

Jacqueline Piatigorsky: Patron, Player, Pioneer

September 13, 2013 (St. Louis, MO) – There are giant names in chess that everyone knows like Fischer and Spassky. Then there are players that devoted fans trade stories about like Carlsen and Nakamura, Petrosian and Keres. And then there are chess figures that were exceptionally important for a moment in time and deserve to be in the spotlight once again.

Jacqueline Piatigorsky was a chess legend who dedicated much of her time, talent and resources to promoting the game that she loved during the 1950s-80s. A new show at the World Chess Hall of Fame (WCHOF) titled *Jacqueline Piatigorsky: Patron, Player, Pioneer* will use artifacts from her archive to tell the story of her fascinating life and fantastic achievements in the world of chess. The objects are part of a generous donation to the WCHOF from the Piatigorsky family.

“Mrs. Piatigorsky was a gifted player, but she perhaps made an even larger mark on the world of chess through her philanthropy. We feel incredibly honored to partner with her family to show these amazing objects, many that have never been publicly displayed,” said Shannon Bailey, WCHOF curatorial director.

The exhibition includes artifacts such as the Piatigorsky Cup trophy, which features a beautiful sterling silver cup created by Tiffany & Co. in 1963 as its centerpiece. The newly-restored cup will be displayed alongside personal chess-related items belonging to Mrs. Piatigorsky, images of tournament play, rare artifacts from the first Women’s Chess Olympiad, and objects related to the progressive Piatigorsky Foundation. Additionally, the exhibition features interesting artifacts related to inductees to both the World and U.S. Chess Halls of Fame.

“Among the notable female figures in the chess world, Jacqueline Piatigorsky stands out as an exceptionally gifted player, as well as a generous and influential supporter of the game in the United States,” Bailey said.

Jacqueline Piatigorsky: Patron, Player, Pioneer opens at the WCHOF on **October 25, 2013**, and will run through **April 18, 2014**. Visit www.worldchesshof.org for additional information.

About Jacqueline Piatigorsky

Born in Paris to the Rothschild banking family, Jacqueline Piatigorsky learned chess at an early age while recovering from an illness. Though she had many interests including art, music, and tennis, chess was one of her main passions. She described it in her memoir *Jump in the Waves* as “part of her blood.”

Jacqueline married notable cellist Gregor Piatigorsky in 1937. The couple fled Europe with their daughter Jephtha at the outset of the Second World War in 1939 and resettled in Elizabethtown, Connecticut, where Mrs. Piatigorsky began participating in correspondence chess tournaments.

The Piatigorskys later moved to Los Angeles, California. There Jacqueline met International Master and founder of the Hollywood Chess Group Herman Steiner, who was the impetus behind Mrs. Piatigorsky’s entry into competitive play. She would later run his chess club after his death, renaming it the Herman Steiner Chess Club in his honor.

Jacqueline's skill quickly led her to the top of the field of women's chess. She competed many times in the U.S. Women's Chess Championship, placing second in 1965. She also won a bronze medal in the Women's Chess Olympiad in Emmen, Netherlands, in 1957.

Jacqueline's generosity as a philanthropist also increased her standing in the world of chess. After serving as co-sponsor of the famed 1961 match between Bobby Fischer and Samuel Reshevsky, she formed the Piatigorsky Foundation. The Foundation gained fame for the Piatigorsky Cup tournaments of 1963 and 1966. The competitions attracted top American and international players, including Tigran Petrosian, Paul Keres, Boris Spassky, and Bobby Fischer.

The Piatigorsky Foundation didn't just support chess at an elite level. It sent chess players to teach the game in schools in underserved communities, supported chess teams composed of players who were visually impaired, and provided financial assistance to high school chess teams. The Foundation also supported the U.S. Junior Invitational Tournament.

About the World Chess Hall of Fame www.worldchesshof.org

The World Chess Hall of Fame is a nonprofit organization committed to building awareness for the cultural and artistic significance of chess. It opened on September 9, 2011, in the Central West End after moving from previous locations in New York and Miami.

The WCHOF is housed in an historic 15,900 square-foot residence-turned-business and features the U.S. and World Chess Halls of Fame, displays of artifacts from the permanent collection, and temporary exhibitions highlighting the great players, historic games, and rich cultural history of chess.

Currently, the WCHOF is also pleased to present *A Queen Within: Adorned Archetypes, Fashion and Chess*.

The WCHOF partners with the Chess Club and Scholastic Center to provide innovative programming and outreach to local, national, and international audiences.

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