

## 100 years of the Polish Mathematical Society

The idea of founding a mathematical society for the first time was born in late 1916 with a group of friends of Stefan Banach and Hugo Steinhaus, who lived then in Krakow and collaborated in considering various mathematical problems. Apart from them, Witold Wilkosz (later professor of mathematics at the Jagiellonian University) and Otton Nikodem (in the thirties at the University of Warsaw) took part in the meetings. However, the idea was not formalized at that time. The first of the official associations of mathematicians was established in Lviv in November 1917 on the initiative of prof. Józef Puzyna. The statute of the organization called the Polish Mathematical Society in Lviv was approved by the Galician Governorship on April 14, 1918. As the main goal of the activity, it was aimed at "promoting scientific work in the field of mathematics and related skills and disseminating mathematical knowledge".

The idea of establishing this nationwide organization came from a second regional mathematical association – the Mathematical Society in Krakow. The Society itself began its activities on April 2, 1919. On that day a constituent meeting of the Polish Mathematical Society was held, during which the statute was passed and the Board was elected. Among others, Stanisław Zaremba (newly elected president), Antoni Hoborski (deputy president), Franciszek Leja (secretary), Ludwik Hordyński (treasurer) and Kazimierz Żorawski, Jan Śleszyński, Stefan Banach, Otto Nikodem, Leon Chwistek and Alfred Rosenblat took part in it. Soon, the Society joined also Tadeusz Banachiewicz, Włodzisław Stożek, Władysław Ślebodziński and Witold Wilkosz.

The statute was largely modeled on the previous document on the basis of which the Mathematical Society in Krakow operated. However, it has been modified so that PMS branches in various cities and the Society's headquarters could function and the Board remained in Kraków. The aim of activities has not been changed, the limit for practicing mathematical sciences only and the field of interests has not been removed and extended to disseminate them, which was a part of the Lviv and Warsaw milieu. Focusing only on mathematical activity even more clearly than in the case of MS was evident in the ways of accomplishing the tasks' set. The statute states that readings will be delivered only at ordinary meetings of an academic nature

The advocates of PMS activity also popularize mathematics and problems of mathematical education were mathematicians who for a number of years were high school teachers before they became university professors and members of PMS. Those who have special merits here are Samuel Dickstein (1851–1939), Antoni Hoborski (1879–1940) and Zofia Krygowska (1904–1988). They

(among others) caused a big change in the goals and activities of the Society concerning mathematics on the pre-academic level. In today's Status of PMS, the second listed aim is "promotion of mathematical culture, including supporting mathematics education and popularizing mathematics" and among the Society's activity is "organizing olympiads, competitions and other forms of popularizing mathematics; cooperation with relevant entities in the field of teacher education in mathematics and teaching mathematics at all levels." (The LXX Mathematical Olympiad for secondary school students is presently in course.) Among the prizes awarded annually by PMS is "Samuel Dickstein Main Prize for achievements in the field of mathematics education, popularization and history of mathematics". And important, our journal "Didactica Mathematicae" is one of its annals.