

# **2007 Tour to Western Ukraine**

**By  
Jim Onyschuk**

## **Introduction**

The idea for this tour had been in the works for a number of years. The Toronto Ukrainian Genealogy Group (TUGG) had been discussing the need for a genuine genealogy research tour to Ukraine. Here we would search for our ancestor's records in the various historical and Oblast (State) Archives. These sources were recently open to the public, including to foreigners, now that Ukraine had become an independent nation state in 1991.

The first serious discussion occurred at our October 8, 2002 meeting, when we had Ihor Kuryliw speak on "Travel in Ukraine in the past and in the present." Ihor ran Bloor Travel Agency Limited and explained the process of planning a trip to Ukraine and how things had changed over the years.

In the spring of 2006, TUGG advertised the "Discover Your Roots Tour to Western Ukraine." Unfortunately, many potential participants had already booked their vacation time and the numbers of committed participants were too few to activate the tour based on the quoted price, which was determined on the basis of 20 participants. We were forced to cancel the 2006 Tour. We decided to again offer the tour, except advertise it much earlier in 2007.

At the April 11, 2006 TUGG Meeting, Ed Drebot spoke on his two years in Ukraine and visiting the archives. Later, on September 11, George Duravetz spoke on "How Canadians can Survive a Trip to Ukraine & Ukrainian Bureaucracy." Next, on November 14, Gail Skikovitz spoke on her experiences in Ukraine and her visits to the archives in Ternopil and Poland. Finally, Dr. Romana Bahry delivered an address on her visits to the archives in Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Krakow and Przemyshl.

These various presentations helped lay the basis for our planning preparations, especially around visiting the Archives. As part of the process we sent out a number of letters to the various Archives announcing our visit. This would help smooth the way for our research. We submitted individual

requests for specific documents (Spravy) so that they would be set aside for our visit on the days we would be at each Archive.

A lot of work went into the preliminary part of the tour, where we sent out many letters. It paid off with a seamless connection to the Archives.

The rest of this account is my personal recollection based on the notes I kept.

## **DAY 1—THURSDAY, JUNE 7**

### **Leaving Toronto**

I hardly slept last night, thinking about what I must pack for this, once-in-a-lifetime trip. I had earlier made up a detailed check-list of things to do and items to bring. Ihor, our travel agent, had sent out the airline details and that our baggage allowance was limited to two pieces of checked baggage, each not more than 23 kg or 50 lbs. The carry-on could not exceed 23x40x51 cm. and not be more than 5 kg/11 lbs. I had decided to pack enough clothing for one week. I decided to bring some laundry soap and wash my clothes in the hotel sinks.

I beat the 6:00 am alarm by ten minutes and got busy going through my check-list. I hadn't yet completed a small picture album to show any potential relatives I may encounter. I worked on this matter until I had a brief representative album including family tree and family group forms.

One of my last chores before heading out was to mow the lawn. It was already 5 inches and looking rather out of place in my neighbourhood of well-manicured lawns and gardens. In my rush to do a quick mow I pulled my left calf-muscle while pushing the mower up a hill. This sore muscle would end up causing me grief through most of the walking parts of the tour. Ironically, when I got back to Canada, I watched a TV news bit warning about mowing lawns and sustaining calf-muscle injuries. It recommended stretching exercises before mowing. If only I had seen it earlier.

The flight was scheduled for 6:20 with a recommended check-in time for three hours earlier. My wife, Joanne, was anxious about getting me to the airport in time to meet the three hour check-in time. I began to wonder, "Why does she really want me to leave so early?"

We got to Terminal 1 at 3:40 and after hugs and kisses, I found the line-up at the Austrian Airlines counter. My carry-on bag was too heavy, so I removed some books and transferred them to the stowed bag. I noticed some Ukrainian being spoken among the passengers.

Next I made a very long trek to gate 171. Why is it that on every International flight I have taken that I have had to walk to the opposite side

of this Terminal? Is this an unwritten law? I bet, that when I get to Vienna, that I will face more of the same long-distance walking.

Earlier, I had e-mailed my picture to the other tour members so that they could identify me. As I wandered into the gate 171 waiting area I was approached by Wayne Vizniowski, one our group. Wayne introduced me to his family members taking the tour. The Vizniowski's included: Wayne and his wife Mary Ellen from Arva Ontario; Glen Albert from Peterborough, Ontario; Gary Stephen from Hay River, Northwest Territories; Van Allen from Mount Hope, Ontario; and Carol Jane Donelly from London, Ontario.

A few days earlier I had spoken to Harry Hrynkiw, over the phone and described myself as sporting a white beard. We agreed to be on the look-out for each other in the waiting area. I looked around, jutting my chin forward, to emphasize the beard, but nobody approached. I figured that Harry and his wife Margaret must be running late. The other "fellow-traveler," Romana Bahry, a seasoned Ukraine traveler had earlier made her way to Ukraine. She would meet us at the Opera Hotel in Lviv. Romana is a professor from York University and is fluent in Ukrainian. She has made a number of research trips to Ukraine and spoke about her last tour of the archives at a recent meeting of the Toronto Ukrainian Genealogy Group.

I chatted with the Vizniowski's, finding out more about their genealogical interest. Wayne had been involved in researching his family history for about twenty years. He was also very active in the London chapter of the Ontario Genealogical Society. He has examined many microfilm records of the type of church records that we would be examining in the various archives. The other family members had picked up an interest through their brother. Finally the boarding call was announced.

After locating our seats I checked around to see if Harry and Margaret were aboard. I knew that they would be seated near us, since Ihor had booked our seats in close proximity. Harry called out my name and I finally met Harry Hrynkiw and his wife Margaret who hailed from Olds Alberta. I quickly introduced the Hrynkiw's to the Vizniowski's. Our flight was 15 minutes late on take-off, getting underway at 6:35 pm. I noted down that it was 1:35 am in Kyiv and adjusted my watch to Ukrainian time.

After getting comfortably ensconced, I was approached by a Stewardess to switch my seat. They were hoping to accommodate a family, who wished to

sit together. I obliged and ended up sitting next to a delightful two-year-old, who while being able to lie in her seat was able, at the same time, to kick me in the ribs, every time I started to doze off. I didn't think that I was snoring to warrant such attention.

I noticed a nervous woman who did a great deal of standing and pacing, during the trip. She constantly donned a sweater, then took it off, then put it on again and headed for the washroom. She seemed very pale, so I assumed that she was getting airsick. I'm glad she wasn't sitting near me. I probably would have also become nervous. She would do this routine throughout the trip.

After we were well underway we were served drinks and supper. We were given a choice of Salmon or Curried Chicken. I opted for the chicken. It was very tasty "smachny." I must practice my Ukrainian.

After fumbling with the video control devise and watching others do likewise I finally figured out how to control the video on the back of the seat facing me. I played with the channels, noting the different music and video channels. I found a movie and settled back.

## **DAY 2—FRIDAY, JUNE 8**

### **Traveling to Lviv, Ukraine**

Day two arrived as we flew over the Atlantic. I tried to sleep but kept getting nudged in the ribs. The two-year-old slept soundly and probably was dreaming that she was jumping up and down.

Day-light greeted us as we approached the Emerald Isle. I switched the movie off in favour of some nice classical music. We crossed the Irish Sea to some wonderful Strauss Waltz's. What do you expect, we were flying Austrian Air. Next, I particularly enjoyed a stirring rendition of the Radetzky March as we passed over the North Sea—how appropriate! This, along with the kicks, definitely woke me up in time for the breakfast service of rolls, cheeses, slices of salami and ham, a fruit cup and strong coffee. Now I was “bright eyed and bushy tailed!”

The Captain announced the estimated arrival time to Austria of 8:55 am Austrian time. Not bad since our original schedule had us down for 8:50. I wondered that had we flown Swiss Air, would we have arrived at precisely 8:50.

After thanking the flight crew, we headed out to find our connecting flight #381, scheduled to leave Vienna at 13:20 (1:20 pm) and arrive at Lviv Airport at 15:40 (3:40 pm)

### **Vienna Airport**

As we searched out the gate for flight #381, I noticed the many boutiques, cafes, bars and interesting places to sit and relax. This is a civilized airport. We decided to quickly make our way through security and find our waiting area for the connecting flight. Big Mistake!

In the USA you take your shoes off and in Vienna they make you take your belt off. I had trouble keeping my pants up and I noticed others in the same predicament. What a stupid requirement! What items of clothing do other countries require you to remove?

I was proud that my new titanium/ porcelain hip set off the alarm. After squeezing my hip for a while, the security guard let me through—I was

hoping for a female security guard. I exaggerated a hobble to appear more convincing that I had a hip problem.



We definitely made a mistake by checking in only to find a barren waiting room with steel seats. Now we had a long three-hour (180 minute) wait. There was only a duty-free boutique and a smoke-filled coffee kiosk in the waiting area. After a while we ended up standing and chatting, as this was more comfortable than sitting in the steel seats.

The PA system was set at an incredibly high volume and abruptly stopped any personal conversation every time they blasted through their loud and inordinately long announcements, first in German, then in English.

I notice the sick passenger from the plane. She was still continuing the routine with the sweater and headed for the ladies washroom a number of times.

Finally our plane arrived and we boarded a bus, which took us to the plane. The bus driver must have thought that he was driving a Ferrari, as he whipped the bus around corners, tossing us passengers around as if we were on the high seas. I yelled at the driver telling him, “we’re on a bus, not a sports car.” He slowed down and looked rather sheepish as we glared at him while we left the bus.

This plane was smaller than our previous plane. It turned out to be a Canadian built Dash 8. It was designed by Dehavilland and built by Bombardier. Sitting next to me was a young Ukrainian man. I initiated the conversation by asking if he spoke Ukrainian. “Ve rozmovlyate po-ukrainsky.” He replied in Ukrainian and I responded by saying, “Ya trokhy rozmovlayu po-ukrainsky.” (I speak a little Ukrainian). This was my first stab at speaking Ukrainian to a real Ukrainian. I managed to carry on a conversation in broken Ukrainian and found out that he was a cement-pourer working on a large building in Germany and was returning to Ukraine where he lived near Ternopil. I asked him if he liked Germany and he replied, “ne doozha” (not very much). As we were descending into Lviv, I thanked him



for letting me practice my Ukrainian on him. He responded “Ve dobre hovorete ukrainskoyo.” (You speak Ukrainian well.)

### **Lviv Airport and Ukraine Customs**

As the plane neared touch down, I noticed that others in our group were tearing up. We finally made it to Ukraine! We’re seeing Ukraine for our first time!

As we taxied towards the terminal building I could see that this was a typical building constructed during the Stalinist period. It bore the usual hallmarks, statues of miners and farmers on the outside. I was told that there would be someone with a sign to meet us and escort us to our hotel. I did not see anyone and was getting a bit concerned, but tried not to show it to the others in our group. Perhaps they were inside?



We crowded our way into a waiting area lined with benches. A large mural inside the terminal showed other toiling workers. The staff inside were all very young and very serious, reflecting the mood created by the mural. I continued looking for someone with a sign and grew a little more apprehensive.

The first step in going through customs is to fill out a declaration form. It is a bit confusing; as are most government forms (Canada’s included). The form has two side by side sections, requesting exactly the same information. We filled out one section and presented it to a young customs official, who impatiently told us to go back and fill out the other half, even though it required exactly the same information. Why weren’t there instructions on the form indicating “fill out both halves?” It would have saved a bit of aggravation and would only take those four words to clarify and correct the situation. We again presented the form and were ushered to a booth area.

We next presented the form and our passport to another young and serious-looking official who studied the passport, then your face and then the passport and finally stamped the passport and gestured for you go into the next room.

In the next room, we were relieved to see that our luggage has made it through to Lviv and was not traveling to some other destination. However, I was still concerned that there was no person with a sign.

We gathered our luggage and had to open the bags for inspection after they passed through the X-ray machine. Finally we were told that we were free to go. As we exited the Terminal we finally saw our guide with the sign standing in front of our bus. After boarding and noticing some of our group taking pictures, it dawned on me that I did not have my camera bag with me. I panicked and rushed off the bus back into the Terminal. I located my camera bag on the bench I had used when filling out the Declaration Form. It was a good thing someone was taking pictures, otherwise I would not have been reminded about my camera bag. After retrieving the bag a young official scolded me for rushing through the Terminal.

Our guide's name was Ihor, a small, balding man in his forties. He welcomed us to Ukraine and Lviv and conducted a brief tour lecture as we drove to our hotel. He was very knowledgeable about the various buildings we passed and the history of Lviv. We arrived at the ***Opera Hotel*** and checked in. Ihor bade us good-bye and told us he would meet us the next morning at 8:00 am for our tour of Lviv.



The Opera Hotel is a small hotel in an older building. It is located directly across from the ***Lviv Opera House***, hence its name. The hotel has been recently renovated and was originally called the New York Hotel. There is a small elevator which can only hold a few people with their luggage. We agreed to meet in the lobby at 7:00 pm and go for supper.



After unpacking and freshening up I decided to explore around the hotel and exchange some money. There was a small money exchange building just south of the hotel. The Opera House is a beautiful structure located at the north end of ***Prospect Svobody*** (Freedom Boulevard). Prospect Svobody

consists of two streets bordering the west and the east side of a promenade park. A wide walkway, lined with benches, runs the length of the park. Along the eastern side of Prospect Svobody is a long string of canopied outdoor cafes and restaurants.

At 7:00 pm, we met in the lobby and decided to see what restaurants were near-by. We crossed over Prospect Svobody and walked through the adjacent park. After a while we decided to try one of the restaurants adjacent the park. This would be our first Ukrainian meal. Our waiter was a young Ukrainian who spoke a little English. The menus were also in English, so we had no trouble ordering. Gary Vizniowsky was one of the first to order and he ordered a steak. We all ordered the borscht (delicious) along with other items, including ones requiring some preparation. After an hour, all our orders were delivered and eaten with the exception that there was



still no steak. We order desserts and finished them when Gary's steak finally arrived. This would become a standing joke of what not to order at future restaurant gatherings.

After the restaurant, we were all feeling bushed and decided to call it an evening. Crossing the road to our hotel I felt my left calf muscle rip and I ended up hobbling back to my room. This calf muscle would end up troubling me for most of the tour. I figured that following my hip operation, the muscles of my left leg had weakened, due to lack of exercise and when I hurriedly mowed the lawn on Thursday afternoon, it overstressed my left calf muscle, causing the injury.

---

### **A Bit About Lviv**

Lviv was founded in the 1256 as a hilltop fort by Prince Danylo Ghaltskyi and named in honor of his son, Lev (meaning Lion). When Danylo died Lev made Lviv the capital of the area known as Halich-Volhynia. As the city prospered, Lviv became religiously and ethnically diverse. It was captured

by Poland in 1349 and remained under the Polish reign until 1772. In 1772, following the First Partition of Poland, the city, now known as **Lemberg** became the capital of the Austrian Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria. Then it came under the power of Austria and from 1867 on – the Austro-Hungarian Empire. During World War I, the city was captured by the Russian army in September of 1914, but was retaken in June of the following year by Austria-Hungary.

In October 1918, the Austro-Hungarian Empire collapsed, and the Western Ukrainian People's Republic (ZUNR) was proclaimed. However, it existed only few months. In the summer of 1919 western Ukraine and Lviv were annexed to Poland. The city became an arena of conflict between the local Ukrainian and Polish populations. Between the World Wars, Lviv was the third largest Polish city (after Warsaw and Lodz) and the seat of the Lwow Voivodeship. Lviv and its population suffered greatly from the two world wars, the Holocaust, and the invading armies of the period. In September 1939, as the result of the division of Poland by Berlin and Moscow, western Ukraine became a part of the USSR. In June 1941 Lviv was seized by the Nazi occupation, lasting until July 1944. From 1944 western Ukraine together with the rest of Ukraine was a part of the USSR until August 1991.

Because of Lviv's strategic location between eastern and central Europe and between the Black and Baltic seas, it resulted in a history of extreme transitions as it passed from the hands of one great power to the next. In a period of seven centuries the city was invaded by Poles, Austrians, Germans, Swedes, Russians, Tartars and Turks. Yet, despite this fact and even with the absence of self rule, the city always remained an important center of Ukrainian culture and nationalism. Today it is still considered to be one of the main centers of Ukrainian culture and much of the political class in Kiev originates from Lviv.

Having escaped much of the urban devastation of WWII, Lviv is a living museum of Western architecture from the Gothic to the present. Almost half of the architectural monuments located in Ukraine are concentrated in Lviv. Most of the old architecture remains intact. It is a mixture of many architectural styles: Gothic, Italian Renaissance, Byzantine, German Baroque, rococo, classicist and many more. Today the city's center contains over 2000 buildings of major architectural achievement and is rightfully recognized on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Driving along one of

Lviv's cobble stoned roads one could easily feel that they were in Paris or Rome.

Today, Lviv is a city of around 830,000. It is considered the cultural capital of Western Ukraine, is the center of Ukrainian nationalism and a major center of transportation, industry, commerce, education and culture.

---

Whilst the eastern part of Ukraine, is largely Russified, L'viv and Western Ukraine retain its Ukrainian spirit. Russian is understood by a majority of the city's population, although Ukrainian is by far the predominant language. I met many young Ukrainians in Lviv, who were quick to correct you if you used a Russian term, instead of the Ukrainian counterpart. For example, saying "**spaseeba**" (Russian), instead of "**dyakooyoo**" (Ukrainian) for "**thank you,**" would bring a frown from a young waiter.

## **DAY 3—SATURDAY, JUNE 9**

### **Tour of Lviv**

I woke up to the alarm clock going off. I had set it for 7:00 am and it showed 7:00 am, however, my watch showed that it was 1:30 am and the fact that it is dark outside meant that it is not 7:00 am. I turned the TV on and it confirmed that my watch was correct, so there is something wrong with my alarm clock. I would have to rely on wake-up calls to get me up.

Now, I couldn't sleep, so I decided to write and read. I eventually fell asleep and was woken by a barking dog around 6:00 am. After showering, I headed downstairs for my first Ukrainian breakfast. The dining room is in the basement level and set up buffet style. There are scrambled eggs, hard-boiled eggs, bacon, sausages that look like wieners, cold cuts, home-fried potatoes, cheeses, kasha, fish, diced beef in a gravy, blood sausages, cold cereals, coffee, various teas, milk, kefir and juices. You can also order fried eggs and omelets.

On the wall are various posters of famous opera stars, ballets and programs featured at the Lviv Opera and Ballet House. The theatre was built in the style of "Vienna pseudo Renaissance" which is a mixture of different architectural styles. This imposing building is richly decorated from the outside and has sumptuous interior.

Romana Bahry, who had checked in late yesterday, joins us for breakfast. She tells us of the research she has been doing prior to our arrival and is loaded down with documents. She is particularly excited about what she was finding in the Schematisms she was researching at the Vasyl Stefanyk Scientific Library in Lviv. Schematisms were annual handbooks listing offices and office-holders. There were schematisms for government, churches and educational institutions. If you had ancestors who worked for government, a church or a school, these schematisms could yield valuable information and add to one's genealogical pursuits. I asked Romana, if she would be willing to prepare a talk on this subject for one of our TUGG meetings.

At 8:00 am we meet our guide Ihor, who will be taking us on our Lviv tour. We climb aboard an air-conditioned bus and meet our driver, another Ihor. The temperature was already pushing 30 centigrade and it was very humid and no breeze. The bus would become a welcome refuge from the heat.



We started the tour with a brief description of *The Grand Opera Theater*, across from our hotel. Grand Opera Theater was erected between 1897 and 1900 and can seat over 1,000 patrons. The theatre was built in classical style following the traditional lines of what was then known in Europe as the Viennese Pseudo-Renaissance of the 19th century.



We next toured *Ploshcha Rynok* [Rynok (market) Square]. It was here, on November 1, 1918, that Ukrainians proclaimed the birth of the Western Ukrainian National Republic. It is the heart of the old city where the 210-foot-tall Town Hall is ringed by 44 three- and four-story buildings that were once 16th-century town houses for the nobility and

wealthy merchants. Over the centuries, the buildings have been refurbished and reflect various styles, including Baroque, Gothic and Renaissance. Fountains with statues of Greek gods and goddesses frame the four corners of the square. The narrow cobbled streets around Rynok Square once housed the workshops of Lviv shoemakers, printers, chemists and numerous other tradesmen. Some of today's street names, for instance *Virmen'ska* (Armenian), *Yevreyska* (Jewish) or *Serbska* (Serbian) still remind us of the multicultural history of the city.

Here, other tour groups wandered about, and at the cafe in front of the Town Hall people sipped beer under the green and white Lvivske beer umbrellas. I was tempted to join them, but Ihor had a lot he wanted to show us and time was of the essence.

We briefly visited a number of different churches of various faiths. We also visited the Bernardine Monastery, home of the Lviv Historical Archives. Now we knew where we would have to go on Monday. One of the more outstanding churches was *St George Cathedral*. It is currently the headquarters of the Ukrainian Catholic Church and is one of the more impressive Baroque Cathedrals in all of



Ukraine; its exterior is matched in intricacy with its decorative interior. We wandered down to the catacombs and visited the tombs of some of Ukraine's modern martyrs, such as that of Metropolitan Josyf Slipyi, who was exiled to Siberia by the Soviet Government after the Second World War due to his religious and nationalist beliefs.

Next we visited the ***Drug-store Museum***. The museum occupies the building of the oldest and still functioning drugstore. It is the **ONLY** operating drugstore-museum in Ukraine and in the whole of Europe. It was founded in 1735 by a military pharmacologist. The museum preserves the old interior of the drugstore shop floor and contains more than 2,000 items, including vessels, scales, instruments and manuscripts. There are several rooms (an office-room of the former pharmacy owner, a pharmacy laboratory, a former cook-room and basements). The first room is called the trade hall. Here, you can buy medicine. We see a unique collection of drugstore utensils, the first tableting hand press equipment, various presses for squeezing the juice out of medicinal herbs and other equipment used for making medicines. The most interesting exhibit in the trade hall is the unique scales of the 18th century. There is also the symbol of medicine - a bowl and a snake, which is more than 4,000 years old. Here you can also see one of the earliest samples of the oil lamp made in the middle of the 19th century. Ihor, the guide announced that the first street oil lamp was developed and made in Lviv.

Our last place to visit was ***The Solomiya Krushelnytska Musical Memorial Museum***. To locate it we proceeded down an alleyway. Ihor rang a bell on a side-door to a run-down building. A lady opened the door and we followed her up a circular, creaky staircase. The outer handrail is missing most of its supports and it hangs loosely. Nobody, understandably, chose to use the handrail. On the second floor we entered one of four rooms, where entry tickets were purchased. A museum guide gave a lengthy presentation about the fascinating life of Salomea Krushelnytska. At the end of her presentation she played an aria from one of her performances. What a hauntingly lovely voice!

---

### **A Bit on the Life of Salomea Krushelnytska**

Salomea Krushelnytska (Kruszelnicka) (1872 - 1952) - was one of the great dramatic sopranos of her time. She had a remarkable career. It was rumored Krushelnytska could learn a part of a new opera in two days, and develop the



character of a role in another three or four. She had a vocal range of nearly three octaves, which was a unique phenomenon in the world vocal art. The



greatest theatres and concert halls of the world tried to secure a contract with her. The celebrated conductors, such as Arturo Toscanini, Leopoldo Mugnion, Ferrero and others, rivaled for the honour to conduct the performances, in which she participated. She won the admiration of the most prominent singers of the time - Enrico Caruso, Mathia Battistini, Titto Ruffo, F. Shaliapin, M. Mentsynsky and others. The famous composers A. Tatalani, Richard Strauss, Giacomo Puccini were profuse in their gratitude for her impressive performance of the leading female parts in their operas. Composers, writers and artists dedicated

many of their works to her.

In August, 1939, after the death of her husband, Krushelnytska left Italy, where she had settled and came to Lviv, where she also maintained a residence. A few weeks later Soviet forces entered the city under the provisions of the Nazi-Soviet pact. Meanwhile, the new rulers nationalized her townhouse in Lviv and prevented her from returning back to Italy. After a time she began to teach at the Lviv Conservatory, now named after her. In 1951 she was named honored artist of the Ukrainian SSR and in 1952 was promoted to full professor at the Conservatory.

---

Before we ended the tour, Romana suggested a side trip for tomorrow. It entailed visiting three castles. We agreed and discussed the logistics. We asked both Ihor's if they would be open to arranging and conducting such a tour for tomorrow. They agreed, providing they can get a bus on such short notice. The cost would be \$200 for everything, plus we would pay any entry fees. It worked out to \$20 per passenger—not bad for a full day's outing. Ihor would contact us at the hotel at 7:00 pm to let us know if it was a go.

Romana also suggested that the tour end at a restaurant near the hotel, where we would have a late lunch, called “Bar Mleczny” (Milk Bar), at 9 Kopernika. The restaurant is cafeteria style with a large selection of Ukrainian dishes. The food was delicious and very reasonable. I had “green borscht,” varynyka (meat and cabbage mixture), chicken and a beer for

about \$5.00 Canadian. The place was obviously popular with the locals. I later found reference to this restaurant in one of the guide books. “If you like eating local when you're on holiday and getting an authentic flavour of everyday life in the city, this is one to drop into.”

While walking back to our hotel, my calf started to ache. I suggested that the others go ahead and I would slowly make my way back. At the Prospect Svobody Park, I found a bench to sit on and do some people-watching. After a while I noticed a rather disturbed shirtless man, cursing and gesticulating at a woman, who was selling souvenirs at a stall. She gesticulated and cursed back. He ranted on for about ten minutes and stopped when he saw a “militzionair” (cop) walking towards him. The ranter wandered off muttering to himself.

Feeling a powerful thirst coming on, I wandered over to one of the cafes adjacent the park and ordered a beer. After a while my calf started to feel less achy, so I ordered another beer—great medicine! One of the café patrons has a Vietnamese Pot-bellied Pig and ties it to a pole near a patch of grass, where it proceeded to devour the grass. After some pictures of the pig I decide to hobble back to the hotel to freshen up.



I met the gang at 7:00 pm in the lobby and we were informed that Ihor had called and given the OK for tomorrow's outing. Carol Jane had her guide book out and suggested we walk to the Oselia restaurant, which was a few blocks from the hotel. The Oselia, on 11 Hnatiuka St. was advertised as having “Classic Ukrainian hospitality, in a splendid interior of an old Ukrainian country home, with an evening folklore show.” Sounded great! We found number 11 Hnatiuka St., but no Oselia. We check the guide book and it clearly stated number 11. At number 11, there was a bank and no sign of a restaurant. Across the road there was a Czech restaurant, where I ask if they know of the Oselia. They told me that it closed down two months ago and added, “But we serve good food.” I noticed that the restaurant was empty and checked out their menu—very pricey. No wonder it was empty.

Being in no mood for Czech food, especially pricey Czech food, we did some wandering and found our way back on Kopernika St. We saw a parked cop car with two cops aboard. They appeared to be watching a small gang of tough-looking Ukrainian teens. We passed by and found a covered outdoor restaurant near the Potocki Palace.



Here we would spend a hilarious 30 minutes trying to figure out the Ukrainian menu. The very patient waitress, Yuliya, spoke no English and my Ukrainian menu knowledge is very limited and of no help. Finally a young chap, who spoke English, came to our aid. Rather than prolong the process we all settle on Borscht, varynyka, salad and beer. Compared

to the service we got yesterday, at the park restaurant, the service at this restaurant was very speedy. Maybe, they were trying to get rid of us after our 30-minute menu ordeal. I later offered to buy a round of beers for the table, where the young chap was sitting, as a gesture of thanks. He refused to accept my offer and accepted only our thanks. Nice young man!

Romana joined us as we were finishing and we told her of our menu adventure and how her Ukrainian expertise was missed.

On our way back to the hotel, Romana and I hit an internet café on the west side of Prospekt Svobody. I composed a lengthy memo to send to the folks back home on the tour so far, only to have it disappear into cyberspace, after I pressed the “Send” button. Romana was having the same luck. Next I composed a shorter memo and tried a different send approach. Again, it disappeared into cyberspace. I surmised that my server had not set up the international service correctly. I will have to contact them when I get back. Our frustration got the better of us and we decided to make our way back to our hotel.

## **DAY 4—SUNDAY, JUNE 10**

### **Lviv—Golden Horseshoe Tour**

I woke up at 6:00 am and there were no dogs barking or cats yowling—only a bright, clear sky. After breakfast we met Ihor at 9:00 am for our “Golden Horseshoe” tour. The “Golden Horseshoe”, refers to a ring of three castles near the villages of Olesko, Pidhirtsi, and Zolochiv. Ihor, the driver brought his girlfriend along for the tour.

It was turning out to be another sweltering day and we made sure to stock up on water. Along the way we stopped to take pictures of the storks, both in their nests on top of lamp-posts and in the fields.

On the way, we passed through Busk. The symbol of the town is a stork (the word BUS’KA in Ukrainian means STORK). Here we saw dozens of women, young and old, carrying wreaths to a church. It must have been part of a religious celebration, possibly Corpus Christi.

Soon we pulled up to a small parking area, along the road, at the base of a hill. Nearby was a ticket booth where we bought tickets, one for entry to the castle and one for taking pictures of the Olesko Castle. A guard checked our tickets as we passed through a gate and to our right was a girl in costume posing with a horse and wagon. She would allow us to take her picture for 5 HUA. We proceeded up a hill on a winding cobble stoned roadway. Looming ahead of us was the imposing castle.

### **Olesko Castle**

Olesko Castle, is 78 kilometers east of Lviv. It stands on top of a hill and is about fifty meters in height. A moat and a wall surround it, which served as a defense for the castle. The entranceway to the castle leads to a courtyard. Inside the courtyard is small cannon on which a number of young boys were climbing and posing for pictures. When I took a picture of the cannon, they respectfully climbed off, allowing me a clear shot at the cannon. We had to wait until another group finished their tour before we could enter



the castle. If I had a Canon camera, I could have claimed, that I shot a cannon with a Canon (GROAN).

Once inside, we were asked to show our tickets. Each room had a different theme and a room attendant who would again asked to see our tickets. This would happen with each new room we entered. Despite this annoyance, each room proved very interesting; displaying collections of antique furnishings and art dating from the 16th-17th Centuries. The rooms also featured sculptures, hundreds of paintings, still lives, applied arts, tapestries, period weapons, and objects used in everyday life at the time. Among them were icons, portraits and a monumental picture of the Battle of Vienna.



One table had a map of the area carved into the table surface. The castle is famous for being the birthplace of the Polish king Jan III Sobiesky, the hero of the Battle of Vienna. He often lived there, and collected much of the artwork currently displayed in the present-day museum.

The castle was, at different times, owned by Poland, Lithuania, and Hungary. Battles for ownership of the castle were constant. A deep well in the basement of the castle was used as an escape route for besieged prisoners. The castle is surrounded by a park, with a collection of carved stones from pagan times as well as works of modern Ukrainian sculptors.

As we finished the tour we were greeted by some rain, just enough to cool us down from the sweltering heat and humidity. It also made for a slippery walk down the cobble stoned roadway. The rain let up just as we reached the roadway where our bus was parked. We crossed the road where there was a small store selling souvenirs, ice-cream, beer and other drinks. I bought a CD with pictures of many of Ukraine's castles. Our next castle was only 9 kilometers away to the south-west of Olesko.

---

## **The Genealogy of Olesko Castle**

Olesko Castle was once a powerful fortress on a high hill surrounded by lakes and swamps. The first reminiscence in a chronicle about the castle dates back to 1327. It is likely that the castle had been founded by the



grandson of Lev Danylovych (for which Lviv was named) in the beginning of the Fourteenth Century.

In 1366, Polish King Kazymyr The Great conquered the castle. In 1382, Prince Lubart Volynskyy bought the castle from the Polish King. Then in 1386, Lithuanian Prince Vladyslav Jagello married the Queen of Poland Jadviga and became the new King of Poland. The castle next became the property of his cousin King Svidrygailo. In 1431, the castle served as the main camp during a revolt to free Halician-Volyn lands. In 1432, it a large army of 6,000 Polish soldiers to quell the revolt.

The castle withstood Tatar raids in 1442 and 1453. Finally, in 1512, it was conquered and destroyed by the Tatars.

Ivan Danylovich, in 1605, became the new owner of the castle. He was a very progressive person for his time and founded a free school as well as a free hospital for his serfs. Ivan's daughter would marry Jakub Sobiesky and 1629 she would give birth to Jan Sobiesky in the castle. Jan Sobieski, was perhaps the most influential king in Poland's history. When Jan Sobieski's mother went into labor, Olseko Castle was being besieged by Tartars. As if warfare and childbirth didn't provide enough drama, a thunderstorm raged outside. After his birth, Jan was placed on a marble table. Just after he was removed, lightening struck the table and broke it in two. This provided the perfect impetus for predictions of the child's future greatness. The broken marble table was kept in the castle for many decades following and was shown to guests. Later Jan would become the most prominent king of the Rich Pospolyta (the equal union of Polish, Ukrainian and Lithuanian Nobility).

In 1648, the castle was again conquered, this time by the army of Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky. From 1684-1687, the castle was rebuilt taking on the look it has today. The rebuilding effort was directed by the wife of Jan Sobiesky and the castle took on a look more like a palace than a fortress. There was the cannon, which was made in 1541, standing in the castle yard. It serves as a reminder of the castle's origins as a fortress.

From 1707-1712, the Russian army of Peter I, was located at the castle as allies of the Rich Pospolyty in their war with Sweden.

In 1716, the son of Jan Sobiesky would become the new owner of the castle and would sell it in 1719 to Severy Zhyvuskyy. The castle would eventually start to decline and in 1838 a large earthquake would crack the structure.

Olesko Castle survived centuries of sieges and wars (including WWI and WWII). It survived being struck by lightning at the birth of Jan Sobiesky. It survived the Soviets. However, it couldn't stand up to a lightning strike in 1956 that burned it to the foundations. In 1965, the Lviv Picture Gallery started a restoration project, following which the castle was opened as a museum. The castle was restored in 1975 and now houses objects and artifacts from neighboring castles that have not yet been restored.

In the 18th Century, the rich and fun-loving owners invited Capuchin monks to build a monastery opposite the castle. Their poverty was meant to balance the Olesko sumptuousness. The Monastery is located below, at the base of the hill and across the road. It was built in 1737, in the classic baroque style.

---

## **Pidhirtsi Castle**

On the way to the Pidhirtsi Castle, we stopped off for a refreshment/rest-room break at a small place called Hvativ. Here there was a small roadside restaurant, which served borscht, varynyeka and beer. There was large angular statue at the top of a nearby hill commemorating a battle between the Polish Army and the Red Army in 1920. While some of the group was

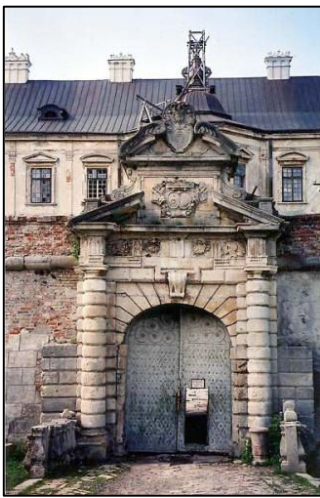


visiting the washroom to the restaurant, some went up the hill to take pictures of the statue and others filled up on water from a barrel situated in front of the restaurant. I asked in the restaurant, if the water was okay to drink and the staff assured us it was. I was tempted to stay for a beer; however, we were running

late and the castles we were going to had closing hours.

The battle took place in the summer of 1920 during the civil war, which raged on the lands of Russia, Eastern and Central Ukraine. During the battle both sides sustained heavy losses and resulted in the Red Army forcing the Polish Army under Josef Pilsudskyy to withdraw to the West-to Lviv and beyond.

Soon we pulled up to a roadside stall with souvenirs. It was near a fence with an iron gate. Across the road was a large church with parishioners gathering outside. The souvenir stall was selling black pottery known as Havarychina Pottery, which was found only in this area. After a quick look at the wares, we made our way through the Iron Gate, which opened to a wide, tree-lined promenade. You could see the castle in the distance, up a gradual incline. There were two parallel pathways, one very rocky and hard on one's shoes, the other, which was partially paved. There were groups of people, coming from and going to the castle. The sun was beating down and the humidity was stifling.



Near the base of the castle was another souvenir stand, which also sold water. To enter the castle, we first had to go through small opening to a large gate of the stone wall surrounding the castle. The gate-keeper was at first not going to allow us in, due to the late hour. She finally agreed and we paid our fee and were now free to enter, provided that we did not take too much time.

The grounds were strewn with broken shards of stone and the castle was in a derelict state. Despite its dilapidated condition, the castle is a unique architectural structure. It is a three-story palace and a fortress in the Renaissance style built from 1635-1640. It belonged to the aristocratic Rzewuski family and was not intended as a defense structure. It was more accurately a palace. Pidhirtsi Castle is surrounded by a moat and includes a Baroque church of St. Joseph. (1752-1766). It has a park with old trees.

The Castle has been under restoration after years when it was being used as a Soviet hospital. It will take a massive undertaking many years before it regains its previous glory. You have to use your imagination when looking at the once grand interiors to envision the possibilities. In a large room, that probably was a ball room. I could only wonder about the Strauss waltzes those wealthy landlords would have danced to or to what polkas.





We met one inhabitant of the castle, as we were about exit. A small frightened mouse scampered across the entry hall and eventually found a hole into which to find safety.

---

## **The Genealogy of Pidhirtsi Castle**

The settlement had existed here since the Seventh Century, when it was called Plisnetsk. Plisnetsk had been completely destroyed by the Tatars in 1241. The name Pidhirtsi was first chronicled in 1432.

In 1630, Stanislav Konetspolsky became the new owner of these lands and started constructing a new castle on the place of an old fortress. This palace is surrounded by fortification walls on three sides only. The complex had been planned as a recreational palace. The northern part of the palace is not protected at all. Numerous balls were celebrated here, on the terraces adjoining a large park.

In 1682, the palace came under the ownership of the Sobiesky family. Later, in 1720 the palace came under the ownership of Vaclav Zhyvuskyy. He would add a large collection of books, paintings and arms as well as a theatre and a pressroom to the castle. Zhyvuskyy also would create a museum with the trophies from the Wien Battle. Everyone, including serfs could visit the museum.

Pidhirtsi Castle was home to extensive gardens, scores of artworks and wild parties. Zhyvuskyy eventually became bankrupt from all the lavish balls, banquets and receptions he hosted. He would try everything to avoid bankruptcy, including alchemy to turn metals into gold, however, with no success. His son would purchase the palace at the bankruptcy auction and would try to maintain it.

After 400 years of such use, the castle fell into decay, the artworks began to slip away, and then the Soviets plundered the property. In 1956 it caught fire. This castle has been under renovation for the past decade, and will probably be under renovation for 15-20 years more before it is restored to its former glory.



Before the outbreak of WWI, the most valuable items from the palace were moved to South America. During the war, the palace would be severely damaged.

Opposite Pidhirtsy Castle is the Church of St. Joseph which served the spiritual needs of the owners and guests at the castle. It had been built from 1752-1763. It is also being restored and functions as a Greek Catholic Church.

---

From Pidhirtsi, we traveled 28 kilometers south to Zolochiv.

## **Zolochiv Castle**

This time we would not have so far to walk and too much of a hill to climb. The road leading to the castle was windy and on a slight incline.



Zolochiv Castle was built as a citadel with bastions in the 1630s. In the 17th - 18th centuries the castle belonged to the rich Polish King families of Sobiesky and Radziwill. Zolochiv is a fortified complex, not a castle. Inside the 15 foot high

earthen walls are two mansions, one belonging to Jan Sobieski III of Poland and the other to Chinese merchants. Almost no documents survived to explain why these Eastern merchants lived here.

The Polish Mansion at Zolochiv was a personal summer playhouse of the Polish blueblood Jan Sobieski III. He stayed here when not entertaining Ukrainian peasant ladies at the Olesko or Pidhirtsy Castles. It was partially destroyed during the same battle that razed the Chinese Mansion.

The newly restored Chinese palace was built to follow European fashion for Chinese art in late 17th century.

You can climb up the bastions of the castle complex from the inside on a ramp, and walk along the perimeter. Here you could see the surrounding countryside and the town of Zolochiv.

One of the legends about this castle is that for some period of time it belonged to Knights Templars. Another legend has it that if you walk about the underground secret tunnels, you might meet the ghost of the unhappy King's wife. Locals say during the final battle Poles stashed a large amount of gold in a tunnel and then collapsed it, hoping to return another day.



Our guide proudly informed us that this castle had a functioning water closet long before Versailles in France. Given the lack of time before closing, our tour only allowed us to see the outside of the two buildings.



Two mysteries reside in the Zolochiv Castle complex. In a neighboring village, two puzzling stones were found. One bears two intertwined wreaths symbolizing life and death with a hole at the intersection. The other bears an encoded inscription in Gothic. No one has been able to explain the function of these stones or crack their codes.

These stones are authentic relics but not part of the original Zolochiv complex. Curators relocated them from the nearby village with the aim of spicing up the castle grounds that were stripped bare between fleeing bluebloods and other looters.



Our guide told us that the story goes that if you put your finger in the hole and turn it, that it will help fulfill your wishes. No one in our group placed their finger in the hole. I guess we were “doubting Thomases.”

In the days of Austro-Hungarian Empire, Zolochiv Castle was turned into a prison and later served as an NKVD (People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs) prison. A room in the castle is dedicated to the 700 people who were tortured and killed here. A memorial and an exhibition to commemorate those who perished here can now be seen in the castle as well as a chapel outside the castle walls.



After examining the list I found that it included an Onyschuk among those who were killed.

---

## The Genealogy of Zolochiv Castle

Historians maintain that the foundation existed in the place in XI-XII centuries but the first fortifications date back to the beginning of XV century. The fortification was placed in the crossing of the trading roads and resulted in even members of the royal family becoming debtors of the castle in the middle of XV century.



Zolochiv Castle is located next to the town on the Kupyna Hill. The fortress had existed for a lengthy time and acquired its present looks after 1634. In 1634 the Polish King Jakov Sobieskyy, the father of the famous Jan III Sobieskyy King, improved the fortifications and the palace was enlarged. At that time it took on a four-cornered Netherland-style. One of the turrets still carries the Coat-of-Arms and the abbreviation JSKKKSK, which stands for the full title of Jakub Sobieskyy.

The fortification walls are supported by earthen shafts. If an artillery shell exploded on such a shaft, it would not result in serious damage and the shafts were easy to repair. The drawback being that the shafts are difficult to maintain because of erosion.

The Palace in the castle compound is built in the Renaissance style, but looks more like the military building it had been after all.

A Chinese palace refreshes the view. It had been built at the end of the Seventeenth Century. There are only three buildings like this in the world; the Potsdam Palace near Berlin, the Petrodvorets Palace in St. Petersburg and the one in Zlochiv.

In 1648, a revolt led by Cossack Hetman, Bohdan Khmelnytsky, occurred among the peasants of Zolochiv and was directed against the Polish landowners. The King's army was forced to abandon the castle and the Cossack army entered the castle with no resistance.

The palace was built, utilizing the latest engineering ideas. A system of toilets and canalization was implemented inside the palace for the first time in this area, even predating that of the Versailles Palace.

The castle survived some serious battles. In 1672 the Turkish Army, after a siege, took the castle. Two years later Jan III Sobiesky gathered the Army



here for his successful war against Ottoman Empire. In 1675 it was again subject to a siege, this time by the Tatar Khan Adgi-Gerej and withstood this siege with only one-third of its men in the castle.

In 1833, Leon Zhivusky came to live in the castle and made enormous restoration works. In 1872 the Polish owners of the castle sold the complex to the Austrian government and a

prison was open here. After 1920 the castle became a private museum. In World War II the castle was seriously damaged. After reconstruction in 1949 a sanatorium was opened. In 1997 the castle was given to the Lviv National Gallery and since then the castle has been under renovation.

After the occupation by the USSR in 1939, the NKVD used these premises as a jail. It was one of the most terrible jails in Western Ukraine. Mass executions continued here until June 27, 1941—five days after the announcement of the war with Germany. In World War II, the Germans also used the castle as the prison. Among the prisoners, there had been a Greek-Catholic Priest, Roman Ziatyk. In 2001, he had been beatified (considered a Saint) by Pope John Paul II. A chapel on the grounds is dedicated to the victims of the Terror.

In 1986 there was a decision to make the castle into a museum here and step by step the castle complex has been slowly renovated.

---

On the way back to Lviv we made a brief stop at a local monastery. Here a priest welcomed us and showed us the Interior of the church where there were some parishioners,

We were getting pretty thirsty and hungry and suggested to Ihor, that we find a place to get a quick bite to eat. We found a pleasant-looking roadside café and ordered beer, wine and kefir (a refreshing non-alcoholic drink made from fermented bread). We also sample their borscht, salads and verynyka. As we left the café, it started to rain, cooling the atmosphere.

After making it back to our hotel, we headed to our rooms exhausted and in need of a cooling shower to freshen up. We met at 7:00 pm. in the lobby to decide where to go for supper. Carol had suggested a place called “The Seven Pigs.” It was too late to book reservations, so we decided to do The Seven Pigs tomorrow. We opted to go to “Bar Mleczny” (Milk Bar), at 9 Kopernika, where we had eaten lunch yesterday.

After supper, we relaxed over a few beers and chatted about the day’s events. Afterwards, we slowly made our way back to the hotel and turned in. I decided to watch some TV and noted the English channels, CNN and the BBC. There was also a 24-hour fashion channel—no wonder the young women were so fashionably dressed.

## DAY 5—MONDAY, JUNE 11

### Lviv—Our First Archives

I was up early and went for a quick breakfast. Most of the group had already had breakfast and we planned our trip to the archives. The Vizniowski's decided to walk to the archive, since it wasn't that far. My calf muscle was throbbing and I opted to cab it and met them in front of the building for pictures before we entered. I asked Romana to accompany me in the taxi, since she knew the route. The Hrynkiw's would be sight-seeing.

#### The “Bernardine Archive”

*The Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine (TsDIAL)* is located in the Old City. Here, many of the buildings predate the 19<sup>th</sup> century, some going back as far as to the 16th century. Most of the streets are cobblestone and are not conducive to walking in high-heels or thin-soled shoes. However, one sees many young, fashionably-dressed women in high-heels making their way to work, seemingly without effort and injury, as they chat on their cell phones.

TsDIAL is located in what was the **Bernardine Monastery**, located at 3a Soborna Sq. It is also referred to as the “Bernardine Archive”. The Monastery was constructed from 1600-1630. After the Austrian government gained control over the territories around Lviv, Stanoslaviv, Ternopil and Chernivtsi (calling it Galicia), it opened the archive in 1784 as a central



repository for the entire region. Over the decades the archives grew and became an important resource center for the Austro-Hungarian province of Galicia, The Monastery **Church of St. Andrii** today belongs to the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church.

After posing for pictures, we opened the large door and stepped inside. The foyer was large, with a checkerboard floor. On our right, was an ancient staircase with well worn creaky steps. I was definitely concerned that the staircase may not hold all of us at the same time. We slowly made our way up the stairs. At the top, there's a turn in the stairwell, where we continued through another door. Since Romana had



visited these archives she acted as our guide and we asked to see the Director, Diana Peltz. We were escorted to an office where we met the Assistant Director, Nadia, Ivanievna Franko. We explained who we were and the purpose of our trip. We mentioned that we had earlier corresponded with the archive. Nadia indicated that they had set aside the Metrical Volumes that we had requested and they were ready for our research. We were informed that protocol required that we each prepare a letter outlining the purpose of our visit. Romana prepared a master letter, which we each copied and signed. The Assistant Director then signed each letter. Armed with these letters, we would now be allowed entry into the Reading Room.

We next proceeded out of the Assistant Directors Office to a long hallway where a guard was stationed at one end.

He examined each letter, requested our passports, which he placed in a cubby-hole and gave each of us a plastic entry card with a key attached. We also were required to sign a visitor's book. We were not allowed to take our cameras or backpacks into the reading room—only writing materials. The key was to a



locker, where we could store our cameras and other valuables. There was an entry turnstile gate, which opened both ways with the plastic entry card we were supplied. You would need this card each time you entered or exited the reading room hall-way. There were evenly-spaced doors on each side of the long hallway. Four hundred years earlier these doors would open to a Monk's room, probably with a small bed, desk, chair and a small bedside table with an oil lamp. Now these rooms serve as offices.

Now we could proceed to the Reading Room. Here our Spravy were set aside. The staff then had us sign the forms, which we had earlier mailed to the archives, listing the Metrical Volumes we requested. We were now in business and each seated at a table piled high with our Spravy (Metrical Volumes of Church records). We could also request additional Spravy and they were brought to us within an hour.

Adjacent the Reading Room is the Card Catalogue Room. The card catalogue is divided by type of document and then by village/town. There are also indices for the Greek Catholic Archeparchy and the Roman Catholic Archdiocese. These list the vital records (birth, marriage and death).



---

## Some Technical Stuff

In 1784, the Austrian government decreed that the Catholic Church was assigned the task of keeping records of births, marriages and deaths. The parish priest would be assigned this duty. In addition, the church required that a copy be made and supplied to the Bishop's Office. The Archives often have both the local parish copies and the bishop's copies for many of the villages. The two major collections of vital records we were interested in were found in Fond 201, Opys 4a for the Greek Catholic Consistory of Lviv and Fond 681, Opys 2 for the Roman Catholic Consistory of Lviv.

When ordering a document you must distinguish it by its Fond number, its Opys number, its Spravy number and its Arkush number. The Fond represents the largest grouping and may contain thousands of books, documents or files. For example Fond 201, which is for the Greek Catholic Metropolitan Consistory, City of Lviv contains 42,430 files or Spravy covering the period from 1300-1945. This huge number of files is in turn organized into a number of series or Opysy. Opys 4a contains 7,421 Spravy. Each of these Spravy represent a metrical volume such as the birth records for a parish. For example, Sprava 2193 is for the parish of Zboriv. The Arkush number would represent the page in the Sprava that a particular record is found.



After finishing our research, we quietly made our way back down the rickety staircase. I imagined how countless hooded Monks had earlier made their way down these same stairs, slowly wearing out the wood. Perhaps there are even ghosts wandering the hallways? Who knows? Someday we might hear about an Archibald, the archivist ghost, who was condemned to haunt the stacks, until he found the hidden Spravy for the parish of Husiatyn (1760-1825).

Directly across from the Archive is an out-door café attached to a restaurant called “Café Na Soborniy.” The out-door part is covered over with an orange canopy. Is it symbolic of the “Orange Revolution?” We decided to try out the food and found that they served a broad variety of inexpensive Ukrainian dishes. The price was right and their borscht and salads would tie us over.



After freshening up at the hotel, we meet at 7:00 to head out by cab, to the “Sim Porosyat/Seven Piglets Restaurant,” at 9 Bandera St. A peasant-costumed three-piece band — violin, accordion and cimbalom—welcomed us to this Ukrainian country inn. Water streams from an overturned earthen jar onto a pile of rocks and a giant pig wearing a pearl necklace sits on a saddle, riding a chicken. Stuffed animals, animal skins, hand-embroidered towels, pads and pig figures add to the air of the place. All the ceramic pieces found in the place are typical of the Ivano-Frankivsk region. The unique lamps consisted of upturned wooden jugs with bulbs inside them.

As we studied the leather-wrapped menu bound like an Orthodox monk's holy book, the band played “If I Were a Rich Man” from “Fiddler on the Roof.”

Next a very boisterous man entered our room and gave a warm greeting to Romana. He reminded me of the type of character you would see in old movies of the typical, happy-go-lucky, joyful Slav, who would break out into song or dance at the drop of a musical note. He turned out to be someone Romana had rented a small apartment from when she had earlier been to Lviv, doing research. He was retired and used to be a master of

ceremonies and it showed in all his mannerisms. He welcomed us and spoke in English and Ukrainian. Afterwards he escorted the violinist and the accordionist to our tableside where they entertained us with gypsy music. At one point, Romana's friend took over the accordion and entertained as part of the duo.

I later chatted with the violinist, during their break and found out that he had lived in Toronto for seven years, working as a musician.

The food was delicious, a bit pricey, but well worth the cost. Romana thought that she ordered a pork cutlet and instead got a large roasted leg. She peeled away the crispy skin and discarded three-quarters of the leg, eating only a few pieces. We, of course, would kid her about this, since she was so fluent in Ukrainian and had misread the menu, or perhaps the waiter misheard her order.

Heading back to our hotel, half of us opted to cab it and the more energetic Vizniowski's decided to walk off their meal. Boy, they like to walk! Back at the hotel, I placed a wake-up call for 6:30 am and turned in.