JAGNA WRIGHT (NEE RAFP)
MEMORIAL

Born:
15th July 1950, Gdynia, Poland

Passed Away:
16th June 2007, London, England
Wright, Jagna (nee Rapf), beloved wife of Stephen Wright and mother of Jamie, Sophie and Peter died peacefully, at home, on 16 June. She was adored by her family and her great circle of friends. In spite of being diagnosed with cancer in 2001, she and Aneta Naszynska produced two wonderful films on Polish history, which have been seen, and celebrated, worldwide. This work helped give her the remarkable energy and fortitude with which she fought her long illness.

Jagna’s Vision

Poem by Hania Kaczanowska, Canada

She had a vision and they said no one wanted to know
Her passion for truth was inspired from lives of long ago
A piece of substantial history was being conveniently overlooked
Exposing the closed chapters she became immediately hooked

In her homeland communists suppressed the story at their best
But her surprise was how little about it was known in the west
People packed into freezing boxcars with the barest to survive
Thru frost, disease and hunger many were no longer alive

Her native Poles deported and banished to inhuman Siberian lands
How this could be forgotten, after war, she couldn’t understand
The Siberian exiles were dwindling fast and remained very few
So she set out a vigilant course to see what she could do

She captured their wonderful stories and filmed them in tears
And released the memories of bondage, hidden for years
Amongst the pain and suffering their survival became the key
For a country wrapped in chains and those who were now free
With the war finally over these courageous people gently tread
To all corners of the earth in search of freedom and bread
To speak of their turbulent past many were just too afraid and proud
But in silence they relived their anguish and secretly wept out loud

Memories were reminders of loss and being lost as they prayed
And surviving Poles still felt abandoned, forgotten and betrayed
What better place than London to learn the chivalry of a knight
And the “God of Exiles” picked a soldier in one feisty Jagna Wright

This unveiling of truth and tragedy pulled at Jagna’s inner core
She sought out her messengers so the story would not be ignored
She knew in bringing forth one story of truth a burden is lifted
And agreed a listening ear does not belong to the gifted

She carefully documented their passionate, suffering tales of sorrow
Binding the odysseys together so not forgotten tomorrow
The exiles had been deported from Poland in hopes of their demise
But she refused to let history forget about these thousands of lives

Delving into the past reawakened within her a new light
And she was often asked, “Who cares about the Polish plight?”
She replied whimsically: "Better a film exists than one not!"
And in defiance cooed “May Churchill’s Polish curse forever rot!”

Infectious, determined and bound to touch the world with her story
She armoured herself like a valiant soldier off to victorious glory
There’s always one more experience that would appeal to the cause
Just tell the story…just tell it like it was

With weapons of patience and tenacious zeal she went into action
As finally recognition of the wartime tragedy brought satisfaction
With friend Aneta, her comrade in arms, the canons fired away
Together they pushed open media doors and got to have their say

When there was no platform, Jagna invited people under her roof
She showed the story in countless films with voices of living proof
But this would be just the first little hill she conquered with zest
A courageous fight with cancer would be another merciless test.

She pushed the obvious aside and like a heroine fought her illness
Whilst surrounded by those on the other side watching in stillness
Perhaps their fighting sprits and patriotism pushed her everyday
Whether alone or guided by the exiles, she slowly carved her way

There was another story to set right and time was not on her side
Many Jews had long blamed Poles and too many truths were denied
She tried to bridge the gap between the survivors and the blamed
And proved that all words written were not as once were claimed
The other truth was completed before the dust blew off her wings
And her victories forever recorded in the land of castles and kings
She laid to rest her mission complete and a legacy of patriotic pride
And her passions for the homeland were shared by us worldwide

The day came to an end for the Exile’s Polish angel with a halo of light
As voices beckoned to earth “It’s time to come home, Jagna Wright”
Her spirit and efforts were carried by voices of those who died before
Voices of the ones who could not come home from Siberia or the war

It is without doubt that she was welcomed home and most joyfully met
By each of those that she passionately begged the world not to forget
As you take your place amongst the truly courageous who inspired you
May the presence of your vivid eternal light always be within our view

Your relentless energy will be our guide as your vision we carry on
Rest in the arms of sweet slumber Jagna, until you greet another dawn

“Spij koleżanko w ciemnym grobie. Niech się Polska przyśni tobie”
Sleep my friend and in the darkness of your grave may Poland come to you in dreams.

Last words of a song commonly used for Polish soldiers who died and were buried on foreign land without seeing Poland again.

Pansies and moonflowers painted for Jagna by Hania Kaczanowska
I remember my first meeting with Jagna. We met at her home in order to discuss a film project which I was to help her edit. She greeted me with a huge warm smile, and immediately plunged into a long, animated and engaging conversation. And so it was for the next ten yours of our collaboration.

Jagna was passionate and her enthusiasm was totally infectious. She managed to accommodate running a home and bringing up three children with her passion for Polish culture and history. She was interested in the missing chapter of European History, in events and people that had been rubbed out of popular memory. In particular, she believed that the story of the deportation of 1.7 million Poles by Stalin into the depths of Russia in 1940 must be told.

For five years Jagna tried to get a broadcaster or TV production company interested. They all turned her down, explaining that no one was interested in the Second World War anymore. They underestimated her determination.

Jagna did not give up, and relentlessly continued to phone and write letters. But time was running out, and when she realised that the number of witnesses was dwindling fast, Jagna bought a camera and, with no prior film experience, began recording the tragic testimony of former Polish Siberian exiles.

And that is how we came to meet. For two years, in our spare time, we edited the film which no one wanted. Long after it was finished, “The Forgotten Odyssey” remained unseen and unknown (apart from private showings, usually in her home). Jagna would say, ‘better a film that exists than one that does not’. She joked that Churchill had put a curse on us because of the ignoble British role in this chapter of history.

Finally, after countless letters and phone calls, Churchill lost. The History Channel UK bought the film, followed by several other broadcasters.

“The Forgotten Odyssey” filled a huge gap. I will never forget the emotion on the faces of former deportees who would come up to us after seeing the film to express their gratitude that they had not been “deported” out of history. For their children, the film was often the only opportunity to learn about their parents’ tragic story, something which their parents had often been unwilling, or scared to, speak about. Inspired
by the film, Stefan Wisniowski, the son of a deportee living in Australia, created an internet chat room “Kresy – Siberia”. Jagna participated in the discussions enthusiastically, sharing with all her wealth of knowledge on the subject. We immediately began our next film project. “The Other Truth”, a three part documentary about Polish – Jewish relations, is the result of four years of painstaking work. By this time, Jagna was ill with cancer, but did not change her pace of life. In between frequent visits to hospitals and consultants, she continued to work, to run her home, entertain guests and to begin writing a book using the wealth of research material she had gathered during the filming of “The Other Truth”. Sadly, the book remains unfinished.

Jagna was a tireless proponent of Polish culture. Any British journalist who showed the slightest interest in Poland was to be targetted, encouraged and informed. She sent them her film, gave them books, and invited them into her home to win them over, as she said, ‘through the stomach to the heart’.

For me, above all, Jagna was a true friend. She knew how to listen, to sympathise, to help and advise. She had friends everywhere. Her warm and hospitable home in Acton was full each summer with guests from all corners of the world.

I adored her spontaneity and love of adventure. Once, during one of our long late evenings in the cutting room, I mentioned Tibet. A few months later we were on our way. Later, this Tibetan journey would give her the inner strength to fight her cancer.

Jagna did not give up. In every situation she tried to find the positive side, even comforting the consultants who were monitoring the progress of her illness. She would often say ‘in every puddle you can find a scrap of blue sky’. She fought bravely and never complained. The cancer destroyed her physically but it did not defeat her.

Jagna leaves a wonderful legacy and a vast number of close and sorrowing friends. We will miss her enormously. But for many of us who are from the Poland she loved so much, her determination, spirit and that infectious enthusiasm are, and will continue to be, an inspiration.
How I Met Jagna Wright

By Stefan Wisniowski, Sydney, Australia

This is from my history written in 2002 for our first group anniversary (file on our website): Through the power of e-mail, by September 2001, a group of about a dozen people had emerged as the nucleus of a mailing list. At the same time, I had stumbled across the new film “A Forgotten Odyssey” in a Russian press article, which had been translated into Polish by Władysław Czapski and posted on his website. After some detective work tracking down the producer, Jagna Wright, through the BBC, I talked her into an Australian screening to coincide with the September 17 anniversary of Soviet aggression. This initial arrangement has led to about 50 screenings in cities around the world, facilitated by dozens of local Polish activists to whom I am deeply grateful for their adoption of this cause.

Also see http://www.pcaaa.org/docs/AFO-AtlantaBrochure-050413.pdf.

This is Jagna’s own version of the history: We started with two public showings in London in 2001, at the Institute of Contemporary Arts and at the Imperial War Museum (the latter sponsored by the Polish Ambassador, Dr Stanislaw Komorowski). Then, several articles in the British press as well as mentions on the BBC radio gradually, but effectively, started breaking the wall of silence around this subject. Finally on 17th September 2001, the anniversary of the Soviet invasion of Poland, we achieved our original goal of having the film screened on television, on the British History Channel and on Channel One of Polish Television.

However, the unbelievable fact that we have now visited North America twice to present our film was the result of something we never bargained for – the deep need of the “second generation” of the Poles, sons and daughters of the Siberian survivors, to learn their roots, and to do justice to their parents’ and grandparents’ memories.

The film went global because a pair of Russian journalists, Zhenya and Sasha Donde, saw the film in London and put out stories on it on the BBC World Service, in Russian, and in the Russian newspaper “Novoye Vremya”. The story was spotted in Poland by Władysław Czapski, a Siberian survivor, who translated it into Polish and put on his website. This, in turn, was chanced upon by Stefan Wisniowski, the son of a Siberian survivor living in Sydney, Australia, who tracked us down and asked for a videocassette.

That turned out to be a real breakthrough, and fruits of his enthusiasm and passion were soon borne out with a public showing in Sydney’s State Library of New South Wales. Building on that successful screening, Stefan campaigned amongst Polish émigré organisations to take on the project of spreading this story throughout the Western world. Through his Kresy-Siberia internet network inspired by the film, volunteers came forward to set up screenings in dozens of cities in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the USA.”
Condolences from the kresy-siberia internet group

Dear group members

I regret to inform you of the very sad news that our dear friend Jagna Wright died at her home in London on Saturday after a six-year battle with cancer. The family will conduct a private funeral and plans to organise a public memorial service in the Autumn.

As you may know, Jagna was the co-producer, with her friend Aneta Naszynska, of the documentary film “A Forgotten Odyssey” which inspired the foundation of the Kresy-Siberia Group in 2001. Jagna had an indomitable spirit that drove her to produce this film against the odds and then have it screened first at the Imperial War Museum in England, then in scores of major cities around the world, on the History Channel and on other television broadcasts around the world in both English and Polish. She also distributed countless copies on videotape and DVD through her website, www.AForgottenOdyssey.com. Jagna and Aneta went on to produce a second film, “The Other Truth”, which sheds light on another lesser-known aspect of Polish history - the positive side of Polish and Jewish relations in Poland.

Jagna grew up in communist Poland. Her grandfather, Zygmunt Osuchowski, was a judge from Zloczow near Lwow who was deported to Siberia along with his sister's family from Krakow. They survived and were evacuated from Soviet captivity with Anders army in 1942. Jagna's parents managed to escape the deportations and fought in Home Army (Armja Krajowa) during the war. She was brought up amongst exiles from the Lwow area, either former deportees or, like her parents, people who lost everything over there but who never stopped loving their real home. She left Poland in 1977 after marrying her English husband, settling in London and raising three children.

Jagna leaves behind her loving family, her dedicated film partner Aneta, and a growing group of people around the world who have her to thank for bringing them together to research, remember and recognise the “Forgotten Odyssey” of their families. She is a hero to our cause and she will be greatly missed.

Stefan Wisniowski, Sydney, Australia
A Forgotten Odyssey

An epic of human courage of survivors of the Soviet forced labour camps

“One of the most disturbing documentaries I have ever seen.”


Basia and Farynka Sgrunowski on the train to Krasnovodzk, 23 March 1942
(private archives of Zofia Jordanowska – courtesy of VideoFact).

Historical Notes

Atlanta, 13 April 2005

Compiled by Stefan Wisnioswki, Sydney, Australia (2001)
and with thanks to Art Wagner, Detroit, USA (2002)
London-based Jagna Wright's film, "A Forgotten Odyssey", is the story - as told by the survivors - of what happened after the Soviet invasion of Poland on 17 September 1939 under the Nazi-Soviet Friendship Treaty.

These are the stories of the survivors of the forced Soviet annexation of eastern Poland, when entire towns and communities were brutally deported to Siberia and Kazakhstan to Soviet forced labour camps. By the time the Nazis attacked their Soviet allies in 1941, perhaps half of the labour camp inmates had died from disease, starvation, and the harsh labour conditions.

Because the Soviets were brought into the anti-Nazi Alliance, the remaining survivors were given an amnesty and many made their way across the vast and foreboding Soviet landscape to join the freed Polish Army being formed in the south. This army became a key element of the Allied forces in the European South-East, and was evacuated though Iran to join the battle with the Nazis in Africa and Italy.

However, despite the defeat of the Nazis, Poland’s Soviet enemies ended the war on the side of the victors. The 116,000 citizens and soldiers who had escaped from Soviet Russia went on to be refugees from a pre-war Poland who could never return home to their former homeland, which was left in Soviet Communist hands after the war.

Their Forgotten Odyssey never reached its destination, and they remained a people in exile throughout the world.

The film was made with the aim of saving an important historical episode of the Second World War from oblivion.

It was by no means an episode which can be seen as insignificant; after all it involved an estimated 1.7 million people, and the human suffering which they experienced was immeasurable – and yet, no Western history books mention this ordeal, and no politicians honor its victims in their speeches commemorating World War 2. Television channels had no interest in commissioning the film about it, on the grounds that they “had already covered this period in history extensively”, and “the public was tired of the subject of World War 2.”

In the words of a Russian Journalist, Poles deported by Stalin to Russia were then deported from history by Western historians. This is surely very wrong. The accounts of the Second World War are simply incomplete without this neglected historical tragedy.

We made this film to rescue this “forgotten odyssey” from turning into an “odyssey that never was”. We believed that, despite it being made with no professional or financial backup, the strength of the survivors' testimonies would move at least some people to help bring this story to light. We believed that making this story known to the Western world was
a matter of historical and moral justice. We believed that eventually we would find someone who would see beyond the technical imperfections of the film, purely on the strength of the powerful and moving testimonies of the survivors of the ordeal in Stalin’s hands.

We started with two public showings in London in 2001, at the Institute of Contemporary Arts and at the Imperial War Museum (the latter sponsored by the Polish Ambassador, Dr Stanislaw Komorowski). Then, several articles in the British press as well as mentions on the BBC radio gradually, but effectively, started breaking the wall of silence around this subject. Finally on 17th September 2001, the anniversary of the Soviet invasion of Poland, we achieved our original goal of having the film screened on television, on the British History Channel and on Channel One of Polish Television.

However, the unbelievable fact that we were able to come to America to present our film was the result of something we never bargained for – the deep need of the “second generation” of the Poles, sons and daughters of the Siberian survivors, to learn their roots, and to do justice to their parents’ and grandparents’ memories.

The film went global because a pair of Russian journalists, Zhenya and Sasha Donde, saw the film in London and put out stories on it on the BBC World Service, in Russian, and in the Russian newspaper “Novoye Vremya”. The story was spotted in Poland by Wladyslaw Czapski, a Siberian survivor, who translated it into Polish and put on his website. This, in turn, was chanced upon by Stefan Wisniowski, the son of a Siberian survivor living in Sydney, Australia, who tracked us down and asked for a videocassette.

That turned out to be a real breakthrough, and fruits of his enthusiasm and passion were soon borne out with a public showing in Sydney’s State Library of New South Wales. Building on that successful screening, Stefan campaigned amongst Polish émigré organisations to take on the project of spreading this story throughout the Western world. Through his Kresy-Siberia internet network inspired by the film, volunteers came forward to set up screenings in dozens of cities in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the USA.

We would especially like to thank the organizer of this screening in Atlanta, Dr. Elzbieta Gurtler-Krawczynska. We dedicate this film to all those who survived the ordeal in the Soviet hands, and to your loved ones, whom you left buried in the “inhuman land”.

The Soviet tanker Zdanov, bound for Iran with Polish refugees who were glad to leave Soviet persecution (Courtesy of Chris Gladun) Jagna Wright and Aneta Naszynska

Jagna Wright and Aneta Naszynska
Where The Film Has Been Shown

UNITED KINGDOM
Glasgow, London, Manchester.

TV: ‘The History Channel’

AUSTRALASIA
Adelaide SA, Brisbane Qld, Canberra Act, Melbourne Vic, Newcastle NSW, Perth WA, Sidney NSW, Russel: Bay Of Islands; Auckland, Wellington

CANADA
Calgary AB, Edmonton AB, Hamilton ON, Kitchener ON, London ON, Mississauga [Toronto] ON, Montreal QC, Niagara Falls ON, Oshawa ON, Ottawa ON, Peterborough ON, St. Catherines ON, Toronto ON, Vancouver BC.

TV: ‘The History Channel’

UNITED STATES
Anne Arbor MI, Atlanta GA, Baltimore-Washington, Boston, Bridgeport CT, Buffalo NY, Buffalo PBS TV, Chicago IL, Chicago PBS TV, Chicopee MA, Cleveland OH, New Britain CONN, Davis CA, Denver CO, Detroit MI, Detroit MI, [another exhibition somewhere else], Franklin [Suburb of


TV: PBS

Join the Kresy-Siberia internet discussion group
If you are interested in “research, remembrance and recognition” of this odyssey, please join the internet discussion group at

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Kresy-Siberia
We are saddened by the news you posted. We would like to ask Jagna’s family to accept our condolences. As some of us know she suffered greatly in the last days of her life. Now she is at peace. God Bless Her.

It is with gratitude that I wish to remember Jagna’s life and express my admiration for her work with Aneta Naszyńska in making the films ‘A Forgotten Odyssey’ and ‘The Other Truth’. The first film records the deportations of Polish people to Siberia and the hardships they encountered; the second is a documentary aimed at rebutting slurs about Polish-Jewish relations.

I spoke to Jagna on just a few occasions and I recollect one particular instance: it was to do with her intention to prepare the second documentary. An Editor from one of the newspapers from California contacted me asking to find out and confirm that Jagna intended to publish work relating to the Jewish-Polish issues. She was very surprised to hear that somehow the news had leaked out. When I rang her one evening, although she was very tired after a day of interviews in London, she did not hesitate to talk of her intentions, but asked me to keep it ‘under wraps’, so to speak, as the film might never happen. It was much later, when the film was being prepared, she said I could say something to that newspaper, who persisted and wanted to know what the film was about.

Jagna was a great person and a tireless worker for Poland and all the deportees to Siberia.

She will be greatly missed by all of us; especially those of us who lived in the camps, as her films renew our memories and give us strength to carry on, publicising the fate of those who did not survive or were left behind. To the younger generations they show a clip of history of which the world knows very little.

I echo what Antoni has said. I too followed Jagna’s last weeks. I only met her once but we had an email exchange and she was inspirational and supportive in her enthusiasm for my research. A powerhouse of a woman who I cannot believe we have lost. My thoughts are with Jagna’s family.

I wish to add my condolences to Jagna Wright’s family. All of the members of the Kresy-Siberia discussion group are very indebted to her. Wieczny odpoczynek racz jej dać Panie! Światość wiekuista niech jej świeci na wieki wieków. Amen!
Tim and Linder Ladbrooke [Sakhnyk], Nottingham, UK

To my good friend Jagna, you may be gone to ‘above’, but you’ll always be sitting on my shoulder, just like the ‘Polish Eagle’ giving me a ‘push’ to further the ‘cause’. You told me that I was ‘brave’, not so! you were the ‘brave’ one at the end. You were a good ‘Polish wife and mother’ and we all loved you so much. You had an extra quality – you had not only ‘Jagna’s vision’, but ‘Jagna’s ‘tunnel vision’. That means that your determination and drive made this, the first documentary ever, along with Aneta, to show the plight of the Polish people, during those terrible years. You both found the last few survivors and interviewed them. The survivors of those terrible times! And now, the world is starting to listen – I’ll make sure that their ears don’t close! I never told of your cancer – a promise that I kept, until you were ready to tell. See, I can keep a secret!!! But, I miss the hugs we had, the voice on the phone, the laughs we had, and even the horrible talks we had about your cancer. I miss YOU!

Because of the film ‘A Forgotten Odyssey’, we now have a dedicated group of 600+ who are learning this piece of history about their families. That’s thanks to you, Aneta and our Stefan Wisniowski, the whole world is opening its ears.

You taught me one very important thing when trying to raise money for ‘the cause’ - ‘many people have short arms and deep pockets’, after just one of many ‘knock-backs’, but you ‘soldiered on’ and got there in the end.

It’s that ‘tunnel vision’ of yours, that’s what you’ve left behind!
You even made my darling ENGLISH husband into an ‘honorary’ Pole, the fellow that is totally English, but caught your enthusiasm for the ‘cause’. What an honour!

Well pal, I hope your family and friends will look at this book often and think to them selves – ‘THAT WAS OUR JAGNA – THE GREATEST’
I’ll remember you forever and when I know that I need in kick in the butt – I’ll think of you.

All our love.
Eugene Krajewski, UK

I am devastated to hear of the demise of Jagna Wright. Although I am not a regular contributor to the group’s discussions, I found Jagna’s offerings very exhaustive and highly knowledgeable. Her contributions to our Cause, and especially her film The Forgotten Odyssey, have in my view, never been bettered. Please pass on my condolences to the family, together with those of many members that, I’m sure, will wish to express them. Her presence in the Group will be greatly missed.

Elzunia Gradosielska Olsson, Alingsås, Sweden

I was really shocked when I heard about Jagna’s illness, I’d never realised things were so serious. This is so sad, so tragic. When we met at Jagna’s house in February 2006 she was so hospitable and so sweet. It’s hard to believe she’s really gone, but she will live on through her films and her dedication to Poland and it’s Kresy-Siberia history. She was a real soldier for the cause, and never gave up. She was always willing to answer questions on the group site and to help people privately. She will be missed by many. Her last months were very difficult and now she can rest in peace. Sincere condolences to her husband and children and family.

Paul Havers, UK

This is something that I didn’t know about, I’m sad to hear this. Please add my sincere condolences.

Eve Jankowicz, USA

Years ago when responding to a post as to why there was not a more concerted effort to our cause, Jagna wrote that there were many “lone cowboys” all over the world who were putting forth much work individually, and this contributed to the whole. From then on in our personal correspondence, we referred to each other as fellow cowgirls. Jagna has left her mark and huge contribution, and her work will go on and on. Jagna did not like to discuss her illness and would rarely do so. She became a little annoyed when the subject was brought up and would barely touch on it even when answering about her health. Here again Jagna fought courageously against the disease with everything she had.

She did not post often, but when she did, to my mind at least, her posts were always correct. When required, she answered truthfully, backed up with facts and citations. She will be greatly missed.

Jagna, “Until we meet again,” (from Happy Trails, theme song of “The Roy Rogers Show”)
Fran Wuebold

Please pass on my heartfelt condolences to Jagna’s family. It is so tragic that such an important member of our group has passed on and she will be sadly missed. But what an incredible legacy she has left with us. In every sense her spirit & work carried with her thousands of voices who did not come home from Siberia. It is no doubt that she was welcomed home by those who she begged the world not to forget.

Cynthia Pukiello, USA

I am new to the group but I would like to add my sincere sympathy to Mr. Wright and his and Jagna’s children who will be sad to lose a wonderful Wife and Mother. I did not know Jagna, but from all the e-mails I have read she must truly have been a marvellous wife and mother. Many people are with you at this sad time and all our prayers are with all your family. Rest in peace Dear Jagna.

Romuald E Lipinski, Virginia, USA

I wish to express my sorrow on the occasion of death of Jagna Wright. As a Siberia survivor I was deeply moved when I saw her film The Forgotten Odyssey during her visit to Washington, DC, USA. This is a major contribution aimed at education of the American populace on this crime committed by the Soviet Government during WWII. Throughout her life Jagna tirelessly worked on the subject of the Polish diaspora. Her passing is a great loss to Polonia in general and to us, the “Sybiraks” in particular. We will keep her memory in our hearts forever.

Elzbieta Gurtler-Krawczynska Survivor from Atlanta, GA, USA

Please pass my deepest condolences to Jagna’s family and Aneta Naszynska. We lost an incredible visionary and ambassador for the Kresy-Siberia problem. Jagna, Thank you for the documentary film “A Forgotten Odyssey” which I was able to show twice in Atlanta. Rest in Peace. Wieczny odpoczynek racz jej dąć Panie. A światłość wiekuista niechaj Jej świeci, na wieki wieków, Amen!
George Szymanski, Melton Mowbray, UK

In June 2007 I read the obituary of Jagna Wright and was impressed with her efforts to record the Kresy-Siberia tragedy. My wife and I watched “A Forgotten Odyssey” and were amazed to see a small movie clip which showed my father among a group of young lads.

Julek Plowy, Calif. USA

I am deeply saddened on hearing this news. I send my deepest condolences to Jagna’s family.

Krys Dobrzanski, Ipswich, UK

I just cannot believe that Jagna has left this world. I did not have the opportunity to meet her personally, but I have always felt in my correspondence with her that she was a dear and caring individual and she will be sadly missed. Jagna’s unstinting hard work in fighting tirelessly for her beliefs must surely be a humbling inspiration to us all. Please express my heartfelt condolences to Jagna’s family.

Elzunia Boden (nee Szlamka) Chichester, West Sussex

Jagna, Opening up your home and hosting the 2006 Kresy meeting, showed a truly generous Polish heart and spirit. The group has lost a cherished member.

Tilford Bartman

I knew her just from exchange of many emails, but even in cyber space I could sense her very genuine and warm personality. . . quite remarkable.

Bozena Gaffney, Florida, USA

Fran: Such a beautifully expressed sentiment will be taken to heart by Jagna’s family. And those reading it must all be touched by it. May I join you and others in offering condolences to Jagna’s family.
Hania Kaczanowska, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

I had a chance to meet Jagna a few years ago when she was promoting her film in Edmonton accompanying Stanley Cloud and Lynne Olsen with their book “A Question of Honour”. She invited me to her home in London when I was there, where we shared tea and croissants with homemade jam in her warm and lovely kitchen, as we talked. Last year Linder and I met with her again in a little Polish restaurant in London and shared a wonderful Polish dinner and conversation as she surprisingly presented us with her newest video “The Other Truth”. She was such a positive energy and soldiered a good cause in a unique journey uniting many of us in this group, and educating beyond belief. She struggled against many odds with her illness and still managed to carry on with the strength of her undying passion in spite of everything.

May the light of angels surround her and my deepest condolences to her husband, children, family, Aneta and friends. Thank you Jagna for your passion, all you did for Kresy and the inspiration you shared with all of us. In the distance may you still hear the sound of the bugle as it plays the last note of the Hejnal for you.

Barbara Revoet, and Vyto Karmazinas, Connecticut, USA

Jagna kindly translated some letters into Polish for me shortly before Christmas last year. I had no idea she was so ill. I’m going to miss her, even though I never met her in person. She was very helpful to me since I joined the group several years ago. My deepest condolences to her family and friends. Please forward our messages of sympathy and remembrance to her family. I’m sure Jagna is looking down at all of us now, hopefully inspiring each us to educate the world about the Polish sufferings, as she did.

Helena Danielczuk, Bradford, UK

How so very sad, and unfair. I too, had the privilege and indeed the honour to meet Jagna with my friend Krysia with whom I sing. We met at the Daiquise, we shared a meal, a drink and anecdotes as well as our passion for the cause, the frustrations of modern censorship and too many closed doors. She must have already been diagnosed as it was about 5 years ago in May. To her family all I can say that she was truly remarkable, take comfort and know that her spirit lives on - she really has only stepped into the next room.
It is with shock and great sadness that I read about the passing of Jagna. I would like to pass on my heartfelt condolences to her family. Wieczne odpoczywaniu racz jej dąć Panie, niech światłość wiekuścia świeci jej na wieki wieków, Amen!

Marek Kepa, UK

It is with deep sadness I read of the death of Jagna Wright. The impact of her work has not only touched my life, when several years ago and quite by chance, I first stumbled on her film ‘A Forgotten Odyssey’, but also that of many many others and has contributed so much to raise the awareness of this aspect of the Polish experience in WWII. I can only concur with Fran Wuebold’s comment ‘what an incredible legacy she has left with us.’ Jagna Wright will be profoundly missed by so many but especially by her family to whom I send my deepest condolences.

Danusia Socha, London, UK

To Jagna’s Family: Please accept my heartfelt and sincere condolences. I never met Jagna, but have viewed her film and web site and have been very impressed by the passion with which she undertook this mission of telling the world about the fate of people like my mother’s family. I can never fully express how grateful I am that she did this. Her commitment, drive and passion will always be fondly remembered, and you have every reason to be very, very proud of her.

Sincerely, Krystyna Szypowska Kingston, Ontario, Canada

I am shocked to hear this sad news. I exchanged a few emails with her when I bought ‘A Forgotten Odyssey’ but never had the pleasure of meeting her. Please send my condolences to Jagna’s family.

Val Oldham, UK
Lynda Kraar, Toronto, Canada

I am still shaking at this tragic news. To say that I am profoundly saddened is the understatement of the year. Jagna was instrumental in providing information and help with my trip to Poland last year. I have every scrap she ever sent me. We stayed in touch quite often. I wanted her to come to Toronto and have a screening at the Jewish Film Festival. We began to talk about some other possibilities for film festivals in the New York area and around the States, anywhere where I might have contacts and connections. Then one day, seemingly out of the blue, Jagna subtly suggested not moving forward until she was ready. I had no idea what was going on with her. I recall that a friend of mine in Lodz went to her screening last year at the Film School and was very impressed with her vision. There was apparently a lively Q&A after the screening and Jagna pulled no punches. What are we to do, without our beloved Jagna? I can’t believe it. I just sit here in total shock and disbelief. It is so important for us/them/the world/anybody/everybody to continue this holy work of preserving the past for posterity. Jagna, dear heart, rest well. You are already missed.

Krystyna Freiburger, Ontario, Canada

Dear Jagna’s family and friends.... my greatest sympathy.....I am so very very saddened with the news of Jagna’s death. Jagna was my inspiration to start working passionately for our cause. She always encouraged me via email whenever I was working on a project and we looked forward to meeting someday face to face. Jagna was a survivor as she continued to work hard in spite of her illness. Like all of you I will miss her immensely. Let us be glad and thankful that she was such an important person in the tapestry of our lives !!!

Helena and Dezio Lachocki, USA

Please, send our condolences to Jagna’s Family. We will remember her as a great contributor to our cause. She will be missed by all of us. Let her rest in peace.
Zosia Lacz (Krukowska) Victoria, B.C. Canada

You never really know how far your actions can go and how they could affect someone else. Jagna’s determination to get the story of The Forgotten Odyssey out into the world truly has made an impact in my life. Through the Kresy site I learned so much more about my own mother. It’s given me a better understanding of who she was and in turn helped me understand myself more. My own searches for stories then took me back to Poland where I reconnected with other family after 30 years. There I found forgotten memoirs my mother wrote and learned even more. Jagna was a beacon and reminder to us all of what one person can do. I am so very thankful for the light she has spread out into the world. Please accept my deepest heart felt sympathies for your loss. Words are not enough to express my feelings but because of Jagna I am inspired to keep that beacon of light burning.

Sincerely.

Zbigniew Bob Styrna, Vancouver, Canada

It is with a heavy heart that I write this. This came as a shock to me because I did not know Jagna was fighting cancer, something that I personally know a lot about. I wish to thank Jagna and her family for the wonderful gift she started and left us, the film “…A Forgotten Odyssey”.

It is especially sad to hear that Jagna’s grandfather, Zygmunt Osuchowski, was on the same train as my mother and her family to Siberia. I asked my mother today if she knew this judge from Złoczów. She did not, but her father was best friends with a lawyer from Zloczow by the name of Kruczkowski. Since Złoczów was not that big, we’re sure that Mr. Kruczkowski and my grandfather must have known and dealt with Mr. Osuchowski.

My deepest condolences. Jagna will be missed, as she made a difference to our lives.

Stefan Nycz

Recently came across this site following the obituary of Jagna in the Telegraph. My father has told me the details of his childhood numerous times, and they correlate exactly to the Odyssey film.
Jagna touched and changed so many of us. She saw a need for education and with the support and love of her family she achieved it. She has touched so many of us in such a special way. How often do I think, “What would Jagna do?” We all know she would stand tall and not let anything stop her. She set her mind on a goal and with an inner strength she was able to achieve her dream.

I must say thank you to her family for sharing her with us. Without your support and understanding we would not have all been given a gift of knowledge. Knowledge of our history as well as a message of what can be done. For this I am forever grateful. My deepest condolences to her husband and children and family.

She will forever be missed.

This album was produced by Mark Lewis
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