



MOUND AND MOUNT
KOSCIUSZKO
FESTIVAL



FIRST
IMPRESSIONS

Both **Kosciuszko Music on Mount Kosciuszko** and the **Mound and Mount Kosciuszko Festival** were truly effective in their promotion of Polish achievement in Australia and Polish culture to the wider Australian Community.

The events were dynamic because of the involvement of our Aussie friends – The Sydney Windjammers, John Hospodaryk (ballads in English), local jazz musician Paul Dion, the local “Snowy Centenary Choir”, local Czech duo Vashek and Vendulka, the local Dance School in Cooma, local balladier/guitarist Jim Lay and local folk musician David Turner.

Even more interesting was the integration of these performances with those of Polish artists Krzysztof Malek, Halina Gad, Olivia Kierdal, Basia Kierdal, Alicia Polak (Adam Wasielek, Joanna Gad and Slawek Kazan joined us on the mountain) and Polish Dance Ensembles Syrenka, Lajkonik and Polhop; all formed the basis of a festival which, by its very nature, was about *integration*, and promoting Polish culture in a way that is likely to be better received and enjoyed by non-Poles.



The MC for the Saturday concert was Tom Barry, Chairman of the Local Heritage Committee. MC for the Sunday concert was Alyson Hulley-Jefferies from Radio Bega. The Cooma Rotary Club organised the Cooma Festival with us, and Jindabyne Scouts catered for the Saturday concert. Tom Shumack, Deputy Mayor of Snowy River Shire Council, represented Council at the Saturday concert and Cooma Mayor Tony Kaltoum, opened the Sunday Festival. Consul-General Ryszard Sarkowicz officially presided over both events. Father Przybylak presided over Polish mass at Strzelecki’s Monument in Jindabyne Park at 8am on Sunday morning.

Several highlights for me were:

- Chopin music by Krzysztof Malek. He brought audiences, Polish and Australian, to their feet on both days – he was just wonderful!
- A little cameo play act about Strzelecki by Lajkonik dancers, Basia Gadd and Robert Mitas, called “Portrait of Strzelecki”.
- Olivia Kierdal’s own composition about Kosciuszko! What a terrific song!
- Little Lajkonik dancers, 3 and 4 years old, performing Krakowiak and Highland dances both in Jindabyne and in Cooma Park!
- Czech Duo Vashek and Vendulka – gorgeous, talented singer/musicians with charming personalities both on and off stage.
- The improvement in the Polhop Dance Group, with some great new choreographies and seeing their growing confidence in what they love to do!
- The quality of the image exhibition and seeing my ensemble “Lajkonik” included as part of this in a series of beautiful, large photos!
- The effort and quality of Lajkonik’s performances.
- A beautiful choreography to Kosciuszko Polonez Nr.2 prepared by Iwona Kower and performed by 4 lovely Syrenka girls!

On behalf of the organisers, I would like to say a sincere thank you to EVERYONE who helped in some way, big or small, and especially the many sponsors, in making the Mound and Mount Kosciuszko Festival a great success!

Special thanks to Rotary of Cooma for their support and assistance with the event, and also to the Snowy River Shire and Cooma-Monaro Shire Councils, for promotion, use of facilities and other support.

First Impressions

A Report from the Mound and Mount Kosciuszko Festival

28 – 29 April
2007

By
Ursula Lang

On behalf of the
Organising Committee

For more information,
visit
www.pulspolonii.com