

Carpatho-Rus

Karpatska Rus'



SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT YONKERS, NEW YORK AND OTHER MAILING ADDRESSES

NO. 16, CARPATHO-RUS, YONKERS, N.Y., AUGUST 5, 1994 VOL. LXVII

THE STORY OF TALERHOF

WE SHOULD NOT FORGET

The people who lived on the northern slope of the Carpathian Mountains (Lemkoland), which is now in Poland and once was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, have been subjected to severe and much discrimination throughout many centuries. They have been forcibly relocated and efforts have been made to eradicate all elements and traces of their distinctive culture.

Last month we wrote of two parts of a journey during the Holocaust of 1914-17. After removal from their homes in Lemko land, they were taken to a transferal point, put into sealed cattle cars and taken by train to a little village, Abtissendorf, which was located near Graz, Austria on the southern border of Austria.

As they stumbled from the train into the sunlight, they found themselves surrounded by guards riding on horses. They were forced by whips to walk in their weakened condition to Talerhof, a concentration camp which was about a twenty minute walk away. The guards carried whips and did not hesitate to use them on those who lagged or fell behind. Those who tried to escape were shot dead and their bodies were pushed into any convenient ditch to join the bodies of those who had succumbed to the brutal conditions.

They finally arrived at Talerhof. Here, families were broken up and assigned to different

barracks. They were segregated -- men in one and women and children in others. The barracks had bare, dirt floors. The roofs leaked so that when it rained, they were forced to sleep on the floor, which turned to mud. They were not even given straw to sleep on.

Starvation was ever present as they were given only one meal a day, which consisted of a clear soup with some rice added and a piece of bread. The thin, watery soup was served in bowls but they were not given any spoons. As time went on, they whittled spoons out of pieces of wood, which they found.

People died every day from lack of food coupled with the unsanitary conditions. They suffered colds from sleeping in the mud or on the cold earth. They started to bleed from the nose, mouth, fingers and toes. The dreaded typhus made its regular rounds. They tried to keep clean but could wash the rags they wore in water only as there was no soap. About ten people died daily from starvation and disease. The women and children were forced to watch men being hung. Many people lost their minds and others tried to commit suicide.

The bodies of all who died were dumped into a common hole and the ground was leveled so that no evidence remained. It brings to mind the landfills we use for dumping garbage in the United States. no memorial services, panahidas, or prayers were allowed at the grave, in fact no relatives or friends were allowed to accompany the body of their loved one to the grave.

For every person who died, four more were brought from the Lemko/Galician region to replace

them. This provoked a mixed reaction on the part of those incarcerated. They were happy to receive news from home but they felt grief for what those who were arriving would now have to endure and many times for the bad news that was brought. For example, the shooting of Fr. maksym Sandowych, who will be recognized as a saint on September 11 this year in Gorlice,

Poland, affected them very deeply. For many, this was the last straw. They could not bear much more.

What was the extent of this Holocaust? Talerof records and diaries show that 30,000 people of both sexes and all ages and from every strata of society were interned. Among them were 800 priests of the Eastern Church (both Orthodox and Greek Catholic). They were not allowed to bring their robes or anything necessary for services. They were prohibited from serving Divine Liturgy, but as time went on they held Molebens to the Mother of God (many times from memory), and at this time they took the opportunity to give sermons in which they tried to uplift the spirits of their fellow detainees. It is written that as the services would progress, the singing of the congregation became more and more quiet as "many cried and cried and could not continue singing the responses."

When the camp was finally closed, the knowledge of it having been there festered. It was leveled to the ground and in 1936, the last evidence of it was removed when the place of burial was excavated and the bodies were moved to another village called Feldskirken. Here the bodies of 17,067 men, women and children were reinterred in another common grave far from their homes in Halichina and Bukovina (Lemkoland), which they had been forced to leave. A poignant phrase says it so well: "Let them walk over their own hills not on some so far from their home."

Books (published by Peter Hardy), which contain personal accounts of witnesses of these horrors and can give you more information, can be obtained from A. Herenchak, P.O.Box 156, Allentown, NJ 08501.

The Orthodox Herald

President of Rusin Association
Interviewed

Mr. Lawrence Goga is a retired police investigator and Korean War veteran with an extensive record of civic involvement. Aside from activism in his professional and geographic

Continued on Page 3

26th ANNUAL LEMKO FESTIVAL

Concert Sunday, August 28, 1994 at 1:00 pm

Guest Performers from Ukraine

Olga Kaminska Yaroslav Lemishka

Viktor Chumak

Vychodna Dolina Singers - Stephanie Salony, director

Gypsy Balalaikas - Stephen Wolownik, director

Ukrainian Dnipro Dancers -

Rose Marie Davoli-Arons, director

LEMKO RESORT Rte 208 Monroe, NY Tel: 914-783-1633

Morning	Ethnic	Dance	Folk
Chapel	Food	Band	Art
Service			Exhibits

TO LEMKO RESORT, N.Y. THRUWAY TO EXIT 16 (HARRIMAN) AFTER TOLL BOOTH KEEP LEFT TO ROUTE 17 TO EXIT 130 (ROUTE 208, MONROE/WASHINGTONVILLE). BEAR RIGHT ONTO 208 TOWARDS WASHINGTONVILLE. SHORTLY AFTER GOLF COURSE, ENTRANCE TO LEMKO RESORT WILL BE ON LEFT.



A MEMORIAL SERVICE AT LEMKO RESORT

WILL BE SERVED ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 7, 1994

AT 1:00 PM

BY

ORTHODOX CLERGY OF THE TRI-STATE AREA

During the beginning of World War I, officials of the Austro-Hungarian Empire imprisoned priests, teachers and lay leaders throughout Lemkovina, because of their love for orthodoxy and Russian culture. The largest camps in Austria were Talerhof and Terezin. many of our Lemko forbearers perished.

The most prominent was Father Maksym Sandowich who will be glorified with the Saints this September 11, 1994 in Gorlice, Poland.

Your attendance is needed

Food will be available

THE COOKING CORNER

Apricot Chocolate Ice Cream Pie

"Apricot Chocolate Ice Cream Pie can be prepared in advance and kept ready for drop-in guests or for a busy summer day dessert. As with all ice cream desserts, it should be moved from the freezer to the refrigerator before serving time so it will cut easily and be at peak flavor.

- 1 Graham cracker crumb crust (9 inch)
3/4 cup Apricot preserves
1 tbs. Grated orange peel
2 tbs. Orange juice
1 pint Softened chocolate ice cream
2 pints Softened vanilla ice cream
2 tbs. Toasted sliced almonds

Freeze the crust until firm. Combine apricot preserves, orange peel and juice. Spoon chocolate ice cream into crust. Drizzle on half of apricot sauce. (Freeze until firm if ice cream gets soft.) Spoon vanilla ice cream over chocolate ice cream. Drizzle on the remaining sauce. Sprinkle with almonds. Freeze until firm.

To serve, let stand at room temperature about 15 minutes. If storing any length of time, freeze until firm, then wrap completely.

NOTE: Ice cream may be softened in microwave. Leave ice cream in carton; place on plate. About 15 seconds on full power will soften 1 pint of ice cream; 30 seconds for a quart; 1 to 1 1/2 minutes for half gallon.

PRESS FUND CONTRIBUTIONS

Table with 2 columns: Name and Amount. Includes M/M John Kurdilla (\$100), J. Antisz (30), Teodor Janiszak (20), M/M John Wandzilak (20), John Petro Garbera (10), D. Trochanowski (10), Total \$190.

PASSAIC LODGES 5-16 OF LEMKO ASSOC.

EVENT CALENDAR FOR 1994

Sunday, October 16-FALL BANQUET-1:00 PM
Donation \$15.00

Birthday Meetings

Sunday, September 11, 1994 1:00 PM
Sunday, December 4 " 1:00 PM

All functions to be held at the Lodge, corner of Ann Street and Lanza Avenue, Garfield, New Jersey.

LEMKO WEDDING VIDEO

A two hour video cassette of the film LEMKO WEDDING is still available for sale to our readers. This is the original film that was made almost 30 years ago, and it should be of interest to those readers who have not had the pleasure of viewing it.

Cost, including postage and handling, is \$45.00. To order kindly send your check or money order to CARPATHO-RUS, 556 Yonkers Avenue, Yonkers, New York 10704.

IN APPRECIATION

We extend our thanks for help in producing this week's issue of Carpatho-Rus to Svetlana Ledenieva, Bogdan Horbal and Susyn Mihalasky.

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556 Yonkers Avenue
Yonkers, New York 10704

CARPATHO--RUS

Carpatho-Russian newspaper, published bi-weekly by the Lemko Assoc. of the United States and Canada.

Subscription Rate: One Year...\$20.

Edited By: Editor, pro-tem., A. Herenchak
USPS No. 291 460

Postmaster: Send address changes to:

CARPATHO RUS
556 YONKERS AVENUE

NOTICE

Due to the lack of hard currency, our subscription mailing list to Poland, Slovakia, Russia, Belarus and Ukraine is limited. Some Americans and Canadians pay for their relatives and friends in East Europe. As an inducement, to increase our readership in East Europe, we offer to send issues there at a special rate of \$8.00 per year, which only represents the cost of postage. If readers in the United States and Canada want to avail themselves of this opportunity, kindly send us the name and address of your relative or friend, with a check for \$8.00, and the newspaper will be sent.

REQUEST OF OUR READERS

Through our archives we have searched for old Lemko Calendars from the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s. Many of those old Calendars are missing. We would like to request, from our readers, any old Calendars that they may have and do not need. This would be of help to us in researching the history of our people. Thank you. Ed.

As Seen From This Perspective

We applaud and congratulate Leonid Kuchma on his election as the new President of Ukraine. Even though the incumbent, Kravchuk, controlled the government and, therefore, the communication systems, the majority of the voters saw clearly the differences between the two candidates, and, wisely, chose Mr. Kuchma. In his desperate attempts to win re-election, Mr. Kravchuk appealed more and more to the extremists of the Ukrainian electorate. It was these appeals which implied an automatic commitment to the extremists were he to be re-elected, that troubled us here at the newspaper.

This Editor and many of our readers served in the U.S. armed forces in Europe during WW II. We saw what plans Hitler had in mind for the eastern Slavs. On his last trip 2 1/2 years ago to Ukraine, this Editor was shocked to see the local newspapers showing pictures of "Galician" division veterans proudly marching down the streets of Lvov. The "Galician" division fought under Hitler's banners during WW II. Lately we have read reports that veterans of WW II cannot wear their battle ribbons in parts of Ukraine since extremist elements are prone to attack and rip off these ribbons. Is history so easily and quickly forgotten?

With President Leonid Kuchma's background as a pragmatic engineer and production Director of a very large rocket complex, we wish him good luck and success in tackling the enormous economic task in front of him. The fact that the extremist elements, primarily centered in western Ukraine, voted in large majorities against him is proof to us that the election of this moderate, sensible and practical man was the correct choice.

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communities, Mr. Goga is active on behalf of Carpatho-Rusyns. He is President of the Minnesota-based Rusyn Association and member of the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center Advisory Board.

Mr. Goga's grandfather emigrated to Minnesota from the Rusyn village of Pravrovce, then located in northeastern Slovakia. The village was subsequently torched during the Second World War. His grandmother came from Košice. Mr. Goga recently took time to speak with *Karpatska Rus'* about the Minnesota Rusyn community and the Rusyn Association.

Karpatska Rus': Please tell our readers something about the origins of the Rusyn community in Minnesota: when did they first arrive? Where did they come from? How many are there today and where are they located?

Lawrence Goga: Rusyns started to arrive from northeast Slovakia during the late 1870s. These initial arrivals were employed as lumberjacks and on the Mississippi River. Others soon followed.

How many Rusyns are there today? It is difficult to say. We know that in 1912 there were 1,200 Rusyns. This figure comes from a letter written by Michael Rushin, then president of the Greek Catholic Union and a Rusyn community activist. Any estimate subsequent to 1912 is pure conjecture. I could only guess that the number of Rusyns presently in the area is between 5,000-10,000.

Church records, unfortunately, cannot provide a more accurate picture of the number of Rusyns in the Minnesota area today. There have been problems in the Greek Catholic Church - problems with priests sent here - which drove people out of that church. Aside from "personality politics" there was a perception among Rusyns that the Greek Catholic Church was becoming romanized. Hence, many Rusyns have gone elsewhere, making church records that much less complete.

There has also been extensive assimilation into the Slovak- and Polish-American communities. Rusyns are present in much smaller numbers than these two groups, and are also ridiculed by some Poles and Slovaks for being different. These factors - small size of the Rusyn community and negative response of others - hastened the assimilation of Rusyns by Slovaks and Poles.

Rusyns are today concentrated in northeast Minneapolis and surrounding suburbs. An interesting sociological question is why the Rusyn community has remained so concentrated when so many other groups have with time become scattered? The answer is probably socio-economic in nature. Work was steadily available in the area, so Rusyns were able to follow their natural inclination to stay close together. Of course they also had their churches in close proximity.

KR: Tell us a little about the Rusyn Association: when was it established? What is its purpose? How many members does it have? What kinds of activities does it engage in?

LG: The Rusyn Association was established in June, 1983 as an initiative of myself, John Gera and John Haluska. We felt the need to do something to keep our heritage from slipping away. This loss was especially evident among Greek Catholic Rusyns.

We have a core group of 20-40 local people. This is not a large number, but it has been consistent. Most of these are older people. The young people just don't seem interested.

The Rusyn Association has just passed its 10th anniversary, a long life span for a volunteer organization. In that time, we have convened 70

monthly meetings and featured everything from genealogy to music, assorted guest speakers and films. The Rusyn Association has organized dinners, potlucks and picnics featuring Rusyn cuisine. We published the newsletter *Trembita*, which carries news and information about Rusyns in the United States and in the Homeland. Several workshops

and meetings with community activists have been sponsored by the Rusyn Association. Its members have written letters to support, lobby or educate, which were directed toward the local media, Washington, DC and elsewhere. The Rusyn Association cooperated with the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center to fund the essay competition for young Rusyns in the Homeland.

KR: A century ago in Minnesota, the Reverend Alexis Toth led the first Rusyn Greek Catholic parish in the United States into the Orthodox Church, launching a movement that eventually divided the American Rusyn community between Orthodoxy and Greek Catholicism. What is the state of religious relations within Minnesota's Rusyn community today?

LG: Most Rusyns attend either the St. Mary's Orthodox Cathedral of Minnesota or the Byzantine Church of St. John the Baptist. Both congregations are predominantly Rusyn with - and this is pure speculation - approximately 500 at St. Mary's and 100 at St. John's.

They don't quarrel with one another. The two churches maintain separate existences, with little contact or cooperation. The Rusyn Association's membership divides 50%-50% between the two, in addition to bringing in Presbyterians, agnostics and protestants. In light of historical religious conflicts the Rusyn Association attempts to downplay religious differences.

There has been a lot of marriage across religious lines, which has led to many Rusyns leaving their traditional churches. Many, for instance, went to the Roman Catholic Church.

KR: What is the extent of young peoples' involvement in religious institutions?

LG: There is no youth involvement in religious institutions. St. John's, for example, has no youth organization. The churches have done a remarkable job of depriving our people of their ethnic heritage and identity. They have converted our ethnic identity into a religious identity. Of course, a church's first priority is to preach the Gospel and it has done this well. This has been done, however, at the expense of our Rusyn heritage.

By way of illustration, I could point out that ecclesiastical publications rarely use the word

"Rusyn." Some, like the Greek Catholic Diocese of Parma's *Horizons*, mention Hungarian and Croatian parishes, but nothing about Carpatho-Rusyns. Rusyn issues are not addressed. I don't mean, however, to single out *Horizons*. Other publications are guilty of the same omissions. They use generic titles like "Slavic," "Slavonic," "Byzantine" or "Orthodox." The only time that the more precise "Carpatho-Rusyn" term is used is when someone like Professor Magocsi submits something that uses that term.

Why can't the churches sponsor Rusyn heritage classes? It's possible for a congregation to be Rusyn and still attract non-Rusyns. At any rate the Rusyn people, not the priests, brought the churches to America. They tend to forget who were the *real* pioneers.... The churches' attitude toward Rusyns is almost disrespectful. They think about dollars and cents and how to broaden their base. But what good is it if you bring in outsiders while losing the original Rusyn foundation?

KR: What kind of relations do Minnesota's Rusyns enjoy with other ethnic groups/organizations such as Slovaks, Poles, Ukrainians, etc.?

LG: The Rusyn Association represents one of 24 local ethnic communities which make up the Friends of the Immigration History Research Center (IHRC) of the University of Minnesota. The IHRC

has holdings from various groups, including Carpatho-Rusyns. Most of the groups originate in East Central Europe, but also include such groups as Italians, Finns and Jews. The various groups involved with the IHRC get along well and cooperate effectively on various projects.

KR: What kind of projects have Rusyns been involved in?

LG: We led a movement at the state capital to have a special day set aside to commemorate the fall of communism in Eastern Europe. The "East Europe at Freedom's Gate Day" was launched with a proclamation by then Governor Perpich - incidentally an ethnic Croatian - on February 4, 1990. It was "a Day of Recognition for the Flowering of National Pride and Progress Towards Self-Determination of all Peoples in Central and Eastern Europe." Several hundred people were in attendance.

The Rusyn Association has also helped to raise money for the IHRC with fund-raising dinners and book sales.

KR: What has been the response of the general public to the activities of the Rusyn Association?

LG: It is difficult to answer that question. Let me give you an example. The Rusyn Association has participated regularly for the past 11 years at the annual Minnesota Festival of Nations. Thousands come by and ask "Who are you?" This is of course the purpose of the festival. If these people come away from the Festival with a new understanding, an important purpose has been served. But some of the same people seem to come back every year and ask the same thing. It is hard to judge. How can we know if we are having an impact?

We do get a hostile reaction from the Ukrainians, although over the years they have been "worn down." The younger [Ukrainian Americans] either don't care or don't know about Rusyns. The only hostile reaction we now receive comes from the older people, the "DPs" ["Displaced Persons," a reference to the Second World War generation which experienced extreme ethnic nationalism, war, and the harsh life of post-war displaced persons camps before emigrating to the United States. Many DPs reflexively assume a militant "all or nothing" ethnic nationalism, even when doing so may not be necessary or appropriate - SYM].

Incidentally, the theme of this year's Festival of Nations was "textiles." The Carpatho-Rusyn booth featured quilts woven by women from St. John's. The quilts reflected patterns from different regions of Slovakia.

KR: What are your hopes for the future of Minnesota's Rusyn community in particular and Rusyns in general?

LG: It's hard to revitalize the local situation without an injection of new blood. This has not happened, however. Hence, the only alternative is to revitalize the local situation with the people already here. The experience of the past 10 years suggests, however, that this will be a difficult task. In the fall we would like to bring in a Rusyn folk group and have it appear at one of the local colleges. We would also like to set up a lecture series, open to the public, which could help educate people about Carpatho-Rusyns.

Speaking more generally, I would like to see the Rusyns have their own country in Europe. Of course, that will never happen. So I would like to see them achieve some form of local autonomy. I would also like to see an end to the persecution of Rusyns in today's Ukraine.

Readers may contact Mr. Goga or the Rusyn Association at: 1115 Pineview Lane; Plymouth, Minnesota; 55441; (612) 595-9188.