

## Public Art Honoring Polish Heritage



### For Your Freedom & Ours

1100 Crosby Ave, Stevens Point

Sculpted by Boleslaw Kochanowski. The spires, over 20 ft tall, reference the grandness of these countries' histories. Freedom is an ongoing process. The canted and skewed spires signify the difficulties of upholding and retaining justice and liberty. The cracked and broken tips of the spires signify that freedom came with hardship and sacrifice.



### Polish Chicken Mural

1100 Crosby Ave, Stevens Point

"The Polish Chickens" mural is a replica of a wycinanki, Polish for cut-paper design, painted by Bernice Bartosz and Dennis Kolinski. It is the last remaining of five murals that were painted for the city's bicentennial in 1976.



### Casimir Pulaski Monument

McGlachlin Park, Stevens Point

Count Casimir Pulaski—the young Polish soldier who valued freedom so much that he left his partitioned nation to come to America to fight in the Revolutionary War against the British. He was fatally wounded at the battle of Savannah in 1779.

### Share your tour with us!

Tag us on Instagram @StevensPointArea or use the hashtag #StevensPointArea

[StevensPointArea.com](http://StevensPointArea.com)



*We welcome you to tour through the central Wisconsin countryside to view the area which is the first Polish rural settlement in the state, and the second in the U.S.*

*Located on quiet, rural roads winding through the glacial terrain with its wooded countryside, lakes and farm land are reminders of the Polish heritage of this area. The small communities, imposing churches and several quaint roadside shrines and crosses create a pastoral and spiritual landscape, not unlike the Kaszuby region in northern Poland from which the earliest Polish settlers came, beginning in 1857.*

*Rock-lined fence rows show evidence of the challenge they faced to farm this land. The gracious red brick farmhouses seen throughout the area show proof of their success. Several parks provide an opportunity to picnic and to enjoy the atmosphere of America's heartland.*

*A road map of Portage County is recommended for those unfamiliar with the area.*

*Enjoy your tour!*

*-Polish Heritage Awareness Society*

(This tour and all of its contents were originally initiated and collected by Adeline M. Sopa)

## STEVENS POINT AREA CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

1105 Main St. Suite A, Stevens Point, WI 54481  
715-344-2556 | [info@StevensPointArea.com](mailto:info@StevensPointArea.com)

[STEVENSPOINTAREA.COM](http://STEVENSPOINTAREA.COM)



[STEVENSPOINTAREA.COM](http://STEVENSPOINTAREA.COM)

# Polish Heritage Trail



PRESENTED BY & THE PROPERTY OF  
THE POLISH HERITAGE AWARENESS SOCIETY



## ① Stevens Point & ② Plover

### Stevens Point Cultural Commons

1100 Crosby Ave, Stevens Point

It started in 1990 through research of church records of Gulcz, Poland. It became evident that many local residents' ancestors immigrated from Gulcz to Stevens Point, Wisconsin in the 1860's. Thus after 125 years, it was important to re-establish ties with the village of Gulcz, Poland. Family contacts were made and a visit occurred on May 8, 1993. At this time Gulcz, Poland became the first Polish "Sister-City" of Stevens Point, Wisconsin. The southern - most section of the Cultural Commons is dedicated to our Gulcz Sister City connection.

Two larger-than-life eagles, perched on tapering spires, represent Poland and the United States. The eagles are looking forward, together, in mutual support as the two countries' histories have intertwined and overlapped even since the pilgrims of Jamestown, and that of the Revolutionary War, where Generals Pulaski and Kosciuszko gave their leadership support to General Washington.

### Market Square (Mathias Mitchell Public Square)

820 Main St, Stevens Point

Polish farmers and their wives brought their produce and animals to market. The Square and the Main Street are on the National Register of Historic Places. Several of the buildings bear the names of their Polish owners.



Matthias Mitchell Public Square



Market Square circa 1900

### McGlachlin Park

2801 Main St, Stevens Point, WI 54481

Contains a bust of Count Casimir Pulaski (see Public Art Honoring Polish Heritage) as well as two other memorial pieces. The first being a Portage County Historical Society commemorative plaque to local WWI Polish Veterans, installed in September 2019, and the Sister City Stone, a commemorative stone dedicated to the friendship between Stevens Point and Gulcz, Poland.

### Kozickowski Park

3433 Minnesota Ave, Stevens Point, WI 54481

A park dedicated to the first Polish settler in this area.

### Heritage Park

Corner of Washington St & Willow Dr, Plover WI

Contains several buildings of historical significance.



Heritage Park

### St. Peter's Catholic Church

800 4th Ave, Stevens Point

Established in 1876, in what was the Polish fourth ward of the city. The present church was constructed in 1897, and is the oldest Polish church building in the county. Notice the Lasecki building, now housing the Stevens Point Area Co-op, across the street.

### Holy Spirit Parish (St. Stanislaus Church)

2151 Stanley Street, Stevens Point

Established in 1913, to accommodate the growing population in that area.

### Mother House of the Sisters of St. Joseph, Third Order of St. Francis of Assisi

1300 Maria Dr, Stevens Point

An order of nuns initially established for young women of Polish heritage in 1901. This order has staffed many parochial elementary and secondary schools throughout the Midwest. Several hospitals were also administered by these nuns.

### St. Bronislava Catholic Church

3200 Plover Rd, Plover, WI 54467

The new church was built in 1991, the newest of those with Polish orientation. It stands behind the older red brick Gothic revival church built in 1911. The parish was established in 1896.

## ③ Torun

### St. Mary's Church

5589 Dewey Dr, Stevens Point

Established in 1895. Present church constructed in 1949.

### St. Mary's Red Brick Shrine

5589 Dewey Dr, Stevens Point

Marks the corner of the church property.

## ④ Hull

### St. Casimir Church

203 Casimir Rd, Stevens Point

Established in 1871, it was the second Polish Catholic Church in this area. The present brick Victorian building was constructed in 1913.

### Wojcik Family Cross

1407 N 2nd Dr, Stevens Point

### N Reserve & Jordan White Cross

Intersection of N Reserve Dr & Jordan Rd, Hull



**Polish Heritage Highway**  
Hwy 66, Portage County



Hwy 66 winds its way for about 19 miles through northeastern Portage County to its juncture with Hwy 49 at the Waupaca County line to the east of Rosholt. Designated a state highway in 1916.

In recognition of the outstanding contributions that Polish Americans have made to the vitality and quality of life in central Wisconsin, the department shall designate STH 66, commencing at Stevens Point and proceeding easterly to Rosholt, as the "Polish Heritage Highway" to commemorate and honor the achievements of central Wisconsin residents of Polish ancestry.



## ⑤ Ellis & Polonia

### St. Martin's Catholic Church

6704 WI-66, Custer

Organized in 1857 by early German and Irish settlers, just to the west, is the only one remaining of the three churches once located here.

### Poland Corners

Intersection of Hwy 66 and Cty Hwy J, Ellis

Ellis, once known as Poland Corners, is located at the intersection of Hwy 66 and Cty Hwy J. The three taverns are reminiscent of the three saloons of nearly 140 years ago. Gone are the post office, blacksmith shop, and general store of what was the first business center of this area.

### Sacred Heart Catholic Church

7375 Church St, Custer

A bronze plaque on the right-hand corner of this church, built in 1934, pays tribute to the first Polish settlers of the area. The cemetery contains the grave sites of most of these people including the first Polish Settler Koziczowski.

The modern-day school is still staffed by the Felician Sisters who came to the area at the invitation of the Rev. Joseph Dombrowski after he had moved the parish to Polonia in 1872. The school was one of the first Polish parochial schools in the state. Indians were included among the students. St. Clare Orphanage was also their project in what was their first service in the United States.

### Shrine of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart

7375 Church St, Custer

Admire the stone fence painstakingly constructed by a handy man and the children from the orphanage.

### Polonia Cafe

7419 County Rd Z, Custer

## ⑥ Mill Creek

### St. Bartholomew's Church

2493 County Rd M, Stevens Point

Established in 1883. The present church was erected in 1910.

## ⑦ Junction City

### St. Michael's Church

324 Main St, Junction City

The parish was established in 1881, with the present building constructed in 1958.

## ⑧ Fancher & ⑨ Amherst

### St. Mary of Mt. Carmel Church

3995 Co Rd K, Amherst

The steeple reaches 156 feet into the sky. The wrought-iron gate, which reads Boze Zbaw Polske or God Save Poland, exemplifies the devotion of the parishioners to their motherland.

St. Mary's was organized as a daughter parish of Sacred Heart in 1884. The present Gothic revival building was built in 1905 at a cost of \$25,000, mostly with parish labor and horse-power.

### Konkol's Corner Shrine

8208 County Rd B, Amherst

The shrine, one of five in the area, was designed and built by John Konkol on the corner of his farm.

### Rising Star Mill

3190 County Rd Q, Nelsonville

## ⑩ Rosholt

### Hillcrest & Cty. I Cross

1394 County Hwy I, Rosholt

Hidden in the trees on the front yard of another familiar red brick house, is one of the few crucifixes still standing in this area. Older residents say that in earlier times, most intersections had a crucifix.

### Cty. Hwy I & Cty. Road Z Shrine

Intersection of Cty. Hwy I and Cty. Road Z, Custer

### Cty. 00 Shrine

8610 Cty. Rd 00, Rosholt

### St. Adalbert's Road Wooden Cross

3149 St Adalbert Rd, Custer

Nestled in lilac bushes at 3149 St Adalbert Rd and just past the church, cared for by the Stanislawski family.

### St. Adalbert's Church & Shrine

3315 St Adalberts Rd, Rosholt

This parish, organized in 1898, is also a daughter parish of Sacred Heart. The present church was built in 1935. Shrine is located on the corner of the church grounds.

### St. Adalbert's Road White Cross

3379 St Adalberts Rd, Rosholt

Very tall white cross next to the driveway.

### Pioneer Park

186 W Forest St, Rosholt

Located at the Rosholt fair grounds, contains the log house of early Polish settlers, John and Antonina (Krefta) Glodowski.

## ⑪ Bevent

### The Wierzba Shrine

Intersection of County Rd J, County Hwy C & Shrine Rd, Rosholt

Built in 1952.

### Cty. Hwy. C White Cross

SW corner of Hwy Y & C intersection, Rosholt

Bass Lake in the background.

### Bevent Dr Red Cross

171749 Bevent Dr, Hatley

Located on a hill to the left on Bevent Rd.

The scenic view from the hill includes the spire of St. Ladislaus Church.

### St. Ladislaus Church

173141 WI-153, Hatley

Organized in 1895.

### Kristof Rd. White Cross

Intersection of Kristof Rd & Cty Rd Y, Reid

## ⑫ Knowlton

### St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church

150051 Mead Ln, Mosinee

## ⑬ Heffron

### St. John the Baptist Church

103 N 4th Ave, Edgar

Established in 1895. John J. Heffron was a local real estate agent who recruited Polish families from Milwaukee and Chicago to purchase farmland in this area.



Cty. Hwy I & Cty. Road Z Shrine





## Looking for more information?

Scan here with your phone's camera to view a Google map of the trail's specific locations.

StevensPointArea.com

[illegible]