

EXTRA THE Oflag DAILY BULLETIN EXTRA

Issue 9



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Tin Store POWs Museum Opens in Szubin

The Tin Store museum celebrated its Grand Opening last month. During the three-day event, descendants, historians, dignitaries, and press, from across Europe and the U.S., delved into the exhibits that led them through the 1939-1945 history of the POW camps of Szubin.

Here's what our visitors had to say:



Thank you to our generous donors and partners who have worked together for almost a decade to bring us to this exciting moment in sharing this remarkable World War II history. Our future plans harness our opening momentum. (See page 5)

Enjoy this bonus issue of our newsletter with stories and photos from the opening events and our plans for the future. For even more Grand Opening photos, visit FriendsOfOflag64.org/news.

Our 135-page, full-color exhibit catalog brings together the stories, artifacts, photographs, and history behind the Tin Store. Order your copy today.

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PRESS AND POW DESCENDANTS "BLOWN AWAY" BY TIN STORE PRIVATE PREVIEW DAYS

On Wednesday, May 13, 2026, the Tin Store opened its doors to journalists from TV, print, and radio. Local and national affiliate reporters read, filmed, and photographed exhibits, and interviewed Board President Mariusz Winiecki and Vice President Susanna Bolten Connaughton. The exhibit's fascinating and little-known history pulled them in and kept their attention.



Mariusz Winiecki giving interviews to Polish national and regional TV, radio, and print outlets.

Some have posted their stories online. [Here's an example from Polskie Radio](#). The story is in Polish, but the visuals are stunning.

The next day, the Tin Store welcomed 97 American descendants of Oflag 64, plus British and French descendants of Stalag XXIB, and French members of Histoire & Mémoire de la Captivité. The all-day cycle of timed-entry tours were conducted by the Foundation Board members, Susanna Connaughton, daughter of Oflag 64 POW Lt. Seymour Bolten, Dr. Jan Daniluk, Kasia Kacprzak, and Mariusz Winiecki, who were also curators and authors of the exhibit.

The Oflag 64 visitors' tours began at the abandoned Szubin train station. Here they learned about a POW's arrival into Szubin: a days-long journey across Germany, locked in a box car, then ordered to walk two miles to the prison camp. The descendants also viewed the ruins of the Szubin brick water tower, which still bears the haunting faded letters of the Germanified name forced onto Szubin, "Alzburgund."

The descendants climbed back into their PolishOrigins coaches and cars, to head for the Tin Store museum and the POW campus. Winiecki



Oflag 64 descendants tour the Szubin train station where their POW relatives had arrived. Photo Credit: Mateusz Michałek.

took each group on a tour of the campus, armed with WWII era photos of the camp, and pointing out original buildings and explaining their uses. Each group also cycled through the Tin Store museum, where Connaughton, Daniluk, and Kacprzak answered questions.

Before entering the museum, attendees passed by the bronze scale model of the Szubin POW Camps. Oflag 64 descendant Rosa Di Francesco Lee, daughter of Capt. Vincent J. Di Francesco, M.D., and her sculptor husband, Pat Cochran, donated this model. Cochran created it with cross-Atlantic assistance of original and CAD drawings. See below about its future installation.



Oflag 64 descendants outside the Tin Store where they could study the scale model of the camp's many buildings.



Mariusz Winiecki stands outside the gates, ready to guide visitors around the POW camp grounds. Behind him on the left is the original POW Hospital building. The bronze scale model will be installed on this sidewalk.

PHOTOS FROM PREVIEW DAY, 14 MAY 2026



Ben Cobb and Tom Cobb, grandson and son of Oflag 64 POW Lt. George Cobb, stand next to an escape map.



Historian Dr. Jan Daniluk, Foundation Board member, welcomes visitors to the Tin Store on Preview Day.



More than 10,000 prisoners were held at the Szubin camps—Polish, French, British, and American. The list is located in the entry vestibule.



Brant Godfrey, son of Lt. James Godfrey (MC) stands next to one of his family's donations, along with his father's note: "These cigarette boxes were made for me...by Russian prisoners of war. In the winter of '45 they were all killed deliberately by their own troops when the Russian army came through our camp on their way to Berlin." Godfrey came to the opening with ten family members, including his sister Kay Cruise.



Anne and Tom Kreutzer, daughter and son-in-law of Oflag 64 POW Lt. Col. Nathaniel Hoskot, listen to 1944 YMCA recording of the Oflag 64 POWs.



Visitors to the Tin Store can open many drawers to have close-up looks of replicas of additional artifacts.

TIN STORE GRAND OPENING WELCOMES INTERNATIONAL ATTENDEES

A rainy morning did not deter attendees to the invitation-only Grand Opening of the Tin Store Szubin POWs Museum to honor the history and people of the POW camps of Szubin. Guests traveled from as near as Szubin and as far as California and South Africa. They took their seats in a tent next to the Tin Store, that was raised for the Opening. Master of ceremonies, Kasia Kacprzak, translated each speaker's remarks into Polish or English or both. The seven speakers enlightened the visitors

on the history of the camps, the origin of the Tin Store, the combination of donors, funders, and hired and in-kind contributions needed to create the museum, and the importance of studying and commemorating this history.

[Here is a link to news outlet footage from the Grand Opening that also provides video of the museum and the guests' enthusiasm.](#) It's in Polish, but the pictures are worth a thousand words in any language.

From a letter sent by Minister Sikorski and read during the Grand Opening ceremony. Edited for length.

I greatly appreciate your initiative...Such projects are meaningful...for fostering historical awareness and a sense of responsibility for the truth about the experiences of the 20th century... Museums, archives, and educational initiatives [have] become a particularly important point of reference for the younger generation.

I also appreciate the international dimension of your project—which reminds us that the experiences of war affected many nations, and that preserving memory fosters dialogue and mutual understanding...

Please accept my best wishes for...continued success in developing the museum's activities and educational work.

Thank you for your commitment...in preserving history.

—Radosław Sikorski,
Minister of Foreign Affairs



Invited guests enjoyed the Tin Store's Opening Ceremony. Photo Credit: Dawid Znamirowski.



Dr. Violetta Rezler-Wasielewska, Director of the Central Museum of Prisoners of War, welcomes guests on behalf of the POW Remembrance League.



Foundation Board members Jan Daniluk and Susanna Connaughton welcomed several visitors from the U.S. Army Garrison-Poland, including Staff Sgt. John Z. Mateja.



Etienne Jacheet, President, Histoire & Mémoire de la Captivité, 1939-1945, stands alongside Kasia Kacprzak as she reads his French speech in Polish and in English. He and his wife Beatrice are descendants of French POWs. They gifted their extensive French POWs research to the Foundation.



Almost 100 Oflag 64 descendants, (otherwise known as "Krigie Kids") after the Opening Ceremony. Photo Credit: Dawid Znamirowski.

THE TIN STORE IS JUST THE BEGINNING

The Tin Store's opening marks the beginning of our Foundation's next phase: to become a go-to resource for Allied WWII POW history. We are already garnering interest from school groups, World War II historians and enthusiasts, and other local and international groups.

Our upcoming late-Summer edition of the Bulletin will detail these projects and funding opportunities. Below are the top spending priorities that will help us achieve our mission:

SALARIED MANAGER & TIN STORE OPERATIONS

Did you know that for the past ten years, the operations and marketing of the Foundation have been largely conducted by our volunteer Board and in-kind donations? Your generous funds donated to the Friends of Oflag 64 have paid for professional fees and the design and construction of the Tin Store. Our salaried Manager will be the perfect next step in our growth.

The responsibilities of the Manager include promoting, recruiting, and managing visitors, researching and writing grant applications, and overseeing day-to-day maintenance and social media content.

The Foundation's estimated annual operating expenses are expected to be around \$60,000/year, which would include the salary for the Manager.



Option 1 of 4 of the Entry Plaza landscape design options created by Marianne Liggett Merriam.

TIN STORE ENTRY PLAZA

Retired landscape architect Marianne Liggett Merriam, daughter of Oflag 64 POW Lt. Francis Liggett, has created four beautiful Tin Store entry plaza options to consider. Each creates a space designed to welcome, guide, and honor history. Each plan includes a map table, seating, planting, and Allied flags. All four respect the historic character of the site by preserving the existing walls and mature trees. More to come in our next issue. In the meantime, you are welcome to contact [Marianne Merriam](#) to discuss. The four options start at approximately \$16,000 and increase with amenities added.

If you are interested in making a donation to the Friends of Oflag 64, a 501(c)3, [please visit this link](#) or contact the Chairperson of the Friends of Oflag 64, [Cindy Sharpe Burgess](#).

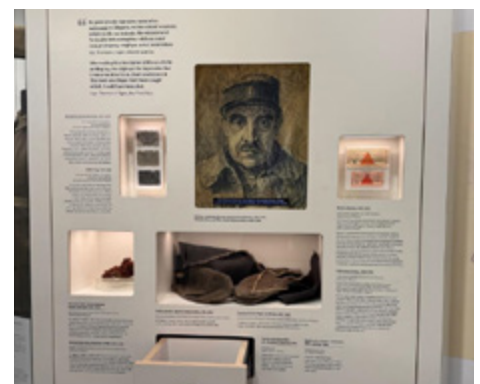
MORE SCENES FROM OPENING WEEK



Two generations of descendants of POW Lt. Royal Lee examine the bronze scale model of the Szubin POW Camps, which will be installed just outside of the campus gates (see page 2 for more about the model).



Cindy Sharpe Burgess, Chair of the Friends of Oflag 64, concludes the Opening Ceremony: "With gratitude to those who endured captivity here, and to all who preserved their memory, we now open the Tin Store." Photo Credit: Dawid Znamirowski.



The Living Conditions section of the exhibit includes (left) a 1945 loaf of German black bread--made with sawdust--and rationed to the POWs, a POW-handmade slipper (bottom center), and a drawing made by a French POW of one of his fellow prisoners.

OFLAG 64 DESCENDANTS GATHER FOR 2026 REUNION DINNER

On Thursday evening, May 14th, the Friends of Oflag 64 oversaw a Reunion Dinner for 100 POW descendants and guests at the Pod Orłem Hotel in nearby Bydgoszcz. The dinner was modeled after the dozens of boisterous reunion dinners that the former POWs of Oflag 64 held from 1947-2015 for themselves and their families.

Descendants of POW Lt. Robert Thompson greeted attendees by giving each a "Tin Store Challenge Coin," donated by former Foundation Chairman Pat Waters, son of Oflag 64 POW Lt. Col. John K. Waters, and grandson of Gen. George Patton. In the ballroom, swing music and Polish and U.S. flags set the mood, and name tags with each descendant's POW's photo facilitated conversations.

Cindy Burgess, daughter of POW Lt. Wilbur Sharpe, opened the event. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Tanner Oberhardt, great grandson of Thompson, Burgess led a toast to the late POWs.

Emcee David Weinstein, great nephew of POW Lt. Len Feldman, introduced Anne Kreutzer, daughter of POW Lt. Col. Nathaniel Hoskot. She spoke about the pivotal role that Elodie Caldwell, daughter of POW Lt. Reid Ellsworth, has played in the history of the Oflag 64 family, as creator and maintainer of the Oflag 64 Remembered website and publisher of *The Post Oflag 64 Item*. This strong American network's contributions to the Foundation is a result of the dedicated attention Caldwell gives to the history, the Oflag 64 POWs, and their descendants.

After dinner the group enjoyed presentations by Susanna Bolten Connaughton, who spoke about the 10-years of steps to get to the museum, and Marianne Merriam, President of the Foundation Council and daughter of POW Lt. Francis Liggett, who gave an outline of the goals and future financial needs to sustain the museum and its history (see page 5). Weinstein entertained the gathering with a 3-minute trailer of his documentary-in-progress, *Feldman: POW #3042. American Spy. Jewish Soldier*.

Burgess presented an engraved crystal plaque to Foundation President Mariusz Winiecki for his years of devotion to the operations of the Foundation and the completion of the Tin Store. His leadership in bringing together a team of dedicated and talented professional members has been everyone's good fortune.



Foundation Council President Marianne Merriam takes guests through the future plans for the Foundation and the Tin Store.



Cindy Burgess, Friends of Oflag 64 Chairman, presents Mariusz Winiecki with a crystal plaque in honor of his untiring dedication to the Tin Store and the Foundation.



The POWs of Oflag 64 in 1947 in Newark, NJ at the first of their many reunion dinners they (and their families) would enjoy over the decades.



Descendants of the POWs of Oflag 64 give a standing ovation during their 2026 Reunion Dinner in Bydgoszcz. Photo credit: Dawid Znamirowski.

BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE MUSEUM

The Polish-American Foundation for the Commemoration of POW Camps in Szubin is honored to be a part of the League of POW Remembrance (Sieć Liga Pamięci Jenieckiej). The League, founded and led by the Central Museum of Prisoners of War in Łambinowice-Opole, is a mutually supportive organization of six museums. Through research, education, and exhibitions, they focus on the POW narrative. Members of the League have supported the Foundation's development and guided it through the creation of the Tin Store. League members attending the Opening included its co-founder, Dr Violetta Rezler-Wasielewska, Director of the Central Museum of Prisoners of War, who also spoke at the Ceremony. Foundation Council member and League leader Adam Szpaderski also attended.

Also in attendance were Museum designer Gosia Gliwińska-Radwańska, and curator/archivists Miłosz Stroński, and Krzysztof Jankowiak. Gliwińska's unyielding attention to detail and craftsmanship led us to a breathtaking design that tells a clear story. She also designed [our exquisite catalogue](#). Stroński is an historian for the Museum in Lewków Palace & Park Complex, and Jankowiak is the manager of the Museum of Armaments, a branch of Greater Poland Museum of Independence, in Poznań. The pair shared their archival and military expertise and spent multiple weekends of organizing, storing, curating, and painstaking placement of artifacts, books,

and uniforms all combined to create a Tin Store museum that is high-impact and informative. The Foundation looks forward to many future collaborations with this team.



Tin Store museum and catalog designer Gosia Gliwińska-Radwańska enjoys the Opening.



Kasia Kacprzak and Mariusz Winiński enter the POW Remembrance League luncheon in honor of the Tin Store.



Krzysztof Jankowiak, Miłosz Stroński, Mariusz Winiński in the Tin Store on Opening Day.



Friends of Oflag 64

MISSION: Friends of Oflag 64 supports the Polish-American Foundation by fundraising, collecting artifacts, publicizing and promoting the Museum of POWs in Szubin, so that the history of the POW camp in Szubin and the courageous Polish citizens who assisted them will be preserved for generations to come.

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[donate to Friends of Oflag 64](#)



Kriegie Grandkids and Great Grandkids enjoy the Grand Opening



To schedule your visit to the Tin Store museum, please contact us at tinstore@szubinpowcamps.org



Polish-American Foundation for the Commemoration of POW Camps in Szubin

MISSION: The Foundation contributes to the knowledge of World War II by studying and commemorating the experiences of Allied prisoners-of-war.

szubinpowcamps.org

office@szubinpowcamps.org



Stewart siblings Dave, Kathleen and Barbara stand in front of the bookcase the family commissioned and donated to the Foundation office. Dave chairs the Friends' Artifacts Committee, responsible for the collection, packing, and shipping of the precious donated items to the Tin Store.



The Oflag 64 POWs hand-lettered this masthead for their daily news-sheet. U.S. Army Heritage & Education Center. Photo Susanna Bolten Connaughton.

To read archived issues of The Daily Bulletin Extra, please visit our websites at friendsofotlag64.org/news or szubinpowcamps.org/en/news