the building's construction

1 August

First phase of the museum's construction begins (building of the dry pit)

31 August

The Museum is involved in organizing the first reunion of the Westerplatte Families in Gdańsk

1 September

The foundation stone is laid

9 September

"Pomerania '39" educational re-enactment about Polish-German fighting in September 1939

10 September

Gala wrapping up the 16th "History at your fingertips" competition

13–15 September

"European Remembrance", First Symposium of European Institutions dealing with 20th Century History

17 October

Gdańsk premiere of the play "Elizabeth Watson – Cichociemna"

18 October

Call for proposals for multi-media presentations and films for the permanent exhibition of the Museum of the Second World War


7 November

Sixth meeting of the Advisory Board of the Museum of the Second World War

14 December

Second meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Museum of the Second World War





Preparations of the
permanent exhibition



Visualization of the permanent exhibition, "The road to war" narrative bloc. Tempora S.A.

In 2012 the museum delivered the scripts for all sections of its permanent exhibition to the Tempora designers, chose exhibits and iconographies and selected their placement in the planned space. Staff historians began to write the exhibition's texts and labels.

The permanent exhibition will cover nearly 7,000 sq. m., which will make it one of the largest historical exhibitions in the world. It will be divided into three narrative blocs. The first, "The road to war", will cover the roots of the conflict. It will focus on Nazism, Italian Fascism, Communism and Japanese imperialism, all of which aimed to overthrow the Versailles order and turned into forces desensitizing politics and the judgement of the people of the time, paving the way for the Second World War.



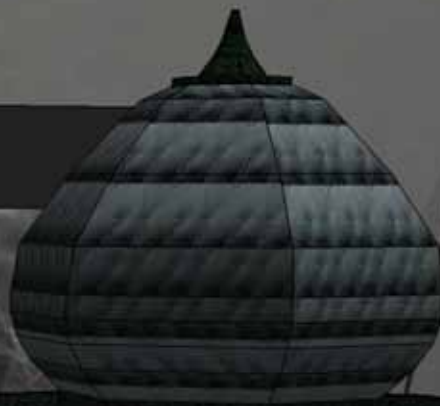
Visualization of the permanent exhibition, "The road to war" thematic bloc. Tempora S.A.





*Visualization of the permanent exhibition,
"The road to war" narrative bloc. Tempora S.A.*





The permanent exhibition will cover nearly 7,000 sq.m., which will make it one of the largest historical exhibitions in the world.



Visualization of the permanent exhibition, "The horrors of war" thematic bloc. Tempora S.A.

The narrative about Poland's defensive war of 1939 marks the passage to the next thematic bloc, "The horrors of war". The experiences of ordinary people will dominate this section. Reporting on the war through the prism of the lives of soldiers, prisoners of war, camp inmates, slave labourers and civilians, men, women and children, will generate the most universal and clear message for visitors, regardless of their nationality.

The third section of the exhibition, "The war's long shadow", will serve as a bridge between the end of the war and its repercussions. We will present not only the downfall of the Third Reich, the liberation of Europe and the dropping of A-bombs on Japan, but also the vast human and material losses, the border changes in Central and Eastern Europe, the Sovietization of the regions to the east of the Elbe and the post-war forced resettlements of populations.

An enormous divided screen will bring the exhibition to a close, showing the most important events on the two sides of the Iron Curtain in parallel all the way until the fall of Communism in Central Europe and the removal of the post-war division of the continent.

Visualization of the permanent exhibition, "The horrors of war" narrative bloc. Tempora S.A



A separate area has been designed for children. It will be specially adapted to educate the youngest visitors. Another discrete space will show archaeological finds from the former Wiadrownia district, in which the Museum of the Second World War is making its home.

The announcement in October 2012 of the call for proposals for multimedia presentations and films was an important milestone in the creation of the permanent exhibition. We are seeking a company to work together with the museum's specialists on nearly 250 multimedia presentations and films for the exhibition.






Visualization of the permanent exhibition, "The horrors of war" narrative bloc. Tempora S.A.



First phase of the construction of the Museum of the Second World War, building of the slurry walls. 3 October 2012. Photo: R. Jocher



Construction of the
museum's building



Archaeological exploration on the grounds of the museum. May 2012. Photo: R. Jocher

Objects excavated by the archaeologists. May 2012. Photo: R. Jocher

After nearly a year, archaeological work on the grounds of the museum was completed on 31 May 2012. The archaeologists reached layers dating back to the 16th century. They discovered the well-preserved urban layout of the Wiadrownia district, including its high street, Grosse Gasse, destroyed during the Second World War. The stones that once paved the street will now cover the main itinerary through our exhibition. Many objects used by the people of Wiadrownia in their daily lives, such as craftsmen's tools, pottery, cutlery, pipes, buttons and coins from various archaeological periods were also found. The most important ones will be shown in the exhibition about Wiadrownia.

On 31 July our museum signed a contract with Soletanche Polska, which won the bid for excavating the dry trench, which resembles a bathtub, the first, and most important, phase of construction. The watertight trench is indispensable to the construction, since 80 per cent of the building will lie underground, and the land is soggy. Soletanche was chosen as the company capable of excavating the pit using the slurry wall technology and building a concrete bottom layer.

Work on the slurry walls, which will secure the building from water pressure from the sides, was completed in late 2012. They were stabilized with anchoring micropiles, which reach deep into the neighbouring plots. The size of the museum's plot made it necessary to install about 300 of them.

First phase of the construction of the Museum of the Second World War, building of the slurry walls. May-October 2012. Photo: R. Jocher





*Ceremony of setting
the foundation stone
of the Museum
of the Second World War.
1 September 2012.
Photo: D. Jagodziński*



On 12 December an invitation for tenders was announced to find the general contractor to build the floors lying above ground. This part of the construction is scheduled for the second half of 2013. The building is shaped like a leaning prism, rising 40 metres above ground at its highest point. It will house the library, classrooms and conference rooms, with a café and a restaurant on the top level with a panorama of Gdańsk.

Laying the foundation stone of the Museum of the Second World War building

On 1 September the ceremony of laying the foundation stone took place, with Prime Minister Donald Tusk, Minister of Culture and National Heritage Bogdan Zdrojewski, head of the Prime Minister's Office Tomasz Arabski, Mayor of Gdańsk Paweł Adamowicz and Director of the Museum of the Second World War Professor Dr hab. Paweł Machcewicz participating. A piece of the pavement uncovered from Grosse Gasse, the main street of the Wiadrownia district in the 19th century, during the archaeological dig, was used as the foundation stone. The stone and the foundation act were placed in the building's stone base.



An Enigma encoding machine. Photo: R. Jocher



The collection





By the end of 2012, over 18,000 items obtained through purchases and donations were registered in the museum's collection. The largest share are objects documenting the daily lives of civilians and soldiers during the Second World War, as well as militaria, parts of uniforms and equipment used by men serving in the armies fighting at various fronts. There are also photographs, documents, flyers and articles from the press from 1939-45.

Some of the most interesting exhibits acquired for our collection in 2012 are:

Memorabilia once belonging to Polish deportees

- A chest donated by Halina Młyńczak, which her mother (née Szpilewska) bought in exile from a Ukrainian family. She used it to keep her belongings and as a bed for Halina's brother Waldemar. The rich lid decorations survived. Inside is Halina's signature in pencil.
- A cross from a Polish exiles' cemetery in Ezhma, Arkhangelsk oblast. Our collection also includes everyday objects belonging to Polish deportees in this area of the Russian Far North.
- A pencil drawing of the interior of a hut inhabited by Polish deportees. It is one in a series of illustrations of life in exile in the town of Urdzhar, Kazakhstan, made by Bolesława Sałęga, who lived there in the early 1940s.
- Christmas tree decorations made of birch bark, straw and paper in December 1941 by Stanisław Ścibor-Marchocki, who was living as a deportee in Achinsk, Krasnoyarski Krai.

Cross from Polish deportees' cemetery in the Ezhma, Arkhangelsk oblast, special settlement.

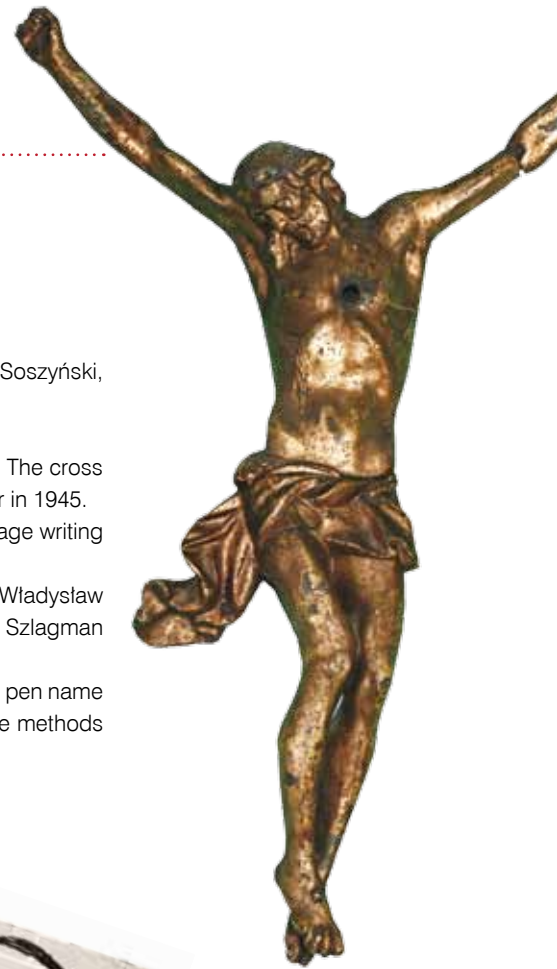
Christmas tree decorations made by Stanisław Ścibor-Marchocki.

Trunk donated by Halina Młyńczak.

Wooden cart of the kind used by refugees and displaced persons made in the 1930s or '40s.

Everyday life

- Remains of a toy pram found in 1945 in the ruins of the Warsaw ghetto by Stanisław Soszyński, who donated it to our museum.
- A child's shoe found by Stanisław Soszyński in the ruins of Warsaw after its uprising.
- A lead figure of Christ with a bullet hole in its left side. The bullet is lodged in the figure. The cross came from a church in Lower Silesia. It was most likely desecrated by a Red Army soldier in 1945.
- An armband worn by guards in the Vilijampolė (Kaunas) ghetto. It bears Yiddish-language writing and two stamps, one with the symbol of the SS.
- A box bearing the initials W. A. from a collection of objects that belonged to General Władysław Anders. There is also the engraved name of its manufacturer and place of production, Szlagman Jeruzalem.
- A 1943 first edition of *Kamienie na szaniec* by Aleksander Kamiński, published under the pen name Juliusz Górecki. The Home Army ordered this first edition destroyed, since it revealed the methods of underground warfare.





Box that once belonged to General Władysław Anders.

Kamienie na szaniec, first edition.

Lead figure of Christ with a bullet hole on the left side of its chest.



British Second World War-era teddy bears.

"Poland first to fight" poster by Marek Żuławski, 1942.

"Precz z wrogiem!" [Down with the enemy!] poster seeking to recruit Polish volunteers in Canada, 1941.

A 1930s rocking horse.

German electric washing machine, 1940.

British child's leather football or rugby boots.



Camps and prisons

■ Items that belonged to Janina Wasilojć-Smoleńska, “Jachna”, a nurse who served in units including Major Zygmunt Szendzielarz “Łupaszko’s” Fifth Vilna Brigade of the Home Army in 1944-46. She was arrested by the secret police in 1947 and given the death sentence, which was later commuted to a 15-year prison term, which she served in Fordon and Inowrocław. She was released in April 1956. The museum received objects including a small box and a rosary “Jachna” made in prison out of bread, and little bags for personal belongings. On one of them, she embroidered the dates “1947-1962”, the years she was to spend in captivity, as well as the first names of her fellow inmates.

■ A letter on birch bark sent on 18 May 1945 from the Reshota forced labour camp in Krasnoyarski Krai by Jan Zdanowicz to his friend Kunegunda Malewska. Jan and Kunegunda had lived in the village of Żołudek in 1941-42. During the war, both were active underground in the Nowogródek



Ticket to “Olympic games” organized in the Oflag II C Woldenberg officers’ prisoner-of-war camp on 23 July-13 August 1944.

Caricatures drawn by Second Lieutenant Czesław Andrysiak in captivity, Oflag II B Arnswalde (today, Choszczno).

Pieces of barbed wire from the fencing of Stalag 325 for Soviet prisoners of war in Karolówka near Zamość.

Letter written on tree bark by Jan Zdanowicz.

Cloth pouches that once belonged to Janina Wasilojć-Smoleńska “Jachna”.



№. ewidency: 116
 Data urodzenia: 4/VII 1917
 Miejsce urodzenia: Mole, Płoms
 Stan rodzinny: żonaty
 Rodzaj przeliczenia: Grubeńskie plus

% niezdolności do pracy:	% zwalnia ze służby wojak.:
	85%
№. i. inwalidzkiej (karty):	ogólny:
3858 III/P.	85%
Wystawca (pa):	
Gen. Br. 11212	
	4/V 1919

50.



Б. С. С. Р.
 Троицкая обл.
 Мелуров с Мелуров
 М-ко Мелуров уст. Троицк
 Кону М. М. Мелуров
 Мелуровская Куна
 Красноармейский край
 1011
 Почт. отдел
 Дикик Репетин
 № 235/5
 Зданович
 Улан Уланович

Кочина...

Вот тебе письмо от мамы
 которую скрывает от твоего отца
 мама уверена, что жестоким дядькой
 и пошутил тебе... Поприжайте
 стали...
 99. тел...

2565





Region of the Home Army. After the Red Army occupied this area, Jan was arrested and deported to the Soviet Union. The friends never met again, and nothing is known about what happened to Jan.

Underground activity

- Polish AP5 radio station, designed and built by the engineer Tadeusz Heftman, a radio technology and short-wave communications pioneer in Poland, who worked for the AVA Warsaw Radio Technology Factory. This radio station was manufactured in 1943 in Britain and found its way to Poland in 1944 in an airdrop. Fighters parachuted into Poland were among this model's users.
- Wreath from a field service cap and a uniform jacket, which belonged to Polish Navy Cadet Adam Dedio, who was condemned to death and executed by the Communist authorities in Gdańsk in 1946 for fighting in the post-war underground anti-Communist organization Semper Fidelis – Victoria.
- Gęsta Street sign, damaged during the Warsaw Uprising. It was taken down from the building in front of which a fighter and the nurse coming to his assistance were wounded.
- Plaque from the tomb cross (1944) of Officer Cadet Jerzy Martin "Mors", killed at the age of 18 in the village of Skorosze near Opacz on 2 August 1944. During the war, Jerzy Martin was a soldier of the "Lawa" platoon of the Air Force Department of the Home Army's General Headquarters. On the first two days of the Warsaw Uprising he served in a cover platoon fighting to take over Warsaw's Okęcie airport and then took part in evacuating the unit to Kampinos Forest, where he died. The museum's collection also includes a plaque with the letters "NN" and a helmet with bullet holes; both were taken down as the graves of fighters were being removed in 1945. Our collection also includes a few markers from the graves of the defenders of Warsaw in 1939. Stanisław Soszyński kept the two

Polish AP5 radio station.

Wreath badge from a field service cap worn by Polish Navy Cadet Adam Dedio.

Bullet-ridden sign for Gęsta Street damaged during the Warsaw Uprising.

Plaque from the grave of Officer Cadet Jerzy Martin "Mors," 1944.

German-made "Hohner" harmonica.

Hand-made shoulder badge of the "Wybraniec" Home Army partisan attached unit of the Kielce District's Kedyw propaganda and sabotage organization (1943-44).



kinds of markers he had found in 1945.

Militaria, the daily lives of soldiers

- Polish partisan's bayonet, helmet, grenades, dagger and small pieces of equipment found along the partisans' line of attack near Osuchy, one of the war's largest partisan battles in Poland.
- Uniform of a soldier of the First Independent Parachute Brigade formed in Scotland in late 1940-early 1941. This brigade took part in Operation Market Garden in September 1944. The uniform consists of a British-made Denison Smock, battledress P. 40 jacket and trousers, uniform shirt, tie, paratrooper's helmet, scarf, camouflage jacket and a British P. 37 backpack.
- American soldier's toilet kit consisting of a shaver, bottle of talcum powder, clothes brush, toothbrush holder, comb, mirror, scissors, 20 packets of blades and a stick of Vaseline.
- Wooden walking stick made by hand by a French soldier during the "phoney war" of 1939-40. Carved on its side is: "Souvenir Guerre. 1939. Fait Au Pont Tournant Le 30-4-40".
- Finnish hunter's knife. Bone-inlaid hilt. The blade bears the engraved words "Kiestinki 1941" and the image of a setting sun, carved by a Finnish soldier to remember the fighting near the village of Kiestinki during the Continuation War of 1941-44 between Finland and the Soviet Union, which followed their Winter War.





US Army soldier's toilet kit.

Finnish hunter's knife.

Wooden walking stick made by a French soldier during the 1939-40 "phoney war".

Polish helmet, model 31, found on the battlefield of Kępa Oksywska, September 1939.

Maxim model 1910 machine gun.

British Mk II Bren machine gun.

British PIAT Mk I anti-tank grenade launcher.

German helmet, model 1916, with a painted-on red-and-white band and white eagle, worn by a fighter in the Warsaw Uprising.

Fairbairn-Sykes fighting knife, used by British commandos and others.



DZIENNIK
działań bojowych
Komp. Sztabowej
16 Bryg. Czołg.



Dziennik działań Kompanii Sztabowej 16 Brygady
holenderskiej, walczącej dnia 4.5.1941

ok. p. dnia 4.5.1941.
Porannek dzienny 1 Pułk holenderski Nr 215 szt 1.
2 dnia 19.5.1941. Kompania Bronienia 1 Pułku holenderskiego
została przeniesiona na kompanię Sztabową 16 Brygady
holenderskiej.
In. p. kompanij - Stajgowa, Pithskite, Holand.
ul. Wilhelmsdorp 25
Kwalifikacja kompanij w domach prywatnych
rozlokowanych.
Stal 0-ta: 1 komp. Sztabowej 16 Brygady holenderskiej

- a) Sztab Brygady
ofic. szt. 16. - 19
Podoficerów - 6
Kuch. - 2
Kuch. - 2

Razem - 24



Porządek w kompanii



Wzrost i postać



- British PIAT Mk I anti-tank grenade launcher and an Mk II Bren light machine gun. The British Army and its allies, including the Polish Armed Forces in the West, used this equipment. It was also dropped to parts of occupied Europe, and partisans in France and Poland also employed it.
- Finnish skis donated by the Military Museum in Helsinki. Finnish soldiers used skis of this type during the Soviet-Finnish Winter War of November 1939-March 1940.
- Collection of photographs of General Stanisław Maczek's First Armoured Division. They were taken between August and December 1944. Władysław Dwojak and Stefan Galikowski, Maczek's former soldiers, donated the collection to our museum.
- War diary of the staff company of the 16th Armoured Brigade of the Polish Armed Forces in the West. Formed on 1 September 1941, from 1941 to 1943 it belonged to General Maczek's First Armoured Division.

The museum contracts out the conservation of the objects it acquires. In 2012, 544 items were conserved, including a German G7A training torpedo, brought up from the Bay of Gdańsk; a German-made early-20th-century freight car employed to transport prisoners and prisoners of war during the Second World War, silk maps of areas including Germany, western France and the Generalgouvernement, which were smuggled into a prisoner-of-war camp in Germany, a DKW motorcycle used by the Wehrmacht's reconnaissance companies and a cross from a Polish deportee cemetery in Suzma in Arkhangelsk Oblast.

The museum also collects eyewitness and participant accounts about the Second World War. So far, over 50 video recordings and some 40 written reports have been assembled. They cover the events of September 1939, experiences of deportees in Siberia, daily life under the German and Soviet occupations, the terror instituted by the German and Soviet authorities, underground activity, partisan fighting and clandestine teaching organizations.


War diary of the staff company of the 16th Armoured Brigade of the Polish Armed Forces in the West.

Finnish skis donated by the Military Museum in Helsinki.

Photos of exhibits: Jacek Balk



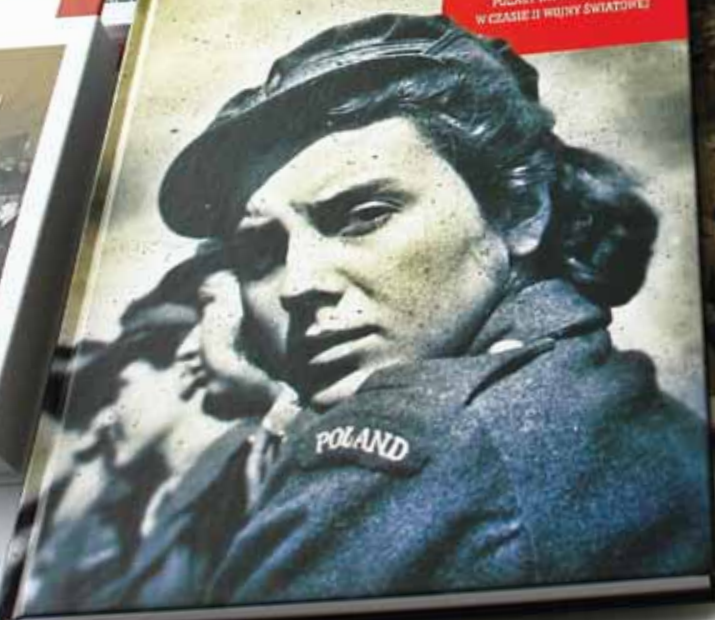
European Night of Museums on the Westerplatte Peninsula. 19 May 2012. Photo: D. Jagodziński



Academic and
educational activities



**NA OBCYCH
ZIEMIACH**
POLACY NA WYCHODZIE
W CZASIE II WJNY ŚWIATOWEJ



Publications

In 2012, our museum published seven new titles (including one in German):

- Zygmunt Starachowicz, *Sonderaktion Krakau. Wspomnienia z akcji przeciwko profesorom uniwersyteckim w Krakowie (6-10 listopada 1939 r.)* [Sonderaktion Krakau. Recollections about the operation against university professors in Cracow, 6-10 November 1939] (Gdańsk, 2012)
- Grzegorz Motyka, Rafał Wnuk, Tomasz Stryjek, Adam F. Baran, *Wojna po wojnie. Antysowieckie podziemie w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej w latach 1944-1953* [A war after the war. The anti-Soviet underground in East-Central Europe in 1944-53] (Gdańsk-Warsaw, 2012)
- Marek Kornat, *Polen zwischen Hitler und Stalin. Studien zur polnischen Außenpolitik in der Zwischenkriegszeit* [Poland between Hitler and Stalin. Studies about Polish foreign policy in the interwar period] (Berlin, 2012)
- Marek Kornat, *Polityka zagraniczna Polski 1938-1939* [Poland's foreign policy, 1938-39] (Gdańsk, 2012)
- *Tajemnice Blizny. Wywiad Armii Krajowej, w walce z rakietami V-2* [The secrets of Blizna. Home Army intelligence at war with V-2 rockets], ed. Rafał Wnuk, Robert Zapart (Gdańsk, 2012)
- Dušan Segeš, *Partnerzy czy petenci? Słowacy i Słowacja w polityce rządu RP na obczyźnie podczas II wojny światowej* [Partners or petitioners? The Slovaks and Slovakia in the policy of the Polish government in exile during the Second World War] (Gdańsk, 2012)
- *Na obcych ziemiach. Polacy na wychodźstwie podczas II wojny światowej* [On foreign soil. Poles in exile during the Second World War], eds. Ewa Czuchaj, Marta Markowska (Gdańsk-Warsaw, 2012); a book of photographs depicting the lives of Poles in exile during the Second World War, published jointly with the KARTA Centre.



Visualization of the "Wolf's Lair: Crime, war, memory" outdoor exhibition. A fragment of the display to be installed in one of the surviving barracks.

Research projects

Work continued on a project launched in 2009 about the history of the Central Commission for the Investigation of Nazi Crimes in Poland. The project will result in a publication about the organization, activities and significance of the commission in settling accounts for Nazi crimes in Poland after the Second World War, as well as its roles as a research and an opinion-forming organization.

We also began to work on a comparative research project of the legal and political processes of settling accounts for crimes and collaboration that occurred during the Second World War in different European countries. The study will compare the post-Second World War attempts to bring justice with other historical cases, such as the First World War, the Spanish Civil War and the fall of the Communist dictatorships.

"Wolf's Lair: Crimes, war, memory"

In 2012 our museum began to prepare a permanent outdoor exhibition in Hitler's first field headquarters on the Eastern Front, "Wolf's Lair", in Gierłoż near Kętrzyn (Rastenburg). The exhibition will show more than the details of military technology and the architectural phenomenon of the buildings of "Wolf's Lair", namely, the real face of the Third Reich's totalitarianism, focussing on its crimes. The exhibition is sponsored by a trilateral agreement between the Ministry of Culture and National Herit-

Exhibition on "June 1941. The deepest cut. The German attack on the Soviet Union. 24 biographies". Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Gdańsk, 7 March 2012.



age, "Wilcze Gniazdo" JV Ltd and the Museum of the Second World War. Our museum is responsible for preparing the script and designing the exhibition, which will serve as its foundation, to be constructed by the plot's tenant, "Wilcze Gniazdo". In the next few years, the museum will supervise the educational and scholarly activities conducted here.

Temporary exhibitions organized with the museum's participation

1) "June 1941. The deepest cut. The German attack on the Soviet Union. 24 biographies", curated by the German-Russian Museum Berlin-Karlshorst and hosted by the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Gdańsk.

2) "Katyń. The memory of the Polish nation. The fate of the victims from Zaolzie". Jan Sechter, ambassador of the Czech Republic to Poland, came up with the idea for this exhibition. The "Katyń Family" association in the Czech Republic, the Congress of Poles in the Czech Republic and the Silesian Provincial Museum in Opava, Czech Republic, worked together on it. The exhibition was shown in the Gdańsk City Hall and in the Main Library of the University of Gdańsk.



Educational and historical re-enactments

In 2012 our museum organized three re-enactments of Second World War military events and operations:

Battle of the Bulge '44

This re-enactment presented one of the best-known battles of the war and the largest land battle with the participation of the US Army. It was staged on land bordering Gdańsk and Gdynia. The participation of historical re-enactment groups and the use of special effects helped to create a live mock-up of the battlefield.

Pomerania '45

This project aimed to familiarize the public with the history of Pomerania during the Second World War. During this tourist-historical expedition put on together with re-enactment groups, participants learnt facts about the German occupation, the Polish underground state and the Red Army's occupation of Pomerania in 1945. They travelled by handcar along the scenic railway line from Kolbud to Niestępowo.

Pomerania '39

This re-enactment organized in the Kashubian Ethnographic Park in Wdzydze Kiszewskie was to teach history, to interpret the battles the Polish Army fought with German troops in September 1939 and to tell the story of the situation of Pomerania's civilian population. Militaria enthusiasts were also able to inspect replicas of vehicles used by the two armies. This was an educational event, put on jointly with the "Pomerania" Independent Reconstruction Group.



Pupils taking part in the "Muzealny Medi@projekt" workshops. 29 January 2012. Photo: A. Róg

Participants in the outdoor games on Westerplatte Peninsula. Tenth Baltic Festival of Science. Photo: A. Kruslińska

Educational projects

European Night of Museums on Westerplatte Peninsula

The Museum of the Second World War took part in this annual event for the third time. Historical re-enactments added to the attractions, which included visiting the peninsula and its outdoor exhibition "Westerplatte: Spa – Bastion – Symbol". Guides discussed the history of Westerplatte from Napoleonic times to the Second World War. Visitors were also able to see a display of 1945-89 military equipment and presentations of military tactics and self-defence by paramilitary groups. Guard House no. 4 was specially opened for this evening, and museum staff and re-enactors recounted its history and demonstrated equipment of Polish troops during the Second World War. Rides on handcars on an unused railway line were an additional novelty.

Museum Medi@projekt

These journalism and photojournalism workshops were designed for young people in their last three years of school. Throughout 2012, they took part in theory lessons and outdoor exercises organized by our museum. Journalists and photoreporters who conducted the workshops taught them the fundamentals of their professions. The pupils learnt skills such as writing reportages, editing texts and conducting interviews. They were also instructed in press photography and photography techniques.

16th "History at your fingertips" competition

This was the third time that the Museum of the Second World War took part in managing the "History at your fingertips" contest for secondary school pupils. The KARTA Centre announces the competition, while the Office for War Veterans and Victims of Oppression, Warsaw City Hall Office of Education, the Centre for Socio-Economic Education and the Batory Foundation support it. This year, the pupils could select one of three essay topics: "Poles and Russians in the 20th century: Preserved and obliterated histories", "The first and last days of the war: Scenes from memory" and "To fight, to resist, to rebel: The value and cost of dissent in People's Poland".

The 16th contest in the series was announced in November 2011, and concluded on 10 September 2012 with an award ceremony at the Royal Castle in Warsaw. The topic developed by our staff, "The first and last days of the war", proved the most popular. A total of 237 essays from 138 schools and 3 district libraries from 105 localities across Poland were sent in. They were judged in two stages by a jury, which awarded 16 first, second and third prizes, as well as 22 first-class distinctions and 26 second-class distinctions.

*Participants in the closing gala
of the 16th "History at
your fingertips" contest.
Photo: M. Sulek*





*Teresa Stepiń-Nowicka in the play
"Elizabeth Watson – Cichociemna".
Photo: M. Ulatowski*

*General Elżbieta Zawacka.
From the collection of the General
Elżbieta Zawacka Foundation.*

Outdoor School of Freedom

This year, our museum, together with the European Solidarity Center, inaugurated educational workshops run by the Outdoor School of Freedom for intermediate school pupils from West Pomerania, Warmia-Masuria and Podlasie Provinces. The goal of the workshops was to give young people a better understanding of the history of Gdańsk, a city that has played an important role in the contemporary history of Poland and Europe. The workshops included exercises in 20th-century history, the "All About Freedom" Film Academy and a visit to the Westerplatte Peninsula that included its outdoor exhibition "Westerplatte: Spa – Bastion – Symbol" led by a historian from our Museum.

Gdańsk opening night of the play Elizabeth Watson – Cichociemna

On 17 October 2012, the premiere of the monodrama "Elizabeth Watson – Cichociemna" took place on the Malaria Stage of the Wybrzeże Theatre in Gdańsk. It was organized by the Museum of the Second World War together with the General Elżbieta Zawacka Foundation based in Toruń. The play, written by Inka Dowlasz, discusses the life of the only woman among the special operations paratroopers dropped into Poland during the war. She used the code name Elizabeth Watson during her missions. She died in 2009.

Training for historical re-enactment groups

For the first time, in November, we sponsored a training session in Łapino near Kolbudy to integrate the re-enactment movement under the auspices of our museum and to promote high ethical stand-

*European Night of Museums
on Westerplatte Peninsula.
19 May 2012.
Photo: D. Jagodziński*

*Participants in the outdoor
game "Westerplatte patrol".
7 September 2012.*



ards, historical accuracy and familiarity with historical reconstruction techniques. We plan to continue these sessions.

Active visits to the Westerplatte battlefield

Our museum has conducted this project since 2009. It aims to teach intermediate and secondary school pupils about the history of the defence of the peninsula in September 1939. A visit to the "Westerplatte: Spa – Bastion – Symbol" exhibition is an important part of the visit, as is a walk down the educational trail, which was created in 2011.

Westerplatte games in the Tenth Baltic Science Festival

This outdoor game for secondary school pupils on the peninsula was combined with a visit to the relics of defence architecture of the Military Transit Depot, the permanent outdoor exhibition and the educational path. The pupils were given assignments about the history of the peninsula and were tested on using maps and giving first aid.

Westerplatte patrol

We organized this outdoor game for pupils from Special School No. 2 in Gdańsk. The young people learnt about the Military Transit Depot by solving challenges prepared for them by staff of the museum's education department. Scouts from the Scout Historical Reconstruction Group and the "September 1939" Association of Historical Reconstructions took part in the game.

Tenth Łupaszko Rally in the footsteps of the Home Army's Major "Łupaszko's" Fifth Vilna Brigade

Our museum helped to organize this rally in late June-early July. Participants learnt about the Home Army unit commanded by Major Zygmunt Szendzielarz "Łupaszko" and about other partisans fighting for independence in the Vilna and Pomerania regions in 1939-46. There were also discussions about the history of Pomerania, Kashubia and the Powiśle region. The participants learnt to move effectively and independently and to orient themselves in the terrain. They travelled through the Tucholski Forest on foot in groups. The many tasks they were assigned involved knowing the history of the Underground State and the anti-Communist underground. Taking part in the rally were also Boy Scouts, teenagers and members of re-enactment groups.

Event series

"The war on tapes" film series

These screenings, which are designed primarily for secondary school pupils, teach about different aspects of the Second World War. During each event, a researcher from our museum discusses the historical background of the film, and a cinema specialist talks about the film's background and its creators' other work. This year the following films were shown:

- *Max Manus*, dir. Espen Sandberg, Joachim Roenning; Denmark, Germany, Norway, 2008,
- *The Flame and the Citron*, dir. Ole Christian Madsen; Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Norway, Sweden, 2008,
- *Charlotte Gray*, dir. Gillian Armstrong; Britain, Germany, Australia, 2001,
- *Female Agents*, dir. Jean-Paul Salome; France, 2008,
- *Walter Defends Sarajevo*, dir. Hajrudin Krvavac, Yugoslavia, 1972.

Public lectures and book promotions in the "Meetings with history" series

The Museum of the Second World War has hosted this series of public events for three years. In 2012, they were:

Gdańsk

- lecture and promotion of Dr Jochen Böhrer's book *Najazd 1939. Niemcy przeciw Polsce* [Invasion 1939: Germany vs. Poland],
- Professor Dr Rolf-Dieter Müller's lecture about Germany's June 1941 attack on the Soviet Union, which accompanied the opening of the "June 1941. The deepest cut. The German attack on the Soviet Union. 24 biographies" exhibition, curated by the German-Russian Museum Berlin-Karlshorst,

Launch of Dr Jochen Böhrer's book,
„Najazd 1939. Niemcy przeciw Polsce”.
12 January 2012.



- launch of Professor Bogdan Chrzanowski's book *Delegatura Rządu RP na Kraj na Pomorzu* [The government delegation for Poland in Pomerania]
- lecture by Ivo Pejaković on "Croatia during the Second World War: Between collaboration and resistance".

Warsaw

- book launch of *Wojna po wojnie. Antysowieckie podziemie w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej w latach 1944–1953* [War after the war. The anti-Soviet underground in East-Central Europe in 1944-53] by Grzegorz Motyka, Rafał Wnuk, Tomasz Stryjek and Adam F. Baran.

Cracow

- promotion of Zygmunt Starowicz's book *Sonderaktion Krakau. Wspomnienia z akcji przeciwko profesorom uniwersyteckim w Krakowie (6-10 listopada 1939 roku)* [Sonderaktion Krakau. Recollections of the operation against university professors in Cracow, 6-10 November 1939] co-organized with the Museum of the Jagiellonian University.

Another event in the "Meetings with history" series co-organized with the Arkadiusz Rybicki Foundation was the launch of a book by Professor Dr hab. Paweł Machcewicz, *Spyry o historię 2000-2011* [Debates about history, 2000-11]. The panel discussion about the most important events of the past decade featured the book's author, the historian Dr hab. Aleksander Hall and the deputy director of the Museum of the Warsaw Rising, Dr Dariusz Gawin.





Joint projects
at home and abroad



The signing of a cooperation agreement between the Museum of the Second World War and the Croatian History Museum and the Public Institution Jasenovac Memorial Area. 5 June 2012.

Polish-German seminar for historians and museum directors. Left to right, Professor Joachim von Puttkamer, Dr Tomasz Kranz, Piotr Tarnowski, Dr Piotr Cywiński. 16 February 2012.

The Museum of the Second World War works closely with many museums in Poland and abroad. The most dynamic relationships, founded on cooperation agreements, include the Royal Museum of the Armed Forces and of Military History in Brussels, Museum of the Slovak National Uprising in Bańska Bystrica, Museum of the Great Patriotic War in Kyiv, KARTA Center in Warsaw, European Solidarity Center in Gdańsk, Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and State Museum in Oświęcim and the Stutthof Museum in Sztutowo. In 2012 we established new partnerships. Our agreement with the Croatian History Museum will allow us to use objects from its collections in the permanent exhibition in Gdańsk. Our ties with the Public Institution Jasenovac Memorial Area cover not only joint research and educational projects but also cooperative publishing. Our recent contacts with China's Unit 731 Museum, which commemorates the crimes against the Chinese committed by this secret unit of Japan's Imperial Army during the Second World War, are valuable for our permanent exhibition and research.

We regularly invite the directors of top Polish and German museums that work on the Second World War to Gdańsk. Taking part in the February 2012 seminar were representatives of organizations including the Buchenwald and Dora-Mittelbau Memorials Foundation, Bundeswehr Military History Museum in Dresden, State Museum at Majdanek, Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and State Museum and the Stutthof Museum in Sztutowo. Researchers focussing on specific aspects of the war, especially terror and German occupation policy, also took part.

Historical discussion on the anniversary of regaining independence and Virtuti Militari Day. Gdańsk Autonomous Intermediate School. Presentation of historical objects collected by the pupils and the Museum of the Second World War. 12 November 2012. Photo: R. Jocher



Our museum's collaboration with other institutions consisted not only of research and archival projects, and exchanges of exhibits, but also of cultural and educational schemes. In May we helped to organize the "Anamneses" First International Festival of History in Wrocław. Its goal was to create a common space for debate among historians, writers, filmmakers and artists, whose work is connected to the history of 20th-century Europe. The festival comprised events such as debates, film screenings, workshops, get-togethers, concerts and plays. Speakers included Jochen Böhler, Christoph Boehr, Agnieszka Holland, Jarosław Hrycak, Roger Moorhouse, Father Jerzy Myszor, Timothy Snyder, Mark Sotonin, Robert Traba and Balázs Varga. Our museum's Dr hab. Rafał Wnuk took part in a debate on "Totalitarianism in exhibition spaces".

In September our museum was co-organizer, with the Robert Havemann Society, of "European Remembrance. First Symposium of European Institutions dealing with 20th Century History". Also involved were the European Solidarity Center, the European Network Remembrance and Solidarity and the Federal Foundation for the Reappraisal of the SED Dictatorship. The event included a three-day conference, a visit to the future home of the European Solidarity Center, which is currently under construction, and a presentation of the plans for the permanent exhibition of the Museum of the Second World War by Professor Dr hab. Paweł Machcewicz.

We also support initiatives to cultivate the memory of the Second World War. In February our museum took part in the education campaign called "We remember the exiles to Siberia" put on by the Kresy-Siberia Foundation by sponsoring a screening of the film "Zapomniana Odyseja" [The forgotten



Children's Day at
the Armoured Weapon
Museum in Poznań.
2 June 2012.



Odyssey]. In late August-early September the Museum of the Second World War was a patron of the first meeting of the Westerplatte Families organized by the all-Poland "Club of Westerplatte Schools" Association and of the 34th Regatta of the Defenders of Westerplatte Cup, which takes place annually in the Bay of Gdańsk. We were also a partner in a history discussion commemorating Independence Day and the Order of Virtuti Militari Day, put on by the Gdańsk Autonomous Intermediate School and focussed on the interwar generation, which grew up in independent Poland. Museum staff served as consultants in the preparation of themes and as jurors in the Sixth Pomerania Province Contest of Knowledge about the Heroes of Westerplatte produced by the Heroes of Westerplatte Elementary School No. 45 in Gdańsk.

Our museum supported the Home Army Film Foundation in its production of a film directed by Zofia Kunert, "Walka bez broni" [Fighting without arms] about the Home Army's Office of Information and Propaganda. We contributed funding for a book of photographs, *Ruiny. Fotografie Wiesława Gruszkowskiego* [Ruins. The photographs of Wiesław Gruszkowski], featuring pictures of Gdańsk's ruins taken after the war by Professor Wiesław Gruszkowski, architect and urban planner, and one of the authors of the reconstruction plan for the centre of Gdańsk.

The museum served as a co-organizer or patron of presentations of the restored Sherman Firefly tank, including Children's Day at the Armoured Weapon Museum in Poznań, All-Poland Battle of the Bulge Meeting of Reconstruction Groups in Leśna Huta, Fifth Rally of the "Strefa Militarna" association in Gostyń and a re-enactment of D-Day Hel.

Sherman Firefly tank acquired through
a cooperation agreement with the Royal
Museum of the Army and of Military
History in Brussels. Rally of the
"Strefa Militarna" re-enactment group
in Gostyń. 15 July 2012.





About the museum

Creation

It was Prime Minister Donald Tusk who first articulated the idea of creating an institution that would present the Second World War from a combined perspective of Poland's and the other European nations' experiences. On 1 September 2008, he named Professor Paweł Machcewicz as his plenipotentiary for the Museum of the Second World War.

The Museum of the Second World War came into being on 26 November 2008 by a directive of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage Bogdan Zdrojewski, and Gdańsk was chosen as the city where it would be located. On 1 September 2009 on Westerplatte Peninsula, during ceremonies commemorating the 70th anniversary of the beginning of the Second World War, Prime Minister Tusk signed the museum's foundation act.

The Museum of the Second World War is a national cultural institution accountable to the minister of culture and national heritage, listed in the State Museum Register.

Management

Professor Dr hab. Paweł Machcewicz serves as the museum's director. His deputies are Dr Janusz Marszałec and Dr hab. Piotr M. Majewski.

Staff

In 2012 the museum employed a staff of 39. Ten individuals took advantage this year of our internship and volunteer programmes.

Financial information

Funding for the Museum of the Second World War is granted by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. The museum's 2012 budget totalled 58,357,000 zlotys, and its expenses were as follows:

■ out-of-pocket expenses (exhibitions; building up collections; conservation, preservation and digitization of the collections; educational, research and publication activities; promotion)

7,061,000 zlotys

Minister Bogdan Zdrojewski hands a Board of Trustees appointment letter to Professor Bogdan Chrzanowski. 24 May 2012. Photo: D. Matloch

Professor Jack Lohman, member of the Board of Trustees of the Museum of the Second World War. Photo: R. Jacher



-
- earmarked appropriation granted in accordance with the Council of Ministers resolution of 4 January 2011 on the establishment of the Multi-Year Programme on "Construction of the Museum of the Second World War" **51,106,000 zlotys**
 - other investments **191,000 zlotys**

Board of Trustees and Advisory Board

Two mutually independent advisory bodies, the Board of Trustees and the Advisory Board, support the work of the Museum of the Second World War. Their members are eminent historians from Poland, Britain, the United States, France, Germany, Russia and Israel, as well as museum specialists, lawyers, journalists and veterans.

Minister of Culture and National Heritage Bogdan Zdrojewski appointed the Board of Trustees on 13 April 2012. Its current members are:

Professor Bogdan Chrzanowski, lecturer, University of Gdańsk; curator, Stutthof Museum; chairman of the Board;

Dr Piotr M. A. Cywiński, director, Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and State Museum;

Lieutenant-Colonel Tadeusz Filipkowski, member of the Board, World Society of Home Army Soldiers; chairman of the Board, Home Army Film Foundation;



Meeting of the Advisory Board of the Museum of the Second World War. Left to right, Professors Andrzej Chwalba, Ulrich Herbert and Włodzimierz Borodziej and Dr hab. Rafał Wnuk. 8 November 2012. Photo: D. Jagodziński

Grzegorz Fortuna, editor-in-chief, *30 dni* journal.

Dr Jarosław Krawczyk, art historian; editor-in-chief, *Magazyn Historyczny* journal;

Professor Jack Lohman, art historian; museologist; chief executive officer, Royal British Columbia Museum;

Professor Krzysztof Mikulski, lecturer, Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń;

Jacek Miler, director of the Department of Cultural Heritage in the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage;

Professor Zdzisław Najder, historian of literature;

Jacek Taylor, Esq., representative of the minister of the treasury on the Board of the Foundation for Polish-German Reconciliation and

Dorota Zawacka-Wakarecy, chair, General Elżbieta Zawacka Foundation, Archive and the Pomeranian Museum of the Home Army and of the Polish Women's Military Service.

The Advisory Board was created on 18 May 2009 and is currently made up of:

Professor Władysław Bartoszewski, the Polish prime minister's plenipotentiary for international dialogue;

Professor Jerzy W. Borejsza, Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences;

Professor Włodzimierz Borodziej, Institute of History, University of Warsaw;

Professor Andrzej Chwalba, Institute of History, Jagiellonian University, Cracow;

Professor Norman Davies, British Academy;

*Meeting of the Advisory Board
of the Museum of the Second World War.
Left to right, museum director,
Professor Pawel Machocewicz,
Professors Norman Davies
and Krzysztof Pomian.
8 November 2012. Photo:
D. Jagodziński*



*Members of the Advisory Board,
Professors Andrzej Chwalba
and Pavel Polian. 8 November 2012.
Photo: D. Jagodziński*

Professor Israel Gutman, International Institute for Holocaust Research, Yad Vashem, Jerusalem;
Professor Ulrich Herbert, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität, Freiburg; School of History, Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies, Germany;
Professor Jerzy Holzer, Institute of Political Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences;
Professor Pavel Polian, Institute of Geography, Russian Academy of Sciences; Academic Library, Russian State University for the Humanities, Moscow;
Professor Krzysztof Pomian, Museum of Europe, Brussels;
Professor Henry Rousso, Institut d'histoire du temps présent, Centre national de la recherche scientifique; Université Paris-Ouest Nanterre-La Défense
Professor Timothy D. Snyder, Yale University and
Professor Tomasz Szarota, Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences.

Professor Norman Davies has served as the chairman of the Advisory Board since June 2009.

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