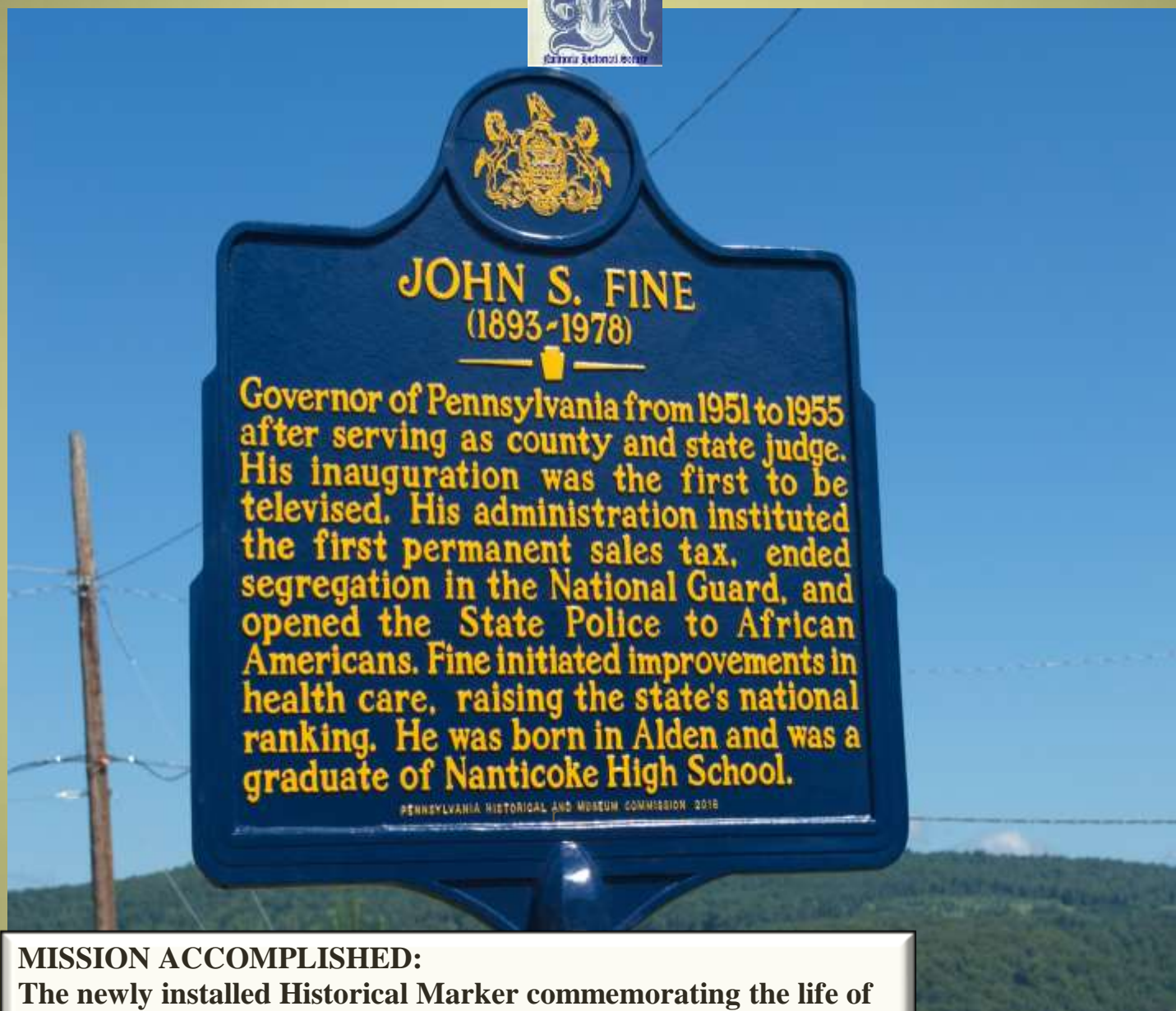


# NANTICOKE LEGACY

## NANTICOKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Samantha Mill House, 495 E. Main Street, Nanticoke, PA – 570-258-1367



### MISSION ACCOMPLISHED:

The newly installed Historical Marker commemorating the life of Governor John Sydney Fine stands on the Greater Nanticoke Area High School Campus.

## IN THIS ISSUE

- **Mission Accomplished:  
John S. Fine  
Marker Erected**
- **Focus on: Jesse  
Henson Family**
- **Nanticoke:  
Memorializing an  
American Hero:  
Thaddeus Kosciuszko**

### **Upcoming meeting schedule**

All meetings take place at 7 p.m. at the Samantha Mill House located next to the Mill Memorial Library.

Enter the parking lot off of Kosciuszko Street.

To get directions call the society office at 570-258-1367

**Thursday, Oct 27**  
**Wednesday, Nov. 30**  
**Meetings resume after  
the holiday season**

## NANTICOKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY MISSION STATEMENT:

*The object of this society is for educational, charitable, and literary purposes with a primary focus to research, preserve, develop and disseminate the history of Nanticoke, Pennsylvania.*

*To collect artifacts, memorabilia and historical documents and facts of Nanticoke, Pennsylvania and to store such items in a central location or specific area where these articles may be preserved, appreciated and used by the citizens of Nanticoke to enhance their heritage*

## NANTICOKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Samantha Mill House

(Next to the Mill Memorial Library)

Off of Kosciuszko Street

495 East Main Street

Nanticoke, PA 18634

570-258-1367

Our Web Site

[www.nanticokehistoryonline.org](http://www.nanticokehistoryonline.org)

Email

[nanticokehistorical@yahoo.com](mailto:nanticokehistorical@yahoo.com)

[history@nanticokehistoryonline.org](mailto:history@nanticokehistoryonline.org)

## OFFICERS

President: Julianna Zarzycki

Vice President/Corresponding Secretary/Treasurer:

Chester Zaremba

## NEWSLETTER

Judith L. Minsavage

## MEMBERSHIP FEES

Individual \$20

Family \$30

Lifetime \$100.00 Individual

Please advise us of any changes in email or home mailing address

Non-member – research fee \$20 for the first hour –  
By Appointment

# Editor's Note

Many communities have historical societies, and many have members who are dedicated to preserving the history of the people and places in that community. The Nanticoke Historical Society has set a precedent in finding the best ways to record and archive the massive amount of material, documents and photos that come into our offices every day, while embarking on projects that will be a lasting testament to those who were born and raised in the city. Recently the unveiling of the John S. Fine Historical Marker on the Greater Nanticoke High School Campus exemplifies that dedication. But in order to facilitate the ongoing work of the officers of the society, it is also important to have new members and volunteers who will carry on this tradition.

We're looking for people to become involved in our efforts. We are respectfully asking parents and grandparents to arouse curiosity in their children and grandchildren to encourage them to want to know more about Nanticoke's first settlers, the effect the American Revolution and Civil War had on the city and the history of the hard-working people who built it. The Nanticoke Historical Society is more than prepared to answer all of these questions and more. For more information on how to volunteer or become a member, call us at 570-258-1367.

Judy Minsavage, newsletter editor

**READ A COMPREHENSIVE HISTORY ON JOHN S. FINE.....**  
**Log on to:**  
<http://nanticokehistoryonline.org/>  
at the bottom, click on the **blue button** with the orange and white B labeled **Blogger**  
**Or log on to:**  
<http://nanticokehistoryonline.blogspot.com/>

## WELCOME NEW MEMBER:

**Thomas E. Winarski:**  
**Looking for information on :**  
**Surnames: Kochan, Yefko (Jewko)**

### We're available 24 hours a day!

Like our Facebook page and keep up to date with all the news regarding the Nanticoke Historical Society. See great photos!

Log on to [www.nanticokehistoryonline.org](http://www.nanticokehistoryonline.org) and enjoy stories, past issues of our newsletters and even more photos.  
CHECK OUT OUR BLOG SPOT  
<http://nanticokehistoryonline.blogspot.com/>



## ONE FINE DAY

# SOCIETY NEWS

## MARKER DEDICATION HELD IN AUGUST

In August, The Nanticoke Historical Society realized a project that has been a few years in the making, the installation of the John S. Fine Historical Marker, now standing on the Greater Nanticoke High School campus on Kosciuszko Street. Now, residents and more importantly students of the Greater Nanticoke School District will have a constant reminder that dreams can be fulfilled through hard work and determination.

“This marker project took the efforts of many members of our society and because everyone was able to do their part, we were successful.” Chet Zaremba, vice president of the Nanticoke Historical Society said recently. “The organizers showed that each was a member of a team. I would hope that all members of the Historical Society realize two things; one, that they are a member of a team, and two, that as a team, any project is possible to complete.”



**Nanticoke Historical Society Members Mike Chimola and Mike Passetti install the Governor John S. Fine historical marker**

Zaremba along with Nanticoke Historical Society President, Julianna Zarzycki, historical society members, city residents and local dignitaries watched as Helene Fine Rubin, Gov. Fine’s granddaughter, did the honors of unveiling the marker. Fine Rubin and Jacob Rubin, 15, a great-grandson of Fine traveled from Philadelphia to attend the event. Also attending was John S. Fine III, grandson of the governor.



Representative Eddie Day Pashinski presents citation to Helene Fine Rubin granddaughter of John S. Fine.

State Rep. Eddie Day Pashinski, D-Wilkes-Barre, who represented state Sen. John Yudichak, D-Plymouth Township; State Rep. Gerald Mullery D-Nanticoke, Dr. William Lewis, of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Greater Nanticoke Area Superintendent Dr. Ronald Grevera and Nanticoke Mayor, Richard Wiaterowski were also in attendance.

**DONATIONS MADE MARKER POSSIBLE**

The marker was made possible by donations by historical society members and friends of the society. State funds are not available for obtaining historical markers. Organizations such as the historical society must provide 100% of the funding necessary. The Fine Marker is the second provided by the Nanticoke Historical Society. A marker signifying the historical importance of Concrete City was installed in March of 2010.

“The placement of this marker makes it evident to the community that the Nanticoke Historical Society is a vibrant, active organization that has the interest of the community at heart.” Zaremba added.

*“We were happy to be able to acquire the marker for Nanticoke so that the people of the community could see all of the accomplishments of Governor Fine.”*

**Julianna Zarzycki, President, Nanticoke Historical Society**



GNA Superintendent Dr. Ronald Grevera and Chet Zaremba, historical society vice president, make opening remarks

**DONATIONS ARE STILL BEING ACCEPTED TO COVER THE FINAL COST OF INSTALLATION:  
TO DONATE PLEASE CALL OUR OFFICES AT 570-258-1367**

# Governor John S. Fine reading room, ready for visitors

## Books, galore, and photos, absolutely....

Visitors are now welcome to inspect and utilize the newly completed Governor John S. Fine reading room and law library located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Society offices in the Samantha Mill House, 495 East Main Street, Nanticoke, PA.

Earlier in the year, John S. Fine III, grandson of the late Governor, donated an extensive law library as well as personal memorabilia owned by his grandfather. 📖



Just a few of the certificates and citations garnered by Governor John S. Fine during his lifetime..

*“We were very fortunate to welcome Gov. Fine’s granddaughter, Helene, grandson, John S. Fine III and great grandson, Jake, to inspect our newly completed reading room dedicated to the late governor.”*

**Julianna Zarzycki,  
President, Nanticoke  
Historical Society**



Holding one of the many photographs in the Governor John S. Fine collection from left, John S. Fine III, Helene Fine Rubin, Jacob Rubin

Welcoming those who wished to inspect the new John S. Fine reading room after the dedication ceremony were, from left, Nanticoke Historical Society Vice President, Chet Zaremba, President, Julianna Zarzycki, and donor John S. Fine III.





*One of the more unique items to be viewed in the John S. Fine Reading Room is this ornate cigar box.*

*Another item is this unusual desk set made of coal. It is inscribed "Governor John S. Fine".*



*"Both items were Governor Fine's personal items which were on his desk as he served as Governor. It is an honor for the society to now possess them and to preserve them for posterity."*

*Chet Zaremba, vice president, Nanticoke Historical Society*

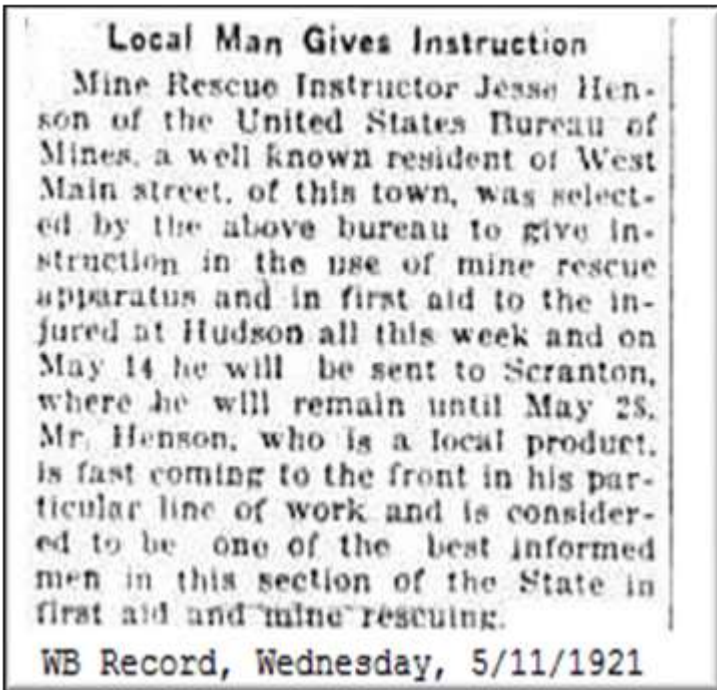
According to [www.statemuseumpa.org](http://www.statemuseumpa.org):

**"Helene Fine, wife of the 35<sup>th</sup> Governor of Pennsylvania John S. Fine, wore a strapless, pale pink tulle dress to the inaugural festivities. The bodice is covered in clear, light and dark pink sequins arranged in an alternating diamond pattern. Just one month after the inauguration, Helene passed away from complications she suffered from a fall several months prior during the campaign. Governor Fine was only the second governor in Pennsylvania to be widowed while in office."**

# FOCUS ON....

## The Jesse Henson Family

**Jesse Henson** resided on W. Main Street, Nanticoke, in the 1920's and 1930's. Henson, a mine rescue instructor of the U.S. Bureau of Mines, was selected to give an instruction in the use of mine rescue apparatus at Hudson during the week of May 1919. He was considered to be one of the best informed men in this area of Pennsylvania in first aid and mine rescue. In 1922, he took a series of engineering classes at Lafayette College.




### Henson was a family man...

Henson fathered three children, Ruth, Robert and Edward. Unfortunately, we don't know his wife's name. Ruth spent some time in Nanticoke State Hospital in 1926, and Robert, a carrier for the Wilkes-Barre Record for nine years, enrolled as a student at Drexel Institute in 1930.

Ruth became a student at Bloomsburg State Teachers' College in 1932 and graduated in May 1934, the only Nanticoke student in the graduating class that year.

According to the Nanticoke telephone directory for 1943, The Henson family was living on W. Main Street. The family is not listed in the 1957 directory.

The Nanticoke Historical Society would like to hear from anyone who knew the Jesse Henson family and what became of them. Our office number is 570-258-1367. 

### Nanticoke Coal Mine Accidents 1839 – 1976 – Nanticoke Historical Society Records

Information obtained from the following publications:

Bureau of Mines Bulletin 509 injury Experience in Coal Mining, 1948

Documentation of Major Coal Mine Disasters in US Not classified as explosion of gas or dust 1846 – 1962

Bureau of Mines Bulletin 586, Historical Summary of Coal Mine Explosions in the US 1810-1958

Archives at National Mine Health & Safety Academy Library.....

3/15/1880 – No. 2 Shaft, Nanticoke, 6 killed, Explosion

8/11/1885 – West End, Mocanaqua, 10 killed, Gas Boiler Fire

12/18/1885 – Nanticoke No 1, Nanticoke, 26 killed, Inrush of quicksand

4/2/1890 Susquehanna No 4, Nanticoke, 12 killed, Explosion

6/22/1893 Susquehanna No 1, Nanticoke, 5 killed, Explosion

11/2/1904 – Auchincloss, Nanticoke, 10 killed, Haulage

8/6/1906 Susquehanna No 7, Nanticoke 6 killed Explosion

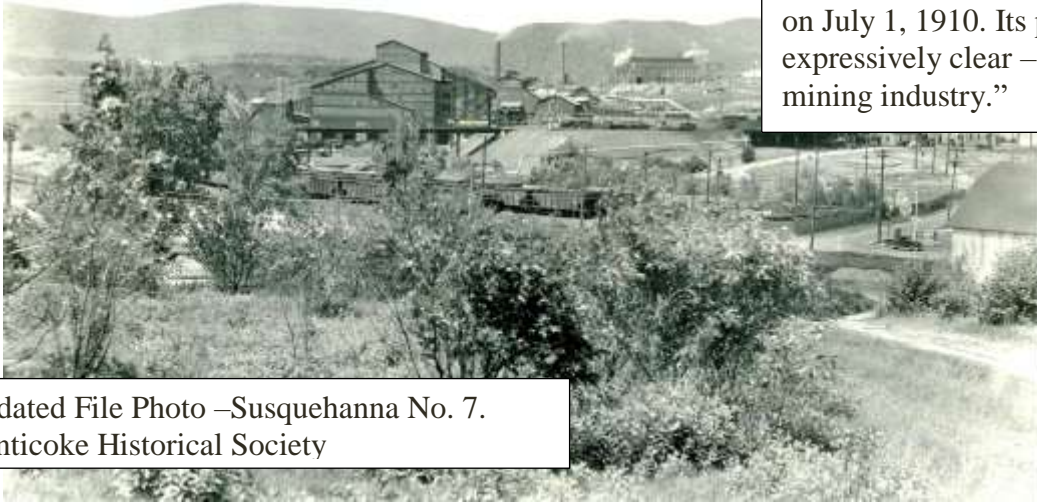
11/9/1909 – Auchincloss, Nanticoke, 9 killed, Fire

6/6/1924 - Loomis Collieries, Nanticoke, 14 killed, Explosion

10/30/1926 Colliery No 7, Nanticoke, 9 killed, Explosion



Jesse Henson would have most probably given instruction on mine rescue apparatus and first aid to miners at the Susquehanna Coal Company #7 Mine in Nanticoke.



Undated File Photo –Susquehanna No. 7.  
Nanticoke Historical Society

#### ACCORDING TO THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

“The deadliest decade in coal mining history occurred from 1900 to 1909, when a total of 3,660 miners died in 133 mine disasters. In the wake of these tragedies, an Act of Congress established the U.S. Bureau of Mines within the Department of the Interior on July 1, 1910. Its primary directive was expressively clear – to reduce fatalities in the mining industry.”

## Nanticoke Memorializes an American Hero

Thaddeus Kosciuszko was a man who achieved notoriety and hero status in many ways and in several countries.

According to the Kosciuszko Foundation: “In the United States ... He designed the blueprints for West Point, which Benedict Arnold sold to the British. He planned the Battle of Saratoga, the turning point of the American Revolution. He tried to buy Thomas Jefferson's slaves and free them. He stood up for the rights of Native Americans, and the chief of the Miami Indian tribe gave him a tomahawk/peace pipe as a sign of appreciation.”

Kosciuszko's name is commemorated in many places around the world, as well as in Nanticoke. According to Nanticoke Historical Society records, “From 1889-91 Hanover Road extended from East Main Street to the borough line at Hanover Station.



The northernmost portion of it appears to have been called Mill Lane.” However, sometime between 1891 and 1896 the street was renamed Kosciuszko.

Kosciuszko High School was built in 1924. According to Nanticoke Historical Society records, “A delegation from the Polish National Alliance spoke before the board and urged them to name the new school as a tribute to the famous Polish Revolutionary War patriot. Board member Talarski moved that the request be granted.

Hess called for an amendment that referred the matter to the building committee. President Summa assured the delegation that the name Kosciuszko Jr. High School would be adopted but that the request ought to go before the building committee to consult the architect regarding the arrangement of the name on the marble slab. The motion was lost but the amendment was adopted.”

The junior high school was converted into an elementary school when the Jr. High School classes were moved into the former Nanticoke High School building. Kosciuszko School was razed in 1995.

## About the Man

Thaddeus Kosciuszko was born on Feb. 4, 1746 near Kosava, also known as a small town in the in the Brest Region of Belarus. He attended classes at the Cadet Academy in Warsaw. Kosciuszko was an enigma of sorts as he left a fairly comfortable lifestyle in France and Poland to travel to America taking up the cause of the colonists in the American Revolution. His motivation however may have come from the fact that as a young man he was forced to choose unfavorably between political factions during the first Russian partitioning of Poland.

Kosciuszko was born into nobility but not to great wealth. He longed to attend military school, but had to accept aid from wealthy benefactors who saw the Russian dominance as an advantage. He, however, agreed more with the commoners who did not benefit from the partitioning. His inaction in his youth may have led to his decision to travel to America in 1776 to join the Colonial Army in their struggle to free themselves from British rule. After being inducted into the Continental Army he served as colonel of engineers. By 1783 he was appointed brigadier general. The list of Kosciuszko’s accomplishments are too numerous to mention here, but to learn more about this hero, read *Friends of Liberty: Thomas Jefferson, Tadeusz Kosciuszko, and Agrippa Hull* by Gary Nash Graham Russell Gao Hodges; *The Peasant Prince: and the Age of Revolution* by Alex Storozynski. *Thaddeus Kosciuszko: Military Engineer of the American Revolution*, by Francis C. Kajencki.



Kosciuszko winter scene, circa 1940’s; large building in the background is Lincoln School; unidentified people.

*Nanticoke Historical Society File Photo*

Nanticoke Historical Society file photo shows the Kosciuszko Street High School Wood Shop



Kosciuszko Street is unpaved in this snapshot from the Stanley Janoszyk estate, 1930; Lincoln School is in the background.

**Contact the Mill Memorial Library as to the availability of books on Thaddeus Kosciuszko.**

## **SOME OF THE MANY THINGS WORLD –WIDE NAMED FOR THADDEUS KOŚCIUSZKO.**

*According to the Origin of Certain Place Names in the United States. Government Printing Office. p. 177, Gannett, Henry (1905).*

### **Places**

#### **Australia**

Kosciuszko National Park, New South Wales  
Mount Kosciuszko, the highest mountain in Australia (not including its external territories)

#### **United States**

Kosciusko, Mississippi [1]  
Kosciusko, St. Louis, Missouri  
Kosciusko County, Indiana [1]  
Kosciusko Island, Alaska  
Kosciusko, Texas

### **Buildings, structures, and monuments**

#### **Poland**

Tadeusz Kościuszko Monument, Kraków  
Kościuszko Mound, Kraków  
Kościuszko Park, Katowice

#### **United States**

Kosciuszko's Monument (West Point)  
Kosciuszko Monument, Milwaukee  
Kosciuszko Park, Milwaukee  
Kosciuszko's Garden, West Point, New York  
Kosciuszko Bridge (New York City)  
Thaddeus Kosciuszko Bridge in Halfmoon and Colonie, New York  
Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Memorial in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Kosciuszko Park (Chicago)  
Kosciuszko Street in Brooklyn, New York and its subway station  
Kosciusko Street in Rochester, New York  
General Thaddeus Kosciuszko Way in Los Angeles, California  
Thaddeus Kosciuszko Park in Dublin, Ohio  
Kosciuszko Monument, Williams Park, St. Petersburg, FL  
Washington - Kosciuszko Elementary School Winona, Minnesota  
Kosciuszko Street in Nanticoke, Pennsylvania

#### **Hungary**

Tadeusz Kościuszko Street, Budapest

#### **Brazil**

Tadeu Kosciusco Street, Rio de Janeiro

#### **Serbia**

Tadeuša Koščuška Street, Belgrade

### **Organizations**

Kosciuszko Foundation  
Tadeusz Kościuszko University of Technology  
The Kosciuszko Institute

### **Military organizations**

Kościuszko's Squadron, a Polish fighter squadron in the Polish-Soviet War of 1919–1921  
No. 303 Polish Fighter Squadron, known as the No. 303 "Kościuszko", was a Second World War Polish fighter squadron  
Polish 1st Tadeusz Kościuszko Infantry Division, a Second World War unit, part of the 1st Polish Army

Polish 111th Fighter Escadrille, known as Kościuszko's squadron, was a Polish fighter squadron in the Invasion of Poland of 1939

Tadeusz Kościuszko Land Forces Military Academy in Wrocław, Poland

### **Ships**

ORP General Tadeusz Kościuszko, a Polish Navy rocket frigate

SS Kościuszko, a Polish ocean liner

### **Airliners**

When LOT Polish Airlines used Ilyushin Il-62s and Il-62Ms. 2 of them were named after Kościuszko. One of these (SP-LBG) tragically crashed on the 9th of May 1987, killing 188 people

## **SOME INTERESTING FACTS**

After reading the Declaration of Independence in 1776, Thaddeus Kosciuszko was so moved that he sought a meeting with its principal author, Thomas Jefferson. The two later became close friends, and maintained a correspondence for more than 20 years until Kosciuszko's death in 1817.

In 1937, Nanticoke Mayor, Stanley Ostrowski announced that more than 100 persons would be taken from the relief rolls and given employment with a new grading and cobbling project about to begin on Kosciuszko Street. A retaining wall was to be constructed near Field Street which included a bridge over railroad tracks. Ostrowski suggested those needing work to register with the Works Progress Administration of WPA to be considered for employment.

Nanticoke Construction Company was awarded a contract to build the Kosciuszko School for their low bid of \$191,500. Other low bid contracts went to JL Turner for heating and ventilating (\$44,497), Frank E. Baldwin for lighting (\$3,121.57), and Hill and Evans for plumbing (\$14,692). The deed for the land for the new school was presented to the board and referred to the proper officials. WBR (7/2/24) 