THE POLISH NATIONALITY ROOM

Dedicated February 16, 1940
Rooms in Cracow’s Wawel Castle, the residence of kings for centuries, inspired this setting for tributes to Poland’s astronomer, Copernicus, and the science that his theories revolutionized.

Artists came to Pittsburgh from Cracow to paint the superb ceiling of 18-foot beams with informal geometric Renaissance decorations. The Room is illuminated by a bronze chandelier bearing a stylized Polish eagle. The walnut seminar table was copied from one in a state dining room at Wawel Castle. A replica of the famous Matejko portrait of Copernicus shows him as a young man pursuing his study of the universe from a workshop on the roof of his uncle’s house in Olsztyn. In the bay stands an enlarged replica of the 16th-century Jagiellonian Globe, the first to depict North America as a separate continent. The original globe - only eight inches high - was designed to operate as a clock and calendar. It took the metal smith in Cracow five years to complete the large globe.

The windows combine hexagonal handmade roundels, similar to those in Wawel Castle, with stained-glass coats of arms representing Polish institutions of higher education. The cornerstone is a fragment of Gothic cornice preserved from the Collegium Maius (1369), the ancient Jagiellonian Library.

Poland’s music is represented by the original manuscript of Ignace Paderewski’s only opera, Manru, which is displayed in the archive cabinet.
MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR
E. Maxine Bruhns, Director

We have had a very busy and productive 2015 so far. We selected and briefed 39 Summer Study Abroad Scholarship winners. Five of them will be featured in Pitt Magazine, whose staff photographed each one separately in the African Heritage, Chinese, Syria-Lebanon, Ukrainian and Yugoslav Rooms. The Rooms represent the locations where the awardees will study this summer.

In December we obtained permission to create an Iranian Nationality Room. A very enthusiastic gathering of 200-350 Iranian-Americans celebrated the news at their Yalda, Norouz and Sizdah Bedar ceremonies. Ad Hoc Chair, Dr. Ali Masalehdan, appeared on Skype with Tehran TV together with 12 artists and architects in Tehran who will hold a design contest for Iranian architecture students to create a Room concept and design. On February 2, Dr. Masalehdan also was one of three panelists discussing Iran Refracted: Perspectives on Iranian Culture and Society, sponsored by Global Studies at Pitt. We welcomed the Deputy Prime Minister of Ireland, Joan Burton, to the University.

The Korean Heritage Room’s walls, ceiling and floor arrived in a seaborne container on a truck March 27. Construction will begin in May when six Korean carpenters and three supervisors will construct the Room based on a 14th Century academic structure in Seoul.

A Tribune-Review article on my 50 years as Director of the Nationality Rooms Program plus my 15 years living and working in Austria, Lebanon, Vietnam, Cambodia, Iran, Germany, Greece and Gabon made the rounds.

I am most grateful to all of you—Committees and individuals who make our program thrive and touch the lives of students and scholars through Scholarships for Summer Study Abroad, Bowman Faculty Grants and Ruth Crawford Mitchell Fellowship. I look forward to the years ahead as we create new Rooms and enhance the lives of hundreds of scholarship awardees who are our Ambassadors abroad.
MESSAGE FROM THE COUNCIL
Jennie-Lynn Knox, Chair

We elected new officers in February 2015: Chair, Lora Ann Bray; Vice Chair, Donna Alexander; Secretary, Jacqueline Cook; and Treasurer, Rev. Maureen F. Cross Bolden. They will strive to increase AHCC membership through community engagement in a variety of exciting and educational programs—stay tuned!

The primary purpose of the African Heritage Classroom Committee (AHCC) is to raise scholarship money to enhance the world-view of Pitt students by sending them to study in Africa. This year’s undergraduate $5,000 scholarship recipient is Ms. Joya Petterson. Joya is a Pitt junior majoring in molecular biology. She plans to travel to Tanzania this summer to learn more about their deaf culture. She hopes to translate that knowledge into better ways to deliver genetic counseling services to the deaf. This Fall the AHCC will host a reception where members can meet Joya and hear first-hand about her studies in Tanzania.

Lastly, the AHCC would like to travel with you in March 2016 on a Gullah Geechee Heritage Tour! The trip will be to St. Helena Island, Charleston, and Beaufort South Carolina. Gullah is the West African-based traditions and family life that has survived centuries of slavery and more than a century of free lifestyle. Gullah Geechee is the unique culture of descendants of captives from the west coast of Africa who inhabit the Sea Islands of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida. Gullah and Geechee are used interchangeably when describing this culture. Gullah storytelling, cuisine, music, folk beliefs, crafts, farming and fishing traditions all exhibit strong influences from West and Central African cultures. Americans are very fortunate to still have the opportunity to experience this culture first-hand! The AHCC hopes that you will join us---look for details soon!

Happy Spring and Summer to all! Auf wiedersehen.

AFRICAN HERITAGE ROOM COMMITTEE
Lora Ann Bray, Chair

The African Heritage Classroom Committee (AHCC) has been very busy! We participated in the Nationality Rooms Open House in December 2014. The African Heritage Classroom was decorated for the holiday season, while the Shona Sharif African Drum & Dance Ensemble performed traditional African Dances that wowed the crowd. Naomi Whole Foods Cuisine sold African and African Heritage Food, and African clothes. Vendors Akiliann and Lora Ann Bray sold clothes and artifacts. A wonderful time was had by all!! We elected new officers in February 2015: Chair, Lora Ann Bray; Vice Chair, Donna Alexander; Secretary, Jacqueline Cook; and Treasurer, Rev. Maureen F. Cross Bolden. They will strive to increase AHCC membership through community engagement in a variety of exciting and educational programs—stay tuned!

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Happy Spring and Summer to all! Auf wiedersehen.

AFRICAN HERITAGE ROOM COMMITTEE
Jennie Lynn Knox, Chair

The Korean Heritage Room construction begins this Spring, with the dedication to be held in November. We welcome the Iranian-American community to the Cathedral of Learning and are gratified they have received permission to begin their journey, which includes design, fundraising, construction and dedication.

Lastly, I want to acknowledge and give my best wishes to our esteemed Director, E. Maxine Bruhns, who has given Pittsburgh 50 years of affection, leadership, mentorship and knowledge. At a young age, Moosie, her nickname through high school, wondered what the world out there might be like. She found out. Working with her husband for 15 years in Austria, Lebanon, Vienna, Cambodia, Iran, Germany, Greece and Gabon. Over the years she has treated us to many of her adventures. We welcome each day that we share with her.

Happy Spring and Summer to all! Auf wiedersehen.

The John Tsui Undergraduate Scholarship was presented to Maura Perry on March 28, 2015.

CHINESE ROOM COMMITTEE
Karen Yee, Chair

With proceeds from the October 5, 2014 Chinese Room Dinner, the December 7, 2014 Open House and a donation from the Plum Spring Foundation established by Tom Chen, we have reached the half-way mark of our endowment fund drive.

Elections for Committee Officers were held and the new officers are: Karen Yee – Chair, Dewi Wong, Vice-Chair, Phanny Yang – Treasurer, Dali Li – Secretary.

The John Tsui Undergraduate Scholarship was presented to Maura Perry on March 28, 2015.
CZECHOSLOVAK ROOM COMMITTEE
Joseph Bielecki, Vice Chair

We co-sponsored two film festivals - Czech and Slovak. Both events were interesting and well-attended by the public. The Committee also participated in the Nationality Rooms Open House and held a holiday party with a sing-a-long.

On March 14, 2015 we held an election. The new officers are: Čestmír Houska, Chair; Joseph Bielecki, Vice-Chair; Joseph Senko, Secretary; and Dianne Rdissi, Treasurer.

In May, the Committee will host the Czech and Slovak winners of the Intel International Science Fair. More information will follow.

FRENCH NATIONALITY ROOM
Barbara Tucker, Chair

Barbara Tucker, President of Alliance Française de Pittsburgh, attended the 36th Colloque International conference in Paris January 26-28, 2015. Five hundred people from 93 countries attended. M. Laurent Fabius, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Development, opened the symposium. He was followed by the President of the Alliance Française de Pittsburgh, M. Jérôme Clément.

Last Fall, the French Room Committee co-hosted an event with Alliance Française de Pittsburgh to celebrate the arrival of beaujolais Nouveau wine. The party took place in the Cathedral of Learning. Guests tasted the 2014 Beaujolais Nouveau, met the 2014 Alliance Française de Pittsburgh Scholarship recipient, Mehrgol Tiv, and had a student docent tour of the French Nationality Room.

The French Room Committee is also excited to announce it is working on an event for Summer, 2015, teaming with the Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh and the Alliance Française de Pittsburgh to host a Bastille Day party on Tuesday, July 14 at the Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh.

GREEK NATIONALITY ROOM
Pennie Hareras

In 2014, the Greek Nationality Room increased its membership to 78, from 65 in 2010. This was due, in part, to a membership drive we conducted in conjunction with the 2014 Greek Independence Day celebration.

The Greek Room hosted a booth at the annual Holiday Open House on December 7, 2014. The event was a huge success, with our pastries and food items selling out well before the conclusion of the event. Pennie Hareras, then-Chairperson of the Greek Room, was featured in an article about the Open House in the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review.

The Greek Room celebrated Greek Independence Day on March 29, 2015 at the St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Oakland. Local Greek school students, Greek dance troupes and a Greek Chorus performed.

Elections were held for Committee officers. They are: Venetia Vlastos Moreno – Chair, George Bellios – Vice Chair, Marion Constantinides-Bennett – Secretary, and Cynthia Raftis- Treasurer.

We are confident that our new Committee will bring fresh ideas and a renewed enthusiasm under the direction of Venetia Vlastos Moreno. We look forward to continuing to promote the Hellenic culture and spirit through the Greek Nationality Room.

HUNGARIAN NATIONALITY ROOM
Cathy Csoman, Chair

The Hungarian Room Committee is pleased to report the great success of updating the holiday decorations for the Room. Members and friends of the Committee donated 13 traditional felt Hungarian ornaments in memory or honor of loved ones. The ornaments were tagged with donor and honoree names. We hope that these ornaments will serve as a commemoration of our community members and their commitment to our shared Hungarian heritage for generations to come. We plan for a spring event to welcome the warmer weather and develop plans for summer activities.

INDIAN NATIONALITY ROOM
Vandana Kekre, Chair

The Indian Room Committee will celebrate India Day on Sunday, August 16, 2015 in the Cathedral of Learning’s Commons Room. There will be a parade outside,
followed by Indian dancers performances. The event will be from 12-4 p.m. with free admission to all. There will be a bazaar where one can buy food, clothes and gifts. A henna artist will be there to paint your palms.

IRISH NATIONALITY ROOM
Jennie-Lynn Knox, Chair
We decorated the Irish Room for Christmas, 2014 and participated in the Open House. We continue to reach out for new members and hope to sponsor a fundraiser for our scholarship in the near future.

JAPANESE NATIONALITY ROOM
Sono Hayes, Chair
The Japanese Nationality Room held its annual meeting on Feb 18. New officers were elected: Chairman Sono Takano Hayes, Treasurer Kumiko Lancet, Secretary Taro Sekikawa, and Chairman of the Display Committee Takako Kiyota-Petek, Vice-chairman Mariko Hashimoto.

Our 2014 year-end fundraising outreach supporting the Swiss Endowment to our Swiss Room donor base yielded $9,096. The drive was boosted significantly when Mr. Samuel Isaly donated an additional $10,000. Our Endowment Fund has increased to $49,200. We are quite literally on the doorstep to our $50,000 Swiss Room Scholarship Endowment goal.

Swiss Room woodworker Richard Sink, Mountaineer Wood Industries, French Creek, WV, donated another Swiss stabellen (chair made of oak like the Swiss Room chairs) for auction at the December 6 Christmas luncheon.

Beatrice Hook won the chair with a winning bid of $435 with all funds going to the Endowment Fund.

Future plans: Swiss National Celebration Day picnic August 1 will be held on August 1 this year! It’s a Saturday! Location: Richland Barn in Gibsonia.

WELSH ROOM COMMITTEE
Dale Richards & John Owen, III, Co-Chairs
To kick off the winter season, the Welsh Room committee and the St. David’s Society of Pittsburgh participated in the Nationality Rooms Decorating Day.

On December 7, we joined the festivities at the Nationality Rooms Open House. We were able to connect with many wonderful people who stopped at our table and purchased items including our tasty Welsh cakes and bread.

Members of the Society have begun what we call Welsh Gatherings. Members meet at area pubs to connect. All are invited to come and learn about our culture.

St. David’s Day, (the patron saint of Wales) was celebrated on March 1st. Activities began with a pub crawl in Market Square, followed the annual Daffodil Luncheon. This year it was held on February 28. Members were invited to participate the “Hash Run” sponsored by the Hash House Harriers group. On Sunday, several members were invited to a service at St. David’s Church in Peter’s Twp. to hear a sermon by a bishop of the Episcopal Church who is also of Welsh descent.

Upcoming events and projects: a Welsh language class at Pitt, the Pittsburgh Folk Festival, Welsh North American Association Board of Trustees meeting in Columbus, Ohio and monthly Board meetings.
YUGOSLAV ROOM COMMITTEE
Ken Kornick, Chair

The Yugoslav Room Committee in cooperation with the Serb National Federation, sponsored a presentation, “From the East to the West Coast: Two Centuries of Serbian-American Presence,” on March 9.

Speakers described the history and patterns of Serbian immigration and settlement during the 19th and 20th centuries. Milina Jovanovic discussed the earliest Serbian settlements in the U.S. in Jackson, California, southeast of Sacramento where evidence of the Serbian presence is still visible. Krinka V. Petrov discussed the patterns of Serbian emigration from the homeland affected by events in European history. A lively discussion followed the presentation. The Yugoslav Room Committee appreciates the efforts of the Serb National Federation to present high-quality cultural programs through the Nationality Rooms Program.

WOMEN’S INTERNATIONAL CLUB
Jennie-Lynn Knox, Vice-Chair

At the Open House WIC was very successful in selling many Nationality Rooms Recipe Books. Proceeds go to our scholarship fund. On January 28, a panel met and selected three students for Summer Study Abroad Scholarships: Brooke Genovese will study in Sydney, Australia, Minyoung Park will study in Costa Rica; Madalyn Fritch will study in Istanbul, Turkey.

Our annual President’s Spring Luncheon will be held on Sunday, May 3, 2015 from 11:30 a.m.—1:30 p.m. in the Gold Room of the University Club.

FINNISH ROOM COMMITTEE
Seija Cohen, Chair

The Committee is working with architect Stephen Altherr to create a realistic look to the Room. It will reflect the main living room in a smoke house. Smoke houses were used in Finland as late as 1900. The smoke house was centered by a fireplace which, in lieu of a chimney, opened upward into the Room’s ceiling. Draft from the door sent the smoke upward. Thus the walls were also heated. After the fire burned out, and smoldering ashes and firebrands cleaned off, the openings were closed leaving a cozy warm room.

In the large living room, many activities went on simultaneously. Men and women did their handwork and weaving there. On poles near the ceiling, skis, sled runners and other woodwork was placed to dry. The major piece of furniture was a large, heavy table with benches around it. Daily meals were served on the table and also meetings took place there, concerning plans for the day’s work or discussions of sales or other business. Educational activities also happened around this long table.

On March 27, the Iranian Room Committee, the Persian Panthers (Pitt) and Persian Student Organization (CMU) cosponsored a celebration of Iranian New Year (Norouz) at Alumni Hall. Some 300 guests attended, enjoying a catered Persian dinner and Laugh Factory comedian Tehran. Guests danced to Iranian music until midnight.

A Sizdeh-Bedar (Iranian picnic on the 13th day after the start of vernal equinox) was held in the Vietnam Veteran’s Shelter at Schenley Park. Attendees enjoyed fine weather, beef & chicken kabab along with Persian nuts and cake.

ROOMS IN PLANNING

IRANIAN ROOM COMMITTEE
Ali Masalehdan, Ad Hoc Chair

On December 11, 2014, after decades of on-again, off-again deliberations, Provost Beeson approved our proposal to create an Iranian Nationality Room. Approval for fundraising and design was given by the Nationality Rooms Director on March 30 and it will eventually be submitted to the Chancellor.

A panel discussion on civil society in Iran entitled, “Iran Refracted” was held on March 17 at the Frick Fine Arts Auditorium. Panelists were Anahita Radji, Nazila Fathi and Dr. Ali Masalehdan. The program was sponsored by the Global Studies Program.
On November 1, 2014, Maxine was honored for championing a Ukrainian presence at the University of Pittsburgh. The Ukrainian Technological Society of Pittsburgh presented her with their Friendship Award in recognition of her invaluable efforts as liaison between the University of Pittsburgh and the Ukrainian Nationality Room Committee from the Committee’s inception in 1975 to the final construction of the Ukrainian Room in the Cathedral of Learning in 1990. It symbolized her unwavering support more than four decades of a Ukrainian presence at the University of Pittsburgh, introducing students and the wider community to Ukrainian culture and traditions, and her deep personal affinity for the Ukrainian community in Pittsburgh and abroad.

The Polish Nationality Room sponsored its 29th Annual Polishfest on November 9th. It was held in the Commons Room at the Cathedral of Learning. The event was very well-attended.

Sue Kerr wrote about holiday events in the Pittsburgh Lesbian Correspondents. To read about it, please go on to their link at http://www.pghlesbian.com/2014/11/ten-pittsburgh-holiday-things-to-do/.

We are very pleased to inform you that the Nationality Rooms were featured as one of 10 Best Holiday Events hotspots for Pittsburgh families. Here is the complete article: http://www.kidsburgh.org/features/holidays-in-pittsburgh-2014. They had a huge viewing response and it was received with much enthusiasm and social media sharing.

An article entitled “Hall of Heritage” appeared in Shady Ave magazine. The article contains beautiful full-color photos of 17 Room decorations.

Maxine hosted a group of writers for an “under the radar” press tour. One of the writers was Roy Barnes from Travel Through History. He wrote an article on Pittsburgh’s “Positively Offbeat Gems”. One of them was our Nationality Rooms. Here is the link: http://www.travelthruhistory.com/html/cities78.html

In December Cornerstone TV featured the Nationality Rooms on CTVN - http://reallife.ctvn.org/web exclusive/university-of-Pittsburgh-nationality-rooms/. Maxine did a walkthrough of the Nationality Rooms with Cornerstone TV reporter Kate Ulreich who also interviewed her.

On March 18, Joan Burton, Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection, and Leader of the Labour PRTY in Ireland visited the University of Pittsburgh. Maxine gave a brief talk on the Nationality Rooms, specifically the Irish Nationality Room, and presented Ms. Burton with The Nationality Room book and James W. Knox’s booklet What the Irish Room means to me.

During “Light up Night” weekend, Karyn Locke, a writer for Trekaroo posted two articles about the Nationality Rooms. Trekaroo is a family-based travel site with more than 279,000 visitors per month. Here is a link: http://blog.trekaroo.com/pittsburgh-guide-holidays/ and http://www.trekaroo.com/activities/nationality-rooms-pittsburgh-pennsylvania.
Our Holiday Open House was a great success again this year. Maxine was the Mistress of Ceremonies. This very lively event began in 1991. We invited every Nationality Room Committee to participate, offer performances and food or artifact tables. Proceeds from this event help fund our Summer Study Abroad Scholarships. We sent 39 Pitts students all over the world this year. Nationality Rooms Holiday Open House was featured in the Tribune Review - http://triblive.com/news/allegheny/7306096-74/rooms-traditions-nationality#axzz3LQnQRBS6


In February, Rex Rutkoski interviewed Maxine for the Sunday Tribune Review’s main feature. The article appeared on February 8 in their Living section entitled: “International Legacy” - http://triblive.com/aande/museums/7603841-74/bruhns-says-rooms#axzz3RGz5pj3o. This article marked Maxine’s 50th anniversary of working at Pitt but also featured her 15 years living and working abroad. At the same time, Maxine was interviewed and videotaped by Alyson Blackwell from WQED for a supplemental feature on American-Italians. PBS ran a documentary on The Italian Americans and WQED was doing a supplemental story on the Italian-American community in Pittsburgh. This feature can be seen at http://wqed.org/tv/italianamericans/ and click on “Italian Nationality Room”.

Pitt News did a special edition called Silhouettes about “interesting people in the community.” Maxine was one of those selected. The article appeared on March 30th - http://pittnewsprofiles.com/silhouettes/maxine-bruhns/

The Lithuanian Nationality Room and the Polish Nationality Room had an Easter Egg Decorations Display and Sale. Admission was free and open to members, students, families, children and friends. It attracted more than 300 guests! Tribune-Review reporter wrote a nice article—http://triblive.com/lifestyles/morelifestyles/7910289-74/pysanky-egg-says#axzz3V1zs2RPN

Maxine participated on a panel discussing Iran Refracted: Perspectives on Iranian Culture and Society. Nazila Fathi, author of “The Lonely War”, Anahita Firouz Radjy, writer and lecturer, and Ali Masalehdan, Iranian Nationality Room Ad Hoc Chair, were the panelists.

Voice of America tells the World about the Ukrainian Nationality Room

E. Maxine Bruhns

Our worldly-wise publicist, Anthony Moore, convinced Voice of America reporter Yulia Yarmolenko to feature the Ukrainian Room on her network. On April 15, we invited the Ukrainian Room Architect-of-Record, Walter Boykowycz; Committee Chairman, Roman Kyshakevych; E. Maxine Bruhns, and two scholarship winners who will study in Kiev this summer: Michael Duane and Courtney Weaver, who also is a Quo Vadis guide.
The wide-ranging interviews were recorded and filmed in the Ukrainian Room by Yulia. Voice of America broadcasts news world-wide every day of the week. We appreciated the opportunity to tell the story of the beautiful Ukrainian Nationality Room to a nation that is currently under siege.

E. Maxine Bruhns, Yulia Yarmolenko, Walter Boykowycz

New UCIS Leader for International Engagement

E. Maxine Bruhns

We are very pleased to welcome Dr. Ariel C. Armony as Pitt’s new senior director of international programs and director of the University Center for International Studies. He leads the University’s global engagement and Pitt’s six area studies centers, the Study Abroad Office, and the Nationality Rooms Program. He began his tenure on March 1, 2015.

I was fortunate to have breakfast with Ariel last May when he was interviewing for his position. Our conversation centered on his background and family. He told me his Polish-Jewish family left Europe to escape anti-Semitism, and settled in Argentina, where he was born.

In turn, I told him about my husband, Fred, who was Lutheran, born in Berlin, and joined the anti-Nazi effort as a teenager. He was delivering anti-Hitler pamphlets on his bicycle when the Gestapo arrested him. Fred was tried for ‘preparation for high treason’ and spent two years in Berlin’s Moabit prison. After months in a French internment camp, he made his way to America and then joined the US Army as a military intelligence officer in the Italian campaign.

As we finished our omelets, I reminded Ariel “We didn’t even discuss UCIS!” And he answered, “No, we talked about important things.”

The important things now occupying his time include fostering partnerships and initiatives with international universities. For example, in June he and Provost Beeson will visit universities in South Korea, and in fall he has a trip planned to China.

At the Nationality Rooms, we look forward to working closely with Ariel to increase our multicultural goals through study abroad scholarships, Room tours, celebrations of Rooms’ anniversaries, and traditional handmade ornament creation sessions for children, as well as our Holiday Open House in December and informal classes for less-commonly taught languages.

In addition to being a native Spanish speaker, Ariel learned basic Chinese having lived in Tianjin, China for a year as a US Fulbright Scholar. His university education began at the Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina, where he received a BA. In 1990, he and his wife, Mirna Kolbowski, relocated to the US to study. He graduated from Ohio University with an MA degree in International Affairs. This was followed by a move to the University of Pittsburgh to complete a PhD in Political Science and a Graduate Certificate in Latin American Studies.
His research focuses on Latin American politics, democratization, and the role of China in Latin America. He has published extensively in a number of highly respected journals in the United States, Colombia, Argentina, and China.

Ariel is becoming familiar with the wide range of international activities at Pitt. Most recently, he attended the Global Studies Center’s panel discussion entitled “Iran Refracted: Perspectives on Iranian Culture and Society”.

I am sure you all join me in extending a warm welcome to Dr. Ariel Armony.

MOST ASKED QUESTIONS
Susan M. Langer, Associate Director

First of all, let me congratulate all new Committee Officers. The Nationality Rooms Program staff will be more than happy to help you whenever a question or problem arises.

For information regarding your committee’s financial accounts: When financial activity occurs, your committee chairman and treasurer are sent copies of the cash report. The treasurer will keep accurate financial records and compile a membership roster. When donations are received, we include the address of the donor, should your committee wish to send an acknowledgment/thank you. For membership dues only the name is included on the back-up sheet and “tear-offs” or forms are sent to the treasurer so an updated membership list can be compiled and sent to our office by April 1st annually.

Before any expenses to the committee’s Agency Account can be processed, they must be approved in writing by both the chairman and the treasurer. For expenses to be reimbursed to an individual, the original receipt(s), a completed W-9 form, which includes social security number, must be submitted. The entire process for reimbursement may take up to three or four weeks.

When planning an event you must first contact Cristina Lagnese with pertinent information and submit a budget. This will be reviewed by the Director, Associate Director and Committee Administrator before any commitments by the committee can be made.

Each year, after scholarships have been awarded, a review of all committee Agency and Endowment interest accounts is done determining if either account has an excess amount of funds. The endowment interest account can only be used for Summer Study Abroad Scholarships, not committee events or projects. Should that be the case, I will contact the chairman and treasurer to advise them that funds should be transferred to the Endowment Principal which earns a higher interest. Upon written approval of the chairman and treasurer, a transfer of funds will be processed and both will be notified. There must be enough funds in the endowment interest to award a scholarship for the next two years.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your committee’s finances, a copy of Committee Agency and/or Endowment Account ledgers can be forwarded upon request by either the chairman or the treasurer. Please allow at least one/two weeks lead-time and remember the University accounting system is one month behind!
INFORMATION CENTER
Michael Walter, Nationality Rooms Tour Coordinator and Quo Vadis Advisor

Statistics
January Adult Admission 849 January Youth Admission 196
February Adult Admission 244 February Youth Admission 82
March Adult Admission 454 March Youth Admission 490
Total Admissions 2,315

Last year though March 23rd we had 3,083 visitors. Our difference of 700 less visitors may have had something to do with the severe winter weather. Several school tours cancelled due to snow and the cold, and weekend numbers were somewhat down from last year.

Notable Group Visits
January 23rd - Harrison Middle School (German language students)
February 20th - Slovenian/American Catholic Union
February 28th - Washington & Jefferson College
March 20th—Evans City Middle School 6th grade (280 people)

Quo Vadis News
Quo Vadis traveled to Colonial Williamsburg over the last weekend in February. The trip had interesting tie-ins to their activities as guides. Costumed interpreters work in and among the buildings. Considering that the QV guides wear national dress on special occasions (Open House, Room dedications), the appearance of our Colonial Williamsburg “reenactors” was a helpful entry into discussing their and jobs. We were invited to spend an hour in the St. George Tucker House, closed to the public, listening to a Mr. Barker (AKA Thomas Jefferson). Mr. Barker, sprinkled in actual Jefferson quotes as he answered questions and otherwise provided an illuminating interpretation of the mythology that has evolved around the framers of the Declaration of Independence. As a point of contact with the Nationality Rooms, it made us consider how historical interpretation is mutable with its times. He was particularly entertaining when he spoke of meeting our “bevy of feminine pulchritude from Fort Pitt.”

Also visited were the Governor’s Palace and old Capitol. An evening ghost tour was a popular attraction for our guides and was similar to the Early American Room’s ghost story.

Maintenance
The Annual maintenance walkthrough occurred on March 12th. Two issues stood out: lighting technology and condition of the floors. Though felt glides have been installed on the German Room chairs, the carpenter does not feel they will work well, since the felt gathers up dirt and salt, becoming an abrasive pad. The summer plan is to begin with the German and Polish Room floors and entirely strip away decades of finish and lay down a polyurethane sealant. Lighting will be an ongoing project, as effective and economic alternatives to incandescent bulbs are phased in. However, the state of current CFL and LED lights’ ballasts and drivers don’t always allow for those types of bulbs to be screwed into unique fixtures. Chandelier lights with exposed incandescent bulbs pose challenge, since the adapter that can be used adds height to the fixture in addition to the height of the bulb. For now, the incandescent bulbs that remain will continue to be used until they are all gone. Similarly, LED lights are technologically on a development curve - the ones in use today are not lasting as long as promised. As time passes, lighting technology will evolve and this maintenance discussion will continue on a room-by-room basis.

Website/Donations
A small project underway is the publication of a webform on the Nationality Rooms website where people can request a visit. Purposes will include: brief overview of the Nationality Rooms, donations of objects and items for the collection, arts known in Rooms etc.. Occasionally I am asked to present a short address to special interest groups and this would be a proactive move to solicit that audience.
Dr. Ralph Proctor once again has donated beautiful artifacts for the African Heritage Room. Some of these items will be rotated among several of his previous donations already on view. Shown here is a very large Banda mask that he has donated. It has a crocodile head and teeth visible at the sides, a human face frontally placed at the bottom with stylized antelope horns. Standing 48” high, it will be among the largest artifacts displayed in the cases.

GIFT SHOP
Anita Gallagher

We celebrated a record-breaking month for sales in December with items from Denmark, Peru, Germany, Austria and new ceramic ornaments from Italy. As always, the German items including pyramids, orchestra angels, smokers and assorted ornaments remain our most popular holiday sellers. Our German Advent Calendars sold out!

Among our regular year-round items, mini soapstone animals from Kenya are extremely popular. We have a new source for Irish memorabilia and for St. Patrick’s Day the items were well-received. We now have Irish dolls and several Guinness-related items. We sold out of Kerry blown glass.

Easter and Passover are now represented in the Gift Center. We offer decorated eggs from Lithuania, Hungary, Kenya and Russia. For Passover we have honey pots and matzoth covers.

ROOM COMMITTEE NEWS
Cristina Lagnese

Congratulations to the new officers of the Nationality and Heritage Room Committees. The Committees have worked hard to recruit new members and hold elections for the 2015-2017 term. Thank you for your commitment and dedication to the program. NRIEP will always thrive when we have strong and active Committees.

In order to meet Legal Counsel’s standards and elect new officers, we have sent you the By-laws, the Charter Agreement and Information Guide on Nationality Room policies. The Information Guide includes the following:

• Reporting deadlines
• Financial matters
• Tax treatment of donations, dues and proceeds
• Sales tax exemptions
• Organizing fundraising and other Committee events
• Purchase or contracting of services
• Promotional materials and correspondence
• NRIEP Newsletter

• Files, Records and Archives
• Scholarships
• Room preservation and maintenance
• Artifacts
• Holiday decorating
• Quo Vadis
• Information and Gift Center
• NRIEP staff

Please expect an email from David Downey reminding you to submit the signed By-laws which indicates that they have been seen by the Committee and a signed Charter Agreement. The Committee’s membership list with address, phone number, email. Also a list of the 2015-2017 Committee officers with their address, phone number, and email.
SCHOLARSHIP CORNER
2015 AWARD RECIPIENTS

This year we awarded 39 summer Study Abroad Scholarships totaling $140,980.

UNDERGRADUATE

JAMIE COOPER - Italian Room Committee Scholarship - Florence, Italy. Study Italian engineering methods, and Florentine culture, economy, and politics with the Pitt Engineering of the Renaissance program.

KATIE DUNKELBERGER - Savina S. Skewis Award - Berlin, Germany. Intern in Germany in finance with the International Internship Program while immersing herself in German language and culture.

ANDREA EVANKOVICH - Polish Room Committee Scholarship - Poland. Intern at the American Pharmacists Association with the International Pharmaceutical Student’s Federation.

MADALYN FRITCH - Women’s International Club Award - Istanbul, Turkey. Study Turkish, history and Organic Chemistry II at the Bogazici University.

BROOKE GENOVESE - Women’s International Club Award - Sydney, Australia. Study the vast range of wildlife and environments across Australia at the University of New South Wales with the Wildlife and Conservation program.

BRADLEY HANLON - David L. Lawrence Memorial Award - Moscow, Russia. Study Russian language and culture through immersion into Russian society at Moscow International University.

GABRIELLE HILL - Scottish Room Committee/Frank and Vilma Slater Award - Edinburgh, Scotland. Study Scottish literature and history, while enjoying Scotland’s great outdoors with the Pitt in Edinburgh program.

JORDAN JOHNSON - Helen Pool Rush Grant - San José, Costa Rica. Study Costa Rican culture and language through a Center for Latin American Studies (CLAS) Seminar and Field Trip with the Panther Program.

DERRICK KREIDER - Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt Award - Augsburg, Germany. Study German language, culture, and history courses with the Pitt in Augsburg program.

MELISSA KUKOWSKI - Indian Room Committee Scholarship - Pune, India. Study the history, politics, and economics of contemporary India at the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, one of the oldest research and training institutes in Economics in India.

JARED MUEHLBAUER - Austrian Room Committee Scholarship - Salzburg and Vienna, Austria. Study Austrian history and German at the University of Salzburg with the AIFS Salzburg program, then to research Metternich and Austrian Conservatism at the Austrian National Library.

ANISA MUGHAL - Savina S. Skewis Grant - Cuenca, Ecuador. Study surgical protocol adherence at the Universidad de Azuay.

KAYKO OHKAWA - Japanese Room Committee Scholarship (In Honor of K. Takano) - Tokyo, Japan. Study Japanese language and contemporary Japan at Sophia University.

MINYOUNG PARK - Women’s International Club Grant - San Jose, Costa Rica. Study Spanish, Latin American history, and society with Pitt in Costa Rica.

GRACE PEHLERT - Austrian Room Committee Grant - Salzburg, Austria. Study German and Austrian orchestral music at Salzburg College with the CCIS Summer Study Abroad in Austria program.

MAURA PERRI - John H. Tsui Memorial Scholarship - Shanghai, China. Study Chinese language, history, and culture with the Pitt in Shanghai program.

JOYA PETERSON - African Heritage Room Committee Scholarship - Iringa, Tanzania. Study East African culture and health issues at the CIEE center with the Pitt in Tanzania program as part of her goal to become a genetic counselor.

CAITLIN RILEY - Helen Pool Rush Award - Podgorica, Montenegro. Study Serbo-Croatian and Bosnian language and culture with the University of Pittsburgh’s Summer Language Institute Program.

JOHANNA SEITENBACH - Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt Grant - Dublin, Ireland. Intern with marketing/publicity agencies to publishing companies in Ireland with the International Internship: EUSA.
COURTNEY WEAVER - Nationality Council Grant - Kyiv, Ukraine. Study Russian language and culture at the Nova Nova International Language School while collecting research on the politicization of traditional Ukrainian embroidery.

MATTHEW WECHT - Israel Heritage Room Committee Scholarship - Tel Aviv, Israel. Intern with the Onward Israel Internship Program, a program designed to immerse students in Israeli life and culture.

ALEXANDRA YINGST - Nationality Council Award - Bocas del Toro, Panama. Conducting research at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute.

GRADUATE

DARIUS BITTLE-DOCKERY - Fred C. Bruhns Memorial Award - Amman, Jordan. Research the role of international organizations in Jordanian Public Health Initiatives for his dissertation on anthropological perspectives of medicine.

COREY DIEHL - Josephine and John McCluskey Memorial Award - Cairo, Egypt. Research security issues in Egypt and their relevance to the polices of the US; Egyptian government’s policies regarding security threats, Gaza Strip, and terrorist activity in the Sinai Peninsula.

JENNIFER DONNELLY - Ruth Crawford Mitchell Memorial Grant - Paris, France. Research period rooms representative of historical architectural moments from the 13th-17th century in the Musée des Monuments Français.

MICHAEL DUANE - Eugene Manasterski Memorial Award - Kyiv, Ukraine. Intern at VoxUkraine, a network of academics and professionals focused on Ukraine, researching anti-corruption and decentralization within Ukraine.

ALISON FEDORKA - Israel Heritage Room Committee Scholarship - Tel Aviv, Israel. Intern at The Clinic for Migrants’ Rights at the College of Law and Business while researching immigration and political asylum in Israel and the Middle East.

DANIEL KU - Dr. and Mrs. Ryonosuke Shiono Award - Singapore. Research security alliances between Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan (formerly Japanese colonized countries) through an internship at the International Institute for Strategic Studies.

ALYSSA LIVORI - Dorothy Bradley Brown Physical Therapy Award - Sydney, Australia. Intern with an independent physiotherapist, Eldin Seif, and learn more about manual therapy while gaining a clinical experience.

JACQUELYNN JONES - Indian Room Committee Scholarship - New Dehli, India. Research the effects of yoga on cognitive function in schizophrenia patients through an internship at the Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital.

DONICA O’MALLEY - Scottish Room Committee/Frank and Vilma Slater Fund Award - Edinburgh, Scotland. Research the attitudes and fascination in popular culture towards Red-Haired people in the country with the highest percentage of red-headed people.

GUSTAVO QUINTERO - Ivan Santa-Cruz Memorial Award - Santiago, Chile. Research the interdisciplinary approaches of Raúl Ruiz’s experimental cinematography and Diego Maquieira’s audiovisual poetry.

JARED ROGERS - James W. Knox Memorial Award - Kumba, Cameroon. Intern at the Cameroon Football Development Program through the practice of international and grass roots community development.

JESSICA WALKER - Ruth Crawford Mitchell Memorial Award - Aqaba, Jordan. Research ‘Ayn Gharandal cemetery excavation and skeletal analysis in order to understand the health and lifestyles of early Islamic pastoral nomads.

TREVOR WILSON - Stanley Prostrednik Award - Paris, France. Research the Russian intellectual expatriate community in interwar Paris between 1922-1945 and study their works of art, theology, and philosophy.
Ruth Crawford Mitchell Czech/Slovak Fellowship

Each year the Nationality Rooms Program awards a fellowship to an individual from the Czech Republic’s or Slovakia’s academic, government or commercial sector to the University of Pittsburgh for a term of non-degree research which will enhance the applicant’s career and deal with problems confronting the Czech and Slovak Republics. The applicant must find a mentor/informal advisor from the Pitt faculty in order to be eligible for the fellowship. Applications are due on March 31, 2016.

WELCOME NEW STAFF

David Downey - is the new Administrative Assistant for the Nationality Rooms Program. He is an alumnus of the University of Pittsburgh, having earned a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy with a minor in English Literature, as well as a Western European Studies Certificate from Pitt’s University Center for International Studies. David was a work-study student at the Nationality Rooms and a recipient of the Mary Campbell Cross Memorial Award (Nationality Room Summer Study Abroad Scholarship) to study Irish culture, literature and history. He is excited to be able to contribute to the program once again.

Bryan Brown - is a graduate student earning his Master of Library and Information Science with a specialization in Archives from the School of Information Science at the University of Pittsburgh. Bryan’s duties over the past months have included processing, arranging, and describing the analog, including photographic materials of the Norwegian Room Committee and the Nationality Rooms office files. Other aspects of Bryan’s duties include relocating the collections to the Archives Service Center for permanent storage, as well as data input in an archival data management program regarding the collections.

Hanna Swift - is a student in the College of Arts and Science, studying Architecture. She started here in October 2014. Some of her duties in the office include filing papers, sending mail, organizing scholarship applications, and various projects. She plays on the women's rugby team and loves hiking. This summer, she will travel to Ireland and England.
IN MEMORIAM
Maryann Sivak

Isamu Sando, M.D. professor emeritus, University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, died April 12, 2014. He was active in the Japanese Room Committee. His credo was “Think positive, work hard, and have good relations.

Ties Allersma, husband of Jorunn Allersma, died November 7, 2014. He was a member of the Norwegian Room Committee for more than 30 years. He served as the editor of The Runes for the Scandinavian Society of Western Pennsylvania. Ties was a senior researcher and inventor for PPG Industries.

Theodora A. Skarlis, was killed in an automobile accident on November 28, 2014. She had taught English and Spanish at North Hills High School. Theodora was an active member of the Greek Room Committee and the Women’s International Club of which she was Chair for several years. She also served on many scholarship panels.

Joseph J. Zasloff - was a faculty member at the University of Pittsburgh for 49 years. During WWII he was an Army infantryman and earned both the Purple Heart and a Bronze Star with oak leaf cluster. He was an active member of the Israel Heritage Room Committee and served on many scholarship panels. He passed away on December 17, 2014.

Albert C. VanDusen - was professor emeritus and vice-chancellor emeritus at the University of Pittsburgh. Nationality Rooms Director Maxine Bruhns, who reported to Dr. Van Dusen for many years, said they shared extensive international experience. Beyond the University, Van Dusen served as chair of the Board of Directors of Pittsburgh Metropolitan Public Broadcasting and of the H.C. Frick Education Commission. He was also a board member of the Duquesne University World Affairs Council, Dollar Savings Bank and ACTION Housing among others. He died December 18, 2014. Plans are underway to endow a Summer Study Abroad Scholarship honoring Albert C. and Margaret Van Dusen.

Semahat (Dengi) Sinharoy - died December 26, 2014. Semahat was a generous and dedicated contributor and supporter of the Turkish Nationality Room. She was a diligent participant in all activities and served on the Committee as an officer for several years during construction and dedication of the Room.

Michael Komichak - was the voice with a distinct Ukrainian identity. For most of Michael’s career, he hosted the Sunday Ukrainian Radio Hour on WPIT-AM 730. Although speaking fluent Ukrainian, he never set foot in Ukraine. Michael was an active member of the Ukrainian Room Committee helping to raise funds for the creation of the Room. He died on December 28, 2014.

Donald F. Mushalko - passed away on December 28, 2014. Donald promoted an appreciation for the Polish culture and language here and abroad. He was Chairman of the Polish Room Committee for many years.

Stephanie Granston Spaulding - served for many years on the Nationality Rooms Summer Study Abroad Scholarship panels. Her life in Kenya made her an exceptionally knowledgeable panel member. Stephanie passed on February 23, 2015.

It is with sadness that we also inform you of the passing of the mothers of Joseph Bielecki and Sono Hayes.
CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2015

2015

May 3   Women’s International Club Presidential Luncheon
May 3   Association of Chinese-Americans of Detroit will tour the Nationality Rooms
May 7   Four school tours, including two Spanish classes
May 16  Clarion University will tour the Nationality Rooms
June 11  Nationality Rooms Council meeting
June 11  Yugoslav Room Committee - Lecture
June 13  Nord-Oestlichen Saengerbundes von Amerika will tour the Nationality Rooms
July 16  JCC of Harrisburg scheduled to tour the Nationality Rooms
August 1  Swiss National Celebration Day picnic
August 16  India Day
September 18  The Landmark Society of Western New York is planning to visit the Nationality Rooms
October (TBD)  Nationality Rooms Council meeting
November 7  Decorating Day and Luncheon
November 8  Polish Festival
November 15  Korean Heritage Room Dedication
December 6  Holiday Open House

2016

January 16  Un-decorating Day
January 17  Un-decorating Day
January 18  Un-decorating Day