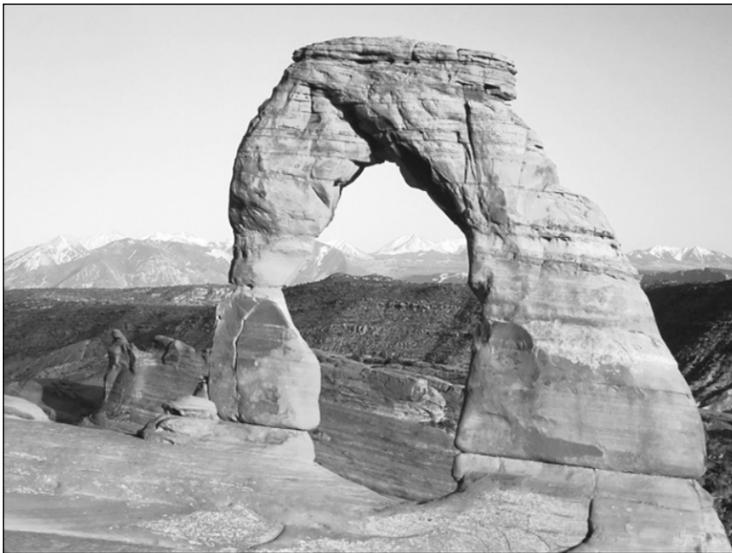




## Slide Show Presentation About Southwest Utah



**WEST CALDWELL, NJ** – The West Caldwell Public Library, 30 Clinton Road, will present a slide show titled “Not All Arches Lead to McDonald’s: Erosion Scenery of Southwest Utah” featuring physicist and award-winning photographer Frederick Dammont on Tuesday, January 26 at 7:00 pm in the Community Room.

This slide show captures how the powers of erosion by water, wind and changes in temperature have created the spectacular array of sandstone arches, bridges and sky-high columns in southwestern Utah. Some of the sites included in the presentation include Capitol Reef, Dead Horse Point, Natural Bridges

Park, and the Arches National Park.

Frederick Dammont is a retired professional physicist and award-winning photographer. He has developed over 50 slide shows from his world-wide travels to such places as the Yucatan in South America, central Mexico, Portugal, Spain, Italy, Austria, France and all the National Parks throughout the United States. His slide shows tend to focus on the natural photogenic elements of each geographical area that he visits.

This program is free and open to the public, but advance registration is required. For more information or to register, call the Library at (973) 226-5441.

## Relive the Magic of “Beatlemania” at BCC

**NEW JERSEY** - Celebrate the legendary musical hits that made The Beatles famous during the 1960’s when the BeatleMagic tribute band visits Bergen Community College on Friday, January 29, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. in the Anna Maria Ciccone Theatre. Tickets are \$28 for adults and \$26 for students, children and seniors (65 and over).

BeatleMagic recreates the aura and sound of the Fab Four’s phenomenal musical career. Fans of all ages will enjoy BeatleMagic’s strong vocals, elaborate costume changes and a musical repertoire that features The Beatles most popular songs. BeatleMagic has performed for thousands of fans throughout the United States and Canada and has even played with Pete Best, the original Beatles’ drummer.

The performance is part of Bergen’s “This & That from Here & There” Performing Arts Series. For ticket information or for a full schedule of events, please call Bergen’s Office of Community and Cultural Affairs at (201) 447-7428 or go to [www.bergen.edu/cc](http://www.bergen.edu/cc)

– Bergen Community College is a public two-year coeducational col-

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## Polish Literature (GAINED, NOT LOST) IN TRANSLATION

By  
Ewa Bronowicz



**JERZY ANDRZEJEWSKI**

**Ashes and Diamonds (Popiol i Diament)**

*Translated by D.J. Welsh*

240pp. Penguin Books, NY. \$14.00

### The Moral War

If you are looking for a good, even if philosophically depressing, novel to start the New Year with, here’s my suggestion: *Ashes and Diamonds* by Jerzy Andrzejewski. Written in 1948, it is a moving, thrilling and enlightening account of Poland in the spring of 1945, just after the Nazis capitulate. Against the backdrop of destruction and poverty, a wide palette of characters is forced to resolve the political and moral tensions that surround them, as well as face their ghosts from the past.

Everyone is affected by the war, one way or another. Those who survived cannot find their place in the new Poland. Mr. Kossecki returns from a concentration camp and cannot find meaning in the comfortable life he led before the war. His wife, Mrs. Kossecki, waited out the war in hiding, but is paranoid about the future, and struggles to find a way back to her husband’s heart. Their two young sons, Andrew and Alek, are secretly involved in the Opposition movement, and both, although separately, want to fight for Poland’s independence from the Soviet Union. The relatives of those who died, on the other hand, are haunted by a feeling that their loved ones died in vain. And then there are the dead themselves, who, despite their physical absence, are very much present in the novel.

This political thriller begins when Andrew Kossecki and his subordinate, Michael Chmielnicki, accidentally kill two civilians instead of a Communist leader, Szczuka. In the last days of World War II, Poland is divided into two camps: one that stands for an independent Poland, and one that sides with the Soviet Union and believes in the ideas of Communism. Szczuka, the Opposition’s target, genuinely cares for his homeland, and is a man of principle. As the drama unfolds, we sympathize both with Szczuka and his wanna-be killers who themselves begin to doubt the necessity of the murder.

Another shocking turn of events happens when the truth about Mr. Kossecki comes out—in the concentration camp, he quickly became a Nazi helper, therefore contributing to many deaths of his compatriots. When confronted with the accusation, he says, “There is one set of values for wartime, and another for peace,” making the argument that crimes committed during times of war should belong to the past. Podgorski, who resolves to take Kossecki to court, responds with his own counter argument: that one must be judged by what he does, regardless of the circumstances. The author leaves this dilemma open-ended.

The most devastating aspect of this fine novel is Andrzejewski’s portrayal of Polish youth in the midst of the new political climate. Alek Kossecki joins a group of friends with the aim of buying weapons and killing “the enemy.” But, as it soon turns out, the enemy can be anyone, including fellow friends who refuse to participate in the project and therefore must be “removed.” Michael Chmielnicki, on the other hand, struggles with a plan to assassinate Szczuka as he falls in love with a woman and realizes that another death is another death, no matter what the dead person happens to believe in. “I want a simple, ordinary life, that’s all,” he says to Andrew, and his dream, laughable in times of peace and prosperity, gains a new meaning in the background of ruins and suffering at the end of the war. In fact, when a voice announces through a loudspeaker that the war is over, people listen to the news in silence, and not one burst of happiness can be seen in the crowd. “It’d be different if you could have said it in Warsaw before it was destroyed,” says a man on the street, and it is clear that the physical degradation of the nation’s capital corresponds to the state of the Polish spirit of the day.

Any questions or comments for Ewa... You can contact her by visiting her website: [www.literatka-nyc.com](http://www.literatka-nyc.com)

## Polish Survivors Add Solemn Note To PAC’s Annual Christmas Party

**BROOKLYN, N.Y.** ... Wanda Lorenc and Wladyslaw Mazur (center) are concentration camp survivors and veterans of Poland’s Warsaw Uprising (The Rising) of 1944. They do not normally speak about their wartime experiences at a Christmas party.

But with the large number of children always present at the annual Christmas party of the Polish American Congress, PAC President Frank Milewski (photo left: on left) and Political Activities Chairman Chet Szarejko (far right) invited them to spend a few moments to tell the children what it was like to live as a teenager in German-occupied Poland in World War II.

“Holocaust studies in public schools don’t usually accentuate the story of Polish Catholics like Mrs. Lorenc and Mr. Mazur. We thought our Polish American kids should be made aware of what such people went through,” said Szarejko, a former history teacher on Long Island.

Both speakers were members of the Polish Underground (Armia Krajowa) and both were arrested by the Germans and sent to concentration camps.

During the Uprising, Mr. Mazur miraculously survived two German bullets that grazed his neck and a third one that pierced into his hip. Even a German soldier’s rifle butt to his head was unable to finish him off.

While a prisoner in a German concentration camp, an SS guard



kicked Mrs. Lorenc’s face to a bloody pulp after she threw a piece of bread to a starving and pleading Jew. She considered herself lucky because she could have gotten a bullet in her head instead.

Mrs. Lorenc’s parents and a brother are honored at Israel’s Yad Vashem as “Righteous Among the Nations” for rescuing and sheltering twelve Jews during the Holocaust.

Another brother was part of an Armia Krajowa unit which tried to blow out a hole in the wall of the Warsaw Ghetto to let Jews escape.

But neither this brother nor Mrs. Lorenc were ever honored as “Righteous” because the Jews they helped were not around to testify that the events really happened. Israel’s Yad Vashem does not count anyone this way unless the rescued

Jew will validate it.

Even though Israel honors Poland as the country with the most “Righteous”, many Poles say that number would be many times greater if it were not for the fact Yad Vashem does not count any act of aid unless the Jewish person who was aided steps forth and confirms it.

After coming to the United States when the war ended, Mr. Mazur centered his efforts on working with the Maria Konopnicka Polish Saturday School in Brooklyn, N.Y. Many of the students came to the Christmas celebration to honor him and hear his testimony.

As in past years, the Polish American Congress Christmas event was held at Greenpoint’s Polonaise Terrace.

– Frank Milewski



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