

Institute of National Remembrance

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A ceremonial run of the “Anders” train on the Łódź-Włocławek route , 17 February 2022





















A ceremonial run of the “Anders” train on the Łódź-Włocławek route

took place on 17 February 2022. The event was attended by the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to Italy and San Marino, Anna Maria Anders, the President of the Institute of National Remembrance, Karol Nawrocki, Ph.D., and the President of the Łódź Agglomeration Railways, Janusz Malinowski.

In connection with the upcoming 80th anniversary of the commencement of the march of General Anders's Army evacuated from the USSR, the Institute of National Remembrance is launching an international educational and commemorative project entitled "Trails of Hope. The Odyssey of Freedom", which is to commemorate the military effort of the Polish Armed Forces during World War II and the fate of the civilian population evacuated from the USSR together with General Władysław Anders's Army.

Once the "Anders" train reached the train station in Włocławek the main celebrations began with occasional speeches by the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to Italy and San Marino, Anna Maria Anders, the President of the Institute of National Remembrance, Karol Nawrocki, Ph.D., the President of the Łódź Agglomeration Railways, Janusz Malinowski and the Chairman of the Board of the Łódź Agglomeration Railways, Rafał Zgorzelski.

Having arrived in Włocławek, Ambassador Anders said, "This train is a wonderful idea . . . I'm all for memorials because they are history, they teach it and provoke questions, and this train is history alive, history in motion."

Karol Nawrocki said, "I'm not sure what General Anders is most loved for: is it fighting for our independence before 1918, serving the reborn country, defending it in September 1939, stepping up as the Moses who led Poles out of the inhuman Soviet land in WWII, or Monte Cassino."

At 9:00 o'clock the official celebrations began on Freedom Square in Włocławek. Flowers were laid at the monument dedicated to Polish Soldiers, a roll call dedicated to General Anders and the soldiers of the 2nd Polish Corps was read out. The official opening of the exhibition "From the Soviet Gulag to Monte Cassino - General Władysław Anders and the Polish II Corps" also took place. The event will be followed by the opening of two more exhibitions: the "On the way to Monte

Cassino” and “The Greater Poland Uprising 1918–1919” at the Maria Konopnicka High School in Włocławek.

On the initiative of the IPN Branch Office in Łódź and as a celebration of Władysław Anders’s 130th birthday , we would like to recall his achievements during the Greater Poland Uprising and the Polish-Bolshevik War, as well as his bravery in the September 1939 campaign. General Anders will also always be remembered for his uncompromising spirit while being in Soviet captivity, his contribution to the expansion of the Polish Army in the Soviet Union, as well as indisputable merits in saving our compatriots.

It is precisely for the above mentioned reasons that on the 80th anniversary of Poles leaving the Soviet Union, the IPN would like to commemorate the General's deeds and remind the world that his decision saved over 112,000 citizens of the Second Polish Republic and gave rise to the formation of the Polish 2nd Corps, which most definitely left its mark in the history of the Polish army. The Institute of National Remembrance would therefore like to pay special tribute to General Władysław Anders and his men through a series of commemorative projects and initiatives, the main one being the “Trails of Hope. The Odyssey of Freedom” educational and commemorative project.

The enterprise objective is educating the public on Polish will and commitment to free Europe from totalitarian regimes. The project is to

be carried out in the years 2021-2025, and planned to cover the countries on three continents that the Anders Army went through. We will highlight, among other things, the relations between local residents and communities and the Polish army, search for archival materials, and find people who still remember the war years, or their relatives. We intend to record several testimonies of history witnesses.

An exhibition presented on the trail of Anders's troops will include panels focused on individual locations. It will come with a multilingual catalogue.

The project also involves proper commemoration of Polish soldiers and civilians whose graves are scattered all over the world. We plan to install commemorative plaques and monuments, as well as renovate the existing memorials.

A dedicated website will be created, offering a wide range of related multimedia. We will release publications, such as books, comics or games, and promote the IPN's products on the General's combat trail that have appeared so far.

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