

Carpatho-Rus

Karpatska Rus'



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

NO. 15, CARPATHO-RUS, YONKERS, N.Y., JULY 21, 1995 VOL. LXVIII

The following human interest story was recently printed in our newspaper in the Lemko Cyrillic dialect. We received several praiseworthy comments that the story should be translated and printed in the English section. It concerns a woman who lived in a small village in Lemkovina during the two world wars.

"I Lived Through Two Wars"

I was born in the village of Hanchov, Gorlitz District. My parents, Anthony and Justina Tima, have passed away. I want to write the story of how I lived through World Wars I and II.

Life in wartime is very difficult. People, never ignite the fire of war; extinguish it before it starts!

When World War I began, I was a little girl, about 6 years old and I do not remember it very well. I remember the troops coming into our village. They came from Slovakia and returned to Slovakia a little while later. But, even now, I do not know whether they were Russian or Austrian troops. Later on in that war, a large number of Russian soldiers arrived from Poland and stayed quite sometime in our village and the surrounding villages. The front was in the Beskid (Carpathian) Mountains. Visov and Blinharka were heavily bombarded, and our village also received some shells. A stray bullet hit one woman and her daughter. Her husband was in the army. She was preparing to leave the house, when the bullet hit her in the chest and ripped the back of the young girl's foot. The woman died before reaching the hospital, and the little girl was saved, although her injured foot was shorter than the other after surgery.

Visov and Blinharka were occupied and people were forced to evacuate. Villagers, in leaving, were crying, carried some belongings, took their children by the hand and walked with their cows. All their precious belongings were left behind. Several houses were burned down. The evacuees were mainly women and children with a few old men, since all the other men of military age were in the Austrian-Hungarian army.

It is very hard to describe grief, tears and the despair of the people. My house was near the road to Poland and there was a small chapel next to our house. Some people, including our neighbor, panicked and decided to evacuate before it was necessary. They brought their feather mattresses and other things to the chapel, walked to it, crying and praying. A soldier came and ordered them to take everything home since there would be no shooting.

A commanding officer stayed in our house. He was very nice to us. There were only 3 of us in the house, mother, sister and I, since my father was in the Austrian-Hungarian army. My sister and I often slept with our clothes on while mother hardly slept at all. She spent most of the nights watching over us.

One day, I was looking at the road and saw two soldiers on horses coming over the hill to the

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Carpatho-Rusyn Folktales and Legends

The following article was written by Richard Custer, editor of the New Rusyn Times, for the Carpatho-Rusyn Society of Pittsburgh. Readers may write to the following address to request their own copy of this text, or for other informative Rusyn related pamphlets: Carpatho-Rusyn Society; 125 Westland Drive; Pittsburgh, PA; 15217.

The Carpatho-Rusyns are an Eastern Slavic ethnic group numbering around 1.5 million in Central Europe. Their homeland is the towns and villages in and around the Carpathian Mountain region of Eastern Slovakia (the Prešov Region), southeast Poland (the Lemko Region), and the Transcarpathian District of Ukraine (historic Subcarpathian Rus'). Rusyn settlements are also

found in Romania (the Maramures district), northeast Hungary, and there is a colony of 25,000 Rusyns in Serbia (the Vojvodina or "Bačka" region).

The combination of the Rusyns' traditional Eastern Christian religion (whether of the Byzantine/Greek Catholic or Orthodox Christian Church); their settlements nestled amid the forests, rivers, and mountains of the Carpathian region; and their mountain-dweller, shepherding culture have inspired a rich, colorful folktale tradition rooted in both pagan superstition and Eastern Christian spirituality. The geography of Carpatho-Rus' is ideal for the development of folktales and legends. Deep virgin forests cover the hillsides all around, here and there a small green clearing shows itself and the foothills embrace one's pathway on both sides. Mountain creeks, like snakes, wriggle

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Celebrating 27 Years of Lemko Festival Tradition



ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 27, 1995

AT LEMKO RESORT, ROUTE 208, MONROE, N.Y.

CONCERT BEGINS AT 1:00 PM FEATURING

Glinka Junior & Senior Dance Ensembles

Glinka Folk Singing Group

Balalaika Russe with Melick, Nova, Alexandrovich & Wolownik

and others to be announced

Ethnic
Food

Al Parks and his
fine orchestra

Folk Art
Exhibits

To Lemko Resort: N.Y. Thruway to Exit 16. After tolls, on Rt. 17 to exit 130, Route 208, Monroe, bear right to 208, head north one mile, golf range on left, Glen Tavern on right, entrance to Lemko Resort opposite Tavern. Tel; (914) 783-1633.



Continued from Page 1 Column 1

village, looking anxiously in all directions. It was a patrol from the Slovakian side, Austrian soldiers. Suddenly, a horse-mounted soldier appeared from behind one of the houses and bravely charged the two horse guards, ordering them to surrender. One of the horse guards dismounted quickly, removed his weapons and surrendered. The other one did not obey and he was attacked and stabbed with a bayonet by the charging horse-mounted soldier. The stabbed soldier fell on the ground and roared like a wounded animal, it was a dreadful sight. Soon other soldiers came and took the surrendered soldier away. The wounded soldier was brought into our neighbor's house and laid down near the stove. We, children, looked at him, everyone felt sorry for the soldier who was in great pain. He could not understand our language because he was Hungarian. His partner who surrendered, was a Slovak.

The wounded soldier was being taken on a horse cart to a hospital in either Losia or Gorlitz. A Russian officer approached the cart to offer sympathy and hope that he would get well, but the soldier snatched a knife hidden in his boots, and stabbed the officer with it.

Fighting died down, less shooting was heard now and the army (Russian?) moved away.

Spring arrived. After the snow melted, the fields around the village were found to be severely damaged by the army horses and wagons. It took a great effort to prepare the fields for planting and cultivating. People tried to cultivate and plant, but there were few horses left. Some people had horses that the army left, but they were lame and could hardly drag their feet, and there was no grain to sow. Everything movable was taken by the soldiers. People suffered from smallpox and other infectious diseases due to poor nutrition and very unsanitary conditions. Though people suffered from hunger in the early spring, they were in better spirits; in the fields shepherds could be heard singing.

Spring and summer passed very quickly. It was not yet completely peaceful. Young men were being conscripted for the army. The longer the war lasted, the less enthusiasm young men had to join the forces. Many deserted and ran away from the villages to cross the border.

My father returned home from the war and began to repair our house and farm. We bought three sheep and a horse. By spring we had seven sheep. I loved my little lamb pet, but even more so, I loved brinza (cheese from the milk of sheep). My work responsibility was to pasture and tend the sheep. Mother sewed a jacket (hunja) for me, which I did not like because it was made in the old fashioned Lemki mode: with tassels below the waist, decorated with lace and red flowers. I was very unhappy with my jacket, but I had nothing else to wear for the winter. We had enough wool to knit a nice sweater, but we did not know how to use needles, so I had to wear the Hunja, whether I liked it or not.

The pastures in our village were public lands and this was good for the shepherds. We walked together, singing, laughing, talking loudly; and if someone's cow was lost, we cried together. Some farm owners had troubles with us because we, sometimes, pastured our sheep and cows in their onion and grain fields. They used sticks to scare us away, but that did not help much. It felt good to bring our well-fed herds home. We were praised for this at home and, sometimes, rewarded with butter.

In autumn we pastured the whole day, we called it presday (?), since harvest time was finished and most of the grass was already consumed by the herds. Only one large field had grass in the late autumn. This farm owner, with the large field, pastured his herd separately from all the others. Even when snow began to fall, which meant the loss of the grass, this owner would not let others graze their herds.

Translated by Larissa Ivanova
To be continued

The Cooking Corner

My sister, Elizabeth, is a very good cook. She reads cookbooks and tries new recipes. She has such a good reputation as a cook that almost every week she copies a requested recipe and takes it to bingo for some grateful fellow bingo player. Try these meatballs. They can be frozen after frying and cooked in a preferred sauce when needed.

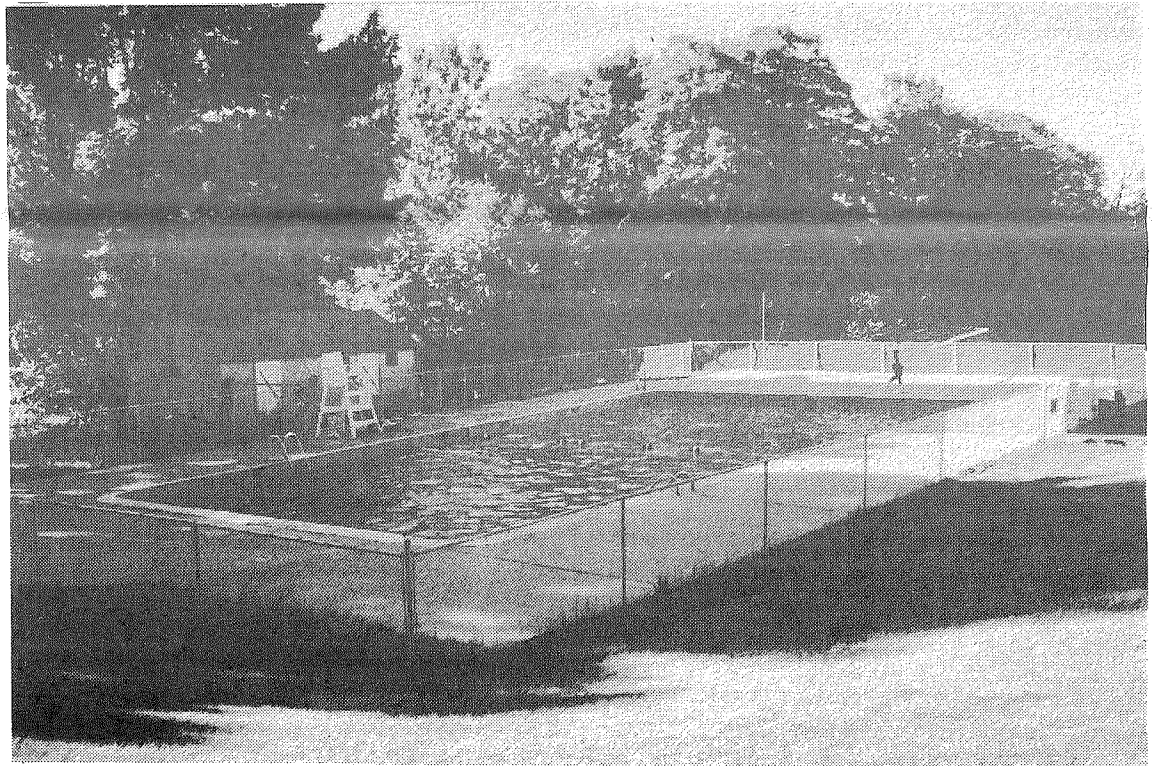
Liz's Meatballs

2	lbs.	ground chuck
1/2	lb.	ground pork
2	cups	Italian flavored bread crumbs
4		eggs
1	cup	milk
1	cup	fresh parsley, chopped
2		garlic cloves, chopped fine
1		onion, minced
1/2	cup	pignoli (pine nuts), chopped, optional

Mix all ingredients thoroughly. Let stand at least 1/2 hour. Shape into medium or walnut sized balls.

Either fry in olive oil, or a much easier way is to put foil on a cookie sheet. Spray with Pam. Bake 350 for 30 minutes. Simmer on low for 1 hour in one of the following sauces; spaghetti, barbecue or stroganoff (made by simmering in beef broth and adding sour cream before serving).

The Orthodox Herald



The rehabilitated swimming pool at Lemko Resort

Swim and Play at Lemko Resort

If you have been up to Lemko Resort recently, you should have noticed quite a change in the outdoor facilities. After being dormant for a number of years, the swimming pool has been refurbished and is now open. In addition to the regular pool, there is also a kiddie pool for the younger set. Lifeguards are on duty during pool hours.

In addition, there is a volleyball net up on the meadow. Basketball backboards have been set up on the hill by the gazebo, and a horseshoe pitching area is available on the side of the main house. For the "barn," there are video games in the "barn." The barn also has a fast food counter, which sells hot dogs, pizza, soda, cookies and candy.

You are cordially invited to come and spend the day with your family at the Resort. Bring a picnic basket, folding chairs, and a blanket. There are a few tables and benches available for your use. The bringing in and consumption of alcohol outside of the bar area is forbidden. The

use of charcoal or other types of grills is also not allowed.

Unless there is a cultural event taking place on that day, entrance to the Resort is free. Entrance to the swimming pool is \$3.00 per day for each child, and \$4.00 per day for each adult. Season passes can be purchased at \$200 for up to people in a family; \$150 for a couple; and \$100 or a person.

In the future we hope to have cottage rooms available so that Resort visitors can spend their vacation weeks with us in our beautiful, wooded Orange County setting.

The Lemko Resort Board of Directors extends an invitation to all to come and visit the Resort. Bring your children, grandchildren, other friends and relatives as well. We look forward to seeing you.

Lemko Resort Board of Directors

Reminder--38th Lemko Convention

September 9 and 10 at Lemko Resort

NOTE TO ALL BRANCHES: Kindly select your Delegates to our 38th Convention and submit the names, as quickly as possible, to one of our Executive Board members or our office in Yonkers.

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
YONKERS, NEW YORK 10704

IN APPRECIATION

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

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through these giants of nature. From the high peaks of eastern Marmaroš county and the Lower Beskyd range in the west with isolated mountain passes connecting the Prešov Region and the Lemko Region, to the mighty waters of the Tysa River and abandoned medieval castles all-but-hidden in the forests, one can easily imagine the magical beings and nightmarish creatures who might play roles in Rusyn legends.

Rusyns told their folktales at evening wake services, in taverns, or passed them down from parents to children. At evening vigil before a wake (*parastas*), during which the church cantor read from the Book of Psalms, the intervals between psalms would be filled with legends and fairy tales. They often acquired a cheerful tone, in the belief that the deceased perceived things going on around him.

A typical Rusyn folktale might begin, "Long ago in a faraway mythical land..." "Za horamy, za lisamy... - Beyond the mountains, beyond the forests..." or "On one of the mountain plateaus..." They may concern familial relations ("Three Sisters," "The Poor Man and His Sons," "The All-Seeing Grandfather"); the struggle with poverty - "The Rich Man and the Poor Man"(or the lucky ones who find wealth: "How Ivan married the Tsar's Daughter"); or they may explain animal behavior ("How the Dog, the Tomcat, and the Rabbit Became Eternal Enemies"). Tales abound in reference to saints, demons, and magical creatures - vampires (which fellow villagers might become after death), dwarfs, and nymphs.

A very popular theme is Jesus Christ coming to earth, and with saint Peter, going all around the world from village to village. The devil himself might star in a folktale: "The Devil at the Evening Party," "How the Devil Helped the Miners," "How the Gypsy Outwitted the Devil," "The Bet Baba (Grandma) Made with The Devil." Every Rusyn village has legends of witches' annual midnight meetings ("*bosorkanja*"), perhaps on St. John's Day, at imaginary places like "Black Mountain" or "Devil's Hill." Even today we hear in many villages legends about people's meetings with Death, personified as a powerful old woman ("*Smertka*") armed with a scythe, with which people could communicate: "Death, the Cantor, and the Soldier," "The Peasant and Death."

Many Rusyn tales deal with the folk mythology of the mountain-dwelling, shepherding Rusyn culture. Some plants have special powers and animals talk. The tales frequently deal with the supernatural: "Rozmarija - the Magic Rosemary Plant," "The Golden Lamb," "The Princess Witch," "The Bearded Dwarf," "The Evil Spirits," or perhaps "The Enchanted Horse." In the imagination of the Rusyn, spirits are everywhere: in the wind, in streams and lakes, and in the terrifying rolling lightning seen in mountainous districts. Ghosts, the "spirits of the dead," are a part of life in the remote mountain setting. By making "friends" with these beings, the Rusyn could tame his harsh environment and make it a friendlier place in which to live.

Rusyns have spun tales to explain magical origins or magical powers for even their own musical instruments, such as the *trembita* (an alpine horn), *piščalka* (flute), *husly* (violin), *cymbaly* (hammer dulcimer), and *buben* (drum).

A Rusyn National Hero - Prince Fedor Korjatovyč

Some Rusyn tales are based on historical figures. Among the oldest are those about Prince Fedor Korjatovyč, a prince from the Rus' land of Podolia (formerly part of Kievan Rus', then part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania) who was invited to Carpatho-Rus' (then part of the Kingdom of Hungary) by King Sigismund in 1395 with 40,000 of his followers to defend the Hungarian kingdom from Polish invaders. As "Lord of Mukačevo," he supposedly established the first Rusyn monastery, that of Saint Nicholas for the monks of the Order of

Saint Basil the Great at nearby Černeča Hora (actually, the monastery dates from 1360). His valiant military struggles and his benevolence to the local Rusyn population earned him an honored place in Rusyn history and folklore as the first Rusyn national hero. Tales glorify him as a valiant warrior, and defender of Eastern Christianity, embellished with a battle in which he vanquishes a fearsome seven-headed, child-eating serpent.

The Carpatho-Rusyn "Robin Hood" Tradition

Other historical figures who have entered the realm of Rusyn legend are the *opryški* or *zbiynyki* - the "Robin Hoods" of the Carpathians. The first recorded mention of them is at the attack of the Polish castle of Czorsztyń in 1434 by Lemko Rusyn *opryški*. Later Lemko *opryški* were Andrej Savka from the town of Dukla, Krosno county, and Vasyľ Bajus from Liščyny, Gorlyci county, who led armed bands of Lemko Rusyns against 17th century Polish landlords. The legendary Oleksa Dovbuš (1700-1745) of eastern Carpatho-Rus' (the Hutsul Region) led a band of 30 to 50 men. Local Rusyn peasants admired him and received whatever he stole from landlords, rent collectors, and money lenders. The Rusyns at Rachov even believe that the money for their church bells was given by Dovbuš. For many years Polish military expeditions sought to capture him; finally he was betrayed by a fellow *opryšok*, caught, and executed.

Mykola Šuhaj was born in Koločava, Marmaroš county in eastern Carpatho-Rus'. In the 1920s he fled to the mountains, leading an outlaw's life robbing from the rich and giving to the poor. He displayed heroic nobility and was beloved by the Rusyn people. He was immortalized in a 1933 Czech novel by Ivan Olbracht, *Mykola Šuhaj, the Brigand*. To his true story were added romantic colors and supernatural powers. Although the book was enormously popular and critically praised, conservative circles succeeded in having it removed from school libraries in Subcarpathian Rus'. The novel has been translated into 19 languages and after World War II was adapted to the silver screen.

The Carpatho-Rusyn writer Vasyľ Grendža-Dons'kyj (1897-1974) likewise popularized the "Robin Hood" theme with his 1936 novel, *Il'ko Lypej: A Carpathian Bandit*. Lypej, a childhood friend of Grendža-Dons'kyj in Marmaroš county, was disowned by his wealthy father for having married a poor girl. He turned to alcohol and was imprisoned for brawling; he escaped and discovered that his wife married him only because she expected him to inherit his father's riches. Distaught, rather than return to prison, he spends his last days as an outlaw figure - robbing from the rich and giving to the poor. The novel developed the themes of the demoralizing effect of wealth and the desire for freedom; Lypej was cast as a representative of the Rusyns who avenges the wrongs done to them.

The Rusyn Experience in America

In emigration, Rusyns have encountered new situations which have given birth to other types of legends. Among the best-known is the "Saint Nicholas Day Miracle" of 1907. On December 19, the feast of Saint Nicholas of Myra according to the Julian Calendar which was in use by Rusyns at the time, there was a terrible explosion at the Darr mine near Jacobs Creek, Pennsylvania in which hundreds of miners were killed. Fortunately for the Rusyn miners, most of them stayed home that day to observe the feast day of their patron. Saint Nicholas' sparing them from certain death contributed greatly to his already exalted position as special protector of the Rusyn people, and was probably the reason for the naming of the Churches of Saint Nicholas in Jacobs Creek and in nearby Perryopolis.

The legend of "Pop Ivan" or "Priest Ivan Mountain" was given new life in America. It was

Richard Custer

To be continued

PASSAIC LODGES 5-16 OF LEMKO ASSOC.

EVENT CALENDAR FOR 1995

Sunday, October 15-FALL BANQUET-1:00 PM
DONATION \$15.00

Birthday Meetings

Sunday, September 10 1:00 PM
Sunday, December 3 1:00 PM

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

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NOTICE

Now Available on Video

Professor Paul R. Magocsi explains:

WHO ARE THE LEMKOS?

This enlightening one-hour lecture will answer many common questions about our complex history. This tape is a "must" for anyone interested in learning more about their Lemko-American heritage. It makes a great gift for the grandchildren....and their children!

Professor Magocsi is a leading author on the subject matter and several of his books are also available through Lemko Hall. This video lecture was recorded during Professor Magocsi's visit to Lemko Hall in Yonkers, New York last September.

To order the video: Please send \$15. per tape

To: **Carpatho-Russian American Center**
Video Offer
556 Yonkers Avenue
Yonkers, NY 10704

Books Available: "Our People" \$25.
"Carpatho-Rusyn Americans" \$20.

To order the books kindly send your check with your name and address to the same address noted for the tapes.

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.