

## History of the “Jaszowiec” Conference

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History of organisation of the first Jaszowiec Conference is briefly described. The role of key persons responsible for organisation of this Conference is pointed out.

topics: Jaszowiec Conference

The first “Jaszowiec School” took place more than 50 years ago. The idea for organizing such a meeting came from Dr. Witold Gariat from the Institute of Physics, Polish Academy of Sciences. Dr. Gariat was very talented in developing semiconductor growth technology. Due to his determination and organizational skills, he was able to create a laboratory where the purification of elements and the growth of single-crystals of compounds such as CdTe, CdSe, InSb, HgTe, HgCdTe, and HgSe was realized. He understood that the organization of such a conference would be a natural platform for the promotion of experimental investigation of semiconductor materials within the scientific community.

At that time, I was employed at the Physics Department of the University of Warsaw in the group of Dr. Wiesław Wardzyński. This group was mixed with the group of Dr. W. Gariat from the Institute of Physics, Polish Academy of Sciences (PAS), and both groups were located in Hoża 69. We had common meetings, so these groups were indeed mixed together. Both groups had the same boss, Professor Leonard Sosnowski, and the organization of the conference required his agreement.

I remember the day when Dr. W. Gariat came to the lab with a red face after meeting with Professor L. Sosnowski. Sosnowski refused to support the organization of such a conference on the grounds that the groups from the PAS and the University were mixed already. Gariat was not a good diplomat and his arguments were not convincing. However, he was a very stubborn man. Following the lack of enthusiasm in his own institution, Dr. W. Gariat convinced Dr. Józef Żmija from the Military Academy of Technology to organize the first conference. Żmija was much more successful in convincing his institution to organize such a meeting and to find financial support for the organization of the conference. So the first obstacle related to the lack of support of



Fig. 1. The third “Jaszowiec”, 1973. From the left in the lower row: J. Mycielski, A. Kisiel, J. Żmija, and L. Sosnowski. The second row: A. Jeleński, J. Loferski, W. Gariat, and W. Wardzyński. (Photography courtesy of Professor J. Furdyna).

Sosnowski was overcome and we could participate in the first meeting, which was officially organized by the Military Academy of Technology.

There was a second problem, related to the choice of a place for the conference. At that time it was not easy to find a hotel with a lecture hall large enough. In the communist system, large hotels were not in the private owners' hands, they were in the hands of trade unions and were intended for workers or employees associated with this union. Gariat found and convinced someone important in the Union of Teachers. This Union had a relatively large hotel (with a lecture room) in Jaszowiec. Żmija and Gariat got the “green light” from the headquarters of the Union of Teachers to organize the conference in that place. Therefore, the first meeting took place in Jaszowiec. The program of the “Jaszowiec” Conference was established with the help of Jerzy Mycielski, Wiesław Wardzyński, Józef Żmija, and Witold Gariat.

The first meeting was very successful and this convinced Sosnowski to support the organization of the next meetings. He even became enthusiastic about such a meeting and attended all successive “Jaszowiec” Conferences. This opened up the way for the subsequent organization of the Conference under supervision of the Institute of Physics, Polish Academy of Sciences, and the Physics Faculty of the University of Warsaw. The photograph from 1973 (see Fig. 1) shows all key physicist responsible for establishing the stable and final form of the Jaszowiec Conference. They are W. Gariat, W. Wardzynski, J. Mycielski, J. Żmija, and L. Sosnowski.

However, another obstacle soon appeared. After two subsequent “Jaszowiec” meetings, the Union of Teachers, for unknown reasons, withdrew its permission to use the place for a scientific conference.

It was necessary to find another location for conference. The solution came from an unexpected side. One of technicians within the Gariat group, Ludwik Borg, had family roots in Silesia, and his family had a connection with the mining industry. In the communist system, the coal mining industry was very important as one of the main supporters of the economy. Usually, different mines possessed their own resort sites. Borg found a way to one of the directors of a coal mine, who had the resort hotel “Gwarek”, also in Jaszowiec. The mine director agreed to use “Gwarek” for week-long conference, and in the coming years it was to become the stable place of several successive meeting.

In the following years, after the first meeting, English was introduced to the Conference session, and “Jaszowiec” become an international meeting.