



HISTORICAL ACCOUNT

150th Anniversary of the founding of Cracow Medical Society

Adam Wiernikowski¹

Introduction

Prof. Wojciech Nowak, the Rector of the Jagiellonian University wrote the following in his introduction to the anniversary book entitled *Towarzystwo Lekarskie Krakowskie. Jubileusz 150-lecia (1866-2016)* [Cracow Medical Society - 150th Anniversary (1866-2016)] edited by Wiernikowski A. (Fig.1) [1]: "Ladies and Gentlemen, let us reminisce. The occasion is very special, since not every day we get to celebrate such a beautiful Anniversary of one of the most renowned Cracow's institutions – The Cracow Medical Society – which celebrates the 150th Anniversary of inaugurating its activities... I may be brave enough to say that Cracovians have history in their blood, and that fascination is imprinted when they are born. A hundred and fifty years is a significant piece of it. The hundred and fifty years of the functioning of Cracow Medical Society is a wonderful heritage, but at the same time a tremendous obligation and the need to look ahead into the future... Cracow Medical Society was founded at the end of the XIX century, in 1866, by the initiative of doctor Aleksander Kremer. Back then, the laying foundations grew in the atmosphere of quick spurt of medical sciences and the specificity of the problems in medical profession – and at the same time a need for creating a forum for thought exchange and inspirations extrapolated from medical

practice. At the beginning, Cracow's physicians organized meetings within a medical section of the Cracow's Scientific Society founded in 1815, the seed which would germinate, grow and bloom to become the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences, also called the Polish Academy of Learning, with close scientific, personal and emotional relations to Cracow Medical Society, just like with the Jagiellonian University, still today. They would be guest users of the premises of the Scientific Society on Sławkowska Street. A true "unification" of the Society took place in 1905, when it received its official headquarters – the House of the Cracow Medical Society (pol. Dom Towarzystwa Lekarskiego Krakowskiego) on Radziwiłłowska 4 Street. It's one of the superexcellent landmarked buildings of Modern Poland, still being its headquarters today. In many aspects the building is unique, especially since the chief interior decorator was the one famous Polish artist – Stanisław Wyspiański. Wyspiański accepted the job owing to personal contacts, relentless energy and foremost due to a friendship with the President of Cracow's Medical Society, and my excellent predecessor as the Dean of the Medical Faculty in the years 1911-1912, Rector of the Jagiellonian University in the years 1921-1922, and also a person sharing my surname – professor of medical sciences, Julian Nowak... Back in those days and now, Cracow Medical Society



was and is made up of pre-eminent minds, with traditions and historical values; presenting strenuous work of many scientists and community activists in the very broad field of medical sciences; providing continuous cooperation with centres and institutions on an international level and contacts with researchers and physicians being established by society's members, thanks to their scientific and personal relations. Especially vital in creating these cooperations were efforts of the Society's professors, including Maria Rybakowa, Józef Bogusz, Marek Sych, Henryk Gaertner, Aleksander B. Skotnicki, Zdzisław J. Ryn, Igor Gościński and many others... The members of the Society are still constantly savouring Hippocrates motto: *Omnium artium medicina nobilissima est* – "Medicine is the noblest of all arts". I consider, therefore, that Cracow Medical Society can righteously celebrate its 150th anniversary".

Anniversary Celebrations

The celebrations of the 150th Anniversary of Cracow Medical Society (pol. Towarzystwo Lekarskie Krakowskie, TLK) had begun on 14-15 June 2016, patroned by the Minister of Health – Dr Konstanty Radziwiłł, Jagiellonian University Rector – Prof. Wojciech Nowak and the President of the City of Cracow – Prof. Jacek Majchrowski.

Firstly a mass was held by Rev. Dr Lucjan Bielas, historian and academic pastor from the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Cracow, who in his homily said: "on this Anniversary day there will be a lot of remembrance. It will be an occasion to

recollect the wonderful heritage of Cracow Medical Society. It's also a time to think about the future. Taking the occasion of speaking in the university collegiate church of St. Catherine, during the Eucharist of suffering Christ, I would like to once more emphasize the word COLLEAGUE and let it never disappear from your lips – for our and the patients' benefit".

The celebrations continued in the Jagiellonian University Collegium Novum auditorium, where the organizers: Prof. Igor Gościński – President of TLK and Prof. Andrzej Matyja – Chairman of the Regional Chamber of Physicians in Cracow, welcomed all participants.

Jagiellonian University was represented by Prof. Piotr Laidler, and the city of Cracow by the Presidential Secretary Mr Piotr Stańczyk, the Regional Physicians Council by Prof. Andrzej Matyja and Dr Jerzy Friediger, Board of Directors of the Polish Medical Association by its Honorary President – Prof. Jerzy Woy-Wojciechowski and its current President Prof. Waldemar Kostewicz and also by the Secretary Dr Marian Baraniecki, Treasurer Dr Krystyna Podgórska-Baraniecka. Warsaw Medical Society was represented by its President Prof. Jerzy Jurkiewicz and Secretary Dr Wiesława Granowska, Częstochowa Medical Society by its Secretary Iwona Kiełtyka, the Silesian Regional Department of the Polish Medical Association by Dr Jerzy Dosiak, the Tarnów Department by its Chairman Dr Antoni Sydor, at the same time a member of the Board of Directors of the Polish Medical Association, and the Secretary Dr Patrycja Kosińska,



Branch in Śrem by Dr Barbara Siwicka, the Polish Medical Society in the Czech Republic (PTMRCz) by MUDr Józef Słowik with his wife, MUDr Urszula Słowik.

After formal introductions and Anniversary speeches by Prof. P. Laidler, Prof. A. Matyja, Mr P. Stańczyk, Dr J. Friediger, Prof. J. Woy-Wojciechowski, Prof. W. Kostewicz, Dr B. Siwińska, Dr J. Dosiak – awards and medals were presented to TLK and Board Members. Drs Jacek Jonkisz, Alicja Macheta and Jarosław Zawiliński were awarded medals *Honoris Gratia* by the President of the City of Cracow Prof. Jacek Majchrowski, presented by the Council Secretary Mr P. Stańczyk. Prof. Igor Gościński and Dr Adam Wiernikowski became the honorary members of PTMRCz and also received other awards. Prof. Zdzisław Gajda received a medal from the Warsaw Medical Society.

TLK also presented awards to merited persons. Honorary TLK membership and A. Kremer Anniversary Medals were presented to: professors Wojciech Nowak, Jerzy Jurkiewicz, Andrzej Matyja, Wiesław Pawlik, Jerzy Woy-Wojciechowski and the *Medicus Laureatus* Medal to professors Tomasz Grodzicki, Zdzisław J. Ryn, Aleksander B. Skotnicki, Władysław Sułowicz and to doctors Jerzy Friediger and Adam Wiernikowski.

Two lectures were presented in the scientific session. One by the Honoured Jagiellonian University Professor, former Rector Franciszek Ziejka entitled: “Towarzystwo Lekarskie w dziejach Krakowa trwale zapisane” [Medical Society with permanent mark on Cracow’s

history] and the second by Prof. Aleksander B. Skotnicki: “Rozważania o prawdzie i nadziei w medycynie” [Considerations about the truth and hope in medicine]. The first presentation had a historical character, with political background, and showed the scientific life in the city of Cracow, including TLK activities. The second presentation had a more philosophical character touching on the problems of a patient-doctor relationship. The full text articles may be found in the already cited Anniversary publication [1].

After sessions which began before noon, at 17.00 a poetic and musical performance entitled “Leczymy Słowem” [Treating with words], was screened in the Juliusz Słowacki Theatre. The spectacle was organized by the Union of Polish Physician Writers (pol. Unia Polskich Pisarzy Lekarzy, UPPL), Cracow Medical Society and the Regional Chamber of Physicians in Cracow. As introduction, Prof. Igor Gościński said: “the first session had a scientific and historical overtone, and the second one which will begin shortly, led by Prof. Hładki, will have a spectacular resonance”.

The poetic and musical spectacle “Leczymy Słowem” [Treating with words] was directed and written by Prof. Waldemar Hładki. It was the perfect opportunity to announce the results of the National Poetry Competition for medical doctors, with awards and prizes ceremony and reading of best poems by actors of the Old Theatre in Cracow – Ewa Kaim and Jacek Romanowski.

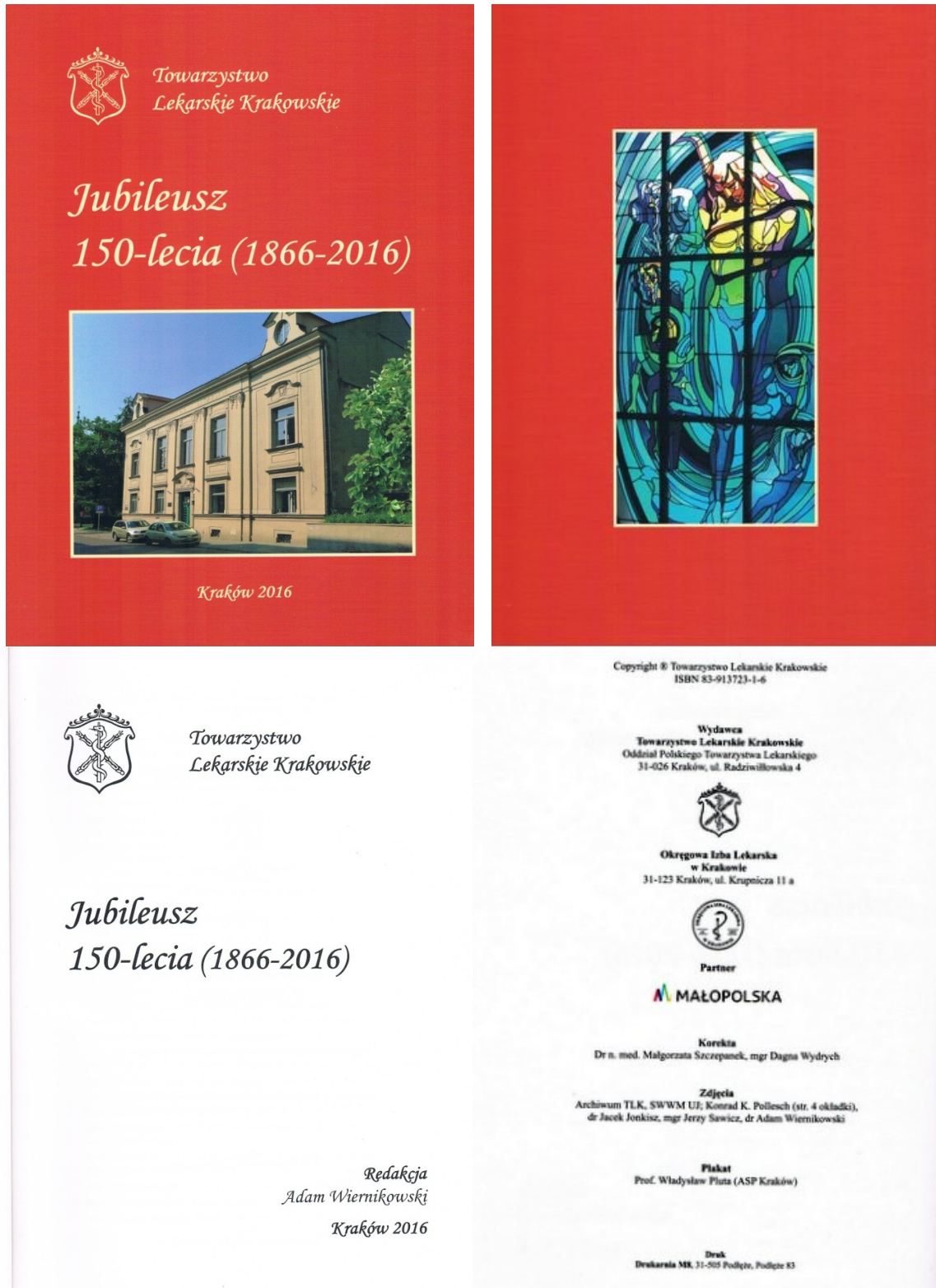


Figure 1. The outer and inner cover of the TLK Anniversary book [1].



The I prize went to Dr Agnieszka Rautman-Szczepańska, a physician currently working in Stockholm, Sweden (she graduated in Bydgoszcz and is a fully registered medical doctor in Poland).

The II prize went to Prof. Anna Pituch-Noworolska, a paediatrician and immunologist working in the paediatric hospital in Prokocim. Prof. Pituch-Noworolska is a member of UPPL and the Union of Polish Writers (pol. Związek Literatów Polskich).

The III prize went to Dr Piotr Piątek, doctor of dentistry from Kołobrzeg, member of UPPL, with this adding to his collection of literary prizes in poetic competitions.

The musical part of the evening, much liked by the audience, was provided by the vocalist Agata Bernadt and the band: Adam Niedzielin – keyboards, Grzegorz Piątek – double bass, Artur Malik – percussion; Stefan Błaszczński – flute, Adam Prucnal – violin.

After the evening meal, a theatrical play was screened, entitled “Opętani” [Possessed], based on a novel by Witold Gombrowicz, directed by Tadeusz Bradecki, starring actors from the Juliusz Słowacki Theatre.

The morning session on the second day of the Anniversary celebrations was addressed to a wider general public audience and involved a lecture by Dr Zbigniew Beiersdorf entitled “Stanisław Wyspiański w Domu Towarzystwa Lekarskiego Krakowskiego” [Stanisław Wyspiański in the House of Cracow Medical Society] and another one by Mr Janusz Antos: “Stanisław Wyspiański jako odnowiciel sztuki polskiej książki” [Stanisław Wyspiański as a restorer of Polish book art].

In the afternoon session, the team from the Clinic of Haematology of Jagiellonian University Medical College (W. Jurczak, A. Giza, D. Zimowska-Curyło, M. Długosz-Danecka, M. Piotrowska) directed by Prof. Aleksander B. Skotnicki, addressing medical doctors, especially haematologists, presented a universal approach to “Modern treatment of lymphoproliferative syndromes using monoclonal antibodies and other targeted drugs” [pol. Współczesne leczenie zespołów limfoproliferacyjnych z zastosowaniem przeciwciał monoklonalnych i innych leków celowanych].

The celebrations have passed but the Anniversary Year lasted, and next to everyday work duties there were many other events and honours for active TLK members. On June 25 a meeting with Doctor Poets took place in the “Audialnia” of Stanisława Motak-Hnatowicz on 32 St. Thomas street. Also, as per motion of TLK - Dr Wojciech Skucha was awarded the Małopolska Cross – a silver honorary distinction of the Małopolska voivodeship by its Marshall - Jacek Krupa.

Below, we present you with a brief documentation of the TLK’s 150th Anniversary Celebrations and Anniversary Year, containing data touching on the various activities of TLK in the past years, which owing to their complexity were published in a broader sense in the Anniversary book: “Towarzystwo Lekarskie Krakowskie. Jubileusz 150-lecia (1866-2016)” [1].

The book contains all correspondence related to the Anniversary and contacts made with



other medical societies and regional offices and branches of the Polish Medical Association, with relevant discussions in selected areas listed (Fig. 2). Our active role and cooperation during the 25th Anniversary of the founding of the Polish Medical Society in Lviv was described, too, with special emphasis on its President – Associate Prof. Ewelina Hrycaj-Mańaciz who took part in our Anniversary, and is now busy preparing the 150th Anniversary of Lviv Medical Society, which is planned for autumn of 2017.



Figure 2. The occasional stamp used for all Anniversary TLK correspondence.

The Polish Medical Society in the Czech Republic with which TLK also cooperates actively, taking part in its meetings and conferences, was also described. This Society celebrated its 25 years of independent activity during a conference in Cierlisko, also in 2016. It is to be underlined here, that TLK provides PTMRCz with a subscription to *Przegląd Lekarski* (a Polish medical journal), medical calendars from the Polish Medical Association, textbooks (like “Podręcznik Szczeklika” and others) and publications from *Medycyna Praktyczna*, which TLK receives free of charge from the Editor-in-Chief Dr Piotr Gajewski.

TLK cooperates with the branch of Polish Medical Association in Śrem and a representative of TLK took part in one of its events, where Dr Barbara Siwińska, a truly dedicated and deserving physician and a person accomplished in many fields, was nominated as Honourary Citizen of Śrem.

The book also contains documentation from the 90th Anniversary of Prof. Henryk Gaertner from 2012, a multitalented and diligent medical doctor, accomplished in many fields, especially valued by TLK.

Also, the 40th anniversary of death of Prof. Stanisław Skowron, a renowned biologist, long-term Head of the Department of Biology at the Medical Academy in Cracow was celebrated with a meeting. Prof. Skowron was recollected in a speech by his daughter, and the “Boss” was also remembered as part of the talk by his assistants.

A list of TLK publications from the years 2002-2016 was included under the heading “Publikacje nasze i o nas” [Our publications and publications about us]

At the end of the Anniversary Year, honouring the achievements of Prof. Jan Piltz, the founder of the Neuropsychiatric Clinic in Cracow, the creator of the Clinic’s buildings (currently the Neurology Institute) and the author of the quadrilingual album on the Clinic entitled: “Klinika Neurologiczno-Psychjatryczna Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego w Krakowie”, Kraków 1929 (Reprint: Prof. Jan Władysław Piltz (1870-1930), Twórca Kliniki Neurologiczno-Psychjatrycznej Uniwersytetu



Jagiellońskiego w Krakowie w 100-lecie powstania. TLK, Kraków 2015), TLK minted a medal designed by Prof. Karol Badyna (Fig. 3).



Figure 3. The medal in honour of Prof. Piltz.

The founder of the medal was Prof. Ryszard Chrzanowski (Richard Cranovsky) together with his wife, who cooperated with TLK for many years, and who similarly to Prof. Piltz, has listened to fate and taken the opportunity that allowed him to work and develop his career in Switzerland (his 2nd homeland), granting him the possibility to act on many important posts at the national and international level.

References

[1] Towarzystwo Lekarskie Krakowskie. Jubileusz 150-lecia (1866-2016). Wiernikowski A (ed.). Wydawnictwo TLK, Kraków 2016.

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Authors' affiliations:

¹ Secretary, Cracow Medical Society – Towarzystwo Lekarskie Krakowskie, Cracow, Poland

Corresponding author:

Dr Adam Wiernikowski, M.D., Ph.D.
Towarzystwo Lekarskie Krakowskie
ul. Radziwiłłowska 4
31-026 Cracow, Poland
e-mail: adamwier@mp.pl

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