

# Institute of National Remembrance

<https://ipn.gov.pl/en/news/10941,The-ceremony-of-awarding-the-quotSemper-Fidelisquot-Prize-15-December-2023-Warsa.html>

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## The ceremony of awarding the "Semper Fidelis" Prize, 15 December 2023, Warsaw















The awarding ceremony of the laureates of the fifth edition of the "Semper Fidelis" prize took place on 15 December 2023, at 12:00 p.m., at the Royal Castle in Warsaw. The "Semper Fidelis" prize, established by the Institute of National Remembrance, is awarded to persons, institutions and organizations active in commemorating the heritage of the Polish Eastern Borderlands. The event was attended by the President of the Institute of National Remembrance, Karol Nawrocki, Ph.D.

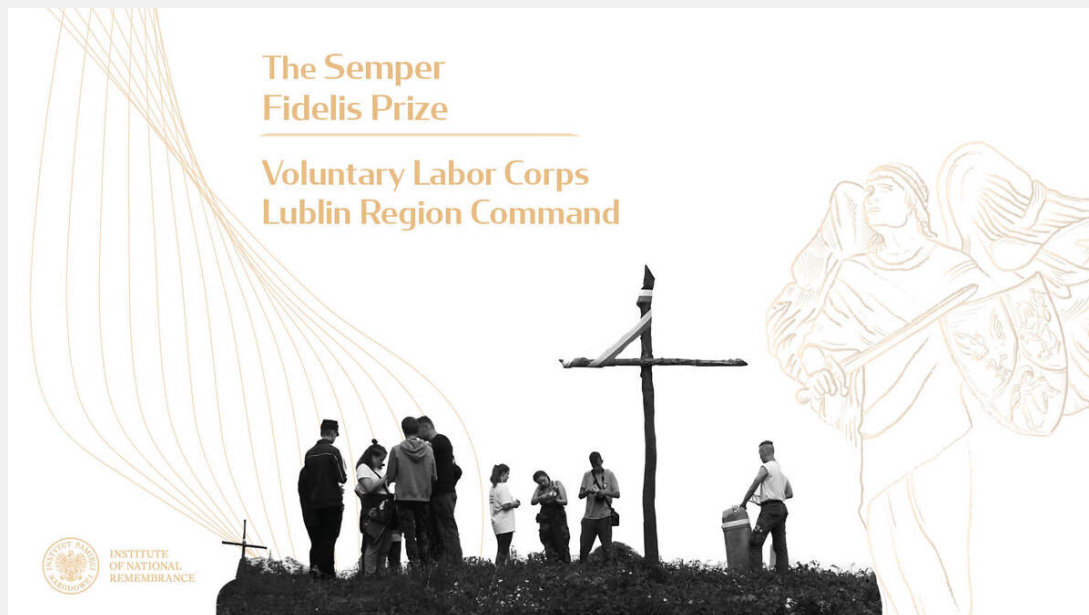
*Ladies and Gentlemen, there's no identity without memory, no community without identity, and no nation without community . . . I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your daily efforts to preserve the memory of the Eastern Borderlands - because that memory defines who we are as a nation and builds our national community,* said the IPN President Karol Nawrocki, Ph.D. during the opening of the ceremony.

The winners are selected by the Prize Committee chaired by the President of the IPN. During the awarding ceremony, the laureates receive a commemorative statuette and a diploma. The committee may also award one post-mortem prize each year.

List of the laureates in the years 2019-2021

The laureates:





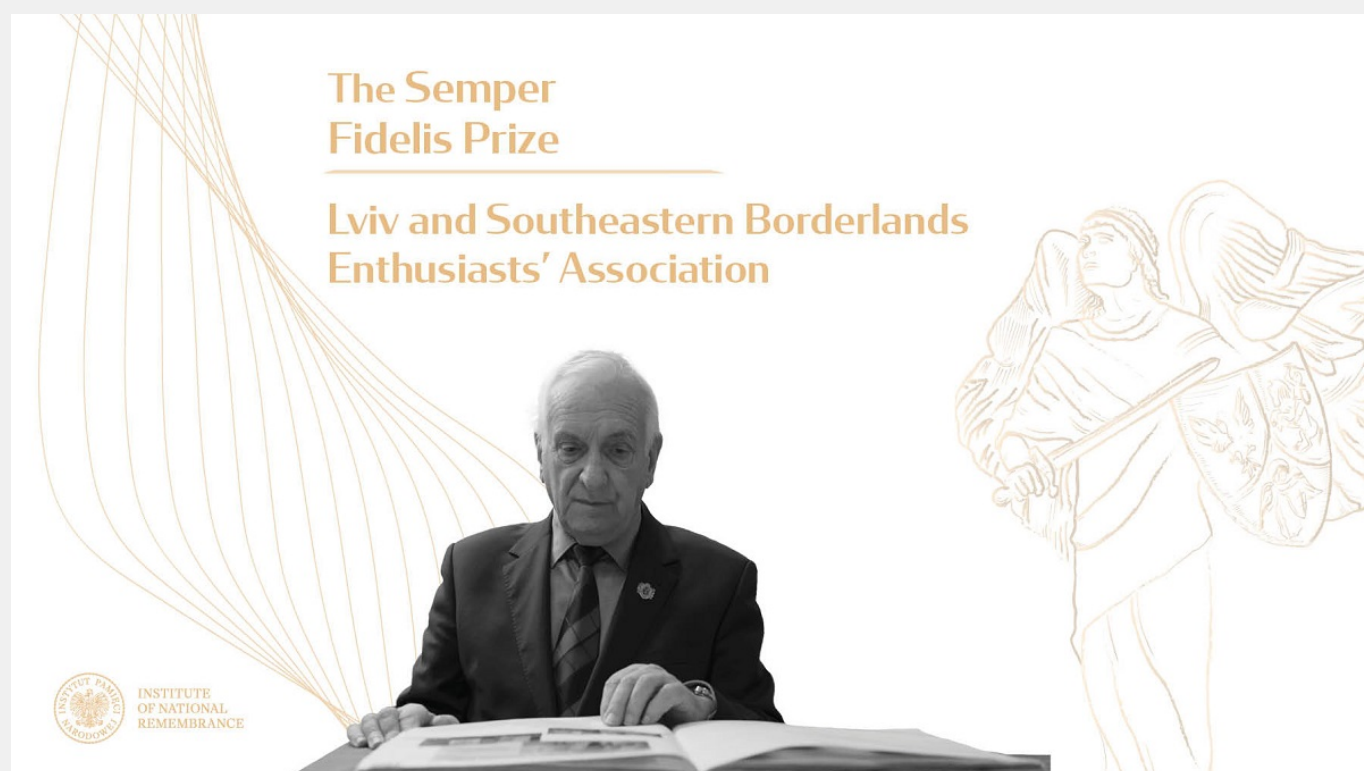
## **Voluntary Labor Corps**

### **Lublin Region Command**

The Voluntary Labor Corps Lublin Region Command commenced its activity consisting in the remembrance of the history of former Eastern Borderlands of the Republic of Poland in 2008, when it organized the first trip to Volhynia where VLC volunteers, aided by the local community, cleaned up Polish cemeteries and remembrance sites. Since that time, the Voluntary Labor Corps has been annually organizing trips to Ukraine, Belarus and Lithuania, and the number of participants has grown from eighteen to nearly one hundred and thirty. Youth participating in the volunteer camps is what you would most often call “difficult”. For young people, the upkeep and conservation of sites of remembrance represents not only a unique lesson in living history, but also teaches them respect for work, tradition and patriotic values. Trip participants take care of cemeteries and memorial sites located in more than fifty locations. Among them are the graves of legionnaires under Commander Piłsudski, soldiers who died in the

Polish-Bolshevik war, victims of the Volhynia massacre, and soldiers of the 27<sup>th</sup> Volhynian Infantry Division of the Home Army.

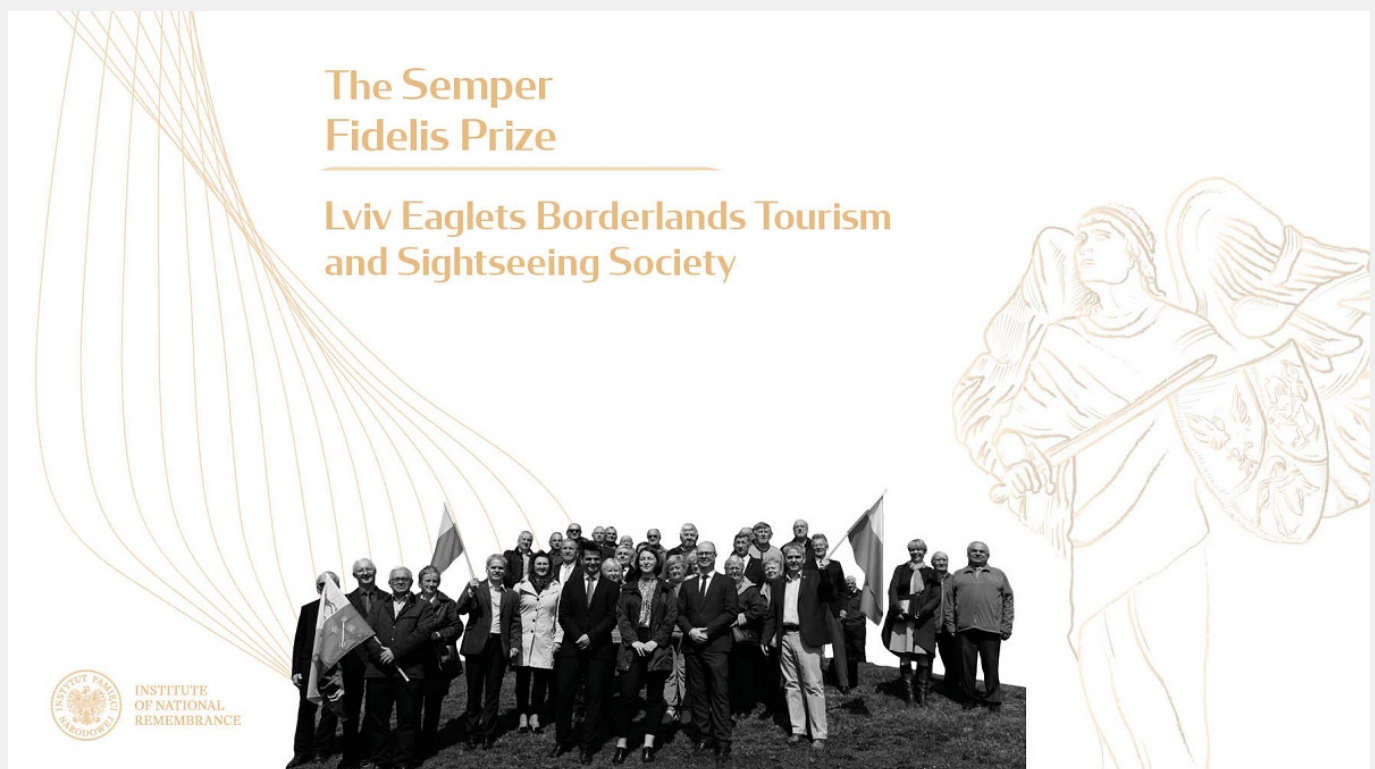
In addition to taking care of graves, the organization's staff participates in various endeavors, such as pilgrimages, ceremonies, educational projects, excursions or canoeing trips. They cooperate with many organizations and institutions: Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Lutsk, Roman Catholic parishes, Lesya Ukrainka Volyn National University in Lutsk or the Municipal Transport Company in Lublin.



## **Lviv and Southeastern Borderlands Enthusiasts' Association**

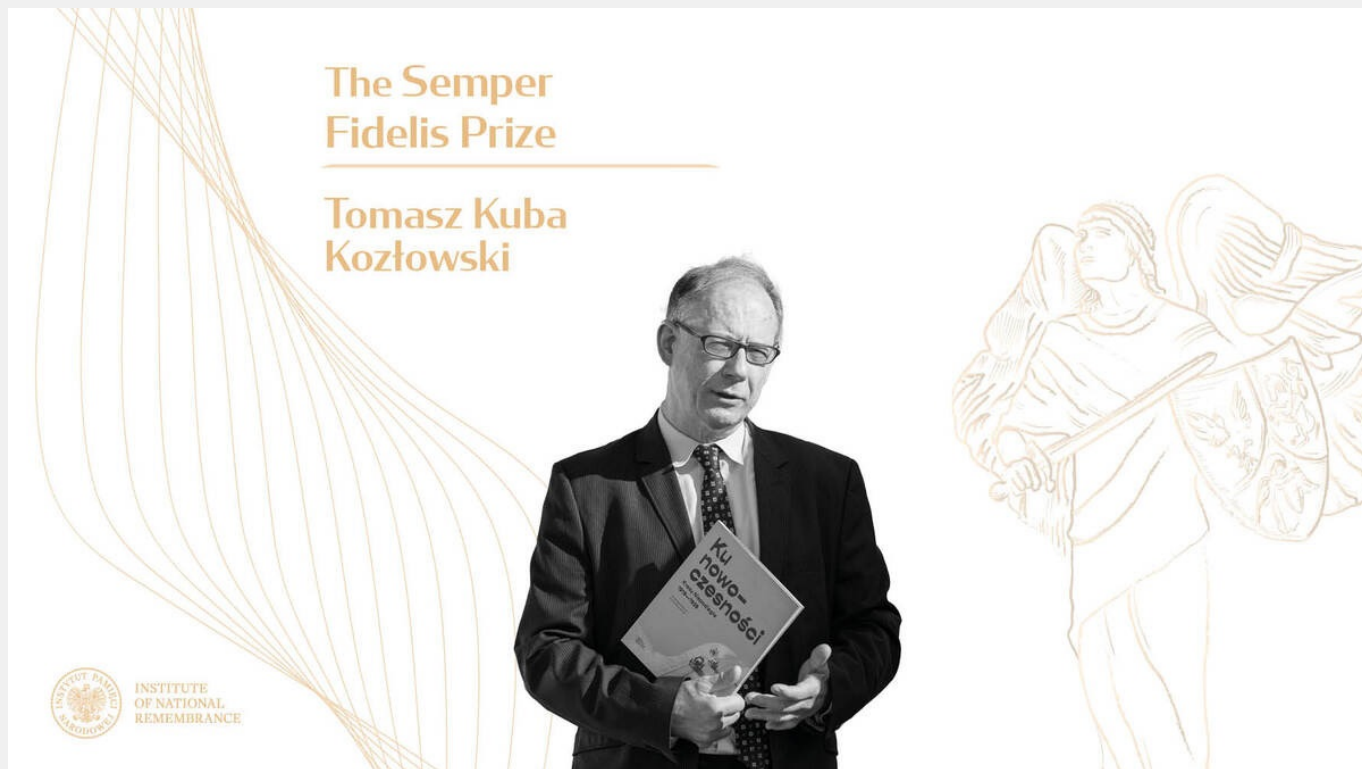
The Lviv and Southeastern Borderlands Enthusiasts' Association is a nationwide institution. Its primary tasks include the collecting and

disseminating of knowledge regarding Lviv and the southern territories of the former southeastern voivodeships of pre-partition Poland. The organization brings together Borderlanders, their descendants and people fascinated by that region. It has been operating for thirty-five years, with fifty-five branches located all over Poland. The organization has been keeping a chronicle ever since the beginning of its operation. As part of its efforts, the Society initiates and implements commemorations, exhibits, discussions, lectures and concerts promoting culture and history of the Borderlands. It holds patronage over various publishing initiatives and scientific conferences. It organizes sightseeing tours and pilgrimages to Polish sites of remembrances and sanctuaries. For years, the Association's governing bodies have been communicating with and petitioning state authorities, of both Poland and Ukraine, in matters related to the protection of Polish heritage in southeastern Borderlands as well as organizing material aid for Poles in the East.



## **Lviv Eaglets Borderlands Tourism and Sightseeing Society**

The Lviv Eaglets Borderlands Tourism and Sightseeing Society in Żary, although formally established in 2006 in response to the need to preserve the memory of the Borderlands, has been active since the 1980s; initially as part of the Polish Tourism and Sightseeing Society. Owing to its organizational efficiency, the Society for Borderlands Tourism and Sightseeing has a head office – Borderlands House under the White Eagle that houses: the Archbishop Ignacy Tokarczuk Borderlands Museum, the Borderlands Gallery, the Borderlands Library, and the Donation Centre for Poles in the East. The Society organizes numerous events and memorials as well as undertakes educational initiatives focused on the culture and history of the Borderlands as well as martyrology of its residents. Its achievements also include publications devoted to Borderlands-related topics. The activities pursued by the organization play an important role in making certain that future generations of Borderlands exiles are aware where their predecessors came from and know the history and culture of the taken lands.

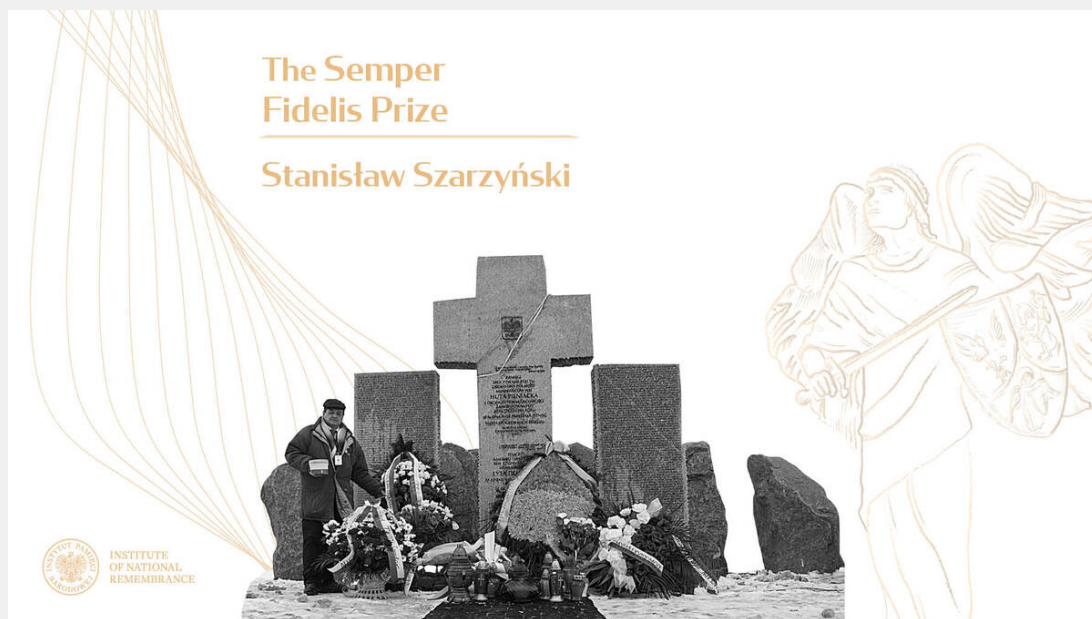


## **Tomasz Kuba Kozłowski**

A promoter of the multicultural heritage of the Borderlands, organizer of meetings, discussions, book promotions, film screenings, lectures, educational classes and workshops for the youth. Coordinator of the Warsaw Borderlands Initiative programme, the purpose of which is to disseminate knowledge about the history and culture of former eastern territories of pre-partition Poland.

Tomasz Kuba Kozłowski participates in, supports and co-organizes nearly all of the important Borderlands initiatives undertaken by Polish social organizations and cultural institutions. His original project, which has been enjoying continuous popularity since 2007, is a series of meetings titled "Stories from the Borderlands", held at the History Meeting House in Warsaw. He also co-authored a number of exhibits devoted to the 20<sup>th</sup> century history of the eastern territories of the

Second Polish Republic. As part of his online activity, he run the “Świat Kresów” (World of the Borderlands) profile on Facebook and a channel on YouTube devoted to the same topic. In 2021, he initiated a series of historical walks around Warsaw, presenting sites, figures and events related to the Borderlands. As a collector, he accumulated one of the largest private collections of memorabilia from the eastern territories of pre-partition Poland. In the past, he held important functions related to the area of migration and refugees. He has been a member of the Council of the POLONIKA National Institute of Polish Cultural Heritage Abroad since 2019.

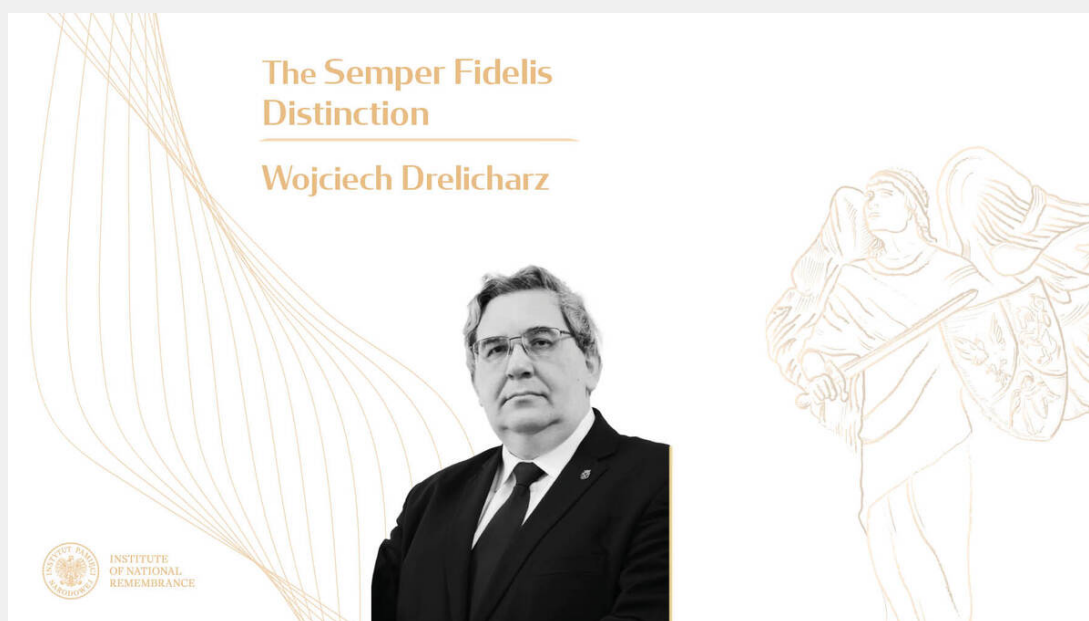


## **Stanisław Szarzyński**

Stanisław Szarzyński is a prominent social activist connected to the Przemyśl Land, born to a family originating from the Borderlands, namely Gródek Jagielloński. He is an active member of many organizations, including the Polish Riflemen's Association, the World Congress of Borderlanders, and the Club of Catholic Intelligentsia. As the president of the Society for the Remembrance of Polish

Thermopylae and the Borderlands, he engages in patriotic activities by honouring Polish heroes and initiating the erection of monuments, including the monument of the Polish Legions and Heroes of the Polish Thermopylae, which is to be erected in Przemyśl.

Stanisław Szarzyński is the organizer of annual pilgrimages, bicycle excursions and events commemorating the victims of the Volhynia massacre and Polish heroes who gave their lives in the Borderlands in defense of their country. He has been documenting his trips through writing and photographs and posting his experiences online. He also prepares photographic exhibits devoted to the Borderlands. His photographs and articles are often the only permanent account of many initiatives undertaken by the communities of Borderlanders. Stanisław Szarzyński also engages in charitable activities by supporting Polish churches in Ukraine. He cooperates with Polish and Ukrainian institutions, including the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Lviv or the Polish Society for the Protection of War Graves.



**Honorary mention**

Wojciech Drelicharz

Wojciech Drelicharz, Ph.D, is the originator of the idea of creating an inventory of the inscriptions and crests in the territory of the Borderlands and editor of a series of publications titled “Monuments of epigraphy and heraldry of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in Ukraine”, which represents the result of his work. He has been connected with the Jagiellonian University since the 1980s, first as a student involved in the scientific community and student opposition structures, and then as an academic at the Institute of History. He has devoted a major part of his life to searching for and researching inscriptions and crests from former Polish territories. For several years, since 1994, he has been going on study trips to the Borderlands with a team of students. He initiated work on and co-edited publications featuring the texts of cemetery inscriptions from numerous Ukrainian localities, such as Chervonohrad or Yahilnytsia. It is primarily thanks to the commitment of professor Drelicharz that we have access to nearly all Polish inscriptions and crests created until 1945 that remain in Ukraine and are located outside cemeteries. The collected documentation is invaluable for preserving knowledge about the Polish heritage of the Borderlands.

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