

Carpatho-Rus'

Karpatska Rus'



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

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Continued from Issue #21, 10/11/96

Christ's Visit to Kermesh in Smerekovetz

(A Lemko legend -- A folk tale)

They could hear the shepherds' voices, the whips together and the bells ringing in the village. The shepherds took their herds into the fields, singing, calling and shouting cheerfully to each other. As they passed the two strangers, they took off their hats and greeted: "Long live Jesus Christ!" "God is forever!" answered Peter in every direction.

On their way to the village they met a farmer with a herd. The farmer was well dressed and clean-shaven, but he had a black mustache curled up. He led his herd off the road and then walked away. Leaving the herd behind, the farmer went in the direction of the village. "What are you doing?" Christ and Peter asked him.

"I am invited to Kermesh in Smerekovetz, but I don't have a servant to leave the herd with. I decided to leave the herd out in the fields in God's hands," he replied.

"But the fields are planted with grain and beets. The herd could do much harm if you leave them," said Christ.

"I don't think so since I'm only leaving them for one day. After all, they will be in God's care."

Christ looked at Peter and Peter looked back at Christ. Peter stayed to watch over the herd, while Christ and the farmer, hand in hand, went to Smerekovitz. "Oh, dear God! How did I get myself into this?" cried Peter.

At the same time a bull noticed Peter's red cape. It bent its head down, lifted up his tail, stared, bellowed and ran toward Peter. It stopped very close to St. Peter and began to rake the ground with its hooves. Frightened, Peter started talking to the bull. "Wait a minute. Do you know whom you are dealing with? I am St. Peter, but right now I am God. Because you had intended to hurt me, you will be as obedient as a little lamb till midnight...."

Bellowing loudly, the bull listened and understood Peter's words. It didn't believe Peter at first, but the bull soon noticed that its voice was getting weaker. He sounded like a lamb calling his mother. Afraid of this change, the bull turned around to see if the cows were watching and thought, "I don't care what people think about my bleating, but if the cows laugh at me, I wouldn't be able to cope with the embarrassment. I would kill myself by jumping from the bridge into the river. I have to stop bleating and show the cows I pretended to be angry, that I am a serious animal and I want to pasture and get fat so my farmer will be proud of me." The bull stopped bleating, moved away from Peter and began chewing grass.

People from the surrounding villages such as Malastov, Pankna and Bortnoje were walking to Kermesh in Smerekovitz. As they came to this

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Carpatho-Rusyn Society Holds Third Annual Rusyn Day Picnic

Poloka said. "Some [new applicants] are Croatian, Serbian...and we've even had a Korean. The greatest compliment that someone from another culture can pay us is to take an interest in our culture. We are open to everybody. Because of that, everyone feels welcome."

Slavjane Performs

Slavjane's program consisted of songs and dances from the Šaryš region, as well as a Spring Maypole dance, complete with Easter eggs.

"We like the Šaryš area," Poloka had explained. "We've received material from the Šaryšan and Pul's ensembles. My son Dean was there for two years and worked with both of these ensembles. He brought back a lot of original choreographies that he learned there. The kids really like the new material. We've never had this material before - we've never been able to get it - so we're utilizing it to the fullest possible extent. We even have replicas of the costumes that Šaryšan uses."

Slavjane's performance lasted about 45 minutes, and included performers ranging in age from 6-17. Aside from costumes from the Šaryš area, dancers also displayed replicas of those worn in the Už, Zemplyn, and Boiko regions. As Poloka promised, the dances contained the dramatic posturing, foot-stomping, and fast-moving formations of the Šaryš tradition. It was evident from the faces of the dancers, that these dramatic elements appealed to their youthful flair for the dramatic.

Among those enjoying the performance was Paul Fedorko, a Rusnak whose ancestors come from Eastern Slovakia. Paul said that this was the first time he had attended a CRS event, and that he had learned of the CRS through church acquaintances. Stephanie Cosgrove, whose grandfather is a Lemko, was also attending her first CRS event. What drew Stephanie to CRS?

"Well, I pretty much know my father's side of the family: Cosgrove, it's an Irish name. My mother's maiden name was Lengyl'. I wanted to find out more about her heritage."

I asked Stephanie, who is Orthodox, about the cultural life in her church. Do Pittsburgh area Orthodox parishioners take an interest in their Rusyn heritage?

"Not everybody knows 'who they are.' Some people care and some don't. Some think they're Russians, Hungarians, or Slovaks. From what I've studied about languages, the Hungarian language is totally different. It's not even a Slavic language. We're definitely not Hungarians. I think that some feel embarrassed that they are some kind of 'ethnic artifact.' I was recently making *pirohy* with one lady who expressed that idea. She said, 'Why should we use our language?'...I'm sorry to be so negative for your article...."

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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 Thirteenth installment of the story from Moscow News.

The Crash and Rise of an Empire

A Colloquial Chronicle, Russia, 1985-. Part 13

Closed Society Exploded

The Chernobyl disaster brought such irrefutable proof of actual, physical harm done to the nation by the Soviet spy mania and general paranoia that glasnost made enormous strides that year, changing the whole climate in the country. The catastrophe showed that all-pervading secrecy, suspicion and other unsavory aspects of a closed society were not just a nuisance for the populace, besides being the Party's tool for keeping that same populace in blinkered, totalitarian unanimity, but also a menace to the nation's economic well-being and national security itself.

Before Chernobyl, only the more educated public, mostly in the capital cities, suffered from the structures of a hermetically sealed society. Trips abroad were, like nearly free housing or subsidized holidays, an instrument of encouraging loyalty to the Party-and-the-government. The few lucky ones only went to foreign lands in groups, each of them routinely chaperoned by the KGB. Contacts with foreigners were not just discouraged or frowned upon but rather pounced upon by the same three-letter organization. Letters and parcels from abroad were routinely intercepted, opened, inspected and confiscated. Bibles were supremely suspect and seized as fiercely as Henry Miller.

The majority of the population, who had never heard of Henry Miller and had no hopes of or much desire for going outside, into the wide but reportedly hostile world, did not much suffer from claustrophobia, having never lived in any but a closed society. They might be breathing nothing but the fumes of a chemical plant nearby, but in never entered their heads to link up this fact with their right to know why it had been built there in the first place. That was just the way things were. Sure, an amorous couple from the sticks would be extremely annoyed at being kicked off a Crimean beach at night by the ever watchful frontier guards: it was forbidden to spend a night anywhere within 500 meters of the edge of the beach which marked the state frontier. These were but minor inconveniences, though, and in this, as in many other areas, the same rule applied as was formulated by Alexander Herzen early in the 19th century: the severity of Russian laws is mitigated by a general sloppiness in their application.

The Chernobyl disaster showed, however, that the blight of secrecy was not always a joking matter, and that its consequences could be apocalyptic. Rudely awakened, Soviet society sat up and took notice, measuring itself not against the days of Stalinist horror but against the more civilized standards of open societies. The spectacle that presented itself to the eye was abominable.

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field, they knew that in the farmer's herd there was a ferocious butting bull and so they looked warily to see where it was. They noticed a new shepherd, but the bull did not even lift its head in the people's direction. People, as well as other shepherds, looked but were afraid to come close to the bull to see the man in the red cape. Wherever the man moved, the bull stayed close to his side.

It was a real Kermesh for the cows. They pastured peacefully until the evening like never before. By the time they had to go home, the cows moved their heads and chewed calmly as well as the bull. Only Peter was not too happy, knowing that Christ and the farmer were enjoying themselves at the Kermesh. Peter thought about the Kermesh, and wondered what it was all about. He had never been to one.

Peter heard the sound of whips, shepherds calling to each other and all the sounds he heard in the morning. Shepherds were taking the herds home. Peter's cows headed towards the village. The bull was so fat that it reminded Peter of his fat neighbor, the butcher who lived across the street from them. He knew that the butcher would pay 10 vetze (?) for the bull, not only for his meat, but his beauty (?) configuration (?).

Standing near the road, the farmer's wife was looking for the cows and for her husband. At last she thought she saw her herd; but there was a stranger with them. Usually, the bull was at the head leading the cows; but now the bull was at the rear. The stranger in the red cape was walking alongside the herd. She thought her husband had hired a servant, and was glad, because she had a lot of work for him to do.

"Are you from Gorlice?" she asked. "It would be great if you could stay with us until winter. I am not much help anymore, and there is a lot of work to do. You can go to the forest and help my husband cut trees and sell the wood in the town. You probably know where we could sell our wood at a good price since my husband had no luck selling on his last trip. My husband is a good man, but it is very difficult for him to sell his wood. Sometimes he brings back some money, but at other times, nothing at all. Last time he received neither money nor even a cup of salt and we need everything in the house. The next time we will send you with wood to Gorlice. I am so glad you are here, so very glad." said the woman.

The cows turned to the side of the road and so did Peter, when the woman shouted to Peter: "drive on, drive on! Tie them up and clean up the stable and sweep it because no one has cleaned it in two days. Then wash your hands and start milking the cows, and I will help you. But first, go to the stream and bring water, wash your hands and take food to the pigs, they are very hungry. When you finish, I will give you more work. I am sorry there is nothing for dinner, but I did not know you would be here. Since my husband will eat at the Kermesh, I prepared little food and ate everything I cooked."

"If you are not lazy and do your work quickly, you will like it here. If you do your work quickly, you will have less to do."

Peter had no choice but to work quickly as told. He realized that there would be problems if he didn't. He worked hard until late at night.

The farmer and Christ returned home late. Because people had recognized Christ, everybody wanted to speak with him. Since there was plenty of food and drink at Kermesh, Christ didn't have to work miracles as he had done in Cain when there was a shortage of wine. Despite his poverty, the host had prepared enough food for his guests.

Pleased that Christ had paid him a visit, the farmer had rented horses from his neighbor to take Christ and Peter back to Gorlice. On their way from Kermesh they also gave a ride to the farmer from Gladishov. When they got to Gladishov they found Peter threshing flour in the mill. There were still many chores to be done.

"I don't have any flour for the dough because my husband had been to Gorlice trying to sell a load of wood. Some factor had said that his wood wasn't good, and my husband angrily threw the wood into the river. He did not even bring home a handful of salt that day. That is the way life is, and nobody can change it" complained the woman.

Peter then realized that he was in the home of the farmer, who had suffered from Peter's thoughtlessness two weeks ago. Christ had told Peter then that he'll pay for his wrongdoing. Peter had not recognized the farmer. In Gorlice the farmer had been tired and poorly dressed. Today he had on his best clothes, and looked good. Peter had not understood that Christ had purposely sent him here to redeem himself.

As he put the last portion of grain into the mill, St. Peter heard the sound of a cart at the house. The farmer was asking if anyone was home.

Christ tapped Peter on the shoulder and said: "Let's go home. You have done your share. Get into the cart."

The farmer thanked Peter for taking care of his herd, and his wife praised Peter's work. "He is a very good worker. We need someone like him to help us. He had been in the pasture with the bull and the cows all day. He has done all work quickly and efficiently both inside and outside the house and barn. Go find someone like that!" said the woman as she gave Peter her hand.

They returned home to Gorlice. As Peter opened the window, the town clock struck 12. Christ looked at his watch and said: "It's midnight, 12 o'clock. Your time to be God is over. Hang my red cape on my hook and your yellow one on yours."

Peter did as he was told and then fell down at Christ's feet. "Before going to bed I have two important favors to ask of you, Christ."

"What are they?" asked Christ.

"One is never take me to Kermesh with you. The other is never appoint me to be God. I somehow managed the bull, but that woman didn't let me say a word," said Peter as he burst into tears.

Stroking Peter's head, Christ said: "Stop crying, get up and go to bed. Tomorrow you will feel much better."

Nest morning Peter felt like a new man. Physical labor and fresh air had worked wonders.

When he saw Christ, he began talking and planning excitedly about festivals. "Next time," said Peter, "we will go to a different village. I know one guy from Hanchowa...."

"I know more than one guy in Hanchowa, but do you know what is important?" said Christ. Apparently forgetting the lesson of yesterday, Peter laughed as he replied, "To celebrate a rich Kermesh."

"People in Hanchowa always have elaborate and rich festivals, but it is more important to be invited to it," said Christ.

"But, Christ, who wouldn't invite us?" asked Peter.

Christ looked unhappily at the cloak, took the broom and gave it to Peter. Remembering yesterday's lesson, Peter silently went outside to sweep the stairs, porch and door mat. On the other street Jewish children were walking to school with their little hats singing cheerfully "Zumzei, zumzei, anahanebaben...."

Peter looked at them and his eyes filled with tears as he automatically kept repeating, "If it were not for the bull and that woman."

The last time people saw Peter he was walking and sweeping the door mat, repeating the same words over and over again, "If it were not for the bull and that woman...."

This story might be true, and then again, it might not be; but don't ask me. There are still people alive who remember, so go and ask them.

THE END

Translated by Larissa Ivanova

IN APPRECIATION

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

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I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete. A Herenchak Ed.

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Paranoia started right at the core of the whole social structure -- in the Party (and we must bear in mind that it was about 19 million strong): the whole oceanic flow of paper from local Party cells upwards and from the Politburo and Central Committee downwards was secret, top secret or plain old confidential, even if some little slip of paper contained nothing more than instructions on how the Party dues were to be paid. Come to think of it, it wasn't all paranoia, a throwback to the times when the Party was a bunch of conspirators or a tiny minority in power confronting a hostile population: the shroud of secrecy was also a useful tool of psychological domination. Ancient geographers had an apt saying: Where you know nothing, place terrors. So for decades the people saw the Party as a terrifying force -- and when the fear evaporated in the rays of glasnost, the colossus came tumbling down like the statue of Dzerzhinsky in Lubyanka in August, 1991.

The same hermetic situation prevailed in all the other state and social structures. No ray of glasnost ever penetrated into the inner workings of the armed forces, the Interior Ministry, or, *horribile dictu*, the KGB. The military-industrial complex was also impervious to view, and if you consider that that complex comprised about 60 percent of the nation's industry, if not more, that meant pretty much the whole country. These bureaucratic-industrial monsters made up their own laws called instructions, *instruksii*, defying all rights -- human, animal and vegetable -- and lived by those rules. If any individuals got hurt by those monsters, so much the worse for the individuals: the monsters could always cite their own "instructions" which invariably proved them right -- if they ever bothered to explain anything to anyone. In 1957, long before Chernobyl, there was a nuclear explosion in Chelyabinsk in the Urals, and no one was the wiser -- I only learned about it when I went to the Urals in about 1971. The population of a huge area suffered -- is still suffering -- from the consequences of that much less publicized disaster, and their deaths were never diagnosed as anything remotely connected with radiation sickness. There were also rumors about a passenger ship on the Volga crashing into a bridge, with a loss of hundreds of lives, but there was never a murmur about it in the press.

The press, and anything ever printed in the country, was subject to the hardest censorship -- which went to simply idiotic lengths. I remember being obliged to have my dissertation okayed by Glavlit, the state censorship agency, although it was on an abstruse subject in semiotics, light-years away from practical life, let alone any state secrets

I sometimes think that all this might have gone on for years, if it hadn't been for Chernobyl. Everybody would have been paying lip service to glasnost, because it was fashionable and the General Secretary told them to, and everybody who had the power to do so would be holding on to their precious "secrets" or rather the practice of never letting any outsiders know of what went on inside. Chernobyl put an end to that. On May 6, Pravda published an article on the disaster which broke with the cover-up tradition and was a real eye-opener to vast numbers of people. It became known much later that the man who insisted on its publication was Alexander Yakovlev, once exiled as an ambassador to Canada for being too much of a liberal (by Soviet Marxist standards), brought back by Gorbachev in 1983 and elevated to the Central Committee secretariat in February 1986. He became the motive force behind practically all moves that signaled the advance of glasnost and the crumbling of the hitherto relentlessly closed society.

Sergei ROY, Moscow News
To be continued

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

Schedule of Events

Kermesh Sat. Nov. 23, '96; 7:30PM
New Year's Party " Jan. 18, '96; 9:00PM

Press Fund Contributions

Andrew F. Kay \$30.

Letters of Interest-Talerhof Chapel Repairs

Dear Larry and Terry,

I read your appeal for donations to repair the leaking roof of the Talerhof Memorial Chapel at Lemko Resort. We thank you very much for taking this problem on yourself. We enclose a \$50. check to help for this much-needed repair work.

God bless you both.

John & Steffi Holovach

Thank you John & Steffi. We also want to make a correction in issue #19; 9/13/96. We inadvertently included Larry Garrahan's \$25. donation in the Press Fund column. Instead, it should be included as a donation for repair to the roof of our Talerhof Memorial Chapel. Ed.

The Cooking Corner

We usually leave the homes of our relatives in Uzhorod loaded down with boxes of cookies to "eat on the bus and plane." We especially appreciate them because we know that there is such a shortage of sugar, shortening and flavorings. Here is a recipe for one type of cookie. The relative who gave us these baked them in a little wood-fed oven in the yard which was shaded by the grapevines. The dough was cooled by placing it in the well, which had been dug by Fr. Basil's grandfather. The nuts were from trees he planted.

Carpathian Poppy Seed Slices

1	cup	butter, softened
1	cup	sugar
1		egg
1	tsp	vanilla
1/2	tsp	cinnamon
1 1/2	cups	finely chopped nuts (almonds are best)
1/2	cup	poppy seed
2	cups	flour
1/4	tsp	salt
2	tbls	sugar

Cream butter and sugar. Add egg, vanilla and cinnamon. Beat two minutes. Stir in flour and salt, gradually. Mix well. Add nuts and poppy seed. Mix well.

Put in cool place for several hours until dough can be handled to shape into rolls. Make 2 rolls about 2 inches in diameter. Roll them in the 2 tablespoons sugar.

Wrap the rolls in wax paper and refrigerate for at least 3 hours. Cut into 1/4 inch slices. Place on ungreased cookie sheets. Bake in 325 degree oven about 20 minutes or until cookies start to brown. Cool on racks. Keep in tightly closed container until ready to serve. makes about 6 dozen.

The Orthodox Herald

Continued from Page 1, Column 2

How does Stephanie understand that situation? For what reason did that lady feel the way she did?

"Probably it's because they have been oppressed because of who they are and how they express themselves."

Where: in the United States or in Europe?

"Here," Stephanie answered. "My mom said that when she was little, they [other American school children] would call them 'Dirty Russians,' and throw rocks at their house whenever they would find out in school [after the Christmas break] that they [the Rusyns] had not yet had their own Christmas. This was during the 1950s and the anti-communist mood."

Sing-Along

Next up on the program was the Carpatho-Rusyn folk song sing-along...a perfect occasion for all those "wannabee" folk singers who don't know the lyrics, or don't like to sing alone. Jerry Jumba, our "choirmaster," passed out song sheets with 30 Carpatho-Rusyn songs, conveniently transliterated (written in Latin letters) and translated into English.

"What you read is what you say," Jumba said, instructing the audience how to manage the transliterated lyrics.

Jumba first lead the audience through a number of well-known folk songs such as *Zaspivajme Sobi* and *Červená Ruža*. Jumba also took requests and lead the audience in singing alternative English-language lyrics to traditional Carpatho-Rusyn melodies. Unlike the Rusyn lyrics which would normally go with the melodies, the English lyrics described the Rusyn-American experience in the United States.

An example was "The Bingo Song," written by Mr. Jumba himself and set to the melody of *Za horami, za lisami*:

Our people sure like bingo/
All the players have their lingo.

Once you learn your bingo
language/Go and have a fried
steak sandwich.

Those younger people in the audience who despaired at having to mumble their way through the original Rusyn lyrics were able to more easily master these American lyrics.

Among the people at the sing-along was John Dawson, 13, a member of *Slavjane*. Why did John join the group?

"Well, I saw them performing. I'm really into this type of stuff," he answered. "I thought that it would be fun. I'm not the person that you expect would be into this stuff, but I really like it."

How do other teenagers react to John's dancing. Do they like it?

"When we went to Kennywood, all these kids in school there were like, 'ughh.' They all looked at me and they started laughing. But then around the end of the show they said 'wow,' because they never saw that stuff done before."

Which dances are easiest and which are the most difficult for John?

"It all depends on what you're interested in. I'm interested in all this stuff, so they all seem easy. At first, everything is hard until you get into it."

John plans to stay with *Slavjane* until he graduates in 3 years.

CRS Heritage Tour

This summer's first ever CRS-led Heritage Tour was the topic of many conversations. Those people who had been on the Tour shared stories, photos, and impressions with others. **Walt Orange**, whose ancestors came from Medzilaborci and Zahočevja, enjoyed meeting members of the Duchnovyč Theater Company, whom he found to be very personable. "They really need some help," he said. "Government funding is very much diminished. They are concerned that they might not be able to keep the Theater afloat."

Did Walt talk to anyone about the recent budget cuts? What does he think: is it straight economics, or is there a more ethno-political aspect?

To be Continued

Susyn Mihalasky