

AMERICAN PEACE CORPS in POLAND



Ośrodek **Karta**



4 JUNE 1989 – first partly free parliamentary elections in post-war Poland won by representatives of the democratic opposition movement

JULY 1989 – during a visit to Budapest, the President of the United States of America announces that Peace Corps volunteers will arrive in Hungary and commence the first Peace Corps programme to be held in an East European country

SEPTEMBER 1989 – the Polish Government contacts the American Peace Corps and registers its request for the help of volunteers

23 FEBRUARY 1990 – an agreement is signed between the Government of the Republic of Poland and the Government of the United States of America relating to an American Peace Corps programme in Poland

MARCH 1990 – Peace Corps Office staff arrive in Warsaw

JUNE 1990 – arrival in Poland of the first group of volunteers with their English language teaching programme

OCTOBER 1990 – arrival of the first group of volunteers with a small business development programme

OCTOBER 1991 – establishment of a Polish “Women in Development” Committee (women volunteers in this programme organised conferences, camps and workshops aimed at helping women to resolve problems relating, among others, to choice, planning and realisation of a career, and to health matters)

NOVEMBER 1991 – arrival of first group of volunteers on the environmental protection programme

JANUARY 1992 – grant of approximately 1.2 million dollars from the Liberty Bell Foundation (financed privately by Edward Piszek, an American of Polish origin) for the English language teaching programme

AUGUST 1997 – first Peace Corps Camp GLOW “Girls Leading our World” organised by women volunteers in Wojsławice for girls aged 16–19, focusing among others on self development and establishment of self-esteem

MAY 1998 – the number of volunteers in Eastern and Central Europe and in the countries of the former Soviet Union (Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Macedonia, Moldavia, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, the Ukraine) reaches 900

JUNE 2000 – World Forum on Democracy discusses volunteer work, co-organised and co-financed by the Peace Corps in Poland

JUNE 2001 – the final (15th) group of volunteers leaves Poland; the American Peace Corps winds up its mission in Poland

Locations where volunteers worked:

Augustów, Barlinek, Biała Podlaska, Białowieża, Białystok, Biecz, Bielawa, Bieliny, Bielsk Podlaski, Bielsko-Biała, Biłgoraj, Błażowa, Bonin, Brodnica, Brzozów, Bydgoszcz, Bystrzyca Kłodzka, Chełm, Chrzanów, Chyrzno, Ciechanowiec, Ciechanów, Cieszyn, Czaplinek, Czarnków, Czernichów, Czersk, Częstochowa, Dąbrowa Tarnowska, Dębe, Dębno Lubuskie, Dobiegniew, Dynów, Dziadów, Dzierzgoń, Dzierżonów, Elbląg, Elk, Gąbin, Gdańsk, Gdynia, Giżycko, Gliwice, Głubczyce, Gołdap, Goniądz, Gorzów Wielkopolski, Gostynin, Góra Śląska, Górzycza, Grabownica, Grajewo, Hajnówka, Hel, Iława, Inowrocław, Izabelin, Jabłonna, Jarocin, Jasło, Jastrzębie-Zdrój, Jawor, Jedlicze, Jelenia Góra, Jerzwałd, Jordanów, Kalisz, Kalisz Pomorski, Kamienica Polska, Kamienna Góra, Katowice, Kazimierza Wielka, Kętrzyn, Kęty, Kielce, Kijany, Kleczew, Klimontów, Kluczbork, Kłodzko, Knurów, Kolno, Koło, Kołobrzeg, Konin, Konstancin Jeziorna, Końskie, Korczyn, Kostrzyn nad Odrą, Koszalin, Koźmin, Kraków, Krasnystaw, Krosno, Krościenko nad Dunajcem, Krotoszyn, Krzepice, Kudowa-Zdrój, Kutno, Kwidzyn, Ladek-Zdrój, Legnica, Leszno, Leżajsk, Lidzbark, Lipnica Wielka, Lipno, Lubaczów, Lubań, Lubiejewo, Lubin, Lublin, Lubosz, Łańcut, Łask, Łazy, Łęczycza, Łobżenica, Łochów, Łomianki, Łomża, Łosice, Łowicz, Łódź, Łuków, Maków Mazowiecki, Malbork, Mielec, Międzyzlesie, Międzyzdroje, Mikołów, Milicz, Mława, Mońki, Mrągowo, Mrozy, Myślenice, Myślibórz, Nakło nad Notecią, Nałęczów, Nawojowa, Niedźwiedź, Niemcza, Niemodlin, Niepołomice, Nowa Dęba, Nowa Ruda, Nowa Sól, Nowy Sącz, Nowy Targ, Nowy Tomysł, Oborniki Śląskie, Ojców, Olesno, Olsztyn, Opoczno, Opole, Osowiec, Ostrołęka, Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski, Ostróda, Ostrów Lubelski, Oświęcim, Ozimek, Pajęczno, Piaski, Piastów, Piła, Piotrków Trybunalski, Piotrowice, Pisz, Płock, Podkowa Leśna, Polkowice, Poznań, Prudnik, Pruszków, Przemków, Przemysł, Przeworsk, Przysucha, Puławy, Puszczkovo, Racibórz, Raczki, Radom, Radomsko, Radzymin, Radzyń Podlaski, Reszel, Rogów, Ropczyce, Rożanystok, Rybnik, Rydułtowy, Ryki, Rymanów, Rzeszów, Sandomierz, Sanok, Siedlce, Siennica, Sierpc, Siewierz, Skawina, Skwierzyna, Sławno, Słubice, Słupsk, Smoldzino, Sochaczew, Sochaczew, Sokółka, Solec Kujawski, Sompolno, Sopot, Sosnowiec, Spiczyn, Stalowa Wola, Starachowice, Stare Pole, Starogard Gdański, Staszów, Sucha Beskidzka, Sulechów, Supraśl, Suwałki, Swarzędz, Syców, Szczecin, Szczekociny, Szczucin, Szczytno, Świdnica, Świdnik, Świebodzin, Święty Krzyż, Świnoujście, Tarnobrzeg, Tarnów, Tomaszów Mazowiecki, Toruń, Trzcianka, Trzebnica, Turek, Tychy, Tymbark, Ulanów, Urszulin, Ustka, Ustrzyki Dolne, Ustrzyki Górne, Wałbrzych, Wałcz, Warszawa, Węgorzewo, Węgorzyno, Wieliczka, Wieluń, Wigry, Witnica, Władysławowo, Włocławek, Włodawa, Wojkowice, Wolbrom, Wrocław, Września, Wysokie Mazowieckie, Zabrze, Zakopane, Zambrów, Zamość, Zawiercie, Zduńska Wola, Żelów, Zgorzelec, Zielona Góra, Zielonka, Złoczew, Zwierzyniec, Żagań, Żary, Żnin



NUMBER OF PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS
IN POLAND AND PLACEMENT LOCATIONS

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AMERICAN PEACE CORPS

IN POLAND

The American Peace Corps, set up in the United States of America in the 1960s, was active in Poland during the period 1990–2001. During the difficult times of political transformation in Poland when democracy was still in its infancy, volunteers came to our country to teach English, to help develop entrepreneurship and to work with us on environmental projects. On the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the American Peace Corps and on the 10th anniversary of the completion of its mission in Poland we have undertaken – with the support of the Embassy of the United States of America in Warsaw – to try to commemorate the work of these volunteers in our country – both from their point of view and that of the people who came into contact with them.



PRESIDENT LECH WAŁĘSA in a speech to Peace Corps coordinators in 1992: Many people, many leaders, have no idea how very much we need you. We know that the world is divided. We had a Wall, an Iron Curtain, an abstract economic and political philosophy. And that is why an enormous task awaits us in uniting nations and evening out inequalities. [...] Each of us in Poland denounces the old system but each of us has something of that system in us. Initiative was destroyed. We were brought up in a system of abstracts. And that is why it would be safer and wiser if we could make your tasks as easy as possible.



Volunteers divided into the 15 groups, in which they arrived in Poland:

1 Nili Abrahamsson, David Allen, Louis Avenilla, Mary Bagby, Kurt Bahnmaier, Vita Mimi Baker, Ann Barger, Cheryl Bashaw, Sarah Becker, Hilda Beltran, Arthur Brown, Virginia Brown, John Butler, Beth Chimento, Melissa Christensen, Everett Conklin, Filomena Crisman, Richard Davis, Michael Dixon, Richard Duslack, Jeffrey Dybing, Tami Edgerton, Martha Eissler, Sarah Geisler, Victoria Gianino, Joseph Gmyrek, Susan Gorga, Jim Hardin, John Hayes, Mark Hilbert, Ricky Huard, Michael Kennedy, Felix Lapinski, Patricia Laurence, Keri McGraw, Jennifer Olsen, Margaret Pawlowski, Catherina Peebles, Rebecca Plaza, Katherine Plueddemann, Helen Prevost, Laurie Przybylowicz, Peter Redmond, Robin Reid, Nicole Reynolds, Amy Rhodes, Belle Rothberg, Amy Rundel, Elaine Sayre, Rachel Schofer, Helen Suchara, Kurt Tjossem, Judson Wagner, Michael Waters, Dorothy Weller, Stacey Whitis, Karen Witczak, Carol Woods, Renee Wright, Mary Ziemer

2 Don Abbott, Clinton Abernethy, James Cason, Patricia Creighton, Miles Dean, David Franzblau, William Grant, Elizabeth Green, Barbara Hilpman, Diana Hugins, Valerie Ibaan, Katherine Kabeiseman, Carla Leise, Elizabeth Metcalf, Martin Myhre, Tammy Neeley, Ann Newman, Robert Ortwine, Susan Peters, Connie Ponsness, Miriam Pye, Stephen Ravosa, Mary Roberts, Deborah Ryan, Randy Schmid, Martha Sickles, Gertrude Whitney, John Wienke

3 Barbra Adams, Carrie Anderson, Jennifer Anderson, Brian Baggs, Lloyd Basler, Charlotte Behr, John Bell, Matthew Bennett, Patricia Berrean, Ruth Blacker, Mary Beth Blanchard, Douglas Blumhardt, Marie Blumhardt, Sean Bobbitt, Christopher Boyd, Allen Brueckner, Todd Brunner, Kara Burns, Cynthia Campuzano, Christopher Carlisle, Aaron Carlson, John Caron, Kera Carpenter, Vanessa Carrow, Mary Cerasani, Virginia Church, Christopher Cox, Audrey Craver, Edgar

Craver, William Day, Jacqueline Derebery, Julie Devaud, Ronald Dodd, Elizabeth Donicht, Alycia Donohoe, Daphna Edgar, Louisa Edgerton, Andrew Eyres, Paul Familetti, Heather Feltmate, Jean Ferguson, Eric Filippino, Stephen Fitzpatrick, Nicole Fredeen, James Freeman, Emily Gage, Frank Garrett, Stuart Garrick, Patricia George, Elizabeth Giles, Sally Gimon, Scott Grave, Michael Groomer, Tammy Grubb, Erik Hanson, Pamela Hanson, Juliet Harbage, Rebecca Harrison, Dennis Hart, Colette Hart-Taddy, Mary Hennessy, Thomas Hohn Jr., Lori Horvitz, Katherine Hubert, Mary Irwin, Thomas Jarvis, Jessica Johnson, Mallory Johnson, Jin Joo, Kyle Keeney, Ashley Kincaid, Lori Kincaid, Louise Kincaid, Kathleen Klompfen, Anne Knipe, Stephanie Krejcarek, David Lesicki, Mark Lewandowski, David Luiken, Aideen Mannion, Jeff Martin, Phyllis Mathis, Nancy Maurer, Eric McCutcheon, Daphne McKnight, Deborah Mullins, John Newman, Brendan Neylon, Denise O'Toole, Rebecca Olerich, Amanda Palmer, Kirk Palmer, Peter Pintler, Esther Prestegard, Bernard Prokop, Ann Pschirrer, Irena Ptaszynski, Margaret Raggio, Suzanne Rainey, Hannah Reid, Suzanne Reymer, Laura Richard, Ronald Riebeck, John Roam, Mary Roam, Diane Robinson, Ann Rogers, Robin Root, Kirstie Rothauge, Daniel Sargent, Janet Schreiner, Dolista Scott, Myrna Seibert, Jeffrey Smith, Ruth Smith, Tracey Spence, Maria Stalnaker, Elsie Stewart, April Swieconeck, Siana Tackett, Tracy Tallman, Michele Tarnow, Charles Vander Zwaag, Michael Wagner, Michele Weaver, Heidi White, Michelle White, Eugene Whiting, Donald Williams, Elizabeth Wilson, Leigh-Ann Wilson, David Windt

4 Teresa Allen, Michael Arsenault, Tamara Arsenault, Kim Bingham, Paul Braun, Paul Clark, David Cooper, Raymond Doherty, Timothy Dowd, Helen Eldred, David Elliott, Ellen Elliott, Rhys Evans, Edward Faith, Patrick Francis, Christine Fuller, Suzi Hagen, Irwin Hertz, Paul Hinman, Beverly Hmurovic, John Hmurovic,

Peter Jensen, Julia Jowers, William Kennedy, Margaret Kern, Leonard Klein, Sabrina Lau, William Manning, Edward Michalski, Lawrence Michel, Loni Moyer, William Norton, Perry Pedersen, Joseph Pikell, David Reene, Michael Robertson, Thomas Rulland, Mark Shafer, Susan Snelson, Amy Tonnessen, Suzanne Veaudry, Christopher West

5 Stacy Andrew, Mark Aune, Nancy Bagwell, Kristin Becker, Dzidra Benish, Christopher Bergin, Joseph Boglino, Jonathan Brady, Stacey Brown, Ronda Clark, Lea Clarkson, Christopher Conrad, Lisa Croucher, Jodi Darvill, Amy De Witt, Stacey Downey, Irene Faass, Diane Fall, Michael Fallon, Holly Fernald, May Fischer, Charles Frederick, Barbara Galvin, Karolyn Gehring, Brian Hartig, Colleen Healey, Kirk Henwood, Helen Hermus, Holly Hetzel, Andrew Janiszewski, Kristina Johnson, Stephanie Karacson, Patrick Kelly, Cynthia Kirby, Robert Kirby, Lorraine Kraft, William Lambert, Linda Lawinger, Shannon Le Heire, Patricia Lee, Janice Linhares, Barbara Little, Jennifer Lockwood, Sandra Malone, Peggy Mc Gill, Anne Moore, Richard Mulkey, Erin Murray, John Newman, Mary Nolan, Jennifer Nunes, Lynette Nyman, Christopher Orlet, Jeannette Petrick, Heather Powers, Joseph Ramos, Sheila Rockwood, Bette Smith, Tom Snowden, Stephen Springer, Thomas Stillson, Michael Svetlik, Sandra Sweany, Jonathan Syndor, Richard Tattershall, Susan Tekulve, Kendra Wilson, Jeffrey Youde, Lynn Zimmerman

6 Benjamin Ahrens III, Phyllis Benson, Benjamin Burg, John Cotter, Patrick Coughlin, Marian Dahl, Steve Dahl, Herbert Denny, Timothy Dimmick, Donald Droubay, Christopher Egan, Beverly Ellerbee-Burton, Brian Fahey, Kevin Fogarty, Donald Geiger, Glen Gill, Amy Giovanini, Stephen Gonyea, David Gustafson, Roberta Gwinn, Brian Hayes, Kathleen Hemak, Amy Holaday, Harriet Hubacker, David

Johaneck, Thomas Larson, Leigh Levine, Kerri Mahaney, Eric CMartin, Robert Matt, Tanya Murray, Kenneth Nielson, Marcia Nielson, Hereld Purdy, Mark Richards, Joseph Roach, Hanna Ruszczyk, Laurel Sherwood, Mark Staba, Kirsten Sutkus, Delores Walker, Katherine Wimble, Ryszard Zolnik

7 Steven Bailey, Jennifer Basile, Tempo Bierley, Katherine Boynewicz, William Brown, Nello Carlini, Lisa Chavez, Catherine Davis, Camille Dickison, Eleanor Dionne, James Ellis, Linda Fajardo, Christie Fish, Yaritza Gavidia, Alicia Geesman, Mary Grabski, William Gray, Kristin Grosse, Margaret Hanna, Patricie Hill, Claire Holzner, James Hurley, Michel Knaub, George Kuhn, Penelope Kuhn, Rita Kurtz, Jennifer Lebre, Carolyn Lindsay, Anna Malesko, Patricia Meier, Peter Michelsen, Kari Nysather, Laura Oldanie, Laura Prindle, John Rath, Sylvia Rath, Clifford Robertson, Dennis Jr. Ryan, Paul Rybinski, Richard Sanders, Mary Schindler, Timothy Shuler, Sheila Skaff, Sharon Slaughter, Sarah Szetela, Donald Vasa, Johanna Walker, Eric Weiser, Christopher Willott, Lee Wilson Jr., Jeanette Wold, Thelma Wurzelbacher, Elizabeth Zach, David Zimny

8 Patricia Adamcek, Sharon Barker, Constance Beck, Donald Bement, Mark Campbell, Constance Cappel, William (Bill) Carr III, Wayne Chiu, Arthur Colpitt Jr., Carolyn Cooper, Peter Coughlan, Gordon Downey, Peter Downs, Lyle Essinger, Don Feil, Peter Gess, Katherine Gibson, David Grajczyk, Karen Green, Michael Greenfield, Sonya Guram, William Harrison, Suzannah Herring, Patricia Holt, Michael Kent, Peter Leinenbach, Robert Marek, Terri Mitchell, John Moore Jr., Carver Nebbe, Matthew Nelson, Barbara Prag, Judith Pryor, Cyril Puthoff, John Schneck, Patricia Schneck, Doris Shindelar, Ellen Simmons, John Strickland, Mary Theisen, Kelley Watson, Korey York

9. Patty Alleman, Amy Allin, Kaylene Alvarez, Lloyd Amburgey, Carole Baldwin, Heidi Beck, Bernhard Behrens, Kathleen Bennett, Catalina Beyer, Karl Beyer, Nona Blades, Mary Branan, Patrick Chapman, Stephen D'Alessandro, Jennifer De Laix, Scott DeBoer, Peter Drewniansy, Lauritz Dyhrberg, Brigid Fahy, Jolanda Ferguson, John Forsythe, Carol Frausto, Curtis Funk, Sylvia Garcia, Ellen Gardiner, Lisa Gauslow, Roman Gershkovich, Ann Gorton, Daniel Hall, Stephanie Hart, Troy Headrick, Gail Hermodson, Paul Howe, Bradley Jarvis, Caroline Kelley, Rochelle Knettel, Traci Leahy, Sandra Leon, Marcia Maynard, Dorothy Mummert, Laurie Norton, Karen Park, Jeffery Petrich, Angel Pickett, Angelo Pressello, David Propst, Donnie Rollins, Heidi Scheuermann, Michael Selkis, Camille Soleil, Mary Stark, Janet Steed, Helene Stone, Julie Thompson, Rita Wade, Matthew Wagner, Betsy Ward, Jared Wiberg, Robert Wojtowicz

10. Gerald Allen, William Archerd, June Morris Arnold, Judith Battershell, William Berry, Mavis Brisse, Larry Cabler, Alan Capodanno, Annelise Carleton, Paul Corrieri, Cecilia Daly, Kathleen Dehm, Richard Drews, Renee Dudley, Lawrence Foreman, Rachel Fried, Kay Goden-Gengenbach, Kathleen Gengenbach, Jacie Grenier, John Griffin Jr., Charito Hammons, Jimmy Hammons, Heather Hoerdemann, Frankie Johnson, Michael Ledwith, Robert Lindstrom, Frederick Mischler, Roy Murphy, Christopher Nowak, Philip Pensiero, Harvery Potts, Barbara Prag, Michael Price, Roberto Ramirez, Jane Robinson, Joseph Rothstein, Robert Shantz, George Steed, John Stevens, Patrice Sutton, Carol Waite, Robert Walser, Kevin Williams, William Wulftange, Alex Young, Eric Zaretsky

11. Evelyn Andrews, Gretchen Ansorge, Hugh Biggar, Theodore Borgerding, Laura Burns, Audrey Case, Amy Cau, Anne Collins, Peter

Conklin, Beatrice Conrad-Heberer, Thomas Epler, Timothy Fitzgerald, Laure Gardner, Elizabeth Giles, Tracy Gordon, Janine Griggs, Sarah Hadley, Josie Hallinan, Kim Hayden, Candice Hite, Jennifer Ison, Lorna Kamber, Kristine Lyons, Patricia Maguder, Michael Marmura, Linda Martin, Sarah Matthews, Wendy Nelson, Susan Ordman, Christine Padberg, Glenn Peterson, Lynne Pimento, Ann Putnam, Jeffery Queen, Ruth Rainwater, Beverly Redgate, Ann Rogers, Garrett Rothman, Sharon Russell, Amy Scaglione, Michael Schwartz, Daniel Smedley, Carol Smith, Cynthia Sullivan, Matthew Sullivan, Rebecca Taggart, Angel Thompson, Paul Thompson, Richard Thornton, Michael Triplett, Theresa Tullock, Andrew Walker, Jonathan Ward, Jonina Weeks, Tyson Whitney, Melissa Wilson, Susan Yelich

12. Bryan Aptekar, Charmagne Baier, Jessica Beck, Cindy Bestland, Andrew Bielanski, Jill Blake, Christopher Bourret, Curtis Bowman, James Boyd, Alex Braden, Patricia Chapman-Dunne, Juliet Chowka, Emilia Clapp, Jakob Clausen, Deirdre Cotter, Julie Cotton, Sarah Davis, Matthew Dingo, Ann Donovan, Michael Drucker, Kristin Eifler, Michael Fackler, Charles Frederick, Lory Gembol, Roger Hadlich, Leatrice Hadlich-Mirikitani, Christina Hajagos-Clausen, Robin Huffstutter, Ingrid Johnson, Nicholas Johnson, Colleen Jones, Paul Karlson, Evelyn Kern, Kristine Kosar, Donald Krug, Tammy Langan, Julia Lodge, Ruth MacLean, Christi Magruder, Melissa Myers, Julia Nash, Jillyn O'Shea, Michael O'Shea, William Phelps, Scott Phillips, Paul Plack, Elizabeth Pollard, Joseph Ramos, Chad Randl, Susan Reagle, Shelley Reece, Miriam Richter, Chad Ruder, Mildred Salangad, Vincent Schommer, Gary Scott, Jason Sickle, Lorrie Smith, Randi Stebbins, Cherry Stewart, Kerry Tepedino, Kevin Tippetts, Nicole Tippetts, Grace Volkov, Elizabeth Vonekx, Pamela Washnock, Robert Wisz, Jennifer Witeck, Christine Wolf, Wade Wolosencuk, John Woskowicz

13. Stephen Alexis, Patrick Allen, Aaron Alton, Laura Anthony, Scott Bates, Paige Bansman, Angela Bellardini, Connie Benson, Jonathan Bibler, Jessica Bowers, Ashley Bruton, Ross Bush, Charlene Caprio, Stephen Chapman, Jaquelin Cochran, Carlee Cole, Jane Duffield, Susan Elias, James Elliott, Diane Emanuelli, Jeanne Geraghty, Mark Gray, Lisa Guadagno, Johanna Gueco, Jodi Ann Hathaway, Joel Hathaway, Lauren Heinz, Leslie Hess, Michael Hintze, Libbie Hodas, Elen Jarolimek, Britt Johnson, Christopher Johnson, Teresa Johnson, Edward Kehler, James Killelea, Katherine Kling, Rodney Kling, Andrea Kubiak, Katrina Leavitt, Maria Longi, Jack Lutz, Paz Lutz, Jennifer Marien, Ellen Marson, Jennifer Maxson, Cassandra McCorney, Eric McConkie, Jann McCord, Paula Miller, Daniel Moroney, Rebecca Murphy, Edward Myrbeck, Karen Noll, Kathleen O'Keefe, Brian O'Malley Jr., Sherry O'Quin, Sharon Pacheco, Jessica Parker, Katie Peel, Grace Peters, Paul Pioszak, Aaron Ramsey, Aaron Rice, Yun Rinnert, Ruth Rudzinski, Shirley Schaaf, Gert Schuller, Ruta Schuller, Brian Seiler, Rebecca Sherwood, Lawrence Siddall, Bethany Slingerland, Evan Strong, Julia Taylor, Juliana Thirolf, Aimee Thompson, Lia Tinkelman, Wendy Widom, Rebecca Wileman, Joseph Woerner, Theodore Zondlo

14. Lisa Anacleto, Thomas Bailey, Ryan Beaman, Peter Berger, Ruth Beutler, Heidi Bissell, Adrienne Brooks, George Brown, Kimberley Carlin, Kathleen Cavender, Jonathan Chappell, Sally Choate, Christine Cochran, Christopher Cohoon, Sandra Collier, Tearsa Coogan, Mabelle Cruz, Maria DaCosta, Michael Davis, Susan Davis, Bonnie Dawson, Garth Dawson, Laura Derkacz, Matthew Dixon, Jeffrey Eargle, Alison Evans, Troy Farmer, Christy Felty, James Flint II, Christine Freeland, Amanda Gardner, Tracy Gauwitz, Daniel Glasson, Kathryn Harrison, Emily Harville, James Hashim, Brian Hayden, Gay Deen Hice, Misty Hitesman, Peter Hoffman, Suzanne Hoffman, Jack Hutchens, Duff Johnston, Cecil Jordan III,

Kelly Keith, Katherine Kerns, Aimee Knight, Yana Kucher, Julie Kurzen, Michael Lento, Mark Lenzi, Tracey Listug, Brendan Madden, Leanne Mairs, Michele Mangan, Sonia Marin, Nicholas Mariotti, Alisa Marko (Lannucci), Celeste Mazur, Candace McClintock, Jason McMyler, Elizabeth Merrick, Kathryn Moorehead, Betsy Moran, Andrew Morrison, Joy Murphy, Robyn Needleman, Katrina Peek, Rebecca Penshorn, Frances Powell, Leslie Pravettone, Dawn Rabey, Stefanie Rehn-Jordan, Jason Ricks, Lisa Robinson, John Rubino, Jacqueline Russell, Jason Salley, Edward Santoro, Liam Seward, Nadine Smith, Sandra Strah, Wendy Stultz, Kari Szydel, Tyson Terhune, Kurt Thumlert, David Tomchek, Philip Tracy, Amy Trojanowski, Cynthia Veit, Robert Wall, Lucy Wichlacz, James Zarnowiecki

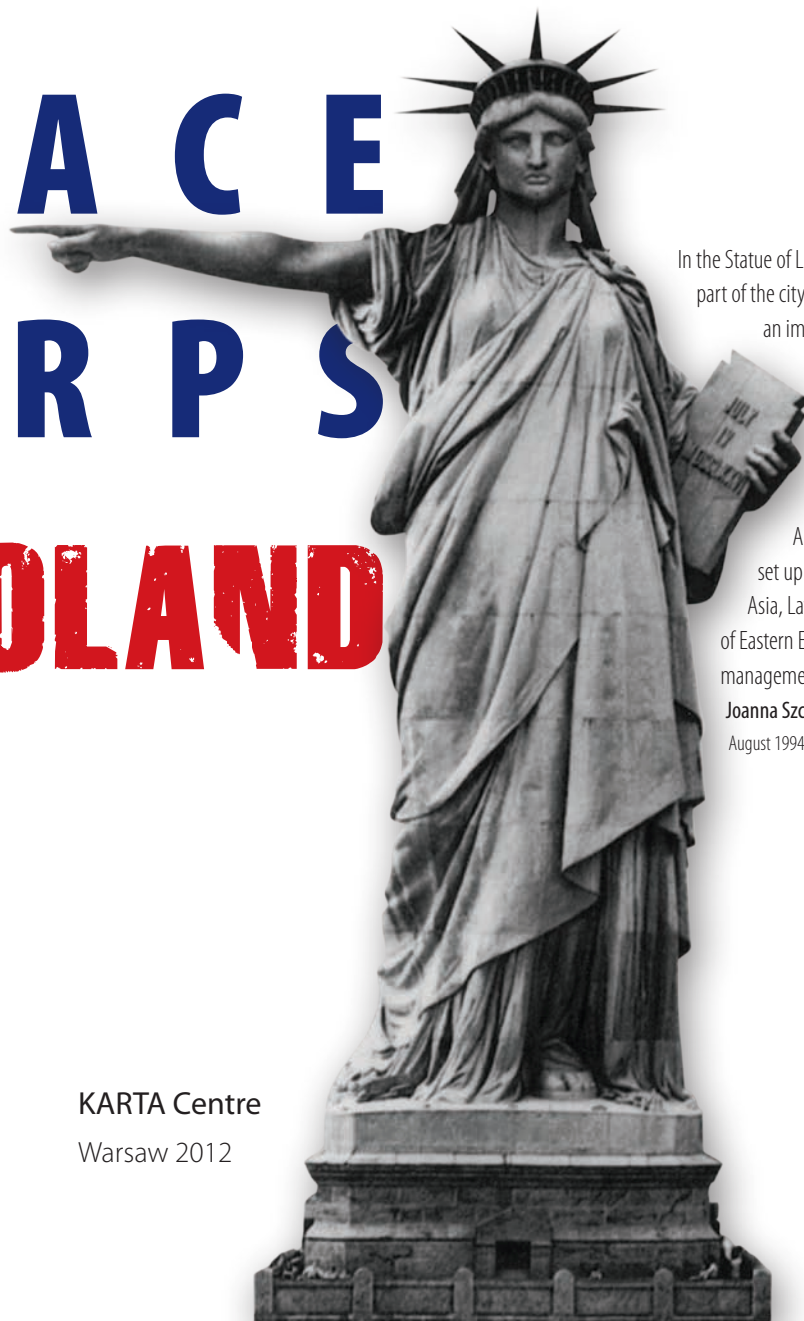
15. Jennifer Anthony, Steven Beaty, Carrie Bemis, Virginia Black, Gregory Bohm, Sarah Bokel, Jonathan Brever, Karen Brown, Adam Bucky, Amanda Buerk, Jenifer Carter, Joel Chanvisanuruk, Rena Chicklas, Oliver Chilson, Mildred Chrin, Elisabeth Clobucker, Dara Collins, Enny Cramer, Mary Crisostomo, Jeanne Cross, Anne Crowley, Cedric Cunningham, Phyllis Damon, Anita Decherd, Megan Dieter, Estelle Disselhorst, Bairnt Dittler, Lesley Farnsworth, Risa Ford, Joseph Gasper II, Marcella Goff, Roberta Harper, Paul Haugen, Gregory Hesse, Abigail Holm, Judith Hunger, Suzanne Keith, Dana Krajewski, Richard Lloyd, Aaron Luster, Lisa Main, Kelley Maltby, Sarah Mankowski, Janelle McCormick, Jason Menayan, Gregory Mihan, Delia Morris, Linda Müller, Faye Murrell, Roberta Olson, David Pasco, Anthony Pirnot, Robert Rauch, Beth Robertie, Lindsey Rosenberg, Jessica Sanchez, Jay Shackelford, Jason Sheridan, Paul Shockley, Lynne Slightom, Roger Slightom, Robert Speski, Betty Spray, Sarah Stack, Barbara Stoff, Martha Strunsky, Rhonda Thompson, Corinne Toth, Lisa Tufts, Victory Upthegrove, Karen Vatz, Kay Wasyliszyn, Ingrid Weigand, Lisa Westerbeck, Kate Willhardt, Robert Wilson, Jason Yalen, Jesse Zajac, Whitney Zeigler

A M E R I C A N

P E A C E

C O R P S

in POLAND



In the Statue of Liberty Museum on a small island which forms part of the city of New York, there is a poster which made an impact on me like no other. Pictured on the poster is the Statue of Liberty but, instead of holding the torch aloft as the Good Lord intended, she points her finger towards the Atlantic Ocean and says: "Be a patriot, leave your country." Signed — American Peace Corps.

And, indeed, volunteers from this organisation, set up in the 1960s, head off to the countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America, and recently even the countries of Eastern Europe, in order to teach English, management and environmental protection.

Joanna Szczęsna

August 1994

KARTA Centre

Warsaw 2012

The Congress of the United States declares that it is the policy of the United States and the purpose of this Act to promote word peace

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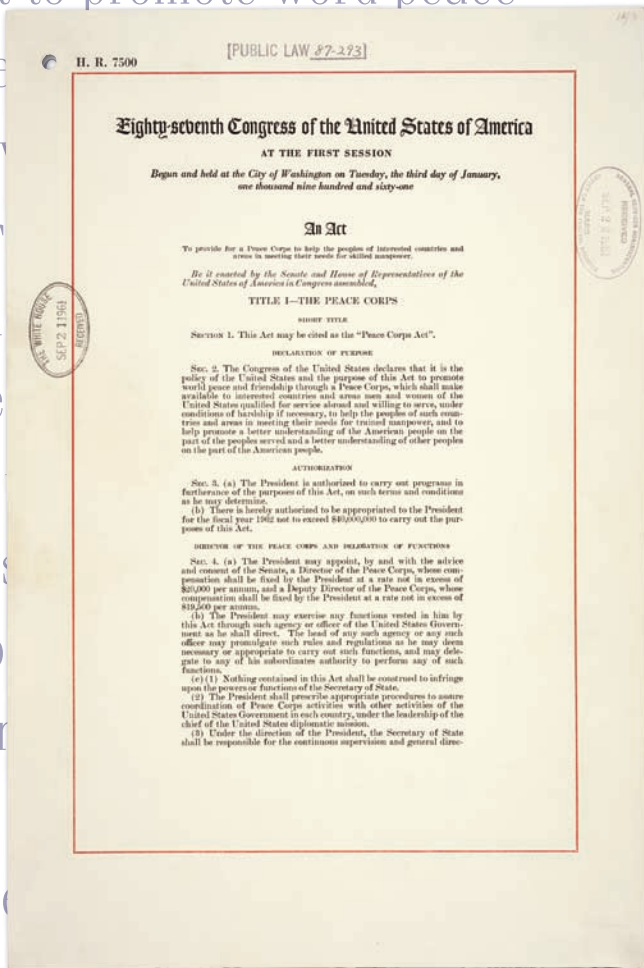
promote

the American people on the part

of the peoples served and a better

understanding of other peoples on

the part of the American people.



The American Peace Corps is a federal government agency, which owes its origin to an event which occurred during Senator John F. Kennedy's presidential campaign. At an impromptu meeting at the University of Michigan, Kennedy confronted the students, asking how many of them would be prepared to spare some time to help developing countries. One thousand students responded positively. Support for the concept grew and, with the new President's backing, the US Congress passed the Peace Corps Act on 22 September 1961. The Corps was entrusted with a mission to "promote world peace and friendship." The organisation's mission remains unchanged to this day. It sends out volunteers to interested countries, to help with their social and economic development. Initially, the Peace Corps was mainly active in the countries of the so-called Third World. At the beginning of the transforma-

Approved -
September 22nd 1961
White House
Washington
John F. Kennedy

United States Act of Congress establishing the American Peace Corps, signed by President John F. Kennedy. Washington, 22 September 1961

tion period which followed the fall of Communism, the Peace Corps responded to the invitation of the governments of Central and Eastern Europe and during the period 1990–2001, some 1000 volunteers were deployed in Poland. They came here in fifteen groups of between 28 – 132 people and their mission fell into three main categories: English language teaching, the promotion of small businesses and environmental protection. They worked within a framework of two-year contracts in various institutions, non-governmental organisations, town councils, national parks, museums, schools and in newly established language teacher training colleges – mostly in smaller towns. In order to be assigned a volunteer, these institutions had to make an application, justifying their requirement for such aid

160 projects with a total value of about \$900,000. Most projects were concerned with equipping institutions with professional English-language literature and with computers, as well as installation of Internet services. Volunteers were expected to work on behalf of local communities and to meet their needs. By June 2001 as many as 670 volunteers had been involved in the field of English language teaching, to the benefit of 120,000 pupils of secondary schools and more than 9,000 students of English language training colleges. Thanks to the activities of the Peace Corps, the number of full-time teachers in the colleges rose from 1,700 in 1989 to over 12,000 by 2001. On the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the American Peace Corps and on the 10th anniversary of the completion of



Ninth group of volunteers after completing their pre-service training. Płock, 1994

and giving an assurance that the volunteer would be provided with housing and – in the case of individual language teachers – that they would be paid a salary in line with other employees. People applying for admission to the Corps had to follow a detailed and, in their own opinion, often difficult recruitment procedure which lasted for many months and which was followed by a period of intensive 11-week on-site training. In Poland such training courses were provided in Toruń, Łódź, Płock and Radom, amongst others. Volunteers were given training relevant to their fields, and also acquired language skills. They learnt about Poland, its history, culture and traditions. In March 1990 a Peace Corps office was established in Warsaw, which employed both Americans and Poles. Thanks to the facilities which the Corps offered, and also to their own skills, the volunteers succeeded in carrying out some

its mission in Poland, the KARTA Centre has undertaken to commemorate the work of these volunteers in our country. The inspiration and support for this project has come from the Embassy of the United States of America in Warsaw. We have managed not only to reconstruct the Polish history of the Corps' activities, to establish the names of all the volunteers, the places to which they were posted and the fields in which they worked but also to make contact with over 500 people who had links with the Peace Corps. The documentation we have amassed now constitutes a considerable collection in the archives of the KARTA Centre, and we are pleased to present a selection of this material. To this end, we have chosen to publish not just this brochure but also features in the 'Karta' quarterly magazine and a multi-media presentation (korpus.karta.org.pl) – all of which we hope will familiarise people with this largely forgotten episode in the process of transformation which took place in Poland after the fall of the Communist system.

Agnieszka Kudelka

In 1998, well before Poland joined the EU, the slogan 'Amerykanka' [female American] aroused many emotions. A colleague explained that this referred to the American Peace Corps. I recalled having heard this in some sort of film but I associated it with Americans going off to Vietnam, Korea or perhaps to Africa... but why to Poland?!

Wojciech Helinski

Cultural Events Organiser for Kudowa-Zdrój Town Council

IN THE EYES OF THE ORGANISERS



PRESIDENT LECH WAŁĘSA in a speech to

Peace Corps coordinators: Many people, many leaders, have no idea how very much we need you. We know that the world is divided. We had a Wall, an Iron Curtain, an abstract economic and political philosophy. And that is why an enormous task awaits us in uniting nations and evening out inequalities. I believe we have not yet made full use of the vast potential within us. [...]

Each and every one of us in Poland denounces the old system but each of us has something of the old system in us. Initiative was destroyed. We were brought up in a system of abstracts. And that is why it would be safer and wiser if we could make your tasks as easy as possible. [...] Come to me and I will do my utmost to help you because I can see huge needs – but great opportunities, too.

Warsaw, 7 December 1992

[1]

TIMOTHY CARROLL (Peace Corps Director): There won't be many waves of Volunteers before the Poles will have caught up... This will be one of the world's great and limited engagements. Poland will not need us for long. Rarely has a host country government of the Peace Corps been so cooperative, so truly a partner. Officials on the highest levels make things happen, support the Volunteers, intercede on behalf of the agency, en-

ertain bold ideas. But more important than the government support is the spirit which these Volunteers bring with them.

Warsaw, 1994

[9]

EXTRACT FROM AN ARTICLE IN 'GAZETA STOLECZNA':

Minister Jan Maria Rokita took twice as long to hoist the Polish flag as the Americans – Ambassador Thomas Simons Jr. and Timothy Carroll, Director of the Peace Corps in Poland. The ceremony took place during the grand opening of the Corps' new head office – a small palatial white building on Bukowińska Street in the Mokotów district.

"I know what value the Americans place in the raising of the national flag. When I took part in the ceremony, I wanted to show that the work you do merits the raising of the national flags," said Minister Jan Rokita.

"It is difficult to add anything to the words of Minister Jan Rokita," stated the Ambassador, "especially when it is so cold." The ceremony concluded with the firing of three petards after which the Corps Director invited everyone inside. Those who wanted to light a cigarette had to stay outside.

Warsaw, December 1992

[5]

TED KONTEK (Business Director in the Warsaw Peace Corps Office): When we began our operations in Poland, we were approached by many



President Lech Wałęsa meets American Peace Corps coordinators for Central and Eastern Europe and for the Near East. Warsaw, the Belweder Palace, 1992

people. Every Mayor wanted to have his own American. Initially, we worked as we did in Third World countries – we assigned teams to the poorest parts of the country, on the eastern borders of Poland.

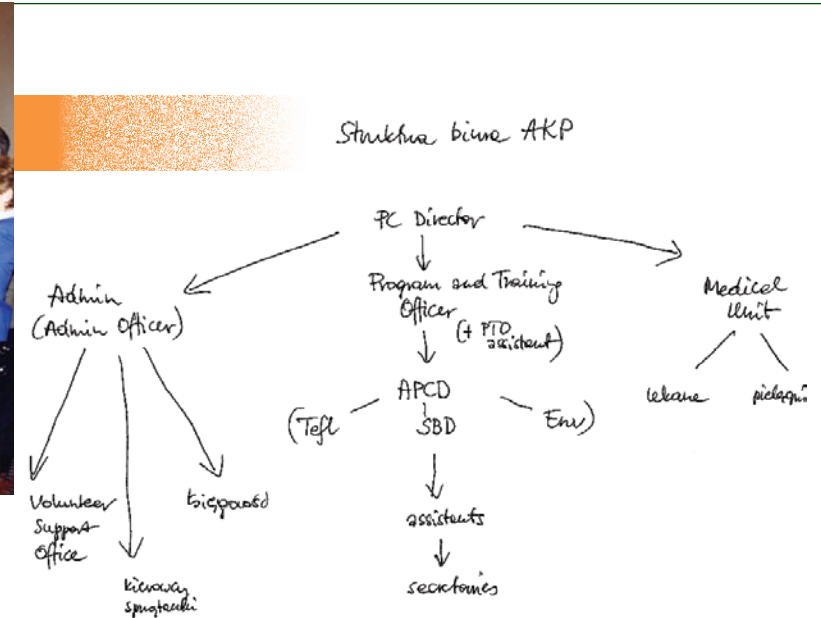
Apart from a few instances, these ventures were unsuccessful. Our experience to date did not work in Polish conditions. On the other hand, the Mayors had not prepared concrete tasks for our volunteers, and had not provided interpreters. Town Councils were under the impression that the Americans had come to hand out cheques.

Warsaw, 1992

[6]

KRZYSZTOF STRZEMESKI (Foreign Language Teacher Training College employee, later Associate Peace Corps Director): In the early 1990s, you did not hear a great deal of English spoken around, so people were turned on by the prospect of contact with foreigners. Being an Americanophile (as most people were at that time), I gladly applied to work for the Peace Corps during my summer vacation. I thought this would be a one-off job, but a few months later I had a 'phone-call from Jean Żukowski-Faust, the first Associate Peace Corps Director for Education in Poland, asking me to come for an interview for a full-time job since I had apparently proved myself.

Toruń, 1991



Structure of American Peace Corps Office in Poland



Staff of the Bielsko Academy of Business greet volunteers. Bielsko-Biala, 1992



Group of volunteers being sworn-in in the City Council Offices. Łódź, 1994

BEATA JACHURA-PRESSELLO (Peace Corps Office employee): There was an almost family atmosphere in the Office. Demands were made but everyone was friendly and supportive. That's when I had my first experience of an 'open door' policy, which was unusual in Poland at that time; however, information about volunteers was not shared publicly. There were strict rules on confidentiality – you didn't automatically know everything about everybody. Warsaw, 2001

MALGORZATA KUJAWSKA (Polish language lecturer, subsequently coordinator of Polish language training for Peace Corps volunteers): It was the beginning of 1990. A dreadfully pessimistic time. I was approaching the end of my studies but had no idea what I would do next. School did not seem to be an interesting prospect. I had had various temporary jobs. I'm a linguist and graduated in Polish language and literature. Then I had a 'phone call from my father who had seen an ad in a newspaper – the Peace Corps was looking for lecturers of Polish as a foreign language. Interviews were being conducted by Michael Honegger, the Peace Corps Director. It was not so much about teach-

ing qualifications as about having an open mind. Although you did not have to teach with the help of translation, some knowledge of English was useful.

Warsaw, 1990

EDWARD MALISZEWSKI (first Foreign Language Teacher Training College Director): The idea that we should make use of volunteers came not from me but from the Education Inspectorate. I also set up the College on the initiative of the Education Inspectorate in September 1990 after a year's stay in the United States. During my stay, I had looked at the structure of their colleges. I tried to make good use of the experience and knowledge which the Peace Corps volunteer had brought from the United States – the best source for such experiences. True, we already had a ready teaching programme prepared by the Ministry of National Education. It was not, however, suitable for implementation as it stood – for many reasons. Firstly, it was not possible to put together the sort of teaching body envisaged by the programme.



Barbara Burroughs, Director of Induction Training for volunteers



Krzysztof Strzemeski, Associate Director of English language teaching programme



Beata Jachura-Pressello, employee of Peace Corps Office

We also thought that, since it was a programme for all colleges throughout Poland, it could not be suitable for each individual college. And anyway, we had our own ambitions.

Toruń, 1990

IWONA LAMŻA-FURMAN (Polish language teacher, later coordinator of Polish language teaching in the Peace Corps): Before that first meeting with the volunteers [during preparatory training in Podkowa Leśna in 1991] I was a little nervous despite having worked

in Great Britain at one time. We had only just emerged from Communism where there was practically no contact with foreigners. Their arrival was very important to me. And then they arrived... and they, too, were a little anxious. Very soon the ice was broken. I can honestly say that I fell in love with those Americans at first sight. Then I realised how different the Peace Corps was to all my other foreign contacts – the volunteers proved wonderful, charming students.

Warsaw, 1991

KRZYSZTOF STRZEMESKI: Peace Corps Office employees received copies of applications from Washington. My duties included selection of target positions for the volunteers. I spoke to directors of schools, 'guardians' whose task it was to look after the volunteers and who would be able to communicate in English. Every school had to have a teacher of English because the Peace Corps placed a great deal of importance on transfer of skills and transfer of 'know-how' to a local contact. Once the volunteers left,

RECRUITMENT OF VOLUNTEERS

Recruitment criteria:

- familiarity with the basic principles of the Corps,
- professional qualifications,
- health,
- American citizenship,
- aged 18 plus,
- no criminal record,
- not engaged in intelligence gathering,
- not responsible for maintenance of children or other persons.

Recruitment stages:

- candidate applications – a year in advance (overseas placement after 9-12 months),
- additional medical checks,
- interview with candidate (to ascertain his/her motivation),
- application documents checked for accuracy, clarity and authenticity,
- assessment as to whether the candidate fulfils the requirements of the task allotted to him,
- documents checked to ensure they meet the requirements of the host country,
- a meeting lasting several days prior to travel overseas,
- travel to training venue in target country.

PEACE CORPS

Amerykański Korpus Pokoju
w Polsce



United States Peace Corps
in Poland

SEP

Do Osób Zainteresowanych Sprawą:

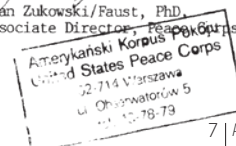
Wymieniony poniżej ochotnik Amerykańskiego Korpusu Pokoju, Pan/Pani Mary Melinda Giemer, został zatwierdzony przez Ministerstwo Edukacji Narodowej jako nauczyciel języka angielskiego odbywający ochotniczą służbę w polskich szkołach zgodnie z porozumieniem zawartym pomiędzy Rządem Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej i Rządem Stanów Zjednoczonych Ameryki Północnej w dniu 23 Lutego 1990 r.

To Whom It May Concern:

The Peace Corps Volunteer here named, Mary M. Giemer, has been accepted for Peace Corps service as a volunteer teacher by the Ministry of National Education of Poland according to the agreement and treaty made between Poland and the United States of America on February 23, 1990.

Jean Zukoński Faust
Jean Zukoński/Faust, PhD
Associate Director, Amerykański Korpus Pokoju w Polsce

Confirmation of employment
of volunteer as a teacher of English



Timothy Carroll, second
Director of the American Peace Corps
Office in Poland, 1991–1994

Grażyna Kawka, Associate
Director of English language
teaching programme

Aleksandra Gul, Associate
Director of small business
development programme

these 'guardians' would remain and would pass on their skills. It was also the first time that I heard the phrase: "If you give a man a fish you feed him for a day. If you teach a man to fish you feed him for a lifetime." The Peace Corps was also careful to ensure that a volunteer did not take jobs away from local people. First we chose small localities which were in real need of volunteers and which would ensure that the volunteers had satisfactory conditions. Sometimes, the chosen localities would turn out to be on our medical officer's black list, as in the case

of Śląsk [Silesia]. When making arrangements, I made sure that the volunteer would be assured of privacy in his lodgings. Young Americans are independent creatures and any attempts to feed them, for instance, were not appreciated.

Volunteers of ethnic origin, or of a different sexual orientation were generally allocated to positions in larger towns. As regards a lack of tolerance among Poles, which was unduly stressed during sessions for volunteers, we – the Polish staff of the Peace Corps – wrote a letter to the Peace Corps Director, asking him not to provoke stereotyping in training sessions. The person in charge of cross-cultural training later apologised for his generalisations.

Warsaw, 1991–93

MAŁGORZATA KUJAWSKA: Michael Honegger was remarkably sensitive and open-minded in his selection of a group of twelve lecturers in Polish as a foreign language. They were young people with varying experience of teaching but who knew English and were prepared to take on the project. Our task was to master a certain type of methodology and to apply it in the preparation of a Polish language course for Peace Corps volunteers. We were to work on this during a two-week training course in Mała Wieś, near Warsaw; future teachers of Hungarian also took part in the course as a Peace Corps was also being established in Hungary at the time. The training was conducted by lecturers of English as a foreign language from America and they were highly competent in the methodology. They introduced us to unusual skills and taught us in accordance with a communicative language teaching method which had proved itself in the United States. During these training sessions we taught the Hungarians and they taught us. For me this was a completely new and innovative approach. I worked on a total of six such programmes. We were thrilled when, during the third session, it turned out that halfway through the course these people were beginning to speak Polish.

Warsaw, 1990

BEATA JACHURA-PRESSELLO: Transfer of a volunteer to a different placement was generally made on the basis of his own specific situation. For example a young woman volunteer was placed with a family where, on sweltering hot days, the father would walk around wearing only his underpants. It was not just a question of approaching him and telling him to get

dressed – it was important that both parties be comfortable during this association which, after all, was expected to last some three months. Money was an important factor for almost all the families which provided lodgings for volunteers during their preparatory training. There were also families where the children were learning English and then the deciding factor was the opportunity for daily conversation in English. In some cases, the motivation was loneliness.

Warsaw, 2001

GRZEGORZ TKACZYK (Town Council employee): In the spring of 1996, a young woman visited the then President of Radom and introduced herself as a representative of the Peace Corps' Polish mission. At that time I dealt with numerous international contacts. She explained that the Corps had chosen Radom as the venue for training of American volunteers. My task was to create a data base of Radom families who would be prepared to take in someone from the United States, regardless of race or age, and to provide bed and board for them for a period of three months. I was to inform the families of the purpose of the visit and of the remuneration which the family would receive. I did not want to select Radom inhabitants whose primary interest was the money they could earn in exchange for such hospitality. My announcements, therefore, mentioned only application dates and my telephone number. This turned out to be a good approach. Those who expressed an interest had to pass my initial vetting process. I sounded them out as to their motives by asking a few innocent questions. As the ratio of interest to the number of placements was considerable (between 80 and 150 families), I had plenty of choice. In the first place, I eliminated those families which considered that for about 100 zloties per month they would have a nanny for their offspring.

There were also genuine enthusiasts, people who were curious about behaviour and traditions with which they had not had previous contact – in other words, people who wanted to learn something new. The results of such tactics were already visible during the second year of the project. None of the Peace Corps representatives wanted to replace either me as the initial organiser, or the considerable number of families which had been entered permanently on the list as being 'totally reliable'. And I must add that this was not just true of my list but also of the American register.

Radom, 1996

BEATA JACHURA-PRESSELLO: We made scheduled visits to volunteer host families but there were sometimes additional visits if a volunteer was in need of help. Some matters could be resolved on the 'phone. Generally the problem lay in loneliness and home-sickness and the fact that volunteers in small town schools often felt as if they were constantly on show. There could also be problems with the lodgings, with the hot water supply – ordinary everyday matters.

Warsaw, 2001

PENNY FIELDS (Associate Peace Corps Director for the English teaching programme): Volunteers had tough times. For example, I had a volunteer who was Jewish and I think she really struggled with the anti-Semitism and the history. It's pretty brutal. And I saw a lot of racism, which was tough. Finally, I'm gay so it was tricky tip-toeing around that – even in Warsaw – not really knowing if things were going to work out if I were to "out". We started the fist sort of 'rainbow' group of expats and Poles, though, and I made some of my best pals that way. Good times. Besides that, the winters were pretty harsh. I had a fireplace and that was really nice.

Warsaw, 1998

JANUSZWOJCIESZEK-LYŚ (host family): That first meeting with volunteers was always exciting. Tension, expectation... who might it be? We didn't really have any preconceived ideas about Americans but we were curious as to the sort of person he or she would turn out to be. During our volunteer's stay with us we were a sort of replacement for her family, we provided her with bed and board. The Corps gave us money towards her stay. Our role was to look after her, to take her around, to do some sight-seeing. We were host to three volunteers. We enjoyed the experience.

Radom, 1999

MAŁGORZATA KUJAWSKA: Moderation of communication in the Polish language between the volunteers was a challenge for us. We wondered how best to step away from our 'teaching rostrum'. A language teacher usually creates a situation which ensures that pupils do not step beyond parrot fashion repetition. We wondered how we could get a pupil to ask questions before he had learnt any Polish.

Warsaw, 1990



Certificate of thanks issued to Mr and Mrs Bilski for acting as host family to Corps volunteers



Krzysztof Jan Głowczyński in front of the Museum of Ethnography which was established with the help of Oliver Chilson, a volunteer. Lidzbark Welski, 2005

In Przysucha I could only speak English with a colleague at school, with another English teacher and one pupil. When I went shopping I had to ask for everything in Polish, of course. Once I asked 'do you have breasts?' – I should have said 'are there any breasts?' The whole of Przysucha buzzed with that story.

Angelo Pressello
Volunteer

IN THE EYES OF THE VOLUNTEERS



Volunteer awaiting the arrival
of host school representatives

DANIEL SARGENT (volunteer): It turned out I was going to Poland. I looked at the map and drank a tequila toast to Poland. I had no idea about its history, I thought Copernicus came from Greece. I'd never heard of Kościuszko. My sum total of knowledge was *Polish kielbasa* [Polish sausage] and that Poles drink a lot because it's a Slavonic tradition. I watched some folk music on TV. In the background there was a lot of snow and thatched roofs. So I reckoned it was sort of like Alaska where all the men are farmers and the women are large and robust.
1991 [10]

ANGELO PRESSELLO: In order to become a Volunteer, you have to have professional qualifications. When I sent in my application I was told to be prepared to go to Kazakhstan or Kirghistan. Then they told me I would be going to Poland. 'But that's Europe,' I thought to myself – why are they sending me there? Do they think I won't be able to cope with those other countries? The Peace Corps in Poland was a somewhat controversial matter. One friend was sent to Mali and another to Moldavia. Now those were real 'Corps countries'. Our life in Poland was luxurious in comparison.

1996

PERRY PEDERSEN (volunteer): I lived with the Schmitt Family (my host family) as a 16-year-old foreign-exchange student from 1971 to 1972, when one could stand next to the 'Zonengrenze' [border zone] and observe thru binoculars the stark differences between the DDR and BRD [Bundesrepublik Deutschland – West Germany]. During the Christmas holidays of 1989, while I was visiting the Schmitts, the German news-broadcasters chronicled the Eastern Bloc's disintegration in real time. The excitement was palpable, the enormous implications of the events were apparent, and I then decided (somehow!) to become a part of this socio-political shift. I had been working as a District Sales Manager for over a year, managing 11 sales representatives in the Seattle-Portland area of the Pacific Northwest. After wit-

WELCOME TO POLISH LIFE!

Extract from a brochure prepared by volunteers. Radom, 1996



VOLUNTEER TRAINING IN POLAND

- 3-months' preparatory training course (training in effective presentation of own skills to associates in host country, intensive language course, awareness of Polish culture and traditions, verification of candidate's skill); swearing-in ceremony took place on completion of this training,
- additional training (training in the candidate's field of work, or language training intended to broaden practical skills),
- 'mid term gathering' (this took place half way through the placement, its aim was integration of the group, summing up the first year of the placement and providing encouragement for the second year),
- closing conference (preparing volunteers for their return to the USA).

Proszę o zatrudnienie mnie w NKJO
w charakterze nauczyciela języka
angielskiego od 1.09.1990.

Mary Ziemeck

Application for employment in the Foreign Language Teacher
Training College in Toruń

nessing the dramatic events within Eastern Europe and after exploring various options for getting involved, I decided that the U.S. Peace Corps' small business development programme made the most sense. My business skills could be useful, and I could stay long enough in a country to learn the language and establish meaningful relationships. After completing all of the necessary paperwork, and against the advice of my business colleagues, I quit my job, and joined the U.S. Peace Corps.
1991

Patrick Chapman counting storks as part of the Pro Natura
programme. Dobięgniew area, summer 1995

THOMAS RULLAND (volunteer): I've come here because the changes in Europe are remarkably exciting at this time. In the States we make sure that when we speak of Poland we don't place it in Eastern Europe – which since forever has been associated with a kind of Third World – but in Central Europe. To me one of the most amazing things, for example, is the vastness of the forests here. I also think the people are extremely interesting, they're very friendly although when you pass by them in the street they look sad and anxious, and they don't greet you as spontaneously as people do back home.

Szczecin, 1992

[2]



Janusz Wojcieszek-Lyś and volunteer, Linda Müller. Radom, 1999

Right: Volunteer Catherina Peebles in Comprehensive High School No. 1 in Białystok, 1990–92

DIANA ROBINSON (volunteer): Two of my great-grandparents had lived in the Jewish quarter in Warsaw and had left around the turn of the century. My great grandfather had been a glove-maker there. Because of that connection, I was particularly curious about Poland. I knew, of course, about martial law, the Solidarity movement, about the round table talks, about Lech Wałęsa. I knew that Poland had been devastated in World War II and that the Nazis had set up many concentration camps there. I was aware that there was still anti-Semitism in Poland and so, for the most part, did not mention my heritage. The other negative experience is not one I personally experienced, but



You know you're in Poland when you...

was very aware of. Our African American volunteers had a terrible time in Poland. They faced tremendous racism, and I don't think any of them actually served their two years. I don't think it was fair to put them in that situation.

Bielsk Podlaski, 1993

BARBARA HILPMAN (volunteer): Some Poles see foreigners through the light of their experiences with the Russians. They think we've come here to colonise their country. They can't believe we want to help Poland with no strings attached.

Łosice, 1992

[6]

LARRY MICHEL (volunteer): When I decided to join the Corps I didn't have any choice as to country. I thought it might be South America because I speak Spanish. We were grilled for almost a year to see whether we were suitable. They checked not just our professional skills but our ability to adapt, our ease of communication, resistance to stress and they even took our fingerprints.

Participation in the Corps is well perceived when you start out on a professional career in the USA. Out of every 200 applications only eight meet the requirements. It really is an élite. I'm very glad I'm in Poland. Developing political and social changes are our guarantee that we will be needed here.

Warsaw, 1991

[4]



Jacek Bożek, leader and founder of the Gaja Club, with his friends at a Tibetan Buddhist gathering. Drobin, summer of 1993

- crave kielbasa.
- eat a szynka sandwich for breakfast.
- wear dark socks with shorts.
- carry a Billa bag.
- like your water "gazowana".
- prefer herbata to any other beverage.
- won't walk out of the house without wearing something tight, black, and made of synthetic fabrics.
- like warm beer.
- recognize bus drivers.
- dream in Polish.
- can spot an Adidas man and move to the other side of the street before he even knows what happened.
- have at least 3 ogniskos under your belt.
- start to wonder how you ever survived on only 3 meals a day.
- have a philosophy about food: the more "tusty" the better.
- feel offended by Polish jokes.
- actually enjoy "monotone man's" narration.
- can do all your laundry in an hour or less.
- eat flaki – and like it.
- fight over slippers.
- think a Fiat is a big car.
- think 80 km is the slow lane.
- know your dog is treated better than anyone else in the house.
- know that any time you pick up a stick it will have kielbasa on the end of it.

From a brochure prepared by volunteers. Radom, 1999

BENJAMIN BURG (volunteer): I never again spent so much time on an application. It takes 6 months for the Peace Corps to accept you. You have to get references from two friends, two teachers, and two jobs. You have to get medical clearance. They tell you at the very beginning that the process takes 6 months, because "we want to make sure that you really want to do this".

Bielsko-Biala, 1995

ALEX BRADEN (volunteer): I lived in a student dormitory. Probably the most interesting part about that was that I had no heat or hot water, except that from a small electric heater, during holidays and weekends. Ah, the beauty of centralized economic systems. But Kętrzyn was a wonderful town with a lot going for it. I still have friends there.

Kętrzyn, 1998

DIANE ROBINSON: Training was somewhat disappointing. I had one very wonderful Polish teacher, Ewa, and one who was dreadful. We sat through endless lectures. Some lectures were useful, such as on writing lesson plans; some lectures



Polish language lesson during induction training.
Podkowa Leśna, January 1993

were utterly worthless, including most of the health lectures. Learning Polish was very intimidating, even with my Russian background. The grammar! Too little attention was paid to adult learning and too little modeling of effective teaching was done.

Bielski Podlaski, 1994

JEFFERY PETRICH (volunteer): Training, working and living in Poland certainly had its ups and downs. The luxuries I had enjoyed in the States were not available and I was forced to speak a foreign language, meet new people and do things I might otherwise not do if back at home. However, Poland has been one of the most single important milestones in my life. The generosity from my host family in Płock, the hosts/organizers in Witnica, or my students, overwhelmed me and continues to overwhelm me to this day. I wasn't just treated very well – I was welcomed with open arms and hearts by people everywhere. Yes, I treasure all of my experiences in Poland and sometimes can't believe I was actually blessed to do and experience what I did!

Witnica, 1996

PATRICK CHAPMAN (volunteer): I took me long time to figure out what was meant by 'kombinować' [to scheme or connive etc.]. It's usually corruption on a small scale, sometimes on a big scale. I see it every day. Any problem has to be solved by what we call 'finagling', e.g. my school director's secretary sewed cribs into his daughter's skirt to use during her 'matura' [High School Certificate] examinations.

Dobiegiew, 1996



Newsletters and brochure cover prepared by sixth group of volunteers



Lesson conducted by Patrick Chapman in Dobięgniew Comprehensive High School, November 1995

Left: Volunteer Andrea Ginise with Janusz Wojcieszek-Lyś (host family) and a friend. Radom, 1997

ANGELO PRESSELLO: In one small place to which I was assigned, Poles would walk up to me, touch me and say: "You are real!" It was very rare to meet an American at that time. I could rest easy – I was sure to encounter the prettiest girl in town at a party and get an invitation for dinner on Sunday. I also knew that Poland was a country where the people had a positive view of Americans. And I was careful not to spoil that impression.

We were also taught there that we were the strange ones. For example, people here used to stand huddled together in shop queues whereas we – in America – were used to having our own space around us when we did our shopping. We were to remember that we were not in the USA. This is their country, they live here and that's how you stand in the queues here. Your role is not to teach them how to be civilised. This is civilisation, too, and this is how you do things here. You must adapt to them and not they to you.

In Przysucha everybody knew what I did and whom I talked to. I was glad when winter came because it got darker earlier and I could be anonymous again. I learnt what it is to be a celebrity. I understand now why people hate it. But popularity had its good moments, too. On 'Teacher's Day' I felt very important. My pupils clapped me – I felt like a star.

Przysucha, 1996

CHRISTINE WOLF (volunteer): It was lonely at first and I felt isolated. Everything seemed so different once I left the safety of training and it took a while to feel comfortable. The first year was all about figuring out the language and what was expected of me. It was also a tough transition into teaching, since I had never taught high school before, or taught full-time. It was also challenging in terms of knowing where to shop and how to get things done. Luckily, my school provided a lot of support. The second year I was much more confident and began to relax, which means I started to enjoy myself a lot more. The transition into the Polish reality was harder than I had expected, but well worth it. At one point, about one year in, I was actually ready to leave Poland. Things weren't coming together for me; I felt exhausted and like I was done with the experience. I actually went to the headquarters in Warsaw and stayed with Mary Cloud, a Peace Corps staff nurse, and her family for a few days while I decided what was best for me. This is another example of how kind and terrific the Peace Corps staff was. Her kindness was instrumental in me having the break I needed. After that, I decided to stay and had a second fantastic year.

Jelenia Góra, 1998

BENJAMIN BURG: To start with, the Gaja Club didn't believe my fundraising strategy could be successful. With time they managed it and they are now the only environmental group in Poland with half of their money coming from donations. They're one of the most powerful environmental groups in Poland today.

Bielsko-Biała, 1995

PERRY PEDERSEN: Under Communist rule, cheating and corruption were regarded by the Poles as legitimate ways for coping with the economic and political systems. According to a Polish friend and former Solidarity member, only fools complied with a corrupt and nonsensical system. But this mentality persisted after Poland's break with Soviet-style communism, even within academic spheres. Two Polish phrases I learned shortly after I began working at the school were: 'Daj mi w łapę' [give me a back-hander] and 'Będzie flaszka' [there's a bottle in it for you]. When I administered my first exam I knew the students were cheating but was unable to clearly catch them in the act. During a dinner meeting with a student's parents, the fa-

Ninth group of volunteers on completion of their induction course. Płock, 1994



ther even bragged to me about his daughter's ability to keep 'ściągę' [cribs] hidden under her skirt during exams.

Bielsko-Biała, 1993

LEONARD KLEIN (volunteer working in Community Job Centre): We tried to explain to these people what starting up as a small trader was all about. We vetted these people, too, trying to fathom whether they really were intent on investing in their future, or whether they just hoped to get more benefits. But when someone passed the qualifying tests then we would recommend him as being worthy of a grant. We also calculated the number of instalments needed for repayment of the loan. [...] I am an optimist. The spirit of enterprise is all around us, sometimes it just needs a nudge.

Warsaw-Ochota, 1992

[8]

MAY YOU FIND THE PATH WHICH WILL LEAD YOU TO THE HIGHEST AND TRUEST OF YOURSELF

Extract from a brochure prepared by volunteers

CHRISTINE WOLF: The things I'm most proud of are the secondary projects all PCVs have. I was the Chair for the Women in Development Committee and we were very active. We put together a Regional Women's Conference, drawing women from several countries around Central Europe. I was also involved with Camp GLOW (Girls Leading Our World), a summer English language camp. Other members of the committee and/or Poland XII facilitated some other wonderful projects around breast cancer awareness and human rights.

Jelenia Góra, 1998

KIRK HENWOOD (volunteer): Wanting to show foreign tourists the character and temperament of the inhabitants of the Bieszczady area, in the guidebook which was prepared with the help of the volunteers, we added some local legends. The only problem is that the publication is likely to cause a mass influx of tourists which could be a threat to these wild mountain areas. The most difficult part is sharing with others something which is priceless to us.

Brzozów, 1994

[7]

CONFERENCES AND EVENTS ORGANISED BY THE POLISH "WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT" COMMITTEE

The women volunteers working on the Committee, which was set up in October 1991, organised conferences, camps and workshops aimed at solving the professional and health-related problems of women.

- 1992 Conference entitled "Taking up the challenge: Women's Organisations and Essential Changes" (acquiring professional contacts, fund raising),
- 1993 "The Changing picture: Women in Poland" (discrimination of women),
- 1994 "One voice - an opinion. Many voices - a movement" (increasing awareness of legal instruments and employment, fundraising for women's organisations),
- 1996 The first training course for women on breast self-examination,
- 1997 "Ideas in practice - the Challenges facing Women in Central Europe" (women's education, writing applications for grants, health matters),
- 1997 First "Health Run",
- 1997 First Camp GLOW "Girls Leading our World",
- 1998 "Ideas in Practice - will they be continued?" (summing up of Camp GLOW and other Committee undertakings),
- 2000 "Common opportunities" (making professional contacts, information about women's organisations).



'Earth Day' organised by volunteer, Benjamin Burg. Bielsko-Biała, 1993

I took the car to Radom to fetch our volunteer. On the way I stopped off at Kozienice to visit family. My uncle asked: "What are you going to Radom for?" I answered: "To fetch my 'Amerykanka' [female American]," to which my uncle replied: "Why, don't you have any furniture shops locally?" 'Amerykanka' is a Polish slang word for a sofa-bed.

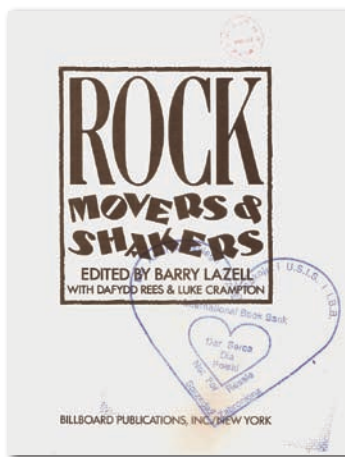
Krzysztof Jan Górczyński
Welski National Park employee

IN THE EYES OF THE BENEFICIARIES

IJA OSTROWSKA (Director – Community Job Centre):

At the end of 1990 and the beginning of 1991, the situation in the Ursus Mechanical Works changed dramatically. Mass lay-offs followed and the remaining employees were under threat of further impending redundancies. Unemployed workers began to arrive at the Department of Employment and the Social Services Office (today's Community Job Centre), of which I was the director at that time. We began to support various initiatives and business ideas put forward by our Social Services clients. Once we had issued the first loans, we realised that the help of a professional business advisor was imperative. I learnt about the Peace Corps from the American Committee for Aid to Poland, with which I had carried out joint self-help support projects and partnership programmes for local organisations in the Ochota district. Warsaw-Ochota, 1992

ANDRZEJ DONIEC (Łódź Technical University employee): A colleague with whom I had worked on various previous projects, informed me that he had invited me to give a lecture on Polish culture, history and attitudes during a preparatory course for American Peace Corps volunteers in Łódź. This led me to think that



Heart-shaped stamp 'Dar serca' [literally: a gift from the heart] on the cover of a book supplied to the Foreign Language Teacher Training College in Toruń by the Peace Corps

I should apply for a volunteer. In 1997 I made an application for a volunteer who would be familiar with environmental problems – environmental management and clean production. I believed that a volunteer of this type would be useful to us as an 'educator'. It would be far easier for him to find relevant American material than for us. I also wanted him to take over some of my dealings with international contacts, as their number had grown considerably by then. Łódź, 2000

MAREK SIARKOWICZ (Comprehensive High School Headmaster): It was not easy to comply with conditions relating to the programme and organisation of volunteer placements. Self-contained lodgings were relatively easy to arrange in the boarding part of the school. Finding a 'guardian' was much more difficult. He should preferably be a full-time teacher of English. We had only just introduced English into the curriculum, the school was quite small so there were not enough teaching hours to warrant two full-time teachers. On top of that, there were not enough English language specialists. The first graduates of foreign language teacher training colleges found better paid employment outside



Traditional St. Andrew's Day party celebrated by members of the High School English Club. Bielski Podlaski, 1992

RESULTS ACHIEVED THROUGH THE ACTIVITIES OF VOLUNTEERS ON THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING PROGRAMME

Each year

- at least 8000 secondary schools pupils acquired basis skills in communication in the English language,
- at least 1500 students of language teacher training colleges demonstrated skills in teaching English in primary and secondary schools,
- at least 1500 secondary school pupils successfully passed such examinations as the 'Matura' High School Certificate, First Certificate, Certificate in Advanced English and TOEFL,
- at least 1000 pupils made use of the English language in extra-curricular activities (correspondence, learning and reading books),
- at least 600 students of language colleges passed examinations such as Certificate in Advanced English, TOEFL and Bachelor of Arts,
- at least 750 students of language colleges used English on a regular basis outside college activities,
- at least 150 secondary school teachers and 50 language college teachers had occasion to update their methodology skills, refresh their English and increase their knowledge about the United States of America.

WARUNKI ZATRUDNIANIA OCHOTNIKÓW W SZKOŁACH

Zatrudnianie ochotników odbywa się na podstawie uzgodnień pomiędzy Ministerstwem Edukacji Narodowej a Korpusem Pokoju. Warunki zatrudnienia są następujące:

- * ochotnik otrzymuje od szkoły mieszkanie
- * ochotnik otrzymuje wynagrodzenie od polskich władz oświatowych (Korpus Pokoju płaci ochotnikowi pewną sumę uzupełniającą wynagrodzenie podstawowe, umożliwiającą mu utrzymanie w Polsce)
- * ochotnik nie podejmuje żadnej dodatkowej płatnej pracy
- * ochotnik pracuje w pełnym wymiarze godzin:
 - 18 godzin w szkołach średnich
 - 12 godzin w kolegiach językowych podległych kuratoriom oświaty
 - od 12 do 18 godzin w kolegiach uniwersyteckich, w zależności od wewnętrznych przepisów uczelni.

Peace Corps information material for schools

the educational sector. Luckily, we managed to overcome all these difficulties.

The volunteers would agree a marking system for the pupils with their Polish colleagues, and together they worked out the marking criteria. This was not at all easy in view of the different educational systems in Poland and the United States and their differing experiences. In these matters, the volunteers had to learn our Polish traditions.

Biecz, 2000

HALINA SADECKA (employee of Centre for Promotion of Entrepreneurship):

We knew little about the American Peace Corps until Deborah Ryan arrived in Sandomierz. What really surprised us was that there were Americans who, of their own free will, actually want-

ed to be in Poland, to live in the same conditions as we did, to work alongside us and to earn similar salaries. And all because they wanted to support us with their own knowledge and experience in this difficult period of political transformation. Our Centre was one of the first non-governmental institutions in Poland involved in laying the foundations for a new small-business sector. While other organisations were only just beginning to learn these new skills, thanks to the input of the volunteers, our Centre was already prepared for the new Polish reality. Sandomierz, 1990

IJA OSTROWSKA: The new Social Welfare Act envisages the granting of small business loans to unemployed persons. Since February we have been helped in this by Len Klein



Teaching staff and High School graduates in Czernichów;
volunteer Garrett Rothman – centre of first row

[a Corps volunteer]. He analyses the business ideas which people bring, talks to them, gives them advice and, finally, issues the aspiring businessman with a reference as to whether he is a suitable candidate for a loan. Len Klein teaches people about reliability and responsibility. They must be aware that the money they have been given must be repaid. With Len Klein's help and advice many businesses have prospered and some of the former unemployed people are already employing others – and that's what it's all about. Before Len's arrival I searched in vain for professional help with this project. However, everyone charged fees for such help, and the people working for consulting firms did not believe that a client of Social Welfare was capable of doing something for himself.

Warsaw-Ochota, 1993

[8]

JOANNA PIOTROWSKA (journalist): According to the organisers of a seminar for women which took place a few days ago, no matter whether Polish women work professionally or spend all day at home bringing up their children, they are all entrepreneurs. The seminar and workshops run by Judith Pryor, a Peace Corps volunteer, met with tremendous enthusiasm. Judith runs a 'business incubator' in Łódź where new businesses are set up under the watchful eye of specialists and unemployed people are taught how to run their own ventures.

Łódź, 1994

[3]

ANITA LEWICKA (student of Peace Corps volunteers): This was my first contact with an American but it was not a culture shock because we were in our own element while Mary Ziemer tried to introduce us step-by-step to her culture, and to make us feel comfortable with it. This was not cultural indoctrination, rather an invitation to learn about her culture.

I thought that Americans must obviously enjoy working from basics. We knew from the start that everything would depend on our own systematic hard work and that much more would follow.

Mary, and later Jim were both very flexible. They adapted to our realities and managed to open us up to theirs – they were the same as us but just spoke a different language. The fact that they both came from a country which is very heterogeneous meant that this openness would later prove invaluable.

The second volunteer, Jim Hardin, was always in Mary's shadow and played second fiddle to her. In my second year I had language laboratory sessions with Jim – in other words mainly listening. Jim tried to introduce methods which were still in their infancy at that time and which are now all the rage. Jim used the textbook only as a point of reference. At the same time, he created a great deal of his own material and even tried to make history into a form of conversation to prevent it being seen as a lecture.

Toruń, 2001



Gregory Bohm with staff of Reszel Municipal Public Library, 2001



KUDOWA – A CASE STUDY

Dzień Ziemi w Kudowie Szanujmy naszą planetę!

KRZYSZTOF BALDY (Education Department employee in the Góry Stołowe National Park): I was taking part in an international project relating to the protection of amphibians when I met a man who worked on behalf of the Peace Corps in the Education Department of the Białowieża National Park. Kudowa-Zdrój, 1998

ZBIGNIEW GOŁĄB (Scientific Laboratory Director in the Góry Stołowe National Park): Joy had so much warmth and so much ease in building personal relationships with us that my view of Americans underwent something of a change. I had always thought of them as being convinced of the superiority of their nation but Joy was, in a sense, unique. I had the impression that she treated her mission seriously and realised that she herself was from a different reality. Joy was very involved in everything she undertook, she was incredibly committed. Although most Americans probably thought that we were something of a third world country. Kudowa-Zdrój, 2001

WOJCIECH HELIŃSKI (Town Council Cultural Events Organiser): Joy was the initiator of our Earth Day. Kudowa had a serious unemployment problem and nobody could be bothered – ecology was just another slogan. Only well-off communities could afford it... Joy tried to explain to us about Earth Day, she referred to the dictionary but we could not understand what she meant. "Let's

have an Erf Dey, an Erf Dey..." she proposed in her broken Polish. So, it's a festive day – but what does it involve? You what? – you invite the world head and he makes an Erf Dey? And who's the head? The Pope? – "No, no – Erf Dey – you not know what is Erf Dey?" Ecology was such a natural concept for her that she didn't even mention the word. In the end, however, we managed to reach an understanding and on the Internet we found that Earth Day is held in honour of Mother Nature.

And so we organised our first Earth Day ceremony. It was Joy's idea that we should join in this festive event which is celebrated around the world by everyone taking part in cleaning up their locality. At that time it all sounded rather like a sect to us, a sort of New Age. Kudowa-Zdrój, 1998

KATARZYNA MROWIEC (tour-guide, co-owner of a café bar): At one time we were fairly close with Joy because she was friends with everybody. She loved people and she loved meeting people. In our café bar we had a computer corner where English lessons, called *Joy's conversations*, were held. A great many young people of high school age used to come and – surprise, surprise – they only spoke English there. Kudowa-Zdrój, 2001

ZBIGNIEW GOŁĄB: Joy had some interesting ideas – for instance, she proposed we should find sponsors in our local community who would finance a 'Tree Path' in Kudowa's Spa Park. Even now the



AMERYKAŃSKI KORPUS POKOJU W NASZYM PARKU

W dniu 1.09.1998 przyjeżdżał w Parku obywatelski Staro Zjednoczonych - ochotnika Korpasa Pokoju Joy Murphy. Ta urodzona w Oregonie w ciągu dwóch lat była wykazała całą serię inicjatyw i niesamowite zdolności językowe (po wyjeździe płać ona mówiła płynnie po polsku).

Opracowała świetny edukacyjny dla dzieci i seniorów "Ośrodek" - "Dzień w Parku Narodowym Gór Stołowych" oraz świetne dydaktyczne prezentacje ukazujące piękno oraz urodzaj Parku Zdrój.

Dopomagała do powstania - Kuchnie w ramach swojej odpowiedzialności, na co w latach następnych fundowała.

Pracowała w gminie jako asystentka i wiele informacji przetransmitowała Kłodzkiemu Zdrój.

Zaproszony był o drugie spotkanie w ciągu trzech lat jej byłych w Kłodzku współpracowników z o. mgr. Błażej Dobry - kierownikiem na tym - polski ośrodek - w tym kierunku. Jej sukcesy w realizacji projektu, dzięki pomocy miejscowej ludności i organizatorów, których - wiele dzięki temu udało się stać się Obywatelskim Kłodzkiem!

Mamy nadzieję, że z jej przyjeźdem w naszym Parku jej urodzajnie wiele wspomnień.

PRACOWNICZKA PARCU ZDROJOWY JOY - CIESZYŃSKA ANNA



Dzień Zjednoczenia - 2000



Joy Murphy



Joy Murphy, Skalne Grzyby ["Rock Mushrooms"], Góry Stołowe National Park 2000

Extract from Góry Stołowe National Park [PNGS] chronicle, 2000

names of the sponsors of each tree can be seen on plaques. They include owners of boarding houses and of restaurants. Joy managed to get them all involved. Everyone in Kudowa knew her. Kudowa-Zdrój, 2001

ZBIGNIEW PIOTROWICZ (Director – Culture and Leisure Centre): Joy decided her project would be a climbing wall – on ecological grounds. Sandstone rock faces were frequently used by climbers during bird breeding periods – when climbing is not be allowed. This wall was to provide an alternative until around 15 June when the breeding period in the National Park ends. This was a difficult undertaking and a solid piece of engineering. It involved all sorts of safety regulations and someone had to put his signature to the project. I was full of admiration for Joy when she managed to overcome all the difficulties posed by bureaucracy. Łądek-Zdrój, 1999

WOJCIECH HELIŃSKI: There was a sort of post-communist belief that only a government department can 'make things happen' and that if you want anything done in the town you have to go to the Mayor, ask, hang around and wait, then go to the head of the local council and then to the provincial governor... And then it suddenly turned out that there are other ways, and that people can get things done by themselves, that it's not always

a question of money, about contacts or whom you know – and that if we get several people together then we can do something really spectacular. Joy asked everybody, she did not have local knowledge, or local contacts, so she approached everyone and somehow this worked. The point is that, apart from the normal everyday problems, like unemployment, industry and so on, someone had come from outside and had provided an impetus for something different.

Kudowa-Zdrój, 2000

CZESŁAW KRĘCICHWOST (Mayor of Kudowa): Joy emanated optimism. The secret of her success lay in the fact that she managed to gather together a group of people who believed in her. This was a country which, just a few years previously, had proved successful in winning its freedom. Now, Joy tried to show us that nothing is impossible and that money is not always the key to success. She demonstrated to us that there are many people and many organisations which are able to help. She used her powers of persuasion to show that the climbing wall was a necessity and she helped me – us – to organise and assemble it in the sports' hall. And it really did not cost us that much. Thanks to Joy I, too, began to have faith in what I was doing because work in a local council is not mere officialdom and I realise that you have to have vision, and be able to share it with the local inhabitants because, without them, nothing will



Park employees and members of their families bid farewell to Joy Murphy



Society of Friends of Góry Stołowe, co-organised by Joy Murphy, during an expedition in Błędné Skały; from left: Bartosz Małek (manager of Karlów protected area of Góry Stołowe – PNGS), Zbigniew Gołąb, Katarzyna Mrowiec and Joy Murphy

be done – we work on their behalf. They have to feel secure, they have to know that someone will back them.

Kudowa-Zdrój, 2001

ZBIGNIEW PIOTROWICZ: My most difficult problem was explaining the intricacies of Polish bureaucracy. The sheer amount of paperwork produced, the justification, the ‘devious paths to decision making’... For the young American girl this was an eye opener – why complicate things?

In the second half of the 1990s computers were still not in general use so everything had to be on paper, perforated and filed in a loose-leaf folder, a copy had to be kept, approved, with relevant stamps... To the Americans these stamps were a curious novelty – over there a signature suffices. Here, on the other hand, a signature without a stamp is meaningless. There had to be a stamp, and preferably two stamps. Red stamps carry most weight, round red ones are the tops – no stamps in Poland are more meaningful.

Łądek-Zdrój, 1998

MAREK SZPAK (Director – Sports’ and Recreation Centre): We came up with the idea that we had show our gratitude to Joy. We discussed this and Joy said that their national holiday is Thanksgiving Day in November. We decided to make it a special celebration. Joy would direct and we would help her. It was to be a meeting

of all Joy’s friends and those connected with her. We would invite the Peace Corps whom we have to thank for her presence among us and someone from the Embassy. We also agreed that there should be flags – the Polish flag, the flag of Kudowa and the American flag. The latter was not that easy. We wanted to buy one but the wholesalers did not have any. I wrote to the Embassy and to the Peace Corps asking for the loan of an American flag. Eventually, the Americans supplied one for our celebration. The main dish was to be roast turkey with a fennel stuffing. We found a turkey... in the Czech Republic. Joy chose it herself. We bought two or three turkeys to cater for so many people and also the fennel. And, of course, there had to be Coca-Cola.

Kudowa-Zdrój, 2000

JANUSZ KORYBO (Director – Góry Stołowe National Park): We are sad that there is no news from Joy. Despite everything, we were sure this young woman stay in touch from time to time, let us know where she was and what she was doing – perhaps she is in China, or perhaps she has lots of children. We have no idea what’s happening to her. Perhaps this was just an episode in her youth, a closed book, and she has now progressed... Or perhaps it’s that American mentality, so different to our Polish one.

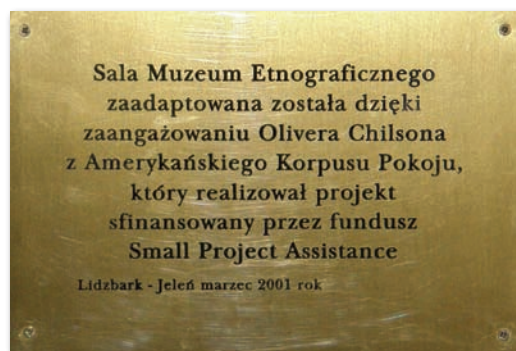
Kudowa-Zdrój, 2000

LEGACY...

MAŁGORZATA KUJAWSKA: The Americans were very proud of the Corps at that time. Sharing *know-how* was a super idea. There's something idealistic about it. Many people of my generation benefitted from it – and they became successful. I was lucky to have been around when they were handing out that special something which proved invaluable. With the experience I gained in my post as language teaching coordinator, I realised that I am not suited to working for someone else. It is good to be able to set tasks which you have to carry out yourself. There is, of course, a certain risk; you have to take responsibility for yourself and for other people, too, but then – *no risk no fun*.

The methodology training which I underwent in the Peace Corps was very useful, and it enabled me to set up a language school. I even asked Greg Edelman, our instructor, to train the teaching staff. It was he who laid the foundations for the school's philosophy and methods.

I also learned a great deal from my boss, Michael Honegger. He was very professional in matters of organisation and business management. I observed and noted many useful situations: lessons started and finished punctually, teachers smiled, and when there was a problem, it was sorted out. We were taught how to comment on work – this was referred to as *great-bad*. *Great* always came first and *Bad* had to be short and painless. Warsaw, 1990



Commemorative plaque in the Museum of Ethnography. Lidzbark Welski

KRZYSZTOF STRZEMESKI: Some 80 people worked in the Peace Corps office in Warsaw, in various positions. There was also a support group including language instructors and resource teachers. All of them had a unique chance to learn American management style, work ethic, as well as values concerned with creativity, initiative, task-orientation and voluntarism.

Thanks to my role as Associate Peace Corps Director of Education, I acquired confidence in my use of English and I began to appreciate team work. I learned to manage a small group of people, strengthened my interpersonal and cross-cultural skills and my ability to build a team. This was a pioneering period when people had to adjust to a different work system and to stop expecting to be told what to do.

Warsaw, 1990–93

GORA, BŁAŻOWA, BONIN, BRODNICA, BRZOZÓW, BYDGOSZCZ, BYSTRZYCA KŁODZKA, CHEŁM, CHRZANÓW, CHYRZNO, CIECHANOWIEC,
CIEGIENIEW, DYNÓW, DZIAŁDOWO, DZIERŻOŃ, DZIERŻONIÓW, ELBLĄG, EŁK, GĄBIN, GDAŃSK, GDYNIA, GIŻYCKO, GLIWICE, GŁUBCZYCE,
OCLAW, IZABELIN, JABLONKA, JAROCIN, JASŁO, JASTRZĘBIE-ZDRÓJ, JAWOR, JEDLICHE, **JELEŃ GÓRA**, JERZWAŁD, JORDANÓW, KALISZ,
KĄCZĘCZÓW, KANTÓW, KLUCZBORK, KŁODZKO, KNURÓW, KOŁNO, KOŁO, KOŁOBRZEG, KONIN, KONSTANCIN-JEZIORNA, KOŃSKIE, KORCZYNA, KOSTRZYN
KUTNO, KWIDZYN, ŁĄDEK-ZDRÓJ, LEGNICA, LESZNO, LEŻAJSK, LIDZBARK, LIPNICA WIELKA, LIPNO, LUBACZÓW, LUBAŃ, LUBIEJEWÓ,
MAZOWIECKI, MALBORK, MIELEC, MIĘDZYLĘSIE, MIĘDZYZDRÓJE, MIKOŁÓW, MILICZ, MŁAWA, MOŃKI, MRĄGOWO, MROZY, MYŚLENICE,
NOWA SÓL, NOWY SĄCZ, NOWY TARG, NOWY TOMYŚL, OBORNIKI ŚLĄSKIE, OJCÓW, OLESNO, OLSZTYN, OPOCZNO, OPOLE, OSOWIEC, OSTROŁĘKA,
PIOTROWICE, PISZ, PŁOCK, PODKOWA LEŚNA, POŁKOWICE, POZNAŃ, PRUDNIK, PRUSZKÓW, PRZEMKÓW, PRZEMYSŁ, PRZEWORSK,
ROCZANYSTOK, RYBNIK, RYDUŁTÓWY, RYKI, RYMANÓW, RZESZÓW, SANDOMIERZ, SANOK, SIEDLCE, SIENNICA, SIERPC, SIEWIERZ, SKAWINA,
TARNOBRZEG, TARNÓW, TOMASZÓW MAZOWIECKI, **TORUŃ**, TRZCIANKA, TRZEBNICA, TUREK, TYCHY, TYMBARK, ULANÓW, URSZULIN,
WIELKA, WŁADYSŁAWOVO, **WŁOCŁAWEK**, WŁODAWA, WOJKOWICE, WOLBROM, WROCŁAW, WRZEŚNIA, WYSOKIE MAZOWIECKIE, ZABRZE,
ZARY, ŻNIN



First group of 60 volunteers. Toruń, 1990

MAREK SIARKOWICZ: A very important aspect of the work of volunteers was the effect they had on the Education Board. Daily cooperation allowed teachers to prepare for changes. They were able to discover a different educational system and could take a step back to view their own work. The important thing was that this was 'personalised' help – nothing works so well as contact with a concrete person. The Peace Corps had come to our aid at a moment when that aid was most needed. This aid consisted of quantifiable help in the teaching of English and it also gave the opportunity to meet with people from 'the free world', to which we aspired, too. Their help meant that our pupils had a good linguistic grasp, their self-esteem rose and they acquired confidence, even though they came from a small town community.

Biecz, 1994

EDWARD MALISZEWSKI: Mary had a very strong personality but she was open, too. She knew that it was pointless to try to transplant American values because we have a completely different culture and different needs. On the other hand, in this virtually 'experimental desert' (people who had never previously proved themselves in a classroom situation were training teachers), we were quick to accept differing solutions. We tested them. I believe we should be grateful to the Peace Corps because, if it were not for them, we would be dithering between the existing

antiquated structures and experimentation which sometimes works and sometimes doesn't. This way, we had something we could fall back on. And that seemed to work. The training of teachers in the colleges proved so effective and up-to-date that the educational market was quick to realise the quality of these teachers and gladly employed them.

Our teaching programme came to life through discussions and disputes, it arose from various concepts and all-in-all gave us something which seemed to be best for us. Year by year, from semester to semester we would re-evaluate it. With the support of the Peace Corps we were able to make use of these tools and stood our ground – this was the way we wanted to teach because it suits us and we can see that it is effective.

Toruń, 2001

IRENEUSZ NOWAK (businessman): I have just started building a large wholesale warehouse. I wondered whether such a large investment was sensible. It was Barbara [Hilpman, volunteer] who told me to 'go the whole hog'. She advised me to do everything on a grand scale. She convinced me that profit would come not from a small boutique but from a large store where you could buy everything. Without Barbara's encouragement I would not have taken such radical steps. I would never have gone for such a big investment.

Łosice, 1992

RYSZARD CHOMIUK (Mayor of Łosice): [The volunteer] helped the farmers to import substances for pollinating trees from Holland because they did not know how to go about it. She organised a visit to an agricultural show in France for the Chairman of the Milk Cooperative. Now they are holding talks with a French firm which is interested in a joint yoghurt production venture. The Łosice area is a gigantic potato growing region. The volunteer arranged negotiations with the Pepsico representative in Warsaw with a view to the production of crisps from our potatoes. Łosice, 1992 [6]

IJA OSTROWSKA: As a result of the 'Setting Up a Small Business' course, prepared and run by Len Klein, a Peace Corps volun-

I also taught environmental studies in a school and I invited Janek to my lessons on air pollution. He was a great help in running the lessons. On the blackboard he drew a road, a cow and a car, behind the car trailed a small cloud of smoke. Next to the cloud he wrote the chemical names of the gases, CO₂, and Pb and he asked the youngsters what sort of milk the cow would produce.

Then we had an idea – the Centre's training programme should include lessons on ecology in the English language. Janek prepared a curriculum. The lessons were attended by a large number of young people. Together with other volunteers, he also organised two English language summer camps for young people. On another occasion we organised training

THE VOLUNTEER TRIED TO SHOW US THAT NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE AND THAT MONEY IS NOT ALWAYS THE KEY TO SUCCESS. SHE DEMONSTRATED TO US THAT THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE AND MANY ORGANISATIONS WHICH ARE ABLE TO HELP.

teer, together with a Polish employee, the following types of businesses were set up in Warsaw's Ochota district during the period 1991–93: building and decorating, dress-making, shoe-repairs, watch and clock repairs, carpentry, metalwork, advertising, small catering firms, grocers, greengrocers, clothes shops, shoe shops, ironmongers, health food stores, as well as manufacture of clothes and buttons. During this period, 131 people were referred to the Project by welfare workers, 102 people were accepted by the consultants, 53 completed a small-business course, while 47 people were granted business loans and they subsequently created 64 new jobs. Repayment of loans amounted to 77%. Warsaw-Ochota, 1993

TERESA CZECH (employee of the Ecology Education Centre in Radom): Janek [John Griffin] worked for us free-of-charge in exchange for lodgings. I took him with me on various visits – to the Biebrzański and Narwiański National Parks, for instance, and to the national Ecology Awareness 'Olympiad' in Zwierzyniec. People were very interested in us. His stay here proved a great help to the Ecology Education Centre.

Czesław Kręcichwost (Mayor of Kudowa)

sessions for teachers. He became friends with my son and we got to know his family, too. Radom, 1999

ANDRZEJ DONIEC: Our volunteer, Jonathan Chappell, would search out information for us on the Internet. And he discovered several important things. Thanks to him, we found out that the European Union was preparing a directive on the subject of the recycling of electrical and electronic equipment, and that NATO had a 'Clean Products and Processes' programme. For nine years I was the unofficial Polish representative on the programme. This, in turn, led to numerous contacts which continue to this day. As a result of the programme, a joint Polish-Belgian-Romanian project was set up concerning industrial estates. Apart from all this, Jonathan found some sort of grant to cover part of the costs of my research visit to Canada, dealing with industrial ecology and eco-industrial estates. And, finally, Jonathan and I made a film proposing an ecological and technical review of business,

which could help to improve manufacturing efficiency and to improve the environment.

Łódź, 2000

IWONA LAMŻA-FURMAN: This work was so *empowering* that you could work 12 hours at a stretch and come home wondering what else you could do. We organised trips, bonfires, and quizzes. There was always something going on. You could see that everyone was involved in a huge joint project. The Poles were greatly receptive to the Americans and integration among the staff was very strong. Many of the contacts with the volunteers and even with the staff of the Peace Corps continue.

Warsaw, 1999

JANUSZ WOJCIESZEK-ŁYŚ: Thanks to them I even see myself in a different light. I can't say that I am more right than other people. I have learnt to apply relativity to certain matters. I have also lost my fear of speaking English. I observed their perseverance and tenacity – when they were working on bulletins, for example. I got to know their specific sense of humour and their 'American openness', as well as their need to preserve their own personal space.

Radom, 1999

DIANE ROBINSON: What changed most for me personally was added confidence. Whenever I've started a new job since then, I think, "Well, they speak English, how hard can it be?" Living in Poland also gave me the experience of being a foreigner and understanding what that means. Being a Peace Corps volunteer gave me a level of responsibility and freedom of initiative I probably would not have found in another job at the same age.

My two and a half years in Poland also gave me greater understanding of what a developing democracy looks like. I was there at a time of great economic and political uncertainty. The attempted coup in Moscow happened during my first summer. Inflation in Poland was still terrible at that time. From my students and fellow teachers, I learned some of what it was like to live under martial law. One of my students remembered begging her mother to get pregnant so they could get an extra chocolate ration! I learned what it was like to live somewhere you couldn't just go and buy anything you wanted, even if you had the money for it. Fresh vegetables in the winter were still a rare sight in Bielsk in those days. There were no big gro-

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING PROGRAMME – THE NUMBERS

Volunteers working in secondary schools: 481 people.

Volunteers working in teacher training colleges: 177 people.

Specialised language consultants: 12 people.

Total number of volunteers on this programme: 670.

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME – THE NUMBERS

Approximately 150 volunteers worked on the Small Business Development Programme in various target institutions, incl. town councils, companies, universities, non-governmental organisations, chambers of commerce, regional development agencies, 'business incubators' and official and government institutions (Polish Development Bank, Warsaw Stock Exchange and the Ministry for Privatisation). These volunteers arrived in five groups of between 28 and 32 people.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION PROGRAMME – THE NUMBERS

Approximately 130 volunteers on the Environmental Protection Programme were placed in over 100 National Parks and Protected Landscape Parks, and in non-governmental organisations – mainly in the following provinces: Małopolska, Mazowsze, Pomorze, Dolny Śląsk and Podlasie.

cery stores. Once, towards the end of my stay, I saw broccoli in a store and bought it. The shopkeeper tried to talk me out of it since it was so expensive. I didn't care – it was such a treat!

Bielsk Podlaski, 1993

PERRY PEDERSEN: Less obvious personal changes resulting from my Peace Corps years in Poland have included enhanced self-confidence and self-awareness, and re-prioritization of my values. Self-development and pursuing my passions became more important than material wealth, understanding



Krzysztof Strzemeski at ceremony marking the close of Peace Corps activities in Poland. Warsaw, US Ambassador's Residence, 8 June 2001



Ambassador Daniel Fried, Grzegorz Tkaczyk and Robert McClendon at ceremony marking the close of Peace Corps activities in Poland

others became more important than asserting my will, and leading a meaningful life became more important than living comfortably. And these personal changes affected my professional life.

Before leaving for Poland, despite my year in Germany as a foreign-exchange student, my world was still quite small. My friends and I were pre-occupied with status and income. Yet, at the same time, the idea of climbing the corporate ladder seemed unfulfilling. I was making good money, but the work was stale. After I returned from Poland, my world became much larger. I looked for the meaningful aspects of my jobs. Money lost its position as my primary motivator.

Bielsko-Biała, 1994

CHARLES FREDERICK (volunteer): The Nauczycielskie Kolegium Języków Obcych [Foreign Language Teacher Training College] received books via the Piszek Foundation. It turned out that some of the books I was using for US literature and US history, for example, were almost the exact same books I used as a student and when I was in junior high. I recognised the books. I know that a number of guys ended up marrying Polish women, just like I did. In my opinion Polish women are very beautiful, some of the most beautiful in the world.

Włocławek, 1994



February 26, 2001

Dear Former PC/Poland Staff Member:

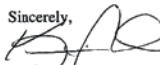
As the Director for the Peace Corps' program in Poland, I wish to thank you for your outstanding contributions to the historic transformation that has taken place in Poland. Your work to develop and maintain projects in education, the environment, and small business development have helped the people of Poland make this transition to a free market democracy.

Because of the work that Volunteers, Staff and the people of Poland have accomplished over the last 11 years, and consistent with the short-term commitment that the agency made with our host government and organizations, the last group of Volunteers to serve will depart Poland this summer. The staff and current volunteers are working together to bring a positive closure to our projects here, and to plan a special celebration to honor Volunteers, Staff, and our hosts in the Government of Poland and in communities around the country. We encourage you to join the Volunteers and staff in Poland, as well as RPCVs and former staff who served there, for this celebration, which is scheduled for June 8, 2001, in Warsaw. There will be a formal ceremony in the afternoon, which will include the presentation of a final report to the Government of Poland that summarizes the work of Volunteers in the past decade. In the evening, there will be a semi-formal event for all guests to continue the celebration.

In the coming weeks we will provide more detail regarding the time and location of the events. Some information will depend on the anticipated number of guests. If you plan to attend the ceremony, please contact Peace Corps/Poland no later than March 15, 2001, to secure your invitation. Enclosed you will find a questionnaire and contact information form we would like for you to complete.

Thank you again for your service as a staff member in Poland. We hope that you can join us for the celebration of this momentous occasion.

Letter from Director of Peace Corps in Poland to members of Corps staff

Sincerely,

 Kevin M. Baker
 Country Director
 Peace Corps Poland

RENATA KUSIK (volunteer's pupil): It is worth noting the changes in mentality – mine, too – which we owe to the presence of Rita [Wade]. Being American, she was very open and direct, always looking for fresh experiences. So completely different to my own attitude. We were very reserved then, we lacked trust and were suspicious. Thanks to her, many of us learnt how important it is to understand the differences between us and to try and learn as much as possible from foreigners such as Rita. Contact with live English, with the natural spoken language, was hard to come by yet we had an American living among us and working for us, sharing her experience with us. Lessons were not just a linguistic labour but also a great chance to acquire a taste of American, i.e. 'Western' culture. [...] The Peace Corps helped to open doors for us which had hitherto been closed due to economic and political realities.

Krasnystaw, 1996

GRZEGORZ TKACZYK: In the summer of 2001 the Peace Corps mission came to an end. The then president of Radom, Adam Włodarczyk, and I received an invitation to a farewell ceremony organised in the private residence of the American Ambassador in Washington. Robert McClendon, Director of the Peace Corps in Poland, was the master of ceremonies and he was ably assisted by his country's Ambassador, Daniel Fried. I was presented with a commemorative plaque to the accompaniment of general applause, and then came the cutting of a huge Polish-American cake. There were several hundred guests and, once the official ceremonies were over, we were able to enjoy ourselves in the enormous grounds of the residence and on the ground floor of the imposing building.

Warsaw, 2001

PERRY PEDERSEN: I am convinced that if more Americans were to spend at least two years as Peace Corps volunteers, or in similar programs, the U.S. would be a stronger country and the world would be a better place. In short, I strongly support the concept, goals and ideology of the U.S. Peace Corps. I believe that the U.S. Peace Corps could be more effective at achieving its goals (especially its first goal of "helping the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women") through better execution, specifically in the areas of accountability and outcomes-orientation. As stated previously, while attending in-country training, leadership

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY VOLUNTEERS - IN NUMBERS

- Type of activity - number of participants/beneficiaries
- Earth Day and World Cleanup Day
 - at least 131,800
 - Ecology education (including preparation of material)
 - at least 15,220
 - Summer language camps - 6,235
 - Language courses - 3,156
 - Additional activities (work on school curriculum, reorganisation of library) - 2,755
 - Cultural and Sporting events
 - at least 1,125
 - Help for the socially underprivileged
 - at least 870
 - Training for teachers
 - at least 840
 - English conversation
 - at least 675
 - Summer sports' camps, ecology camps and courses - 640
 - Setting up English clubs
 - at least 320
 - Computer training - at least 240

personnel often advised us (the Peace Corps volunteers) to lower our expectations about the effectiveness and sustainability of our respective programs. As a result, many volunteers regarded their in-country assignments as part-time hobbies. Bielsko-Biała, 1993

CHRISTINE WOLF: I think the Peace Corps is a good organisation that is trying to improve all the time. The current trend to recruit more experienced volunteers is a good thing and I think will be better in meeting the needs of host countries. I am proud to be a returned volunteer. It was truly one of the best experiences of my life in all kinds of ways. Making peace through meaningful connections with other human beings is really the focus of the Peace Corps and I hope some of us accomplished that. I hope our presence made people feel more comfortable with Americans and we in turn contributed something meaningful and lasting that helped in those days of democratic transition.

Jelenia Góra, 1998

LEGACY...

PENNY FIELDS: I am a huge fan of Peace Corps – it was a transformative experience for me as a volunteer and I am still in touch with many volunteers I have supervised over the years. I think it is the best expenditure of the US foreign policy dollar in the world. I am now a Country Director for Peace Corps Cambodia. Obviously the Peace Corps is a life-long love affair.
Warsaw, 1998

SYLWIA MARTIN (Polish language teacher to the Peace Corps): I believe the American Peace Corps came to Poland at just the right time. A pity it was not on a larger scale and only for such a short time.
Toruń, 1994

DIANE ROBINSON: What was good: the Peace Corps provided support. I knew if I got into trouble they would help me. They pretty much left me alone to do my job. What was bad: it



Kevin Baker (Director in Charge of Programmes and Training), Charles R. Baquet III (Director of the American Peace Corps) and an Embassy interpreter at ceremony marking the close of Peace Corps activities in Poland. Warsaw, US Ambassador's Residence, 8 June 2001

FUNDS ALLOCATED TO PEACE CORPS ACTIVITIES IN POLAND

Funds allocated to volunteer activities amounted to a total of \$855,112. Small Business Development projects were allocated \$144,684. Support for projects in the field of English language teaching amounted to \$389,191. Additional funds for the Environmental Protection Programme amounted to \$321,237.

could be pretty bureaucratic and some of the rules seemed a little silly. All in all, though, I considered it a fair exchange. What they asked of me was not unreasonable.
Bielsk Podlaski, 1994

PAWEŁ ŚWIEBODA (Director of the Office of the President of the Republic of Poland): Corps volunteers brought to Poland a 'better' world, they were a liaison with a country which for countless years had been a symbol of heaven on earth to many Poles. They provided a human dimension to the enormous historical process in which we had participated since 1989. They gave us that invaluable feeling that we really are of interest to our new American ally. They managed to convince people that the world of politics is one matter but that somewhere, deep down, it is people who are the most important. The fact that, against all odds, we had emerged in the Western world was not something which had been pre-planned. There could have been many different scenarios.

The Peace Corps played a massive role, preparing us for the civilisational shock which led us to membership of NATO and the EU. Its greatest achievement was groundwork in matters which were simple but of particular importance at the time: from teaching English to business training.

At the beginning of the 1990s Poland was invaded by so-called 'Marriott brigades' – consultants on high salaries, mostly from the economic field, who helped to plan the transformation of the system but who also aroused deep controversies – especially when they claimed to 'know better' what should be done in Poland. The Peace Corps was exactly the opposite. Its volunteers did not come to Poland in search of profit but because they really wanted to help. They gave us the solidarity which we needed so much.

Warsaw, 2001

Sources used in the text:

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The motto on page 1 – 'Gazeta Wyborcza', 26 August 1994.

The remaining (unnumbered) extracts come from the American Peace Corps in Poland Collection, in the Archives of the KARTA Centre.

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**This publication has been prepared with the support
of the U.S. Embassy in Warsaw, Poland**



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Computer setting and preparation of photographs:
TANDEM STUDIO

Cover photo: Patrick Chapman's private collection

Photographs and other illustrations courtesy of: **American Peace Corps Archives** (pg. 1, pg. 10, pg. 12: right, pg. 31), **College Park National Archives** (pg. 2), **Czernichów High School archives** (pg. 20: top), **Municipal Public Library in Reszel** (pg. 20: bottom), **Foreign Language Teacher Training College** (pg. 7: bottom right, pg. 11: right), **Góry Stołowe National Park** (pg. 22, pg. 23)

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Print: Efekt Sp.j.

Warsaw 2012

ISBN 978-83-61283-74-4

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