

Highlights of Past Members

A Long and Dangerous Journey

Story compiled from articles in the Trenton Times by Kirk Everett

William Hewitt Blohm and his wife Irena Maria Blohm were very active members of the Polish Arts Club. Bill served numerous terms as president of the club. Irena served as chair of the Cultural Committee for many years. She also served as chair of the Scholarship Committee, Scholarship Dinner Dances, Polish Arts and Craft Shows, and club sponsored

fashion shows. Irena also held Polish dance group shows to benefit surgery for Polish children at Deborah Heart & Lung Center.

Trentonians in Wedding Ceremony at Teheran



Army Photo

On February 17, 1945, Technician Third Grade William Hewitt Blohm of 29 Bryn Mawr Avenue, Trenton, N.J., and Miss Irena Maria Chmielowska, a Polish refugee from Lwów, Poland, were married at the French Mission Church in Teheran, Iran. A reception followed at the Polish Red Cross Restaurant for 50 friends. The couple spent their honeymoon at Darband, a nearby mountain retreat.

Sergeant William Hewitt Blohm was the grandson of Mrs. Josephine Hewitt. He was the chief photographer for the Office of Technical Information, Persian Gulf Command Headquarters and had served in the vital Persian Corridor supply line to Soviet Russia for two years.

Mrs. Irena Maria Blohm was the daughter of a Polish Army colonel who was killed in action during the German blitz in Poland. At the time of their marriage, she was employed by the Polish Red Cross to handle correspondence for the International Red Cross.

The young couple had met at a wedding of one of Blohm's soldier buddies in Teheran. Bill was the first American the young lady had met. Bill didn't speak Polish and Irena didn't speak English. However, he had taken French class at Trenton High. Irena was a fluent speaker of that language. Bill remarked, "So we got along with that language." Five months later they were married and it required five wedding certificates to make the ceremony legal.

Some 14 weeks later on May 30, 1945 Irena boarded a ship at the Persian Gulf port of

Khorramshahr, the first leg of an 8000-mile journey to Trenton. She arrived on July 7 as Trenton's first war bride. Bill had gotten approval of a return to the United States and on June 27 also started for home, a 30-day furlough and a reunion with his wife.

Her long and dangerous journey began when Irena was only 17 years old when the fighting came to her native town of Lwów, in Eastern Poland, in 1939 (now Lviv, Ukraine). First the Germans fought for the town, then the Russian soldiers moved in to so called "protect" the people.

Mrs. Blohm's 23-year-old brother was a leader within the Polish underground, involved in smuggling the country's leaders to Paris, where the original provisional government had been set up. Tipped off by spies, the Russian secret police came to the house and arrested him and, except for one brief visit in prison, they never saw him again. She learned that her brother was in the same prison with their first cousin, who said he had been tortured repeatedly. A woman reported that he had been put to death in Kiev (now Kyiv, Ukraine) in 1942, but this was never confirmed.

Soon Irena and her family were shipped off to Siberia. "The Russian soldiers went through the streets pulling people out of their houses shoving them on cattle cars," she says. After an unbearable journey that took a few weeks, they arrived in Kazakstan. For three years they worked on dairy farms, surviving on skimpy daily rations. Many of them died.

Finally, the Russian government gave them so called "amnesty", which didn't permit them to leave the country but allowed them to travel. They lived in wet, underground tunnels and kept warm by burning dry bushes and bricks made from cow manure.

The group moved south to a warmer climate, where many died because their weakened bodies couldn't accept the first fruits and vegetables they had eaten in years. They picked cotton for a living, getting paid by the pound, but they had to wait to pick the fields until the Russian soldiers had taken what they wanted.

Irena left her mother to meet up with the Polish Army, which was regrouping in Southern Russia. She recalled, "When I met up with the army, I thought I was back in Poland. I was so weak, they had food, but I couldn't eat it." After recovering from her ordeal, she enlisted in the army, was given a uniform and, because she was highly educated, was given a teaching job in the young soldiers' school.

She was told to return for her sick mother immediately because the Polish Army was at last leaving Russia. In her frantic rush to retrieve her mother in the north, Irena recalled the kindness of the Russian people. "What the Russian government didn't take from them, the Mogul tribes did," she had recalled. "But the Russian people were kind to me. They fed me and invited me into their homes to stay overnight."

When Irena got her mother to the train station for the ride south, some Russian policemen tried to stop them from boarding the train. Just as it was about to leave the station, she waved them aside, saying, "Everything's alright, were going" and pulled her mother

aboard the train.

They caught up with the Polish Army, traveled to a Caspian Sea port, then took a crowded ship to Teheran, Iran. She went to work for the Missing Persons Bureau of the Polish Red Cross. Her new found freedom was saddened by the death of her mother.

Bill and Irena eventually reached the United States and settled in the Trenton area. They put behind their ordeal and served the Polish Arts Club and larger community for many years in a variety of other ways.

Reunion in Trenton



Mr. and Mrs. William Hewitt Blohm
Trenton's First War Bride

This article was highly condensed by Kirk Everett from many newspaper articles published in the Trenton Times. The original newspaper articles are on the following pages and available for your reading pleasure on the Polish Arts Club of Trenton's website. We encourage you to read the full stories and the six terror filled years that took Irena halfway around the world to a new life in this country.

Trentonians in Wedding Ceremony at Teheran



Army Photo

Technician Third Grade William Hewitt Blohm of 29 Bryn Mawr Avenue, Trenton, and Miss Irena Maria Chmielowska, a Polish refugee from Lvov, Poland, were married in the French Mission Church in far-away Teheran, Iran. In the picture, left to right, are Mrs. Janusitus, secretary of the Polish Red Cross delegation; Mrs. Blohm, Sergeant Blohm, and Sergeant Charles McCullough, son of Frank M. McCullough of 466 Rutherford Avenue, Trenton, Sergeant Blohm's best man. Chaplain James E. Murphy of Amirabad Post (right foreground) and Chaplain Goralk of the Polish Army, performed the ceremony.

Soldier Weds Polish Refugee In Distant Iran

Trentonian Marries Daughter of Slain Army Colonel

TEHERAN, Iran — Technician Third Grade William Hewitt Blohm of 29 Bryn Mawr Avenue, Trenton, N. J., and Miss Irena Maria Chmielowska, a Polish refugee from Lvov, Poland, were married at the French Mission Church here February 17.

A reception followed at the Polish Red Cross Restaurant for 50 friends of the bride and groom. The couple spent their honeymoon at Darband, nearby mountain resort.

Sergeant Blohm is the grandson of Mrs. Josephine Hewitt of the Trenton address. He is chief photographer for the Office of Technical Information, PGC Headquarters, and has served in the vital Persian Corridor supply line

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Trenton Soldier Marries in Iran

(Continued from Page One)

to Soviet Russia for the past two years.

Before entering the army at Fort Dix February 4, 1942, he was engaged in plumbing and heating work for Lesten Company, 41 Adams Avenue, Trenton, and also did free lance photographic work. He was graduated from Trenton Central High School in 1934 and the New York Institute of Photography in 1935.

Mrs. Blohm is the daughter of a Polish army colonel who was killed in action during the German blitz in Poland. Her mother died in Teheran last year and her only brother, also a Polish officer, is missing in action. She is employed by the Polish Red Cross to handle correspondence for the International Red Cross.

Trenton Evening Times
March 21, 1945

Reunion in Trenton



Mr. and Mrs. William Hewitt Blohm

Blohm Back from Teheran to Rejoin the Girl He Married There—French Course at High School Aided Romance

It was "reunion in Trenton" this week for Technician Third Grade William Hewitt Blohm and his Polish refugee wife, the former Irena Maria Chmielowska.

The young couple were married last February 17 in the French Mission Church at Teheran in Iran. They had met at the wedding of one of Blohm's soldier buddies—Bill was the first American the young lady had met.

Some 14 weeks later, on May 30, Irena boarded a ship at the Persian Gulf port of Khorramshahr, first leg of an 8,000-mile journey to Trenton. Bill got approval of a return to the United States and on June 27 also started for home, a 30-day furlough and a reunion with his wife.

Both arrived at the same port in Virginia, Mrs. Blohm on July 7; her husband last Saturday. Their reunion took place at their temporary home at 8 Beechwood Avenue on Wednesday.

"Where do you think she went last Friday?" Bill asked during an interview. "She was up at the top of the Empire State Building—the next day that plane crashed into it."

The attractive Mrs. Blohm left Lvov, Poland, and fled into Lower Siberia. There she joined the Polish army in Russia, later making her way with her ailing mother to Teheran. Her mother, a colonel in the Polish army, was killed in the Lvov blitz in 1939. A brother, also a Polish army officer, has been missing for months.

In Teheran, Mrs. Blohm worked for the Polish Red Cross to handle correspondence for the International Red Cross. She likes the United States, especially Trenton, and plans to work for the Polish Red Cross in New York City.

Blohm, chief photographer for the Office of Technical Information, Persian Gulf Command, had a wealth of experiences during the two and one-half years he was overseas.

"Did you take any pictures of

the famous Teheran conference?" he was asked.

"Did I take any pictures?" he came back. "I was taking one when a flashlight bulb burst and went off like a pistol shot six feet from the late President Roosevelt. He didn't budge an inch."

Laughingly he recalled meeting his bride-to-be.

"She didn't know a word of English," he recalled. "I don't know Polish, but I did have a smattering of French while at Trenton High. She is a fluent speaker of French. So we got along with that language."

Mrs. Blohm, who speaks and writes Polish, French and Russian, has acquired enough English to get along.

After his furlough, Bill will report to Camp Lee, Va., for reassignment.

Trenton Evening Times
August 3, 1945

Six Terror Filled Years

War Bride Recalls Siberia Ordeal

By FORD BOTHWELL
Staff Writer

Irene Blohm first saw Trenton when the train pulled into the station here at 5 in the morning July 7, 1945. The date doesn't mean much now, except to Mrs. Blohm and her family, but when it happened, Mrs. Blohm's arrival was duly noted with a picture on the front page of the Trenton Times.

Twenty-eight years ago, Mrs. Blohm was Trenton's first war bride. Five months before, in Iran, she had married Trenton-born William H. Blohm as World War II was drawing to a close.

Halfway Around World

The years haven't dimmed the memory of Mrs. Blohm's six terror-filled years, an odyssey that would fill two lifetimes, that took her halfway around the world to a new life in this country.

Mrs. Blohm was only 17 when the fighting came to her native town of Lwow, in Eastern Poland, in 1939. First the Germans fought for the town, then the Russians moved in to "protect" the people.

Mrs. Blohm's 23-year-old brother, recently graduated from law school and married, was one of the top eight members of the Polish underground, involved in smuggling the country's leaders to Paris, where a provisional government had been set up. Tipped off by spies, the Russian secret police came to the house and arrested him and, except for one brief visit in prison, they never saw him again.

Soon, Mr. Blohm, her mother and sister-in-law were shipped off to Siberia. "The Russian soldiers went through the streets pulling people out of their houses, even the old and the sick, and shoving them on cattle cars," she says.

3 Years In Desert

After an unbearable journey that took a few weeks, they arrived in the Siberian town of Kazakstan (called "Hungry Desert") in the middle of the Gobi Desert. For three years they worked on dairy farms, somehow surviving on skimpy daily rations of hot water, bread, bones with little meat on them and goats' milk. Many of them died.

Finally, the Russians gave them amnesty, which didn't permit them to leave the country but allowed them to travel. Mrs. Blohm had brought with her three of her brother's suits, expecting to see him again. Now, she exchanged them for food.

They lived in wet, underground tunnels and kept warm by burning dry bushes and bricks made from cow manure. Mrs. Blohm kept getting reports about her brother. She learned that he had wound up in the same prison with their first cousin, who said he

had been tortured repeatedly. A woman reported that he had been put to death in Kiev in 1942, but this was never confirmed.

The group moved south to a warmer climate, where many died because their weakened bodies couldn't accept the first fruits and vegetables they had eaten in years. They picked cotton for a living, getting paid by the pound, but they had to wait to pick the fields until the Russians had taken what they wanted.

Mrs. Blohm soon left her mother to join up with the Polish army, which was then regrouping in Southern Russia. She waited in a train station three nights before she was permitted to buy a ticket, and she was bitten by lice en route and stricken by typhus.

"When I met up with the army, I thought I was back in Poland, I was so weak," Mrs. Blohm recalls. "They had food, but I couldn't eat it. There wasn't enough medicine and there wasn't enough shelter. Wounded people just lay in the snow.

All Five Died

"The men came in in rags, many with frozen feet that had to be cut off. They shaved my long hair. I was placed in a tent with five wounded men. They all died, somehow I recovered without medicine."

Mrs. Blohm enlisted in the army, was given a uniform and, because she was highly educated, was given a teacher's job in the young soldier's school. Finally, she was awakened one night and told to return for her mother immediately, that the army was at last leaving Russia.

In her frantic rush to retrieve her mother in the North, Mrs. Blohm recalls the kindness of the Russian people. "What the government didn't take from them, the Mogul tribes did," she says. "Many secretly hoped the Germans would win the war. But they were kind to me. They fed me and invited me into their homes to stay overnight."

When Mrs. Blohm finally got her mother to the train station for the ride south, some Russian policemen tried to stop them from boarding the train. Just as it was about to leave the station, she waved them aside, saying, "Everything's alright — we're going," and pulled her mother aboard the train.

They caught up with the army, traveled to a Caspian Sea port, then took a crowded ship to Iran. Mrs. Blohm went to work for the Missing Persons Bureau of the Polish Red Cross, but her new-found freedom was saddened by the death of her mother, at age 53, of cancer.

Two months later she attended the wedding of a friend and met the photographer, Trenton's William Blohm, who was photo chief of the U.S. Army's Persian Gulf Command. She spoke no English, but they man-



SHE REMEMBERS — Mrs. Irene Blohm, Trenton's first war bride, years of terror and hardship in Russian custody during World War II.

aged to converse in French, and five months later they were married in Teheran, and it required five wedding certificates to make the ceremony legal.

Trenton's first war bride arrived here in the summer of 1945, followed by her husband one month later. Now, 28 years later, the Blohms live on Dover Road in Yardville; have two grown sons, Bill and Bob; and have deeply involved themselves in the cultural side of their community.

William Blohm, still a photographer, is employed by the Princeton Microfilm Corp., while Irene Blohm works in the Alumni Records Dept. of Princeton University. She is also chairman of the Cultural Committee for the local Police community's annual glittering affair, the Polonaise Ball.

The formal ball, to be held Feb. 10 at the War Memorial Building, is a sellout year after year and, as always, this year's festivities will include the presentation of daughters of Polish ancestry to the public and the awarding of scholarships to worthy, needy students of Polish descent. For the

first time, one of the scholarships at this year's 27th annual ball will be awarded to a student of astronomy as part of the international Polish recognition in February of the 500th anniversary of the birth of Copernicus, considered the father of modern astronomy.

The Polish Arts Club, sponsors of the Polonaise Ball, is headed by Mrs. Loretta Damsis, one of its founders, and schedules year-round activities, including art shows, folk festivals, Polish nights, carol sings, concerts and summer formals. General chairman of this year's ball is Walter Musick.

For the Blohms, it's been a long time since the war bride days, a marriage in Teheran and years of terror in Siberia. Irene Blohm is philosophic about her life, which wasn't always kind. Looking back on the dark years, she says simply:

"I guess when you're young and have a patriotic spirit, you survive. God helps you to survive somehow."



Members of the Polish Arts Club of Trenton go over final plans for Polonaise Scholarship Dinner-Dance.

Polish Arts Club slates scholarship dinner-dance

Members of the Polish Arts Club of Trenton will hold their traditional Polonaise Scholarship Dinner-Dance on Feb. 13 in the ballroom of Scanticon Conference Center & Hotel on the Forrestal Campus of Princeton University, 105 College Road, Princeton. For information and invitations call Dance Chairman Edward Cywinski at 737-2183 or Irene Blohm, program chairman, at 585-5451. For reservations, call Edward Daunis, ticket chairman, at 882-6833. Others participating in the planning are Sabina Modzelewska, Stephanie Winowicz, Dorothy Gronet and Christina Podraza ●

Polish Arts Club presents \$600 check to Deborah

Mrs. Irene Blohm, chairman of the Fund-Raising Committee of the Polish Arts Club, recently presented a \$600 check to Stanley Fryczynski, president of Deborah Heart and Lung Center in Browns Mills. The check represented proceeds from the Janosik Dancers' performance in June at the Kendall Park Theatre at Trenton State College. The funds will help Polish children travel to Deborah for heart surgery. In a letter to Mrs. Blohm, Fryczynski said, "It is only because of the wonderful help of so many individuals and groups that we have been able to pass the halfway point of our program to treat Polish children and to train Polish doctors" ●

William Blohm

YARDVILLE — William Hewitt Blohm, 66, a Princeton Microfilm Corp. employee, died suddenly Wednesday at Hamilton Hospital.

Born in Trenton, he was a lifelong area resident.



Blohm

An Army veteran of World War II, he worked for 25 years as an industrial photographer for the CF&I Steel Corp. in Trenton. He worked at the Princeton Microfilm Corp. for the past 12 years.

Past president of the Polish Arts Club of Trenton, he was a member of the Pro-

fessional Photographer's Club.

Surviving are his wife, Irene M. Chmielowska Blohm; two sons, William of Princeton, and Robert of Montreal, Canada; a granddaughter, Kelly; an aunt, Elizabeth Hewitt of Trenton; and an uncle, Waldburg Hewitt of Washington, D.C.

The funeral will be Saturday at 8:30 a.m. from the Winowicz Funeral Home, Adeline and Beatty streets. Mass of Christian Burial will be at 9:30 a.m. in St. Raphael's R.C. Church. Burial will be in Greenwood Cemetery.

Friends may call from 6 to 9 p.m. Friday at the funeral home.



Polish artists Mrs. Jaga Ruta, left, and George Kolodziej discuss their work with Irene Blohm, cultural chairman of the Polish Arts Club of Trenton.

Polish Arts, Crafts Show will be held at Ellarslie

The craft work of Mrs. Jaga Ruta and the paintings of George Kolodziej and other Polish artists will be on display at Ellarslie, the Trenton City Museum in Cadwalader Park, during the Polish Arts & Crafts Show.

The show, sponsored by the Polish

Arts Club of Trenton in cooperation with the Trenton City Museum Commission, will run from Oct. 22 to Nov. 21, according to Irene Blohm, cultural chairman of the Polish Arts Club



Going over plans for Polish Arts & Craft Show are, from left, Irene Blohm, chairwoman of the Polish Arts Club Cultural Committee; artist Jaga Ruta, and committee members Ann Patykula and Eleanora Siatkowski.

Polish Arts & Crafts Show to be held at Ellarslie

The Polish Arts Club of Trenton will hold a Polish Arts & Crafts Show at Ellarslie, the Trenton City Museum in Cadwalader Park, beginning on Oct. 22 from 7 to 10 p.m. The exhibit, featuring paintings, sculptures and crafts by Polish artists from New Jersey, Pennsylvania and New York.

will be on display through Nov. 21.

Z. Michael Legutko will give a slide-illustrated lecture on 19th century Polish paintings on Nov. 4 at 7 p.m. at the museum. On Nov. 15 artist Jaga Ruta will give two morning demonstrations of famous Polish craft "cut-outs"

Trenton Sunday Times
October 16, 1983



Photo by Peter Nash

EXHIBIT OPENS — Ben Whitmire, director of Ellarslie, the Trenton City Museum, and Irene Blohm, chairwoman of Polish Arts and Crafts Show, pose at the show's opening at the museum yesterday. The show runs through Nov. 21.

Trenton Times October 23, 1983

Polish Arts and Crafts Show, sponsored by the Polish Arts Club of Trenton, opening 7-10 p.m. Saturday at Ellarslie in Cadwalader Park, and continuing during museum hours until Nov. 21. Slide-lecture by Z. Michael Legutko of North Brunswick about 19th Century Polish paintings, 7 p.m. Nov. 4; and demonstration on Polish craft "cut-outs" by Jaga Ruta of Philadelphia, Nov. 15.

Trenton Times October 19, 1983

ART/Susan Doan-Johnson

Visions of Poland as varied as artists that created them



Staff photos by Martin Griff

"Koscinski Soldier with Girl" by Stefania Henryka Cieszyńska.

Iga Majewska says she's put on paper what she saw on the faces of the people around her after martial law was declared in Poland. It's all there — frustration, fear, pain.

Joseph Duda and his family left Krakow before martial law. His remembrances of Poland are of the beautiful countryside and humble churches.

Stefania Henryka Cieszyńska has been in the United States for seven years. Two years ago, after her marriage to Ted Cieszyńska, her "driver, secretary and translator," she picked up a paint brush and recorded her vision of Poland — a vision of childlike innocence.

Through Nov. 21, these three are exhibiting their work, along with six more artists from the Polish Arts Club of Trenton, at Ellarslie, the Trenton City Museum.

The works are as diverse as the stories the artists had to tell from the porcelain miniatures of George Ivers to the wool felt creations of Jaga Ruta to the watercolors of Stanley Mischuk.

"The Trenton area has a marvelous diversity of ethnic groups. Our current exhibition, 'Polish Arts and Crafts Show,' ranges from artists who speak little English to second generation Polish-Americans who are largely assimilated into the mainstream of American culture," writes Ben Whitmire, of Ellarslie, in the exhibition brochure. "Their work is equally wide-ranging, from cut paper designs that are based rather directly on Polish peasant designs, to paintings and ceramics that are 'contemporary-international' in concept."

IRENE BLOHM is the force behind the Polish Arts Club exhibition, the group's first. The widow of William Hubert Blohm, past president of the club, who died earlier this year, Mrs. Blohm said it was her husband who encouraged her, as the club's cultural chairwoman, to put the show together.

Mrs. Blohm, who met her husband in Tehran, Iran, in 1944 and was Trenton's first "war bride" in 1945, hopes this exhibition will be the start of a series. "We want to give the young artists a chance to participate and let the people know about Polish arts and crafts," she said.

Ms. Majewska, 27, who has been living in this country for only a few months, is a graduate of the Warsaw Academy of Fine Arts, with a degree in graphic arts. Recently, her design for a Solidarity poster won her second place in a competition in Chicago.

She calls her drawings in the Ellarslie exhibit "Visions" — and what haunting, frightening visions they are. Done in black and white, the faces are almost skeletal, many with empty eye sockets. In one, a cross-section of skin is peeled away, revealing a woman's sad eye. This sad emptiness is what she saw on the faces in Warsaw.

Using her sister, Maria, as translator, Ms. Majewska, who now lives in Doylestown, talked about being an artist in Poland. She said there were no opportunities for artists to exhibit under martial law. Anyone who wanted to work did so at home, scrounging for materials. Some of her works were done on the backs of notes she took in class, because that was the only paper she could get. "Dead" was the way she described the life of an artist.

Duda, who lives in Doylestown, designed interiors for public and private buildings in Krakow. His appreciation of architecture is seen in his "Camaldolese Fathers Church, Ohio," "Old Wood Church, No. 1," "Old Wood Church, No. 2" and "Old Wood Church, Orthodox, No. 3." There is a feeling of quiet contemplation in these works, especially the "Old World" series, and of a humble and sincere religion.

DUDA ALSO brought some of his jewelry creations. The designs of silver and Polish amber or coral are quite beautiful and very unusual. The ones in the exhibition are not for sale — his daughter, Urzula, who acted as translator, explained these were pieces her father had sold and then borrowed from the owners for the exhibition — but Duda is happy to accept commissions for new pieces.

Unlike Ms. Majewska, Duda said he didn't have much trouble getting the materials he needed for his artwork, but that there were always shortages. It all depended on the kind of work he was doing, he said. Some materials were not made in the country and had to be imported, but "in general it was not too difficult" to get them.

"That was three years ago," he added. "But now, who knows?"

Mrs. Cieszyńska, who now lives in Brooklyn, N.Y., comes from a large family that lived in the northeastern part of Poland, near the border with the Soviet Union. At 14 she worked as a maid to pay for her high school education and there was no time



From "Visions" series by Iga Majewska.



"Old Wood Church No. 2" by Joseph Duda.

— or money — to pursue her desire to paint.

Two years ago that changed. The Ellarslie show is her sixth exhibition and recently she won a prize at a show in Doylestown.

She has 11 oil paintings in the show, her husband, Ted, noted with obvious pride. Some are of scenes from their vacations, such as "Niagara Falls," which was painted from the Canadian side to show the U.S. falls, and "A Fragment of West Nyack," a Presbyterian church they came across on a trip through New York.

Other paintings are pure fantasy — "because I have fantasy up here," Mrs. Cieszyńska said, pointing to her head — and seem to be scenes of a Poland in more tranquil, gentle days, with nobles out hunting or riding in a sled over the snow-covered ground. The purity and innocence of the scenes could come from a child's coloring book. As Whitmire pointed out, these are sweet paintings that bring quite a different perspective to the exhibition.

East Windsor's George Ivers is represented in the show by 14 small etchings and 20 delightful porcelain miniatures. Many of the miniatures are painted on what look like odd pieces of broken porcelain that suggested scenes to Ivers by their shapes.

IF YOU GO: Ellarslie, the Trenton City Museum, is located in Cadwalader Park. Hours are: Monday through Friday, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.; Sunday, 2-4 p.m.; closed Saturday. For information, call the museum at 989-3632.



Staff photo by John A. Pietras

Bronislaw and Sophia Palkiewicz — buying Polish ham in the States to take back home to Poland.

Painting a different picture of Poland

By EUGENIA COOK
Staff Writer

The news out of Poland has become harsher and grimmer by the day. Food lines with eight- or nine-hour waits apparently have become routine — with shoppers sometimes finding only bread and ice cream at the other end of the line, as happened last week.

But the image we have of a country coming apart at the seams is not one shared by Bronislaw and Sophia Palkiewicz, who are here visiting her cousin, Irene Blohm, in Yardville.

Because they must return next week to their home in Katowice, in the heavily industrialized province of Silesia, they declined to talk about political matters.

Palkiewicz — who is a Communist Party member — talked of the current period of "sacrifice" leading to a better Poland. But the picture painted by the couple — he works for the state as an agricultural/forest engineer, while she is a housewife — is far from gloomy.

In addition to his salary, he gets a house he describes as "nice," with a 400-square-foot garden in which they grow much of their own food. Although life is "hard" now, they "are proud and happy to be Polish, and look forward to the day when Poland is as prosperous as she has been in the past."

"The sacrifice will be worth it," he said through Mrs. Blohm. The couple speaks French, but no English.

They could afford their five-week trip to Canada and the United States because they have no children and were able to save for it. He normally gets four weeks' vacation, as he says most Poles do. The couple could see little difference between Canada and the United States except, perhaps, that Canada is a little cleaner.

Only the very rich in Poland can afford to live the way most middle-class Americans do. So, for "souvenirs," they will be taking food back — chocolate, coffee, canned ham. "You can't get Polish ham in Poland," they explained.

Aside from the ready availability of food here, he particularly was impressed with the highways, the communications systems in both countries — and the number of blacks in Atlantic City.

They visited the resort Monday with the Blohms. Mrs. Blohm explained: "There are very few blacks in Poland except for Africans, and they're mostly students." The youths come from North Africa to study in Poland and become "ambassadors of the Polish culture," Palkiewicz added.

As for Atlantic City itself, he volunteered that, if he were mayor, he would take some of the casino profits and pour them into the slums. "I tried to explain to him that it's not that simple . . ." interjected Mrs. Blohm.

The couple didn't gamble in Atlantic City; they wanted to walk in the sand and touch the ocean. Explained Mrs. Blohm: "The Atlantic Ocean, you know . . . it means something special to them to touch it."