

## POLISH-AMERICANS CELEBRATE THE QUINCENTENNIAL OF KOPERNIK

Mikolaj Kopernik (Latin: Nicolaus Copernicus) (1473-1543) was a Polish mathematician and astronomer whose heliocentric model of the universe laid the foundations of modern science. He was born in Torun and died in Frombork, Royal Prussia, then a region of the Kingdom of Poland. The United States issued an eight cent commemorative in 1973 to mark the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth. Oddly enough, this stamp was issued April 23, Shakespeare's birthday, in Washington DC, a city with no significant population of Polish heritage. The Post Office Department never explained these choices.

This exhibit focuses on event and first day souvenirs produced by Polish-American organizations and individuals in honor of Kopernik during his Quincentennial year of 1973.



Combination first day cover with the six US stamps issued prior to 1973 honoring Polish heritage: the Revolutionary War patriots Tadeusz Kosciuszko and Kazimierz Pulaski; pianist and statesman Ignacy Jan Paderewski; the Polish flag; and the Millennium of Christianity in Poland, as well as a Cinderella label produced for a World Stamp Exhibition in the city of Poznan. These are all tied by a First Day of Issue handstamp, plus a First Day bull's-eye marking.