

● The National Bank of Poland is putting into circulation coins commemorating the 400 years of Polish settlement in North America:

On **17 December 2008**

a coin with the face value of **100 zł**
– struck in proof finish, in gold,

a coin with the face value of **10 zł**
– struck in standard finish, in silver,

On **15 December 2008**

a coin with the face value of **2 zł**
– struck in standard finish, in Nordic Gold alloy

The National Bank of Poland

holds the exclusive right to issue the currency
in the Republic of Poland.

In addition to issuing coins and banknotes of general circulation, the NBP issues collector coins and banknotes.

The issue of collector items is designed both to commemorate events, anniversaries and well-known personalities and to disseminate knowledge about Polish culture, science and tradition.

Since 1996, the NBP has also been issuing occasional Nordic Gold coins of 2 złoty denomination.

All coins and banknotes
issued by the NBP are legal tender in Poland.

NBP

National Bank of Poland

COINS



COINS ISSUED IN 2008 COINS ISSUED IN 2008



Information on the schedule of issue
and the sale of coins can be found at the websites:

www.nbp.pl
www.numizmatyka.nbportal.pl

The coins have been struck
at the Polish Mint Plc in Warsaw.

Edited and printed: NBP Printing House

400 Years of Polish Settlement in North America

400 Years of Polish Settlement in North America

- In October 1608 soon after the establishment of the first English colony at the eastern coast of North America, Polish settlers reached the new continent as well. Thereby, they paved the way towards the multiethnic Virginia and in a longer perspective towards the multiethnic United States of America, a country established and populated by descendants of immigrants, including Poles, who have searched for their „promised land” in America ever since.
- In 1606 king James I Stuart chartered the Virginia Company of London with the right to colonize and exploit the resources of the southern part of North America. On this basis the English started the establishment of their own colonies in the New World, discovered by Christopher Columbus in 1492, thus engaging in competition with both Spain and Portugal. In December 1606 a hundred British settlers on three ships ventured across the Atlantic. Jamestown, the first permanent outpost named after the King was established about 40 miles from the mouth of the James river entering the Chesapeake Bay, on the land inhabited then by the Powhatan confederation of the Algonquian tribes. The colony was named Virginia in honour of Elisabeth I Tudor- called the *Virgin Queen*. Settlers from England hoped to find gold, trade with Indians and grow rich fast as shareholders. It soon became apparent that really few of them could work physically to build houses, cut trees, hunt or work the farm. Since it turned out that there was neither gold nor silver to be found, land proved to be the only natural resource of the area. Diseases, hostilities and rivalry for leader’s position among settlers further aggravated the situation in the colony.

- The credit for Virginia’s survival goes first of all to captain John Smith, the leader of the colonists, a man of energy and decisive action, who disciplined the settlers and made them work hard. In his letters to the Virginia Company of London he demanded to fetch him „thirty carpenters, farmers, gardeners, fishermen, blacksmiths, bricklayers and lumberjacks rather than thousands of such that we have at present”. He actively engaged in exploring the area, drawing sketches, collaborating with the local native Americans and providing the settlers with food supplies. At that time Jamestown received fortification.
- The next party, which landed in Jamestown in 1608, included about 70 new persons: i.a. eight people from Prussia and Poland (literally „eight Dutch men and Poland” since in the 17th century English the word ‘Dutchman’ stood both for Dutchmen and Prussians) – as respectfully reported by John Smith, the leader of settlers, in his journey „The True Travels, Adventures and Observations ...”, published in 1629. Unnamed settlers coming from the territory under the Polish rule were recorded as artisans. The governing board of the company hired them in order to ensure the continuity of the outpost surrounded by forests and arable land. Although no details of the employment contract between artisans and the London-based company are known, sumptuous financial benefits were presumably guaranteed. Had it been otherwise, even though curious to see the New World, the workmen would not have set across the ocean, especially given that artisans of this sort were in high demand in England at that time.

- According to the tradition of Polish settlement, the first Polish settlers in America most probably included tar makers, who could produce charcoal, coal and wood tar as well as potash (i.e. materials used for the construction and operation of sailing ships), coopers making barrels to store food, and glass-makers. The latter were commissioned to build the first glass smelting furnace (producing bottles and jars), they made windowpanes for the wooden huts constructed in the settlement as well as glass beads exchanged with locals for maize and tobacco. Unlike many other settlers of the early history of Virginia, they could work physically and were willing to. As it appears, they endured the first and difficult period of settlement and also contributed to some stabilization in the English colony.
- Throughout the 17th century, Polish artisans were still being hired by the governing bodies of the Virginian company, as mentioned in the existing historical sources. With their work they generated wealth both for the colony and themselves, while at the same time they accustomed English settlers to ethnic diversity in the new habitat.
- Those first anonymous Polish settlers to Virginia pioneered the emigration from the territory of Poland to North America, particularly large in the second half of the 19th century.

**Professor Izabella Rusinowa, Doctorus Habilitatus
Institute of History Warsaw University**

COINS ISSUED IN 2008 COINS ISSUED IN 2008 COINS ISSUED IN 2008 COINS ISSUED IN 2008 COINS ISSUED IN 2008 COINS ISSUED IN 2008 COINS ISSUED IN 2008



FACE VALUE **100** ZŁ

metal **900/1000 Au** ■ finish **proof** ■ diameter **21.00 mm**
weight **8.00 g** ■ mintage (volume) **9,500 pcs**

OBVERSE: In the centre an image of the Eagle established as the State Emblem of the Republic of Poland against a stylized image of a wind rose. Above, the outline of fragments of the western coast of Europe and eastern coast of North America. Above, a semicircular inscription: RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA (the Republic of Poland). Below, an inscription: 100 ZŁ. On the left-hand side, the notation of the year of issue: 2008. The Mint’s mark under the Eagle’s left leg: M/W.

REVERSE: In the centre a stylized image of a wind rose. Between its arms, stylized images: on the left-hand side at the top – a man smelting glass, below – an artisan making barrels, on the right-hand side at the top - a man making pottery, below – a blacksmith at work. On the rim an inscription: 400. ROCZNICA POLSKIEGO OSADNICTWA W AMERYCE PÓLNOOCNEJ (400 years of Polish settlement in North America).

Coin designer: **ROUSSANKA NOWAKOWSKA**



FACE VALUE **10** ZŁ

metal **ring: 925/1000 Ag oxidized, core: glass**
finish **standard** ■ diameter **32.00 mm**
weight **14.14 g** ■ mintage (volume) **126,000 pcs**

OBVERSE: In the centre, on the glass core, a stylized image of a man blowing glassware and on the rim of the core, an inscription: POLSKIEGO OSADNICTWA W AMERYCE PÓLNOOCNEJ (of the Polish settlement in North America), read from the reverse side of the coin. On the ring, fragments of a stylized map of Virginia. Above, an inscription: VIRGINIA, placed on a sash. To the left of the core, images of settlers, to the right, images of Indians. Below the core, an image of the Eagle established as the State Emblem of the Republic of Poland. To the left of the Eagle, the notation of the year of issue: 2008. To the right, an inscription: 10/ZŁ. At the bottom, a semicircular inscription: RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA (the Republic of Poland). At the Eagle’s left leg, the Mint’s mark: M/W.

REVERSE: In the centre, on the glass core, a stylized image of a man blowing glassware and on the rim of the core, an inscription: POLSKIEGO OSADNICTWA W AMERYCE PÓLNOOCNEJ (of the Polish settlement in North America). To the left and to the right of the core, stylized images of men smelting glass. Above the core, stylized images of ships and newly-arrived settlers. Below the core, an inscription: JAMESTOWN, placed on a sash. Below, an inscription: 400. ROCZNICA (400 years).

Coin designer: **ROBERT KOTOWICZ**



FACE VALUE **2** ZŁ

metal **CuAl5Zn5Sn1 alloy** ■ finish **standard** ■ diameter **27.00 mm**
weight **8.15 g** ■ mintage (volume) **1,200,000 pcs**

OBVERSE: An image of the Eagle established as the State Emblem of the Republic of Poland, on both sides of the Eagle, the notation of the year of issue: 20-08, below the Eagle, an inscription: ZŁ 2 ZŁ, on the rim, an inscription: RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA (the Republic of Poland), preceded and followed by six pearls. Under the Eagle’s left leg, the Mint’s mark: M/W.

REVERSE: A stylized image of a man blowing glassware. On the right-hand side a stylized image of a glass smelting furnace, above, an inscription: 400. / ROCZNICA / POLSKIEGO / OSADNICTWA / W AMERYCE / PÓLNOOCNEJ (400 years of Polish settlement in North America).

ON THE EDGE: The inscription, NBP, repeated eight times, every second one inverted 180 degrees, separated by stars.

Obverse designer: **EWA TYC-KARPIŃSKA**

Reverse designer: **ROUSSANKA NOWAKOWSKA**