

Carpatho-Rus'

Karpatska Rus'



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

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About two years ago, we printed a short summary of one of our reader's, Greg Leck, trip to Lemkovina. He has now submitted the full story of his experience and it is very interesting. This is the 2nd installment. Continued from Issue #25.

In the Wake of Action Vistula: A Search for Lemko Heritage

Introduction (Cont'd)

The next day, the group returned to Warsaw, but my wife and I set off for Sanok. We were going to spend another week in Poland, on our own. Those seven days turned into an incredible adventure, filled with unbelievable mishaps and fortunate discoveries, kind hearted people and rude louts, unbelievable treasures and worthless dross.

The best *skansen* (ethnographic park) of the trip was the one we visited in Sanok; the guide, Tadeuz Kowalski, gave us a private tour and demonstrated each item. Despite our lack of Polish, he patiently made sure we understood everything. Our Mercedes motorcoach gone, we rode in a rattletrap *Authsan* bus which nevertheless delivered us to our destinations. We saw incredible Ruthenian icons in the Sanok museum. In the Bieszczady we hiked through torrential rains and nearly froze in a 1950's Stalinist motel with no heat and no hot water, but found the innkeepers to be gracious and warm hearted. We heard fabulous folk songs performed live that night and played chess with a local, who broke open a bottle of Russian cognac in our honor. We rode a narrow gauge railroad, in antique cars, over the peaks of the Carpathians.

I was stopped by the border *policja* not once, but on two separate occasions. Running out of money, we hiked over 20 miles one day through mountain pastures and forests and were rewarded with views of foxes, deer, hawks, and incredible vistas, as well as ruins of old Lemko villages. We hitched a ride with a truck driver ("It's no Mercedes," he joked as he threw our bags into the back and we piled into the tiny cab.) who took us into his house for lunch and proudly showed us around. A visit revealed my ancestral village of Wisloczek had been destroyed during Action Vistula and now consisted of new, three story houses built by the new Polish settlers. As I stood among the ruined gravestones and church and gazed out at the lush hills where my grandfather had no doubt played as a child, I marveled at how a people could have lived here over 500 years and now hardly a trace survived.

Bureaucratic frustrations continued; no one could tell me where the remaining records I sought for Wisloczek and Barwinek, my grandmother's village, were held. Our local interpreter, Jacek Pajak, ran an English school in Krosno and was a mover, shaker, and born entrepreneur, as well as an invaluable source of information, but even he could not untangle the Gordian knot I was enmeshed in.

In Cracow we savored the city's artistic treasures, rode the express train to Warsaw, and

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Talk on History in Passaic Carpatho-Rusyn**Carpatho-Russian

Passaic, New Jersey. At 7:15pm on Saturday, November 2, certified genealogical record specialist Thomas A. Peters gave a talk at the Sts. Peter and Paul Russian Orthodox Church, entitled "The Rusnak; Rusyn Immigrants of Passaic and Vicinity: Who Were They and Where Did They Come From?" The talk drew approximately 40 people for an interesting 2 hours of slides, discussion and refreshments.

The talk represented the partial results of an on-going project by Peters to write a history of the Rus' people in the Passaic area. Drawing on the church registers of Sts. Peter and Paul Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church, his presentation provided background material on the network of families that immigrated to Passaic at the turn of the century.

Peters began his lecture by recalling that Passaic, New Jersey is his home town, and that many Rusyns had immigrated there. Before discussing the database he had compiled from church registers, Peters turned to the introductory questions of who are the Rusnaks-Rusyns-Lemkos, and why they came to Passaic:

"Virtually 99% of the people in this parish are Carpatho-Rusyns. Carpatho-Rusyns are a distinct ethnic group that lives near the crests of the Carpathian Mountains. We are either Greek Catholic or Orthodox. We speak an east Slavic language called 'Rusyn'." As he spoke, Peters showed slides of maps, religious and historical sites in the homeland.

Following this brief geographic and historical background, Peters spoke about the church registers that he had examined. As suggested by the registers, most of the parish, "...came from the area around Svidnik and Bardejov in Slovakia. They came from the former counties of: Šaros, Zemplen, Szepeš and Ung." He also found Rusyns from the northern slopes of the Carpathians (they are the "Lemkos"). These people were concentrated primarily in the Galician counties of Nowy Sącz, Grybow, Gorlice, Jaslo, Krosno and Sanok.

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NOTICE

1997 LEMKO NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

Will be held on January 11, 1997

beginning at 9:00 PM

at the CRA CENTER, Lemko Hall

Music by: Zhurawli Orchestra

Please reserve your table in advance
Tickets: \$15. if paid in advance
\$18. at the door

Call (914) 969-3954 for additional information
and reservations

Carpatho-Russian American Center
556 Yonkers Avenue
Yonkers, NY 10704

An interesting in-depth analysis of the climatic events that began in 1985 in the former Soviet Union up to the present day. This is the Seventeenth installment of the story from Moscow News.

The Crash and Rise of an Empire

A Colloquial Chronicle, Russia, 1985-. Part 17

"Soviet Fiction"

For many years I mostly earned a living by translating all sorts of stuff--poetry, prose, scholarly treatises--from Russian into English. Apart from the fairly high pay (by Soviet standards, that is), the job was an inexhaustible source of entertainment in the shape of idiotic phrases produced by mostly half-literate Soviet scholars whose works I had to translate. A certain Corresponding Member of the Soviet Academy of Sciences staggered me with this gem: *myortvorozhdyonnyi trup amerikanskogo imperializma zazhivo razlagalsya*, which, translated literally, means "the stillborn corpse of American imperialism was rotting alive." Another cherished item in my collection was "Soviet Fiction" --the title of a section on literature in the magazine Books and Arts that I regularly translated. I giggled each time I came to that one, wondering how long it

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TO ALL BRANCHES AND MEMBERS OF LEMKO ASSOCIATION, YOUR
FAMILIES AND ALL READERS OF CARPATHO-RUS, WE WISH YOU ALL THE
BEST OF HEALTH, SUCCESS AND WELL-BEING FOR 1997.

FROM: THE EXECUTIVE AND PLANNING BOARDS of LEMKO ASSOC.

THE RELIEF COMMITTEE of LEMKO ASSOC.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF LEMKO RESORT

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spent an evening discussing Polish politics and concerns with an engineer we had only met on the flight from New York three weeks earlier; he had insisted we join him for dinner in his modest apartment.

I hope to return to Galicia one day to finish my search. Somewhere, scattered by the currents of the Vistula Action, are people who share my heritage and my name.

[note; at the time of this trip, the exchange rate was approximately US \$1. = zloty 14,000.



*****Ready to leave the Hotel Rzesow and start on our own independent exploration of Poland*****

Friday, 29 May 1992

Rzeszow -- The group returned to Warsaw this morning via the Mercedes motorcoach. I remarked we would be sure to miss it in the coming week and a half. After the usual delays and confusion everyone was aboard. We had to endure numerous "Polish farewells" (multiple kisses on both cheeks). We had tipped our guides the night before and a fellow traveller had lent us her Berlitz phrase book (which I had previously used to get a shave and a haircut at a local barber). I had searched high and low throughout Poland for a copy of the out of print *Beskid Niski* map without success, but I had a photocopy of one which was loaned to me by another group member. The copy was made on the photocopy machine in the Hotel Forum in Cracow. I had spent several hours one night coloring in the map by hand with colored pencils, the acquisition of which had been an epic task in itself.

After waving good-bye we returned to the dining room to a cluttered table which our group had occupied. Orange juice was there for us, but we waited awhile for breakfast, which, when it finally arrived, turned out to be cold eggs. I filled up on bread instead.

Gathering up our belongings, we settled up our phone bill (3 calls to Krosno to arrange for an interpreter) while our taxi driver, Leszek, waited. He had driven Jon Shea, Joe Novak, and I to the Przemysl archives on Wednesday and me again on Thursday. (The second day he got flagged down by the *policja*, for improper passing, I believe, and fined. He charged \$50. each day for what amounted to about an 80 mile round trip and about 10 hours waiting time. We agreed on a price of \$40. for the trip to Sanok (about 40 miles) and he seemed quite happy with the arrangement. He drove a Lada, which he took pains to point out was Russian manufactured. "Ruskie!" he would declare after mentioning the car.

The trip to Sanok was uneventful (no tickets) but we saw many horse carts, haystacks, and very old hewn timber houses with thatched roofs. The road was lined with beautiful trees and many people were walking or bicycling along.

We arrived at the *Turysta*, the "best" hotel in Sanok after Leszyk stopped a few times to ask various *kamarad* the way. At 280,000 zloty, it was similar to the hotels in Rzeszow, Bialystok, and Lomza but the beds were better. We also had a beautiful view over the San valley, though it was obscured by fog. Nevertheless, I was grateful to have finished my research in Przemysl since it meant we had an extra day now.

After settling in, we went to the PTTK office to find out when the bus could leave for Ustrzyki Gorne. Of course, no one spoke English but with a few words of Polish we were able to convey our message. We were told the bus left Sanok at 7:05 AM.

That settled, we decided to go to the bus station to obtain tickets. By now it had begun to drizzle but we had raingear so it was only a minor inconvenience. Using the map in *The Real Guide: Poland* we walked about two miles before deciding we were lost. Again, with limited Polish, we worked our way back to town and the hotel. There, the lady at the desk, who spoke some English showed us on a map where to find the station. It was mismarked on our map.

At the station, we joined a long line at a window above which a number of destinations, including ours, were listed. When we were one person away from the head of the line, the lady at the window abruptly got up, closed the window, and drew a curtain across it. Cathy, my wife, and I looked at each other, perplexed. Others did not seem perturbed at all. We stood around for a few minutes before noticing "13:00-13:15" written on the window after a Polish word I didn't know the meaning of. We deduced this was a 15 minute staff break during which all business stopped, despite the hoards of ticket seekers.



*****members of the tour group posing in front of a frytki stand on the trip back to Warsaw*****

Promptly at 1:15 PM, the window opened and difficulties ensued as soon as I asked for two tickets to Ustrzyki Gorne. Apparently they understood very clearly what I wanted, even exclaiming "*Dobshe*" [good] when I drew a chart with "Sanok" and "U.Gorne" and an arrow and the word "Soboda" [Saturday] and "7:05" on it. But they continued to jabber away in Polish. I finally resorted to drawing a pictorial type illustration of tickets and a bus, which impressed them, but only resulted in one of the clerks drawing a line from the ticket to the bus. Finally, as the line behind us reached epic proportions, we were motioned to leave and join the tail of the snaking queue. Instead, I went to the information window, where we again met without success. At this point we could only surmise that tickets could only be purchased on the bus and decided to show up the next morning at 7:00 AM and trust to luck.

The rain was still a drizzle, but as it was still

coming down and we had wasted a lot of time already (it was close to 2 PM) we decided to take a taxi to the castle in Sanok, about a mile away. (20,000 zloty). This was really a very large, old (circa 1650) stone manor house which housed a beautiful collection of Ruthenian icons. They were absolutely beautifully done and there were about 100 of them. There were also some very fine examples of 17th century oil paintings as well as some contemporary oils and sculptures.

After the museum, we walked through the *Rynek* and stopped again at the PKKT office, this time to check when the narrow gauge train from Majdan, in the Bieszczady, ran to the Beskid Niski town of Rzepedz. Again, with limited Polish, I could easily convey what I wanted. This time we were shown a schedule indicating a departure of 6:30 AM, M-F, and 9:15 AM, Sat/Sun, as well as a fare chart. (Incidentally, a copy of the much sought after Beskid Niski map was on the wall. When I asked about it, the ever familiar refrain "*nie ma*" was given in reply.

Just when we thought we were all set, we noticed 1 VI 1992 do 15 IX 1992 on the chart. We didn't know if the train didn't run during that time or only during that time, or on a different schedule for that period. Finally, after several minutes of fruitless pantomime, diagrams, and words, the lady (who had the patience of Job) made a phone call to some one who spoke a limited amount of English. He told us the train's first day of operation, June 1, and the first weekend, June 6. That settled, we walked 2 kilometers to the *skansen*. A *skansen* is an ethnographic park; the first one originated in Sweden. It consists of various buildings and artifacts all grouped together to form an outdoor museum. After getting two tickets (no problems this time) we were told to join a group which had entered ahead of us and were about 500 meters away. This turned out to be about 35 schoolchildren aged 8 to 9 years, and 3 or 4 adult

chaperones, with the Polish guide from the *skansen*. At this point I figured the trip was rapidly degenerating into an unmitigated disaster.

However, it proved to be quite the opposite. Although the kids ran wild, as children that age are wont to do, our guide was excellent. He asked if we understood Polish, and when we replied no, he spoke a few words of German, which Cathy knew a little of, from high school.

In short, that *skansen* was the best of all we visited in Poland. Aside from the houses, which included some fantastic agricultural implements, we saw two beautiful Greek Catholic *cerkwie*, which contained icons and an altar more stunning than the one we had previously viewed at the Suwalki monastery. One would never have dreamed that the plain wooden exteriors held such wonderful artworks within. We learned our guide's name was Tadeusz, and he said his last name was Smith (this while showing us a smithy, so I presume he meant

Kowalski) I believed he learned his rudimentary *Deutsche* while working in Hitler's Germany as a "guest worker" during the Second World War.

"Ted" was very patient and genuinely interested in showing us everything and how it worked. After about an hour he dispatched the kids but proceeded to take us on a private tour for another two hours. Again, with Polish, German, English, pantomime, drawing, and actual demonstrations, he showed us everything, all with great enthusiasm. We saw a fantastic contraption used to scare groundhogs out of the potato fields. (A wooden box placed over the burrow, with two hand cranks which turned rows of hammers to produce a hellacious din.) A Uniate *cerkiew* from 1750 with wooden belltower. An 1890 one room schoolhouse with the schoolmaster's wooden briefcase, pointer, slate blackboard, and portrait of Franz Josef behind his desk, along with a map of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. A beehive, carved in the shape of St. Francis of Assisi, (The saint held a small honeypot in his hands, into which a small entryway for the bees was carved. The saint's back was removed to obtain the honey.) An outhouse located inside a giant, one piece hollowed out tree trunk. Implements for macerating flax, thrashing it, and weaving linen. A fabulous machine, made entirely of wood, with huge wooden hammers used to press linseed oil from seeds. A wheelwright's shop, showing how wooden wheels were made from logs -- axles, hubs, spokes, and rims. A large house with barn and enclosed courtyard with well. A pottery shop with kiln. Horse powered machinery to chop hay. Wooden kitchen strainers and covers, and a cheese press. A portable hammock to take infants out to the fields when working, and a cradle which hung from the ceiling. Yokes for cattle, flails, and a hooked stick for carrying bundles.

It was a fascinating three hours. When we left, it was already a half hour past closing time. Ted walked his bicycle with us back toward town, and we stopped at a takeout stand, where we had a Coke. Ted told us he had worked in the Auto San bus factory in Sanok for 34 years before retiring. Now, at age 63, he was still working because inflation had wiped out his pension. He also told us a folk festival was going on that weekend and invited us to return, but we had to sadly decline. As we parted ways, he wished us good luck, hoping I would find relatives still in Wisloczek and Barwinek, and asking us to come back and see him again at the skansen should we return to Poland.

By 8 PM, Sanok was rolling up the sidewalks. A gypsy woman and three kids lounged around the TV in the hotel lobby. As the hotel had no restaurant, we asked for a recommendation. We were directed to "Max," about 1 kilometer away. The desk lady suggested we change for dinner, so we expected something ritzy. As it turned out, we were the only diners. The menu was all in Polish, but with the aid of the Berlitz guide, we successfully avoided ordering the herring in oil and settled for some delicious soup and roast beef which was done very well. It was a welcome change from the greasy, fried cutlet *du jour* which to this point had been the mainstay of our diet. The entire dinner, with beer and wine, was only 134,000 zl. (about \$10.). The night passed uneventfully, with the exception of no hot water in the room.

Greg Leck
To be continued

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 more than 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. To order, kindly send your check or money order to Carpatho-Rus, c/o A. Herenchak, P.O. Box 156, Allentown, New Jersey 08501.

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"This parish is a little unique in that it is made up of people from both the northern and southern slopes of the Carpathians in almost equal numbers. Most parishes tend to be either dominantly Lemko or Sub-Carpathians."

Peters recalled the actual immigration process and the difficult journey that brought Rusyns to Passaic. "They started coming to the Passaic area as early as 1880. They came because there were jobs here." He showed slides of some former employers: United States Rubber; Botany Mills; Huffman-Forstmann and many others.

"In 1880 there were 50 'Hungarians' in Passaic. But in fact, none of them were of Hungarian nationality. They were either Slovak or Carpatho-Russian [they had immigrated from the Hungarian empire - which is why their nationality was often mistakenly referred to as 'Hungarians']. The immigrants were unmarried young people who came to work for a few years, went back to the homeland to marry, and returned to settle in Passaic. What was life like in Passaic in the 1880s and 1890s? How were Our People perceived back then?"

To answer this question with an example, Peters read an excerpt from an article that he had found in the March 3rd, 1891 issue of *The Passaic Daily Herald*. The article was very amusing by today's more politically correct standards and provoked laughter from the audience. Peters' own understated reading also accented the humorous aspects of the article. He read that:

"...Passaic postal officials are frequently annoyed by foreigners who call for registered letters. They are generally fellows with unpronounceable names and when they fail to establish their identity they not infrequently want to whip the postmaster or his assistants. Saturday, a letter arrived for a 'Hungarian' with a jaw-breaking name. Word was sent to the address on the envelope and soon a doubtful-looking character appeared at the window...."

"It goes downhill from there," Peters laughed. He went on to recall that our people tended to settle in clusters near their churches and places of employment. He showed a map of Passaic to illustrate this settlement pattern.

Over the next decade, the 50 "Hungarians" of the 1880s grew into 200 who wanted to establish their own church. They formed St. Michael the Archangel Greek Catholic Church on First Street in Passaic. It was the second Catholic Church formed in Passaic and the first Greek Rite Church in Passaic. It was the only Greek Rite Church in Passaic until 1902.

Peters then recounted the religious infighting which led to the formation of Sts. Peter and Paul. "It's my opinion that most splits resulting in the formation of new parishes grew out of personality clashes among priests." He also attributed these disputes to rivalry between the clergy and powerful fraternal organizations, i.e., the Greek Catholic Union. Likewise regional factions, i.e., Šarisska versus Galician often played a factor in these divisions.

To illustrate how the split and rivalry between the Greek Rite churches of St. Michael's and Sts. Peter and Paul may have played themselves out in daily life, [a few years later, St. Peter and Paul converted to Orthodoxy] Peters again read a fascinating excerpt of an article from the May 27, 1903 issue of *The Passaic Daily Herald*. This article likewise provoked much laughter:

"Three good-looking 'Slavish' girls, members of St. Michael's Greek Rite Church on First Street were in the Police Court this morning on charges of disorderly conduct. The charges were made by the Reverend Volosin, pastor of the Sts. Peter and Paul church of the same faith. Father Volosin alleged that the girls had caused him considerable unpleasantness when he was walking on Third Street. Half a dozen witnesses for both sides had been examined. The judge decided that

the girls had been guilty of the charge.... A fine of \$6.36 each was imposed...."

"You notice," Peters added amid considerable laughter, "that I'm not naming the girls. They could be the ancestors of someone here today."

After he concluded this historical background, Peters turned to a discussion of the database he had put together from the church registers. He showed a slide image of the sort of documents in the register and how to interpret them. He showed a slide of a 1802 baptismal certificate. It provided a wealth of information: birth date, place and circumstances; the child's name; parents' and godparents' names, birthplaces and religion; and the priest's name.

Peters ended his talk with an extended list of surnames that he had broken down by geographical origin. He reminded people that only surnames from the period of 1902-1915 were displayed at the talk, but that interested individuals could look at Peters' complete database of surnames if they did not see a particular name in the slide presentation.

Audience members were clearly fascinated by the surname database projected onto the screen. "No, wait, slow down!" many voices insisted. "I haven't found my name!"

When a particular name was found (which happened very, very frequently for very many people), a cacophony of voices arose. "Oh, look, the 'X' family! I remember them!" or "Hey, there are the 'X's!" or "Oh, the 'X's - they're related to my father's cousin's sister's friend's uncle!" Before long, the room was as noisy as a kindergarten. Peters had to speak loudly to be heard over the general din.

Questions to Peters at the conclusion of the slide show suggested that one of the prime difficulties people faced in genealogical research was the confusion created by changes in the spelling of surnames. Without knowledge of the original cyrillic name, and its transliterated ("English language") spelling, root-seekers reported having a difficult time locating documents.

In the back of the room, would-be root searchers were able to make use of Peters' customary display of homeland photos, reproductions of genealogical documents and general information. He provided a 2-page work sheet, "How to Trace Your Family Tree," which gave step-by-step instructions and included a handy "Family Data Chart" with which to start a genealogical search.

Peters thanked the late pastor of Sts. Peter and Paul, the Very Rev. Archpriest, Eugene Carroll for allowing him the privilege of examining the church registers to uncover some of the history of our people in Passaic. Some photos in Peters' slide program, as well as in his display were provided by Joyce and John Barr, who went on last summer's CRS Heritage Tour. Lastly, Peters thanked his wife, Jessica, who was also in attendance.

Susyn Mihalasky

Press Fund Contributions

Samuel Hubiak	\$100.
M/M Paul Ruschak	50.
Walter A. Turchick	30.
Kay Barrow	25.
M/M Dan M. Patrick	25.
Helen Barry, in memory of my parents, Kristina & Dimitry Haytko	20.
Stephen Dornic	10.
Mx. Andrew Spewock	10.
Bill Rusynyk	7.
Joseph Komorowski	6.
Total	\$283.

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would take for the editors to catch on that there was an unintentional but politically dangerous *double entendre* here. They never did.

The point I really want to make here, though, is that much of that Soviet fiction might as well be called "anti-Soviet fiction" and be done with it. This was especially true of the so-called rural prose -- authors like Abramov, Astafyev, Rasputin, Shukshin or Belov. While the great majority of the 10,000 members of the Soviet Writers Union churned out vast amounts of "Soviet fiction" in the other, non-literary sense, describing life as it should be by the canons of Communist ideology rather than like it really was, the "villagers" stubbornly stuck to the models they absorbed in school, the critical realism of the 19th century, which had a powerful trend in "rural prose" of its own.

They couldn't really tell the whole truth about rural life, of course, especially not about recent history -- about the reprisals, the destruction of the whole *kulak* or richer peasant class, the death of millions in the famine organized by the Party and the Soviets in the 1930s. However, even the simple, realistic pictures of how horrible and hopeless everyday life really was on the collective farm or in a small town was food enough for the ever rebellious mood of the intelligentsia and of the reading public in general, undermining the tireless efforts of the agitprop writers. We must carefully note here that all this started long before perestroika, and, as a matter of fact, paved the way for it, shaping the mood of the very people that later initiated or eagerly welcomed change.

I must enlarge here on something that I only mentioned in passing in a previous installment. The Party developed an enormous ideological apparatus to forge the New Man and to bridge the gap between the poor, shoddy present and the impossibly beautiful, bright communist future. That apparatus comprised the so-called "creative unions," of which the Writers Union was only one, a 100,000-strong army of journalists, cheap papers and books, a huge network of state-supported libraries, and so on.

For the Party, it was an instrument of brain-washing; for the brainwashed, a venue of escape. Russia was indeed one of the most educated and well-read countries in the world. Reading was the "done" thing--it would never do to say, "Oh, I've no time for reading." You might dislike the process, but it would be socially disastrous to admit it. Everybody was reading, and you had to keep up. I remember a friend from Radio Moscow, who sort of commuted between America and the Soviet Union, living a few months there, a few months here, wondering why it was that she read out whole libraries while in Russia and never opened a book back home. It appears that in Russia she read about living and in the U.S., she just lived, with a vast entertainment industry to take care of her leisure.

With all that money lavished on the ideological apparatus, its efficiency was remarkably low, about 3-5 percent, like in steam engines. Tons of Soviet fiction and non-fiction lay peacefully and immovably on the counters preparatory to being pulped, while the reading public queued up to subscribe to Russian and foreign classics, especially when they came in beautiful sets. Those queues had to be seen to be believed, with hundreds of people burning bonfires until morning, as often as not in freezing weather. At opening time, the whole thing erupted in ugly scenes. My sister, an avid bibliophile, described one such event in the famous words of a film director: "The dead lie peacefully about, the living go on fighting." She was only slightly exaggerating.

There were several types of prizes won in those battles. One was subscription to modern foreign authors, anything from beyond the Iron Curtain, like Erich Maria Remarque, Hemingway or John Updike. Another was science fiction, particularly books by the Strugatsky brothers, which, as a matter of fact, had very little to do with science and were distinctly anti-Soviet as fiction-

pure social satire slightly camouflaged in the garb of sci-fi. Third came those "rural prose" writers and a few others of the semi-dissident kind, constantly pushing beyond the boundaries of what was permitted in print, like Andrei Bitov, Fazil Iskander or Chinghiz Aitmatov.

Such was the situation on the eve of perestroika. There was a great demand, a real thirst for truthful books about contemporary life, especially because of the old Russian tradition in which writers were never just entertainers but were looked up to as "teachers of life," like Tolstoy or Dostoyevsky. There was also a considerable supply: In those same pre-perestroika years, quite a few writers kept writing *v stol*, that is, "for the desk drawer," because they knew that their stuff was unpublishable under the Soviets and would have to wait for better times to come - as they now did.

As early as the summer of 1985, Valentin Rasputin's long short story "The Fire" appeared in the "fat" literary magazine *Nash Sovremennik* ("Our Contemporary"). The story fell plumb in the category of *chernukha*, a derisive, slangy term for any artistic work that painted reality in shades of black-as that reality amply deserved. In the story, a fire breaks out in a storehouse, and the entire village, taking advantage of the disaster, goes on a pillaging binge. The picture of utter moral corruption of the "simple Soviet man" which Rasputin paints couldn't be farther away from the fictional heroics prescribed for the occasion by the canons of "socialist realism." Regardless of the not indubitable artistic merits of the short story, it was a landmark in that it pointed to the abyss between "Soviet fiction" and stark Soviet reality.

The same effect, only much more powerfully, was achieved in Victor Astafyev's long short story "The Sad Detective," which was published by the *Oktyabr* literary monthly in January 1986. It is set in an ugly, small industrial town of which the most prominent feature and symbol is a ditch running right across it and filled with stinking poisonous waster from some plant. The souls of the townspeople, studied by the Nietzsche-reading policemen, are not unlike that ditch. The only ray of light in the crime-and poverty-ridden hell is a nice girl who hangs herself after being raped. A far cry indeed from the ordinary Soviet fictional fare in which good characters are shadow-fighting in some insipid, implausible conflict with even better ones.

In June 1986, *Novy Mir* ("New World"), the prime "fat" literary journal, began publication of "The Execution Block" by Chinghiz Aitmatov, a Kirghiz author writing in Russian. It simultaneously pushed into two of what were known as the "forbidden zones"-drug-addiction and religion. Drug-addiction had been plain unmentionable. The official view was that there was no such problem in the Soviet Union because no "social roots" for such an evil existed. The "New, Soviet Man" was an entirely optimistic and healthy animal primarily concerned with heroically fighting all sorts of spurious difficulties on his path to the bright future. The most that was permitted a "positive hero" was an occasional glass of vodka, and not even that, if he happened to be created during an anti-alcohol campaign. Not only did Aitmatov make the horrors of drug-addiction his subject but he also chose a deeply religious, if doubting, man, a Christ-like figure going through his own stations of the cross at the hands of bestial drug-smugglers, for his chief protagonist.

All these things had to be said, of course, and the book created something of a sensation in Soviet society at the time. I must confess, though, that whenever I think of this author's writings, Nabokov's biting phrase, "topical trash," invariably comes to mind, as does a sort of squirming doubt as to its justifiability in this particular instance. As in the case of Solzhenitsyn, one is torn between recognition of the writer's daring in laying bare a social evil and a certain dislike for the wooden quality of the vehicle.

After these momentous publications, exploration of forbidden zones went apace, and I

hope to be able to discuss the relevant works under the proper chronological headings. For the present it must be mentioned that Gorbachev followed in the footsteps of his predecessors, notably of Stalin and Khrushchev, in keeping up personal contact with the "masters of the literary guild," as writers were called in Soviet cant.

Early in the summer of 1986 he summoned some 25 of those "masters" to the Central Committee to outline his vision of the situation and to encourage them to support perestroika. Some of the older gentlemen present, like Leonid Leonov or Sergei Zalygin, still remembered the times of Stalin, who used to give out carrots in the shape of Stalin Prizes for Literature as well as sticks or rather bullets in the back of the head to those he happened to dislike; or their meetings in the Kremlin with Khrushchev, who would first give them caviar and then bawl and shake his fist and stamp his feet at them. No wonder this meeting with the bland, talkative and oh-so-very-progressive Gorbachev seemed like paradise to them, and it never entered their heads, I guess, to resent his desire to manipulate them. After all, they were mostly card-carrying Communists, and there could be nothing wrong with taking instructions from the General Secretary. They were acting in the framework of a tradition that they thought was there for good-in which they were luckily mistaken.

SERGEI ROY - Moscow News

Long Time Friendships Are the Dearest

Our friendship means so very much
It has right from the start
The things we've done together
All the sharing we've done together
And though the world keeps changing
As the days and years go past
We keep right on proving
That good friends were meant to last.

Have a very **MERRY XMAS** and a
HAPPY NEW YEAR

I want to thank my many friends for remembering me for the holidays and the many cards they sent.

Thank you -- Julia Adamiak

Letters to the Editor

The Editors,

I sincerely wish to thank you for publishing, and Jessica Peters for composing, the poem that appeared in the issue of September 13, 1996.

It so beautifully expressed the plight of the Lemkos in modern history.

I wanted to thank her personally but was unable to determine her address or telephone number.

Thanks, Jessica, you can be proud for memorializing our people, The Lemkos.
Walter Turchick

CARPATHO--RUS

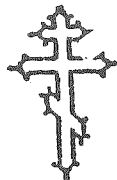
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In Memoriam

Mary Bidnik

Mrs. Mary Bidnik, 88, of Clifton died on December 31 in Passaic General Hospital.

Services were held on Thursday January 2 in the Three Saints Russian Orthodox Church, Garfield, NJ. Mrs. Bidnik, a life member of Lemko Assoc., worked for many years to preserve and develop the culture of our Carpatho-Russian people. She, and her late husband, Alex were also shareholders in Lemko Resort. Together with her late husband she actively participated in the making of the popular Lemko Wedding video with authentic costumes and dances from the Carpathians. She was also an active member of the Clifton Senior Citizens Club.

Born in Passaic, she lived in Pennsylvania, returned to Passaic and moved to Clifton about 50 years ago.

Serviving are a son, Alex; a daughter, Mrs. Sonia Gartner; two grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

VECHNAYA PAMYAT

The Cooking Corner

At our Welcome Dinner in Presov, Slovakia, we were served the traditional holiday meal-roast duck, dumplings and fresh stewed and sour cabbage. The cabbage was so good we asked the chef for his recipe. Since he was a friend of Betty Kovach, he was kind enough to cut the recipe down and run them off for us. The only problem was - he used the European measurements. This cabbage, Dusena Hlavkova Kapusta, is made in most of the Slavic countries. In Russian its name is very similar -- Tushonaja Kislo-sladkaja Kapusta. This goes well with duck, goose, turkey or pork, which you may serve at Christmas or New Year's. The recipe is for 10 portions.

Sweet-Sour Cabbage

3	lbs	(15 cups) chopped cabbage
1	cup	shortening
1	cup	chopped onions
1	tsp	caraway seed
5	tbls	sugar
3	tbls	vinegar
1/3	cup	flour
1	tsp	salt
		broth, as needed

Saute chopped onion in shortening until light brown. Add sugar, vinegar, and pour a little

broth over. Add chopped cabbage, caraway seed and salt. Saute until soft. Sprinkle flour over and mix in thoroughly until thickened. Add more broth if necessary. Taste and add one or all of the following: more sugar, vinegar or salt. This reheats well.

Optional: You may wish to use less shortening and more broth.

The Orthodox Herald

AUDIO and VIDEO Tapes

Item #1 Karpati-Rus' Folk Songs;

Eighteen folk songs from the Carpathian Mountains! Transcribed from 78 rpm discs recorded in 1910, this audio cassette tape presents wedding, christening and Christmas songs...the way our ancestors did them.

Item #2: Russian Balalaika and Polkas, Chardashes and Gypsy Eclectic;

This audio cassette tape contains Russian polka and balalaika selections, Slavic chardashes and gypsy melodies. Several folk songs provided here were originally recorded in 1910 on 78 rpm discs.

Item #3: East European Folk Festival;

Each year, the Lemko Association of the U.S. and Canada sponsors a festival of East European dancing and singing. This video offers highlights of the 25th festival which was held in 1993. It includes excerpts of an Orthodox Catholic prayer service and concert of Karpati-Rus., Ukrainian, Russian and Slovak folk songs and dancing.

Item #4: Canonization of Father Maksym Sandovich;

This video includes a biography of Saint Maksym, the first Orthodox Catholic saint of the Karpati-Rus;. The major sites and events of his glorification which occurred in Gorlice, Poland in September, 1994 are uniquely recorded.

Item #5: Video Recording of the Akafist Male Chamber Choir of Moscow and the Slavic Male Chorus of Washington, D.C.;

Recorded at St. Luke's Serbian Orthodox Church in McLean, Virginia on March 12, 1992, this video includes 17 classic liturgical songs and shows the interior and exterior of all slavic Orthodox Catholic churches in the Washington, D.C. area.

Item #6: Canonization of Father Alexis Toth;

St Alexis' biography and canonization ceremony are preserved on this video which was filmed at St. Tikhon's Monastery.

Item #7: Folk Songs from the Uzhorod Region:

"Muse Zakarpatskaia through 12 folk songs that were recorded in Soviet days in 1955.

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Item #2.....\$12.

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Item #4.....\$20.

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Part-time Choir Director for:

St. Mary's Holy Assumption Russian Orthodox
Church
Stamford, Connecticut

For information please call:

Father Vladimir Horoschak, 203-329-9933
or
Barbara Driscoll, 203-846-2280

C.R.A. Center, Lemko Hall, Yonkers

Schedule of Events

New Year's Party Saturday, Jan. 11, '96; 9:00PM

IN APPRECIATION

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

На фото: А.Лебедь.



Генерал подлінявся своїм планом вихода Росії з кризи, сказав, що 62 проценти найбогатших людей в Росії - бывши партпартачники и суть кризи в тому, што діятивя нинішньої власти не відповідають бажанням людей.

На питаня, кого Лебедь повинен буде поділити, жєби стати президентом Росії, генерал відповіт: "До виборов далеко и не вшиткы, з ким я повинен змататися доживут..."

Американци показали ниши раз, што ни оден "модний политик не остаєся без заінтересованя".

Він не просияв політичного азилу. Російский генерал і бывшии секретар Світа безпеки дост нежданно был запрошений в Америку, побувал в Нью-Йорку і Хьюстоні, встріявся з бывшим президентом Джорджом Бушом, бывшим державним секретарям Генри Киссінджером і Джеймсом Бейкером, виступал перед великими бізнесменами, тому числі Джорджом Соросом, політологам, а также бывшими співробітниками.

АЛЕКСАНДР ЛЕБЕДЬ ПОБУВАВ В США