

Searching For—And Finding—Our Ukrainian Roots

Introduction

Hello. My name is Myron Masnyk. I was born in a farming community in Southern Manitoba in 1942.

My paternal Grandfather, Petro Masnyk, born in Western Ukraine in 1861 and his wife, Paraskevia, left the village of Woroniaky, near Zolochiv, in the province of Lyviv, Western Ukraine, ("Halychyna"), in April 1909 to make a better life for themselves and their children in Canada.

They left behind their worldly possessions, except for \$200 and travelled by train across Poland and into Germany where they boarded the "SS Prinz Adelbert" in Hamburg, sailing into Quebec City in May 1909. From there they boarded a train which was to take them to the "Promised Land" in rural Manitoba.

They had with them five sons, one of whom was my father Dmytro, aged 6 years and two daughters. The oldest, Anna, had a three year old daughter of her own. Their youngest, my aunt Ksenia, was, at two and a half years of age, their "baby" traveller.

Staying behind in the village, my Grandfather had three brothers, Ivan, Hrehorij and Dmytro and a sister Anna."

There would be very little, if any, communication between them for the next 90 years! Most were illiterate and those who could read and write feared repercussions from the Soviet KGB or whichever political group was running Ukraine at the time. I'm aware of letters sent them from Canada being burnt—unopened!

One wintry day in early 1999, I decided to search for my ancestral roots, which would lead to a family history, family tree, family re-union, etc.

I had very little to work with. I knew the name of their village, (selo), the names of my Grandfathers siblings and their approximate years of birth. But—where to go from here?

Fortunately, my brother in law had been living in Kyiv, Ukraine since 1993. He had befriended a couple, (and possibly a distant relative), living in the city of Ternopil.

Dmytro and Oryssia, both in their mid 30's, are university educated. They have a 14-year-old daughter, Oksana. They live for Oksana and worry they might not have the money to send her to university.

Given the terrible state of unemployment, as high as 80%, in some areas of western Ukraine, neither of them is able to get full time, decent paying jobs. Through my brother in law, Oryssia agreed to research my family roots in the village, etc.

She would need to travel to the village, visit churches and government archives and interview people who may have heard about the Masnyks. I chose to pay her USA\$300; up-front and in good faith, to offset travel expenses, buy "gifts" for her informers and, of course, to earn a

profit in the end.

She was successful!!!

In late 1999, I received names, some addresses and other details on several members of the family, including comments on her visit to the village and "interview" with two of my "third?" cousins in the original selo. I was thrilled and certainly overcome with emotion.

While I can speak, even read and write in the Ukrainian language, I am not overly confident. Calling my command of the language as "kitchen Ukrainian" is probably being too kind.

I decide to write to one of them. The "slovník"(dictionary), got quite a workout, but we made it. Two months later I had a reply! My hands shook as I opened this letter. I had found them and this was the first communication in almost 100 years!! We've been exchanging letters and cards 3-4 times per year since then.

At Christmas 1999, my wife Doris-Ann and I started planning a visit to Ukraine—the first time for either of us. I would fulfil a promise I had made to my father, (who died in 1986). I would walk on the same ground, on which he walked and played. I was going to see my "Batkivscyna".

We kept a daily journal of our adventure, of what we saw, who we met, etc. The journal would grow to over 60 typed pages.

We now share this journal with you—enjoy!

Myron and Doris-Ann Masnyk

FOREWARD

JOURNEY TO UKRAINE

Our trip to Ukraine, in May 2000, was the first for either of us.

We laughed, we cried, we gawked. We felt badly at times, sorry at times and helpless at other times.

We saw a lot, walked a lot, ate and drank a lot, learned a lot, and enjoyed ourselves immensely.

We decided to keep a daily journal of our sojourn in Ukraine and we have done so. Now we share our thoughts and observations with you.

Please forgive us for small errors, mostly spelling Ukrainian names, and please understand the opinions are strictly our own and are not meant to preach to, or offend anyone.

Please let us know what you think of this endeavour.

ENJOY

DEDICATION

JOURNEY TO UKRAINE

This journal is dedicated to the many persons who made our trip possible and enjoyable:

- TO: Petro and Parashka Masnyk, my grandparents, who left Ukraine in 1909 to seek a better life in Canada. They succeeded.
- TO: Their 220 late and living descendants in Canada and to the 60 plus still in the original "selo" of Woroniaky, Western Ukraine.
- TO: Dr. Peter and Mrs. Doris Smylski, my in-laws, who so much helped and encouraged us to make this trip, and looked after our house.
- TO: Pauline Salo (nee Masnyk) who has been a great supporter from Day I and who almost made the trip with us.
- TO: Peter and Oksana Smylski, my brother-in-law, in Kyiv, who wrote thousands of words and made countless telephone calls, preparing us for the journey and guiding us so we could be comfortable.
- TO: Dmytro and Oryssia Smylski, of Ternopil. Oryssia was the catalyst in searching out our family roots and without whose findings this trip just may never have taken place.
- TO: My Aunt, Ksenia Solotowski, (nee Masnyk), of Winnipeg, Man., who will be 95 years of age in September, 2000, and is the last survivor of the Masnyk family which emigrated to Canada in 1909.
- TO: Angeline Janeshewski, (nee Masnyk) of St. Catherine's, Ontario, the oldest living member of the first generation of Masnyks born in Canada.
- TO: My son, Robert, who hopefully will carry on my world quest for the Masnyks and who will not forget his Ukrainian heritage.
- TO: My wife, Doris Ann, (Darucia to many) for her patience, support and tolerance, when I would sometimes stray, becoming a little cavalier in my ways and for her gentle manner in getting me back to earth.

Thank you all.

Myron Masnyk

DAY 1—TUESDAY, MAY 9, 2000

Today, Doris, (I will call her DA from now on) and I, embark on what for me finally fulfils a promise I had made to my father 25 years ago, but never really thought I would do. That is, to visit the village and country of his birth and the homeland of so many of our relatives and friends—Ukraine.

Very much encouraged by my in-laws, Peter and Doris Smylski, we have been preparing and planning for this day since Christmas. There was a lot to do: Travel visas, passports, accommodations, itinerary, currency exchange (Canadian dollars to American dollars at the rate of \$1.51...(Yikes), what to take, what to wear (after all we don't want to look like a couple of typical tourists).

DA's brother, Peter, who has lived in Kyiv for the past 7 years, has been most helpful and we have burned up a lot of Internet e-mail, getting assorted tips and advice on what and how much to bring, how to get around, what to see, how to act.

We have planned what appears to be a rather exhausting itinerary with much overland travel, visitations, sight-seeing and even some tours. I resolve to keep a journal of our activities and hope I can keep my promise just in case others may like to read about how things go. It is warm and humid (27 degrees C) with some threat of rain as we leave Toronto, being driven to the airport by DA's parents, to board Lufthansa Flight #6841 at 5:35 p.m., which will get us to Frankfurt, Germany, at 7:00 a.m. tomorrow. There is a 7-hour time difference so we will actually be flying only 7 hours. After a 3-hour layover in Frankfurt, we will change planes, still on Lufthansa, and after a flight of some 2 1/2 hrs. will land at Kyiv's Boryspil Airport, at 1:30 p.m. tomorrow, where Peter will pick us up.

We have jammed our luggage, gifts, etc., into just two suitcases, which we will check. They must not be more than 32 kgs. each, and we each have a carry-on limited to 10 kgs. each. Both of us are taking cash in US currency, stashed safely (hopefully) into those ingenious "body safes" strapped to our persons. While US currency "rules" in, Ukraine, while there, for most purchases, we will need to convert to the local currency the "hryvniy" at approximately 3.5 hryvniy for each US dollar.

We leave for the airport at about 2:00 p.m. Excited? You bet! Everything went smoothly at Lufthansa check-in. DA's luggage weighed in at only 15 kgs. while mine was 21 kgs. I thought we might have been at the limit. At "Duty Free", among other things, we bought a bottle of good old Canadian rye whiskey to take to Volodymyr in the village (selo) of Woroniaky. Wonder what he will think of it? He likely only drinks "Horilka z Pertzem" (vodka with chili peppers). It is legal in Ukraine to make spirits for personal use ("Samahonka"). The last time I drank Samahonka was in Gimli, MB. when I was 17! I was sick and (and drunk) for 3 days.

Despite our flight being oversold, and attempts to bribe passengers to make alternate arrangements, we are not delayed too much and are airborne at 6:01 p.m.. DA starts to doze as we climb to 30,000 feet.

I am getting hungry—Feed me!

DAY 2—WEDNESDAY, MAY 10

After a "so-so" meal and even a short snooze, we are still only half-way to Frankfurt, (3:30 a.m. Frankfurt time). The passengers are generally quiet. Watching the movie "Stuart Little" was not overly stimulating. We are to land approximately at 7:00 a.m. Will try to sleep (again) but it is only 9:45 p.m. in Toronto.

Sleep does not come easily but I do doze a bit. When I awaken it is 5:30 a.m. and dawn is breaking on the eastern horizon. My first sight of Europe—while DA has been here before. The stewardess announces we are 1-1/2 hrs. outside of Frankfurt and they are starting to serve a "continental breakfast". For me the flight has been at least 2 hours longer than any I have previously taken. Too long! I imagine what it must be like to fly to Australia!

We land in Frankfurt and everyone streams like a herd of buffalo into the huge airport complex. Some 80,000 people work here. Immediately we are overcome by the smell and clouds of tobacco smoke as the passengers from our flight light up. It's been at least 8 hours since they last had a smoke. Hopefully some may have quit.

We have 3 hours to kill, not enough to get to see Germany but enough time to check out a few things: Coffee @ \$3.00 US, Small cup. Beer @ \$4.50 US.

Nice weather: Sunny and 17 degrees C. The terminal building is very modern as are all the surrounding buildings.

Chatted with a group of 12, 15 and 16 year old students, each wearing an "Iowa-Ukraine" T-shirt. They were in the USA on a high-school cultural exchange program and were returning to their homes in Cherkhasi. Also met "Ken" from Little Rock, Arkansas, returning home after a 6 day visit to Kyiv, with a 25 year old female he met through "European Connections". They had been corresponding by letter and e-mail.

Despite all the high-tech of this very modern terminal, there seems to be shortage of washrooms! The few there are will accommodate but two persons at a time. Imagine... men lining up to use the washroom.

We board a brand new Lufthansa Airbus for the last 2-1/2 hr leg of our journey.

We fly over Prague and Southern Poland. Once we are in Ukrainian airspace, I am overcome by a flood of emotions and thoughts about being in Ukraine:

- returning to my ancestral home,
- thinking of the centuries of oppression and the fight for independence finally realized in 1991,
- thinking of how so many people are naive and uninformed about the Ukraine and the struggles of the people during the forced famine of 1933, the scorched earth policy and atrocities of World War II, how so much fighting was on Ukrainian soil and how it lost 25% of its population from 1930 to 1950.

As we approach Kyiv, I am reminded of landing in Winnipeg—a great patchwork of farms. Our landing is temporarily delayed because on first approach a "wind shear" causes the aircraft to rock side to side, forcing the pilot to "gun" the plane to gain altitude and circle around. The next landing is perfect.

We arrive at Kyiv Boryspil Terminal A. (There is no B) and enter a very stark, poorly lit area, but supposedly functional, to start the first of three line-ups.

1. To purchase health insurance. Mandatory. Cost \$8.00 US per person. II
2. To go through passport control. We were in Line 10 but it closed
3. To collect our luggage and pass through Customs Declarations.

Peter is waiting for us as we clear Customs. He has a single rose for DA, (I got a hand ~ I shake). The weather is lovely. Sunny- 26 degrees C.

For a city of 3 million, Kyiv certainly has a small terminal. Winnipeg's is three times the size. We note several de-commissioned "Air Ukraine" aircraft. We load our luggage into Peter's white 1992 Lada station wagon, then return to the terminal area for a cold "Obolon" beer in a shaded out-door patio-type setting.

Leaving the airport we drive along a wide chestnut tree (in bloom) lined boulevard. The speed limit is unknown. Peter clips along at 110 kms. and is passed by a Mercedes surely doing 180!. Crazy!! During our 40 minute drive to his apartment, we notice at least a dozen disabled cars along the road with the drivers checking under the hoods.

Peter and his family live on Mala Zhitomyrska Avenue, within a 5 minute walk of the city centre Their building is a yellow stucco type with white trim, built at the turn of the century as a residential complex of some 18 apartments. It cost \$75,000 US, three years ago with another \$25,000 US of improvements. At 600 sq. ft. it is small by western standards, but well appointed and comfortable.

We were very tired from jet-lag but do stay up long enough to have dinner and see a bit of central Kyiv. The gold domes of St. Michael's and St. Sophia's are magnificent at sun set. I can't remember my head hitting the pillow!

DAY 3—THURSDAY, MAY 11

Kyiv is a city of Ladas, legs and chestnut trees. They are everywhere! The legs are my favourite...and the young Ukrainian women certainly know how to display them to advantage with their high heels and mini skirts!

I awaken at 7:15 a.m. quite rested DA sleeps another two hours.

We start off by Peter driving us to an agency to purchase O.V.I.R. (Ukrainian Visa Registry). Compulsory if we plan to leave Ukraine. And we do!

At a currency exchange I convert \$100 US into 534 hryvniy. Now we're getting some place. That amount can buy 534 loaves of bread and is about three times what an average Ukrainian can earn in a month.

We pay 75 hryvniy to get three, sixth row tickets for a Friday evening presentation of the opera "Taras Bulba". Dear reader, please don't tell anyone that Myron went to the opera.

Did you know that there is no such thing as a residential telephone directory in Kyiv? In fact

none of the former USSR countries ever had or have them. An invasion of privacy we are told. But they are available on CDs. Go figure!

Kyiv was among the first, if not the very first city in Europe, even before London or Paris, to install an underground subway system. It is a widely used, inexpensive transit system for thousands of Kyivians daily.

Peter took us to one of the stops, "Zoloty Vorota" (Golden Gates) where we paid 50 kopeks each to "ride the tube". Kyiv topography is hilly. Golden Gates is one of the higher points. We descended via two escalators of 336 and 232 feet each, at about a 45 degree angle. At the bottom we must have been 300 feet below ground level. That is where the trains are. It was likely 10 degrees cooler than on the surface. During II war time these were used as bomb shelters.

There is very much open space in Kyiv. Many parks, well used. Lots of benches. The grass, however, is not well groomed. It is mowed infrequently and there are also plenty of weeds. A cost factor. Mowers and cutters need money.

I was told that men in Ukraine did not wear shorts. I defied this advice. No one seemed to care. Maybe a Tilley Endurables franchise would do well here.

Churches are being restored everywhere at the expense of the state. The gold leaf on the cupolas is certainly impressive but one wonders if the money could be better spent on feeding the poor, job creation, repairing streets, etc.

If you like espresso coffee or the like, you'd love these in Kyiv. I hate espresso and even ordinary coffee is very strong, especially for one who likes his coffee in Canada with one third cup of milk.

We have a great lunch in a tiny 24 seat restaurant. For 6 beers, vareneky, home made kobassa, for three of us, the bill came to 24 hryvniy, (about \$8.50 Canadian).

We stroll down St. Andrew's Descent towards the old town of Podil. It is lined with merchants selling everything from embroidered shirts to Matrushka dolls, to carved icons, post cards, communist memorabilia, jewellery boxes, etc. We look and price shop but buy nothing. We prefer to look in Western Ukraine.

In the evening we wander down to Independence Square. It is about 7:30 p.m. Hundreds of people sitting around drinking beer, laughing and enjoying themselves. We go into a McDonald's to compare prices with Canada. More on this later.

Around 10:00 p.m. we phone George Duravetz, an ex-Winnipegger, retired teacher, now living in Chemivtsi. We arrange transportation and accommodation there for May 22-25, when we will get our first taste of Bukovyna and the Carpathians with visits to the wood carvers of Kosiv.

Hit the sack around midnight.

DAY 4—FRIDAY, MAY 12

Up at 7:30 a.m. Walk down to Independence square. Have a “so-so” coffee at McDonald's.

Spend a lot of time discussing anything and everything with Peter, while DA and Oksana go shopping for a purse for DA.

Oksana's father, Victor Volodymyrovich Filatov, who lives 70 klm. south of Kyiv, comes by train for a short visit. He brings DA a beautiful long stemmed red rose. I, of course, am shut out, again. We have a nice chat. Very interesting man. Quite excited about our visiting the land of our ancestors.

We learn that the Ukrainian national unemployment rate is 40 %-50 %, and as high as 80% in some of the towns and villages in the western oblasts (provinces). With the aging population, very low birth rate and emigration, the future seems very bleak.

Little things mean a lot! The toilet paper available here would best be served for making papier mache or wiping dip sticks when checking oil levels in the car. Maybe it should be exported to sell to Petro Canada or Home Depot!

They have great ice cream in Kyiv. Available along any of the busy streets from vendors selling a variety flavours from their freezers.

We spent 4 hours at Pecherska Lavra. This is a 900 year old monument near the site where Volodymyr the Great introduced Christianity to Ukraine in 988 AD. It consists of various chapels, the largest monastery in Ukraine (and the entire former Soviet Union), a museum, a huge church and bell tower (300 steps to the top--I did it!) and most interesting, underground caves and catacombs where early monks lived, died and whose mummified remains are now on display, enclosed in glass coffins, covered with ornate cloth, head included. There are 64 on display in one set of caves and 72 in another.

This site is seen as the world home of Orthodoxy .Some devotees come here daily to observe, cry , kiss the coffins and likely make two hundred signs of the cross. There is an admission charge of 5 hryvniy for locals and 16 hryvniy for tourists. We tried to sneak in as locals but an old “Baba” was too smart. Pay another 11 hryvniy!

The grounds, normally very serene, were a buzz of activity with restoration and repairing going on. It was amusing to see the kind of equipment being used. Some of it seemed like Canada in 1948—especially the trucks.

In a separate building, under very heavy guard, was a fantastic display of Scythian gold Everything from buttons to rings to necklaces, bracelets, head coverings, etc. Extremely detailed. Exquisite!

The Scythians were a tribe which lived in parts of (mostly) southern Ukraine in 300-400 B.C. Excavation of their settlements began in the 1890's and are still ongoing. Their craftsmanship is seen as world class, as good as Egyptian, etc. A travelling world display is due at the Royal Ontario Museum in 2001.

The evening found us at the Taras Shevchenko Ukrainian National Opera House to see the

opera “Taras Bulba” by Mykola Lysenko. (I had never been to an opera and may never go again).

It was in Ukrainian, glitzy, great costumes, in a wonderful 150 year old building, in 3 acts lasting 3 hours (including 2 intermissions). I had several short naps.

On the walk home we ate at a very lovely restaurant. I had vareneky. DA had some spaghetti! We were entertained by a trio of a violin, guitar and bayan (button accordion).

Peter called his distant cousin, Dmytro Smylski, in Temopil, where we will be tomorrow night. Seems that Volodymyr Masnyk had phoned asking if we could visit on Sunday for “Woroniaky Days”. You bet!

We hope to leave tomorrow by 8:00 a.m.

DAY 5—SATURDAY, MAY 13

We condense our luggage by 30 % and are out the door at 8:45 a.m. as Peter is driving us to Temopil on the start of our visit to western Ukraine.

For me, this is my “raison d’etre” in Ukraine, where I seem to have a much closer bond. As DA points out, our ancestors likely never made the 500 km trip east to Kyiv but were certainly respectful of its presence. They are much more identifiable with L’viv.

The service vehicles here are quite different. Many of them are converted military trucks, thus bullet- proof, I guess. Other trucks look like throwbacks to the Canadian West in 1950. No air-conditioning! Unlike Canada where overland transports dominate the highways, in Ukraine mostly trains are used.

Despite a threatening weather forecast yesterday, today has turned out not bad. It is sunny and cool (+6 degrees C.).

On the way out we stop at the monuments of Babyn Yar, the site where in 1941-43 the Nazis massacred 100,000 Ukrainian citizens, mostly jews.

DA had just finished reading the book by Anotoly Kuzmenko and felt she must visit the site.

BABYN YAR:

Over a 3 year period the Nazis shot over 100,000 citizens and dumped their bodies into a ravine, along with some wooden cribbing and assorted trash. As the Nazis retreated, they feared the Soviet Army would come upon this atrocity and decided to incinerate the decaying bodies to hide all evidence.

Today a huge monument with an information plaque in Russian, Ukrainian and Hebrew marks the spot. This was very emotional for us, especially DA, whose tears flowed freely. Strangely, there are no markers or signs of any kind to indicate how to find the site. One just has to know or ask someone.

Road to Ternopil (Continued)

Clearing Kyiv city limits we see many hitch-hikers, and old “babas” selling potatoes, eggs, cabbages and pickles.

It is a four lane highway with a median, with a 90 kmh speed limit, which Peter observes. The surface asphalt is rough at times. Along the way Peter points out several stork nests on the utility posts and also in the first 40 km. we notice three roadside saunas. Why? Who uses them?

Some vendors are selling homemade brooms and birch leaf switches. The latter to beat one's body while using the saunas. Different!

Village exits are marked with village names and beyond the village, the same sign appears with a red line through it letting you know you have passed it.

By 11:30 we cross into Zhitomyrski Oblast. The highway seems rougher and my note taking is difficult. The rural sites take me back to southern Manitoba, circa 1948. Old women hoeing gardens and old men using a “kosa” (scythe) or both of them hauling manure in horse drawn carts.

An hour later we are in the city of Zhitomyr. Talk about pot holes! Best ones so far!

Beyond, we stop at a nondescript “selo” overrun by cows in heat. After using the outdoor toilet and later munching on “morozivo (ice cream) we were off again. Only 300 more kms to Ternopil.

Near Novohorod/Volynsk, home of Lesia Ukrainka, the poet, we purchase 20 liters of “benzene” (gasoline) for 34 hryvniy, which works out to \$10.20 CDN-51c/l.

There a several policemen checking speed, (some with hand held radar guns), stolen cars coming from Poland, etc. Several of these checks are at former positions, where in Soviet days, travel was restricted and cars were stopped and searched. Today you do not need to stop unless pulled over from some type of traffic violation.

We stop again at Km 310 for a coke and to use the hole in the concrete.

Except for perhaps a bar and a “magazen” (grocery store), most selos do not have any factories or commercial businesses. Residents all seem to have about a 1/2 acre of land and of course, a garden.

Larger tracts of land in the distance are used for grain and other crops like barley I and “rypak” (canola). We see much manual and/or horse labour. In over 300 kms we have seen just 3 tractors.

At Rivne, we turn south towards Ternopil. On the outskirts of some towns we note various construction of huge, three storey, 5000 sq. ft. homes. Who can afford these? Peter thinks the completed ones are owned by former communist party elite and the unfinished ones were started 10 years ago by the “not so elite” and abandoned because they ran out of money.

Because we chose to make so many pit stops, got lost twice and had a flat tire near Kremenets, we do not get into Ternopil until almost 8:00 p.m. Dmytro, Oryssia and Oksana are waiting for us and advise that Peter's wife has phoned three times. We were four hours late!!

These people turn out to be wonderful hosts!

They live in a 4 room apartment on the third floor of a ten storey building. Their building is #5 of seven or eight buildings clustered together. There are similar complexes in other parts of Ternopil. We understand the State Housing Authority owns 36 such buildings in total.

They have lived in it for 8 years and waited 6 years just to get in.

They have a small kitchen, a living room and two bedrooms, one which serves as Oksana's bedroom and a dining room when they have guests. There are two bathrooms, side by side, with separate doors. One contains just the toilet, while the other contains a sink, and a bathtub with a shower. As luck would have it, they do not have any hot water for the month of May. No one has in any of the other buildings also. Closed for maintenance. Need some hot water? Easy! Just warm some hot water in a pot on the stove!

Given that they have 3 guests, Oksana sleeps with her parents. Peter gets her room with a pull-out couch, while DA and I use a fold-out/pull-out couch in their living room.

While the building is only eight years old, by our standards, it is borderline ghetto. The main entrances do not shut properly, the stairs and corridors are raw concrete, exterior surface wall tiles are breaking off, and public areas are badly in need of paint, etc., etc. There is just no money for maintenance! If money is not available soon it will look like hell.

Inside, their apartment is comfortable, sparse, but well appointed with wall units, book cases, carpets, etc.

Dmytro, 37, is an engineer, graduated from the University of Chernivtsi, once specializing in military and commercial optics and currently works for the State Housing Authority, overseeing all engineering issues in 36 apartment buildings, totalling 3,328 apartments. He likely earns the equivalent of \$40.00 US per month, (\$60.00 Canadian).

Oryssia will be 33 on June 11th. She is wonderful also an engineer from the University of Chernivtsi, graduating in 1986. Has rarely worked in her field. Has worked in the travel industry but is currently unemployed. The job became redundant. She feels her life is unfulfilled, there is no mental stimulation and hates staying at home in the apartment during the day when her family is away. Oryssia is the person who assisted us by researching and locating the Masnyks in Woroniaky.

Their daughter, Oksana, is 14, just completing Grade 8 and a real princess. Courteous, polite, good looking and even speaks a bit of English .

Seemingly excellent in school, her parents want her to get a university education. Oryssia wants her to become a "likar" (medical doctor). We truly wish her the best. There is just one problem—her parents do not have the money, nor can they borrow any to pay for her education. What a tragedy! I wish I was rich and could give them \$20,000.

Our dinner consisted of black current horilka. We toasted four times one “charka” (shot glass) per toast; borscht, 2 salads, holubtsi, and of course, the obligatory kobassa. Very good. Every meal is accompanied by a selection of plain and flavoured mineral waters. We keep eating and toasting until midnight. It’s been a long, long day.

DAY 6—SUNDAY, MAY 14

We rise early... for a Sunday. Have had a decent night’s sleep.

Again, our hosts lay on a big breakfast table which, of course, includes horilka, an egg and kobassa (what else?) dish, cheeses, tomatoes and a fish dish

We note the quality of materials used in the construction of their building is quite poor and the workmanship is equally so.

Volodomyr Masnyk phoned last evening, spoke with Oryssia, who confirmed we would meet him at the church about 1:00 p.m.

Given the flat we had yesterday, Peter does not have a spare, thus we must go buy a new rim (the tire is okay). We go to an open air bazaar where a new rim is purchased for about \$13.00 CDN, including installation.

One of the reasons Peter bought a Lada, other than to “blend in”, is that parts are cheap and readily available everywhere. Unlike us spoiled Canadians, in Ukraine, when you take your car in for repairs, the mechanic tells or shows you the parts needed. You then go and purchase the parts and upon your return, he does the installation. If it is a rare part it may take three days.

We return to the “kvartera” (apartment), pick up Oryssia, who knows the way and has been such a vital link in finding the Masnyks, and head off for Woroniaky, about 70 kms away.

As we near Zolochiv and I first set sight on my “bahtkivschina” (home of my father), I fill with emotion and my thoughts go back to their leaving for Canada over 90 years ago. (Actually they sailed into Quebec City on May 16, 1909). What a time it must have been! To leave home forever. Never to return.

We spot our rendezvous point, the 8 year old Greek Catholic Church high on a hill. We ascend the hill and I don’t know whether to laugh or cry! I do so want everything to go well! We park near the church. There must be 300 people outdoors, in the beautiful sunshine, dressed in their Sunday best. The priest is conducting mass. The “Praznik” (anniversary) started at noon. It is now 1:30-ish. The mass may go to 3:00 p.m.

Oryssia, the only one to have met Volodomyr, (his grandfather Dmytro and my grandfather Petro, were brothers), motions to me that Volodomyr and his youngest daughter, Anna, are approaching.

I would recognize him anywhere! He is tall, thin, dark skinned and dressed in a black suit with a vest. He looks like Uncles Steve, Bill or John. Not so much as Uncle Dan or Uncle Mike.

Our eyes meet, we embrace and both are in tears. I turn to Anna, who looks pretty good in the photograph I've seen, and embrace her. She seems surprised and almost draws away.

We chat for 5 minutes when Oryssia introduces us to Stephania, daughter of Helen (Ruzhtska) who is the daughter of Ivan, brother to Mykola, Volodomyr's father. This makes her Volodomyr's niece. We promise to visit them later this afternoon. If I only knew! (I learn later that the two families may not be getting along. When will they learn?).

I don't know why, but I notice their teeth. Volodomyr has several missing or broken while Anna's smile is full of gold...literally. She is 33 years old!

We arrive at 38 Vulitsia Bodnarska. Older daughters Mila and Stephania run out to meet us and almost drop to their knees to kiss my hands. They lead us to their house where we meet Volodomyr's wife, Maria. She is 62 but looks 20 years older. Mother and daughters are very big on gold teeth. Maria did not go to church today. Says her kidneys are sore.

We are almost shoved into their house and sat down at a table in a room probably 20' by 15', the walls of which are adorned with large holy pictures festooned with embroidered cloth. At each end stood high single beds. It seems this doubles as a bedroom for two. Inside walls and ceiling are plaster, painted blue.

Then the fun began!!!

Volodomyr pulled out 2 bottles of very good champagne which Peter and I managed to pop without breaking anything. It was poured into real crystal glasses which DA thought rather expensive for such poor folk to have.

We toasted and drank until all the champagne was gone. DA and I and Volodomyr were really the only ones drinking as Maria, Peter, Oryssia and the girls hardly drank...except for a bit in the first toast.

As soon as the champagne was gone, out came 3 bottles of "horilka z pertzem". (A Ukrainian vodka with chili peppers). This we drank from shot glasses...Nah! None of that sissy mix stuff!

And then the food came out!!! Plate after plate of salads, fish, kobassa, holubtsi, dill pickles, etc... We ate and drank and ate and drank. They would not take "No" for an answer. As soon as one serving plate was empty, out came another twice as high! And except for Volodomyr, their family watched.

After about 3 hours Volodomyr admitted he was drunk and went outside, sat on a chair with his head in his hands, and moaned! I guess I drank him under the table. I should...I weigh twice what he does.

We finally escaped the table and roamed their property of one hectare (2.4 acres) on which they grow all the fruits and vegetables they need. In dated, but functional outbuildings, they have 3 cows, 3 calves, 2 pigs, chickens, 2 yappy dogs, ducks and geese.

We took some photos in their orchard. At that point Volodomyr seemed to come around.

They would not let us leave but finally relented after we promised to return on Thursday. As we left amid hugs and kisses, they insisted we take along 2 gallons of fresh milk and 2 gallons of home made pickles. We accepted the latter.

Because we promised, we had to visit Helena Ruzhytska. What a trip!! Clear across Woroniaky and the access road was the roughest I have ever been on. Gravel then plain old ground. Good thing it had not rained!

Helena is a very pleasant person who has had a lot of tragedy in her life. Her son, Bohdan, died last November after being run over by a train on his way to work. He was 39. Her daughter, Maria, has two children, boy and a girl, both of whom are deaf mutes. Despite all this hardship, she has a bubbly personality. She has been a widow since 1989. She is 63 years old.

All of her family plus a brother-in-law and his wife, and two neighbours, were there to welcome her “rodena z Kanady” (relatives from Canada).

There were piles and piles of more food and several bottles of booze, but this time, homemade “samohonka”. Of course I had to have several more drinks After all, we were “hosti” (visitors).

We finally staggered out and Peter, who did not drink (and they respect this designated driver stuff) got us back to Temopil about 10:30 p.m.

DAY 7—MONDAY, MAY 15

Four Tylenol do not make a “samohonka” hangover go away!

Oryssia was preparing boiled eggs. The smell really got to me. I very nearly came close to “you know what” but escaped the embarrassment and spent much time outdoors, hoping the cool breeze, and three glasses of mineral water, would clear my head. It did.

Dmytro insisted on showing us Temopil. He is a learned and capable tour guide, and with his anecdotes and wonderful inflection in his voice, (as if he was speaking Ukrainian with a drawn out southern twang), we really enjoyed our outing.

Temopil was incorporated as a city in 1534. Before any white settlement in Canada! It boasts a population of 270,000 and is only one of two European cities, the other is, Vienna, to have a lake within its city limits.

It was and is, fiercely independent from Russia and was the first city in Ukraine to tear down Lenin’s statue. Once independence was declared, the very first protests against Russian domination were held here, and it was the western terminus of the human chain link demanding an independent Ukraine.

We visited various sites, churches, the parks and the zoo. Not much in the latter but all in all a most interesting three or four hour tour.

Then we were on our way for a one hour ride to Hlescheva, the home of the Smylski clan. DA's grandfather left from here to come to Canada in the late 1890's. Her father, Peter, born

near Dauphin, MB., has visited here at least twice.

Along the way we drive through Terebovla founded in 1097! Imagine, that is almost 400 years before Columbus sailed the ocean blue and discovered America!

Dmytro's father Wasyl, aged 67, and mother Olha, live here and operate some 5 hectares of mixed farming. Neither is in good health. Wasyl had a stroke/aneurysm one year ago and Olha complains about boils and infections on her right arm.

Wasyl is a large ruddy man. His poor health has really grounded him. He has gained 30 kg in 3 weeks. We wish him a speedy recovery .He is improving and we hope he keeps it up. For 45 years he operated combines and other farming equipment on soviet style collective farms, some as large as 5000 hectares.

He makes no apologies that he was able to regularly skim grain or sugar beets for his own resale, profit and income augmentation. The system was not disciplined. Now Wasyl cannot look after the farm so Dmytro must do so. They farm using horse drawn implements. This takes too long for Dmytro yet he cannot afford, now or ever, to buy a \$5,000 tractor.

Their farm includes a cow, heifer and a calf, two pigs, brooding hens, geese and ducks, and of course, a strutting tom turkey with a large ego. We wander freely as they show us around. It's been a long time since I had manure on my shoes. I did today.

We had a lovely dinner which, of course, included kobassa and more "samohonka" than we needed.

Following a short drive through Hlescheva, we returned to Ternopil about 10:00 p.m. but stayed up past midnight talking and drinking tea thank God!

Tomorrow we leave for L'viv.

DAY 8—TUESDAY, MAY 16

We feel sad leaving Dymtro and Oryssia. They have been so good to us. Their daughter had to be a school at 8:00 a.m. for a year end consultation. Peter returns to Kyiv.

For the first time in a week, DA and I are on our own. Everyone is worried about how we will make out without chaperones. We'll do okay! Just wait! We are looking forward to just being together. We leave Dmytro and Oryssia \$80.00 US to help them. Oryssia packs us a box of chocolates and a "makivnyk" (poppy seed roll). Dmytro gives us a bottle of Ukraine's finest horilka. The bottle is gorgeous and we will treasure forever.

Our driver, Bohdan "Danko" Yarmolik arrives at 10:00 a.m. in his 1986 Lada... What else? His services were arranged through Roslana Wreznenskij, our Toronto contact and owner of the "condominium" unit in L'viv where we will stay. Two hours and 140 kms later we arrive in L'viv. The ride cost \$50.00 US.

L'viv (or Lviv), Lvov in Polish, the "Pearl of Europe" also known as the "City of Sleeping Lions", has a population of 830,000 souls. Earliest settlement here can be traced to the 5th century. However, the fortified city was founded in 1256 by Danylo, the crowned king of

Halychyna and Volyn, and named in honour of his son, Lev. It is an extremely historic city. More than 50 % of all architectural monuments within Ukraine are located here. It went through several invasions, battles, fires, floods and each time it was rebuilt with new attractiveness.

Every street has a legend and in viewing the architecture, the grey stones reflect a diversity of styles, spanning the Middle Ages, renaissance, classical and secession eras.

Various nationalities and ethnic groups have called L'viv their home. Modern L'viv is mostly populated with Ukrainians but Russians, Poles, Armenians, Germans, Czechs, Jews and Hungarians also live here.

We approach the city centre along cobblestoned Vul. Taras Shevchenko. Our driver Danko, remarks how the ancient Germans, on first seeing the cobblestoned streets, were so impressed, they brought cobblestones from home to pave their own streets. After all, by current standards, cobblestone will outlast asphalt or concrete by 2000 times and it does not give off tarry smells.

Because most of the streets are narrow, the street cars are narrower and roll on narrow gage tracks.

Danko pulls up in front of 10A Vul. Akademia Filatova, named after a surgeon, who in the late 19th century, pioneered cornea transplants using corneas from cadavers, thus saving the eyesight of millions.

We enter the courtyard of this ancient apartment complex and meet Panni Maria, the concierge...a Madam Lafarge type, who hears all, knows all and seeks all. She welcomes us. She has the keys.

We ascend wooden stairs where likely thousands have trod before us for centuries, to Apartment 17 on the third floor. We open the door, walk in and "Wham" we are suddenly in the 21st century!

Our three room apartment is similar to anything you would find in an expensive North American condominium costing \$250 per day. We are paying \$30.00 US, or \$45.00 Canadian.

It appears to be a real bargain and has all the modern conveniences including a satellite dish, gas range, 24 hour hot water, a "holodnik" (refrigerator) and REAL toilet paper.

Danko leaves and will return on Thursday to drive us to Woroniaky.

We unpack, rest, and take our first real shower since Kyiv, 6 days ago. We will stay here for 6 nights.

About 5:00 p.m., we make our way to the square at city centre. It is very busy. Street vendors selling assorted products, produce, trinkets and flowers. Many do not have elaborate kiosks but will simply lay a half dozen eviscerated, but unwrapped chickens or 4 jugs of milk on a piece of cardboard on the sidewalk. We do not buy anything like that and wonder what happens to the milk and chickens if they do not get sold that day?

We do go to a real store and purchase some bread, milk, juice, butter, tomatoes, Coca Cola, Sprite and mineral water to take back to the apartment. Later we stroll out again. It is 8:00 p.m. and we are a bit hungry, but want something light after days of gorging ourselves.

For about \$4.50 CDN we feast on one bottle of beer, two glasses of mineral water, a tray of cold meats, a tray of salads, a tray of cheese, and bread. Certainly enough for us.

While eating in an outdoor cafe we are approached by a young girl selling flowers to buy scribblers, and a 35 year old (who looks 50) begging for a few kopeks to feed her five children.

We see beggars throughout Ukraine. They do not appear to be street drunks or shiftless souls like back home. Some mothers hold small ill children. It is very sad and hard to say “Get lost”. This phenomenon is among the most heart wrenching sights in Ukraine. We usually refuse. You cannot help them all.

Back at our apartment we make a few phone calls to plan ahead. I catch up on my journal entries for the past few days while DA plays around with the TV set, but all she seems to find are exotic dancers.

For the first time since May 8, we lay down in a real bed. Sleep comes easily.

DAY 9—WEDNESDAY, MAY 17

We are awakened by bright sunshine streaming in the bedroom window. The weather has been beautiful. We have been in Ukraine for a week now and had sunshine every day. Hope it keeps up but like everywhere else, the poor farmers will need rain.

DA makes instant coffee and blows an electrical fuse, wiping out the power in half of the apartment. The kettle uses a lot of “juice”.

Did I say the apartment had all modern appliances? Well, it doesn't. It does not have a microwave. Our son, Robert, would starve!

Microwaves are not common in Ukraine. Neither are clothes dryers. Most people air dry, indoors or out. You can hang yourself if in the dark you walk into a clothes line.

L'viv is a city of Science and students. There are eight institutes of the National Science Academy of Ukraine, more than forty research institutes, three academies, three universities and eleven colleges. Among L'viv's many architectural jewels is the Ivan Franko L'viv State Opera and Ballet Theatre situated on the banks of the Poltava River. Some feel it is the best opera house in the world, certainly in the top three. Others would be Milan and Odessa respectfully.

Back home five or six months ago, while doing a Masnyk search on the Internet, I found a Yo11a Masnyk in Rhode Island, who gave me an e-mail address of a Mykhailo Masnyk, a 22 year old in his fifth and final year in computer science in L'viv. His home town is Dobromil, about 100 kms southwest of L'viv, near the Polish border.

He knows some English. We exchanged e-mail messages and he asked that we contact him

when in L'viv by phoning his Aunt Nadia. I did so last night. Mykhailo is busy on his final exams. He does not live with her.

She phoned back this morning offering to show us a bit of L'viv. She works in the centre of the city, 10 minutes away, walking. She phoned again at 10:30 a.m. and we are to meet between 11:00-11:30 a.m.

Nadia Shatanska (nee Masnyk) is not the 68 year old "Baba" in grey stockings that I expected. She is 44 years old, well dressed and has a good job.

She arrives in an air-conditioned BMW driven by her 58 year old brother, Mykola Masnyk. Mykhailo is with them. Mykola is a musician by training and still works in some musical endeavour. He was in Kyiv yesterday.

We drop Nadia off near her office. She is a Director of Finance for the L'viv Oblast Cultural Organization and has been employed there for the past 25 years. We will see a lot of her later. Mykola drops Mykhailo, DA and I, near the opera house and is on his way. Mykhailo is our walking tour guide for the next three hours.

The world's third best opera house was completed in 1902. It took three years to build and is an architectural marvel. It was designed by Zigmont Gorgolevski; is acoustically perfect, seats 1204, the stage measures 48' x 52' deep. Ballet is also presented here. Gorgolevski also built opera houses in Odessa and Vienna.

We get a private guided tour by a fellow in a suit and tie and who is very informed. Is he the general manager? The orchestra and some ballerinas are in rehearsal.

The splendour, detail and workmanship is absolutely outstanding! Of any building I have ever seen, none even comes close to this one in grandeur. None! It is simply breathtaking!

Its location is in the centre of town beneath which flows the underground Poltava River. Near the end of its construction, Gorgolevski was told that the foundation was sagging and cracking and that the building would collapse. He was so distraught he hanged himself. The building is still standing.

We check the schedule of upcoming performances. "Aida" is on tomorrow and "Rigoletto" on Saturday. We choose the latter. Mykhailo tells us that Nadia will find us tickets.

Despite various wars and invasions, L'viv has been spared. All of their ancient buildings and monuments are still intact. The reason being, that invading armies made the city their headquarters and little fighting or destruction resulted, unlike Ternopil.

We love L'viv! Maybe we'll move here! Having a local show us around is a big plus.

Mykhailo takes us everywhere! There are too many places of interest to write about. We take many photos. To date, in a week, we have taken 100. Not bad, I guess.

About 2:00 p.m. we rejoin Nadia at her place of employment. She has a staff and a private office. I like that. She makes us coffee and she gives DA a book on Ukrainian icons which she "autographs".

Her daughter, Natalia, aged 20, is there and a third year history student. We did not establish if Natalia works there or was just hanging out today. Nadia seems to have some corporate privileges and seems to keep her own hours. I invite them for a late lunch. They accept, and with Nadia's cell phone in her purse, we set out to a light lunch in a lovely restaurant.

We each have a drink (beer or wine). We dine on salads and a meat/mushroom dish and really get to know each other. I'm convinced we are related. She tells me Joseph (Yuzik) Masnyk, with whom we visited in Nassau, Bahamas, three years ago, phoned and visited her. This plot is really thickening.

Nadia and Natalia are bright and interesting. We laugh and joke about a lot of things. She dreams of visiting Paris but will never live outside Ukraine. Things are good for them here. They seem well grounded. All are employed and their children are getting a good education

Nadia feels blessed. A tumour on her larynx which made her temporarily mute was benign, but quite scary at the time. .

As we prepare to leave, she insists on paying! She does...in cash! Oh, well! She is the finance director, and maybe a smallish CEO in the old party elite. Who cares! We like her. We make plans for Friday. Either we travel to Dobromil or go to Natalia's 20th birthday party—or both.

At her office Nadia made a quick call for opera tickets for us. No problem! I'll bet there is no cost. About 4:30 p.m., she returns to her office, while Natalia takes us to a store and bazaar to look for embroidered shirts we want to take home.

We purchase several. Average cost is 75 hryvniy (\$22.50 CDN) for adult sizes. The very fancy ones run up to 150 hryvniy.

Once done, Natalia is on her way. DA and I sit on a bench on Vulitsia Prospect, soaking up the ambience. She admires the architecture while I admire the legs—but don't tell her that!

We relax at the apartment until 8:30 or so. I enter my thoughts in the journal while DA writes postcards and soaks her feet.

We go out for an hour and a half. It's a warm evening and the streets are still busy. Street lighting is poor and flickering. With all the old historic buildings and statues here, they'd look good with floodlights, but the energy levels are low so they sit dark. Fountains? Sorry—water crisis the last four years.

As we return to the apartment, Panni Maria (aka Madam Lafarge) is at her usual post with two of her cronies. We have to stop and chat. She has started to call me “Kotyk” (small male cat). Really?

Ascending those ancient wooden stairs, where cats abound, and have for decades, DA muses about their different personalities and wonders whether Andrew Lloyd Weber may have been inspired by a place like this when he wrote the musical “Cats”. I think she has eaten too much kobassa. We both smell cat pee!!

It's been a great day!

At eleven tomorrow “Hot Rod Danko” will be here to pick us up with his Lada to drive us for a second visit to Woroniaky.

A change of plans for Friday means we will not be staying overnight at Volodymyr’s as we promised, so we have to think of an ingenious way to tell him, without offending.

You think your phone bills are high? DA called her parents in Mississauga. The cost was \$3.75 CDN per minute.

DAY 10—THURSDAY, MAY 18

Another sunny day.

We take some laundry for Panni Maria to do. “Please do not starch the shirts!” I spend ten minutes chatting with her and learn she has been a widow since November. Just as they thought things would get better—with his 80, plus her 47 hryvniy pension per Month—approximately \$25.00 US—he dies and she is left with only 47 hrv. (\$9.40 US).

Inflation is rampant, while disposable income is decreasing. Two years ago, one kilo of sugar cost 60 kopeks, today it is 190. Two years ago one kilo of flour was 30 kopeks, today it is 140.

She tells me a nephew is in hospital. There is no money to buy ointment for his bed sores. She prays for better times but recognizes that things will just likely get worse. “Hot Rod Danko” arrives a bit early carrying a four foot long wooden statue which he meant to deliver to the apartment three months ago. He will drive us to Woroniaky to Volodymyr Masnyk’s place, “get lost”, then pick us up at 7:00 p.m. for the drive back to L’viv.

Given this is our first trip without Oryssia Smylski’s guidance, we make several wrong turns, back track, ask three or four persons for directions and finally arrive at the right place. It is very hard to explain the layout of Woroniaky. It’s not a village with a grid of streets following a logical sequence and the road surface is terrible with ruts up to 18 inches deep. Thank God they are dry!

We are (including Danko) ushered into the house for a huge meal of salads, kobassa, green borscht, pickles and huge cottage cheese pyrohy with “shkvarki”. (Only Ukrainians know what these are), plus cakes, drinks, coffee and compote (raspberry and cherry home made—one drinks the juice and eats the fruit). Delicious.

DA, Volodymyr and I have four or five toasts with the usual horilka z pertzem.

Volodymyr apologizes for getting drunk last Sunday and really gets teased about it. Claims it was mostly the excitement of our arrival. He drinks very little today. He has home-made “samohonka” but it is not on the table. He would offer it but has too much class to serve it to such important guests as us. He tells us he only uses it to get neighbours drunk or to use as barter .

We discuss family trees, our backgrounds, lineage, etc. He asks a lot of questions and provides a lot of answers. He gives us some old photos of his father Mykola and grandfather, Dmytro.

He seems very proud to have been the catalyst to co-operate with Oryssia on our family history search. I certainly acknowledge this fact. We may never have come to Ukraine otherwise, and tell him so.

There are perhaps 50 Masnyks in Woroniaky. Most of them do not even know or remember that in 1909 our grandfather Petro immigrated to Canada. Another 20-30 Masnyks also live here but at this time we cannot establish a linkage to our family.

Volodymyr worked in a steam plant on a military base for 25 years and another 15 years on a farm co-operative. Now retired, he receives a monthly pension of 45 hrv. and his wife Maria, 20 hrv. That's about \$19.50 CDN per month. He spends 85 kopeks a day on cigarettes.

Poor Maria. She's not having a good day. Her kidneys are sore and she's been in bed until we arrived at 12:30. She can't eat anything sweet, sour, spicy, hot or cold, tomatoes, cucumbers, pickles, etc. and seems to exist on cottage cheese and milk.

We stroll to the edge of the property and admire the grasslands, hills and valleys. It's wonderful. Too bad the unemployment rate is 80 %! In soviet days everyone worked. We spend time today chatting with the daughters, Mila, Stephania and Anna. Anna is by far the spryest.

They each have 12 years of education: 8 in Woroniaky, 2 in Zolochiv and 2 in L'viv. The latter to get a form of Home Economics degree or certificate. Each loves to cook and each had related jobs in the "old days". Mila worked in L'viv in a pyrogy factory, Anna in the railway station in Zolochiv. I'm not certain where Stephania worked.

Today, only Stephania "works", selling milk, produce and other barter items at the bazaar in Zolochiv. In a good month she may earn 15 hrv. (\$3.00 US). These 15 hrv will not buy much. She'll need to save every dollar for a year to buy a decent pair of shoes. I feel like crying.

Each of the girls, when reading or writing, holds the copy 6 inches from their nose. Why? Is it from poor lighting? None wears glasses. Have their eyes been checked? Cost?

We give them some simple gifts and they are very excited, giggling and laughing. DA gave the girls panty hose, knee highs and broaches. They tease each other as to who will get which design. Maria gets the heart shaped ones and tells all she now has two hearts. The broaches cost \$12.00 CDN each. They have never seen such extravagance! They loved them, even if they did not know how to open the clasp.

I gave Volodymyr a shaving kit of a canister of Edge gel cream, a Gillette Mach II safety razor and a supply of blades. I had to show him how to shake and use the shaving cream. The Masnyk men are always clean shaven. We also provided writing paper, envelopes and a supply of 15 ball point pens—so they can keep those cards and letters coming.

They wait each day for letters from Pauline Salo and us. These letters are a breath of fresh air in their lives. We give them hope. Volodymyr apologizes for not having written Pauline in a long time. After all, he had to plant the garden and make some "Samohonka" for his "hosti" (visitors) from Canada.

Anna first, then Stephania, want to come to Canada to work. They do not personally know of

anyone who has done so, but hear of others who have found the gold at the end of the rainbow.

It is not so much escapism but a sense of self worth they feel they can attain in Canada. I try not to get Anna's hopes up too high and explain the difficulties just getting a visa. I leave her information from the Canadian Immigrants Aid Society in Toronto.

Given the cost and hassle of sponsoring in bringing them to Canada, if I were to send them each \$20.00 US per month, they'd live like queens. But then would they ask for \$30.00 ? I don't think so. They appear to be very honest and not that devious.

Along with the above, we continue to eat and drink until we are bloated, yet they insist we have more. Maria keeps saying DA is "soomna" (sad). What DA needs is a reprieve from all the food!

By the way, driver Danko Yarmolik, stayed the whole afternoon but did not drink any alcohol.

We depart at 7:00 p.m. laden with 3 x 2 litres of fresh milk and a torte (which DA helped make) 4" high, 12" wide and 16" long. We will return for our last visit on Sunday. We are told a "surprise" awaits us then.

Back at our apartment at 8:30 p.m., we give Danko two bottles of milk and give Panni Maria two thirds of the torte and the third bottle of milk.

In the apartment I take two and a half hours to complete my journal notes while DA reads the Eastern Economist. She is not happy with what she's read. There is nothing on how the "Rada" (government) will help make the lives of the Masnyks of Woroniaky any better.

We promised to phone Nadia Shatanska tonight at 9:00 p.m. to confirm tomorrow's schedule. For the next hour I try at least 30 times. We do not connect and don't know if it's the phone lines or what.

DA phones her parents in Mississauga. All is well back home. There has been a lot of rain.

DAY 11—FRIDAY, MAY 19

We awaken around eight. Outside our window, there is another blue sky.

We perform our daily ritual of blowing a fuse (actually tripping the breaker) in Ruslana's apartment, when we use her electric kettle to make instant coffee. To reset the breaker, we must unlock both our front double doors, go outside and unlock the breaker box. Immediately we are back in business.

The instant coffee we are using is very good. Brand name "Halka". It is processed in L'viv.

At 9:15 a.m., I get through to Nadia at her office. (Seems last night her home phone was constantly busy.) Our trip to Dobromil is not possible today. She is to phone back later this morning to help plan our day.

We connect again at 11:00 a.m. and speak to her secretary. Nadia has had to go to an unexpected meeting at the local “Rada” (L’viv Oblast Parliament Building) and will be tied up most of the day.

This gal moves in some important circles!

L’viv is only one of 30 cities worldwide whereby the entire old downtown historical section is under the preservation auspices of UNESCO. That’s quite an honour. We also learn that Ukraine has 39 towns which are over 1000 years old. L’viv certainly qualifies.

We walk in a different direction today which takes us past the L’viv University Campus School of Medicine. Perhaps Dr. Robert would consider a staff position here? He’d be kept very busy! Those high heels the young girls wear here can’t be good for their skeletons—but they sure look great!

A city highlight is the Lychakivsky Cemetery and we wander through it for half an hour. The site has been used as a cemetery since the 16th century. In 1783 the state forbade churchyard cemeteries and “middle town” L’viv was granted this site.

Outstanding dignitaries of science, art, and culture are buried here, including the poet Ivan Franko. The gravestones and crypts are massive and in various states of disrepair. Some have collapsed while others have been kept up. I cannot rationalize how people can erect such massive structures to their dead—but what do I know?

Spanning some 450 years of history, besides Ukrainians, Austro/Hungarians and Poles are buried here. For all intents and purposes, this cemetery is now full except for those who have relatives here or can pay \$300-\$500 US for the privilege of being buried here.

We walk past Rynok Square (a produce bazaar) and wind up having lunch at a McDonald’s! Heavens! Frankly, I’m tired of Ukrainian food and need a change. A double cheeseburger combo costs 13:10 hrv., about \$3.93 CDN, plus 70 hrv. (21 cent) for a package of ketchup. DA asks for vinegar for her “kartopli fries” but the girl just giggles—vinegar on French fries???

We return to the bazaar and purchase two more embroidered shirts for a couple of gals back home. Given that the bazaar is near the opera house, we decide to check if our tickets are there. You bet they are! Front row centre! Free! Courtesy of Nadia Shatanska (nee Masnyk) of the L’viv Cultural Organization. Now, DA thinks she has nothing to wear!

This Nadia woman is well connected it seems. It’s good to know such people in Ukraine, I brag. What a contrast! From the poverty of Woroniaky yesterday, to front row seats at a world class opera tomorrow.

We get back to the apartment at 4:30 and I phone Nadia as planned. She invites us over and will call us later and send a car to pick us up.

As I make my entries, DA reads up more on L’viv’s history but only for five minutes. Then I hear gentle sounds—she has fallen asleep.

An acquaintance of DA’s, Olha Kuplowsky in Toronto, has asked us to deliver a gift of

\$100.00 US to her aunt, Kateryna Mostychiwska in L'viv. We try calling 30-40 times with no answer. We finally connect and she will come by tomorrow at 11:30 a.m.

Nadia is late calling back. Very late. In fact she does not call back at all! We've been stood up! We got all dressed up with no where to go. So we play cribbage until 10:30 and change into our casual clothes. We snack on cheese, old bread and drink "Jaffa" apple juice.

By 11:15 p.m., as I write these words, we still are in suspense. What went wrong? She could have at least phoned if there was a change of plans. Was there an accident? Maybe we will never know, but Nadia was so kind and accommodating. Oh, well!

DA plays around with the TV trying to get a good satellite connection. We see a cooking show from Turkey, check out the weather in South America and a poorly dubbed Nick Nolte movie in Russian.

We are exactly half way through our Ukrainian adventure.

DAY 12—SATURDAY, MAY 20

I awaken at 7:30 a.m. DA is still sleeping. It's cloudy and it has rained. First rain since we got here.

I reflect on the first half of our visit. We've seen a lot and met a lot of people. All have been wonderful

Before we came here, an acquaintance told us to keep in mind that things here are very different. How right he was!

We have seen beggars and we have seen the elite being driven in a Mercedes with tinted windows. We've seen Volodymyr's daughter hauling water up a steep hill from a well, in two pails suspended from a yoke across her shoulders. In the villages much of how things are done must be like our grandparents did in 1910. Many are very simple folk and I do not mean intellectually.

For most, Ukraine's so called system of independence has failed them miserably. There is much unemployment and rampant inflation causing people to resort to a life of begging, trading, praying and dreaming. Historically, Ukrainians are a very resilient people. They cope and they survive and go on. We don't have an answer for their situation. Are they better off striking an alliance with Russia or the West?

Likely the most hated person in Ukraine is Pavlo Lazarenko, now in exile in the U.S.A., who is said to have milked Ukraine for \$140 million for his own personal use. Every citizen we spoke with mentioned Lazarenko.

However, there are dozens like him. If just the money with which they absconded could be returned, it would make millions of average, hard working Ukrainians happier.

Enough politics for now.

We decide to stay another day in L'viv, now departing for Chernivtsi on Tuesday, May 23rd.

We call Peter in Kyiv to get proper directions to call our contact, George Duravets, in Chernivtsi, regarding our accommodations there. Our “hosts” there must be real rip-off artists and think they run the Chernivtsi Hilton—or they think we have bags of money. That certainly is not the case.

They are charging us \$100. US per night!! Ouch! Sure, this includes a buffet breakfast. Who needs it! And “free” (yeah, yeah) transportation in the area.

Regardless, we agree to two nights, not three, so we can check out this opulent Taj Mahal, to see what we are getting and to compare the contrasts from the ridiculous to the nadir. Surely Volodymyr will never know what we paid. The two nights cost as much as his total pension income for two years.

Panni Maria returns our laundry. It looks and smells great neatly pressed. I tip her 20 hrv.

Olga Kuplowska's aunt comes by at 11:30 am to receive the money from Olga.

Prior to this, I decide to phone Nadia Shatanska to see what may have happened last night. She is very embarrassed. The local telephone service is to blame. She tried phoning us for 3 hours between 7:00 and 10:00 p.m. We did not hear the phone ring but also, we did not call her. In retrospect, we should have.

She is delighted that we are staying another day, so we can connect on Monday. We are relieved. We want our brief meeting to end on a positive note and her husband will gladly drive us to Chernivtsi on Tuesday, likely at no charge to us.

Bingo! Nadia has delivered again! As we prepare to leave to leave the apartment, strapping on our money belts to conceal money and passports, DA muses about stuffing money into her brassiere. Then she would be a size 36. She thinks this may be quite an improvement. I just fantasize about the possibility.

I crave bacon and eggs. No such thing here. (McDonald's do not have a breakfast menu, per se).

Today we elect to visit, walking, of course, Znessinia Park. A 60 hectare open air museum, featuring churches, homes and farmsteads, as they were, from various “raions” (districts) of Western Ukraine. Ten raions in total are featured.

On the way, we get a bit lost and ask a young couple, with a 2 year old boy, for directions—not only do Volodymyr, Oksana and Roman(chuk) show us the way, they walk us there! Oksana works but Volodymyr has been unemployed for five years. We take pictures of them.

At the gate we pay admission of 1 hrv.(.30 cents) each and are about to enter when we ask for further directions. We meet Oryssia Omedian (more about her later) who works in the park and because she has some free time, offers to show us around, apologizing though that she is not a tour guide.

Another stroke of luck! She takes us into the Boykivschina, Hutsul and Bukovyna areas. We see how each lived and worked.

The buildings were disassembled at their original sites and rebuilt here. The homes are furnished, including house wares and farm implements. We take several photos. Each property has an old "baba" sitting there to explain her "specialty". They are very accommodating. The site is very peaceful and enjoyable. It opened in 1974 but since independence, there is no money for upkeep, thus windmills, roofs, even floodlights, are broken and laying around in heaps. Sad!

Oryssia earns \$20.00 US per month. She lives with her parents. She is about 35 years old. This month they are featuring the paintings and sketches of Valentina Lehayskiva, a 31 year old, crippled and confined to a wheel chair, from Volyn Oblast.

Valentina's work is exquisite as to detail, especially in her miniatures. We like her work so much that we buy an original for \$40.00 US. As we are leaving DA decides to tip her \$5.00 US. She refuses until I tell her I'd spank her. She accepts.

We rush back so we are not late for the opera. We stop at a "producteh magazyn" (produce store) to buy milk, bread, cheese, etc. It is strange how many of the store clerks still use the abacus. Yes the abacus! Often it may be along side of a Samsung electronic cash register.

"Rigalletto" is a wonderful experience. Even I enjoy it and come out humming and whistling the theme aria. Our free seats are bang on front row and centre. We can see the 50 piece orchestra the conductor was six feet away and we could even see the make-up on the performers.

Going to the opera here is very inexpensive. Our tickets cost 9 hrv. (\$2.70 CDN).

At the first intermission I need to use the washroom facilities. As I enter I note a cost of 50 kopeks for men, 25 for boys. Inside sits a woman, (remember this is the men's washroom), collecting money. The smallest I have is 20 hrv. She seems annoyed but makes the change. I wonder how much she gets paid to sit and listen to men pee?

The performance is over at 9:00 p.m. and along the way we stop for a hot dog and a beer. They put shredded carrots on as a garnish.

We decide to check out the Casino Sofia. It opened in 1997 and is rather opulent. We check our coats and before we enter, DA must open her purse for inspection and we go through a metal detector scanner. The admission is 40 hrv. each but out of that we each get 30 hrv credit to use for betting or drinks.

The casino is small and features only roulette, blackjack and perhaps one other game. We are the only customers in the house! It is 10:00 p.m. and a Saturday night. We exit quickly having lightened our pockets by 120 hrv. (\$36.00 CDN) in 20 minutes, and return to our apartment.

Danko, the driver, is to come by tomorrow at 10:00 a.m. to drive us for our last visit to Woroniaky, for more "force feeding" etc.

We hope to visit their cemetery this time.

It has been mostly cloudy today and there may be some rain. That is not good news for anyone driving to Woroniaky.

DAY 13—SUNDAY, MAY 21

To date, we have walked more in Ukraine than we did the last year back home. I have a pedometer at home which I had planned to bring but forgot. My best guess is we have each covered 60 kms of Ukrainian soil on foot about one third of it up hill.

I reflect on one of the main reasons we are in Ukraine. When we started our family search in February 1999, I was not sure of any Masnyk family here.

A year ago we learned there are 50 plus direct descendants from my grandfather's brother, Dmytro, alone. We had two addresses and in July decided to write to Volodymyr. Since then we've exchanged five letters, and a bond has grown between us.

Four months ago we wrote to advise him of our plans to visit Ukraine and his family. I expected he would tell others and we would visit most, if not all, these relatives. He did not. Once in Woroniaky, reality set in. There were many reasons we could not see more of our "rodena":

- We did not have our own car and getting around Woroniaky is a nightmare. This village is so spread out and the streets (I use the term loosely) and house numbers are hard to find.
- We would have to introduce ourselves over again at each visit and if there is good chemistry, would be expected to visit, drink and be force fed for 3-4 hours and promise to return a second time. Not possible.
- Some of these relatives do not recall an ancestor having left for Canada in 1909; thus the introduction process could be quite frustrating.
- By what we have seen and been told, too many would be unemployed, very poor and destitute; some may expect and some may even ask for financial help from their "wealthy" relatives from Canada -or -we would see the need and voluntarily leave them a few dollars.
- They would ask for our address and give us theirs to keep in touch and (I would guess) request more financial assistance, or to sponsor some to Canada How charitable can we be? Not having met them we feel less guilty.
- Being hard nosed about it, maybe Volodymyr wants to "keep us to himself" thus did not broadcast our visit.
- Finally, if we choose to "support" one family only, I guess Volodymyr's makes the most sense.
- That's reality .

As we await Danko's arrival, we package a few dollars into four envelopes to give to Volodymyr and his daughters. A separate envelope is some money from Pauline Salo. She wanted to send some along but was unsure of the need so we used our own, knowing she would repay us. Volodymyr need not know of our little scheme.

It is cloudy with light rain today. While this is great for crops we dread the drive to Volodymyr's place and realize we may have to walk in the rain and mud for perhaps twenty minutes.

Danko arrives at promptly 10:00 a.m. He certainly is punctual. We are ready and on our way. Along the way we have interesting conversations about the difficulty in immigrating to Canada. After all, I must have something to tell Anna.

Danko also explains some history back to the 1930's when the 8 yard wide Spuch (Zbruch) River was the dividing line between Polish held Ukraine and communist held Ukraine. People starved in the East, while in the West, things were okay.

As farmers tilled their fields on each side of the river, those on the Polish West side were forbidden to even face the East, under penalty of beatings, being sent to labour camps or even death. So they hoed walking sideways for fear they might be caught facing east.

We arrive at our rendezvous spot in Woroniaky, the Greek Catholic Church, where we first met last Sunday, at 11:15 a.m. A 9:00 a.m. mass has just ended. Volodymyr and Anna are waiting.

However, a second mass is about to start with some 40 young boys and girls who will make their first communion. We are curious so enter the church and decide to stay for a bit of the service.

Inside, the men seem to be on the right and the women on the left. As customary, there are a few benches along the perimeter for the elderly, but everyone else stands. Now we know why. There are so many in attendance that if there were pews for all to sit; the church would need to be four times the size!

The young boys are nicely dressed, with fresh haircuts, and the girls—they are beautifully clad in their white dresses—all home made—with fresh flowers adorning their home-styled hair.

We feel sorry these kids had to trudge their way here through the rain and mud.

Each youngster carries a candle and a pink carnation. They look radiant. DA ascends a spiral staircase to the choir loft and takes some pictures.

The mass begins, we watch and listen for perhaps 15 minutes, then pile into Danko's Lada and slip and slide to Volodymyr's house. We make it without needing to get wet. This Danko is an excellent driver.

Unlike our previous two visits, when we were able to sit outdoors in the sunshine or shade, today our visit will be largely indoors, except when Volodymyr sneaks out for a smoke or to visit the outhouse.

The outhouse, by design, is a wooden structure without a door and without a seat. You void into a one foot diameter hole in the wooden floor. Depending on one's gender and the purpose of being here in the first place, to finish the "job" one may need to squat. No wonder Ukrainian farm girls have such strong and shapely legs!!

As we enter their house, the girls play a lovely taped song and music: "Our guests have arrived! We embrace and welcome them". It's in Ukrainian of course and very emotional. These folks are genuinely delighted to have us honour them with our visit. Danko is again made welcome and stays throughout the afternoon.

Again the table is laden with heaps of food and drink. After two visits, how much more variety can they "force" upon us? But they do!

Along with meats, breads, salads, kobassa, they bring out chicken soup, fried chicken and, one of my favourites, "studenetz" (jellied pork, which I had not eaten for years. DA deftly passes on the latter), but overall, I have never seen her eat so much.

Of course, the pepper vodka flows like water! Throughout the afternoon, we must make 15 toasts (1 1/2 ounces each—straight). I think I am building up a tolerance for this stuff.

We toast everything, ranging from the glory of Ukraine, to each other, to Danko the driver, to good crops, to the cooks, to their mother, to our grandparents, to their dog, "Morkva" (Carrot), to everyone's family wherever in the world they may be, and even to some lady with a moustache!!!

The afternoon goes quickly, laughing and talking. Volodymyr is curious about everything in Canada, especially the Masnyks. He volunteers information freely and answers all our questions. Our conversation breaks off only to have Volodymyr scold me to "eat now—talk later" or to make still another toast. We really get into the spirit of things!

We learn that Anna's sight is quite bad. I don't know the exact state of her vision. She wore glasses until a year ago but they made her dizzy and gave her headaches. She no longer wears them. They feel that the eye specialist in Zolochiv misdiagnosed the problem and prescribed the wrong strength. Now they cannot afford new ones. Very sad!

Then they start with their "secret" gift surprises. I am given a most beautiful embroidered shirt which I am obliged to model. It's a bit short and snug, but I'll lose weight and cherish it forever. I am also presented with a bottle of "Odessa" champagne and two bottles of "Ukrainska z Pertzem Horilka".

They apologize for not having the time to finish an embroidered shirt for DA and she is given chocolates, several embroidered doilies and a cloth ornately sewn which I could be used as table draping.

We get serenaded by the girls and the whole family sings "Mnohaya Uta" in our honour. We cry. Plain and simple. We cry.

Later we present each of the family members with an envelope containing US dollars, including a gift from Pauline Salo. They are very appreciative. We know this will help defray the costs of hosting us or buy themselves something they really need—or save for an

emergency.

It's still raining but we have a commitment to go to Zolochiv to call Pauline Salo and to visit a cemetery.

DA stays behind while Danko, Volodymyr, Anna and I set out. The drive is even a bigger challenge. We get to the Post office which has eight telephone booths. We pay in advance for 10 minutes "air time", but there is a problem! Someone in Prince Albert picks up but not Pauline. We try again. Same thing. What the hell? Later I learn I had written down the wrong number. Hers ends in "66" and I wrote down "77".

Leaving the Post Office we stop at the cemetery .I pay my respects at the graves of my grandfather's brothers, Ivan, Dymtro and Hrehorij. I never thought I would see this day.

Dmytro was Volodymyr's grandfather and returned blind from an Austrian war in 1918. Volodymyr looked after him and took him places until his death in 1956. The grave site has a concrete plate around it and a spot for a headstone but it is unmarked. In the past 44 years, due to other demands, Volodymyr has never had enough money to buy a headstone! He hopes to, one day.

As we walk through—the rain is now a shower—I notice dozens of names familiar to us in Canada Melnyk, Soltowski, Bodnarchuk, Boguski, etc. There are many Masnyks—not all related.

We also visit a mass grave site where 700 "unknown" Ukrainian soldiers are resting.

By now it is 7:00 p.m. We slip and slide back to Volodymyr's place for "closing ceremonies", It is time to leave my "brother" for this trip. A few more drinks and a Dance—DA and Volodymyr!! She claims he's her best dance partner ever. He beams! What's wrong with me? My ancestors were marvellous dancers!! I have two left feet.

As we plan to exit the house, some other Masnyk relatives arrive. They must have seen us at church. They invite us over but we decline. Volodymyr sees them as mercenaries whom he rarely sees and who, he feels, arrived to plead their poverty, get us drunk and ask for money.

Amid many hugs and tears we must leave but promise to return and keep writing in the meantime. It's been a very big emotional roller coaster.

As we are pulling away we are given 6 litres of milk, two cakes and about 10 kgs of fresh walnuts. We will leave these for Danko and Panni Maria.

On the drive back I note DA's state of equilibrium is very suspect. She's had too much of Volodymyr's horilka!. Oh well, it's not everyday one can do so.

We arrive safely back at the apartment. Danko has been super and we would recommend his services anytime. He drove about 1200 kms on our behalf. Our cost: \$70:00 US plus the free food, milk, cake and walnuts of course.

A very nice guy! We wish him well.

DAY 14—MONDAY, MAY 22

Three Tylenol at bedtime must have done something. I am awake by 7:30 a.m. but DA needs more sleep and does not rise until almost 10:00.

This is our last day and night in L'viv.

I phone Myron Vasilovich, plant manager of the “Trembita” Musical Instrument Manufacturing Company. We met him two months ago at Irka Sirant's birthday party in Toronto. He was there with bandurist Victor Mishalow. He asked me to call him when we were in L'viv and said he would arrange a plant tour.

He invites us over for 2:00 p.m.

They manufacture mostly string instruments. Their biggest volume is in guitars and they are the last manufacturer which has a bandura making department. The latter, up until 5-6 years ago, was made in plants at five different locations in Ukraine. Due to the lack of demand and artisans dying off, the Trembita factory is now the only one making banduras.

The “system” is out of money to train artisans, buy equipment, etc. and there is a recent thrust among Ukrainian Diaspora, at least in Canada, to “save the bandura” by collecting funds to be sent to Ukraine. Many, including Victor Mishalow, think this is a joke as the administration, graft and other expenses would take up most of the donations. We tend to agree.

Another call to Nadia Shatanska, (remember her?), who asks us to phone her in the evening. She invites us for dinner at her house and will have us picked up. We look forward to that. “Father Hen” Peter phones us from Kyiv to check on our well-being. No problemo! It's good to know he cares. Perhaps we should be wearing some sort of tracking device. Then he could monitor our movements somehow.

Outside our window, we see the sun again with some lingering clouds. Hopefully it will clear up.

My hair and toenails seem to be growing faster in Ukraine! Sure hope DA brought clippers, for the nails, that is. I am just too vain to get my hair cut here and will wait until Luigi can do so back home. Hope he's not on vacation when we get there.

Now, some observations about some of the foods. I found their dairy products very Good—especially the ice cream. Better than ours! We would not, however, buy milk in 2L Coca-Cola bottles, sold by vendors in bright sunlight!

The kobassa is “passable” if you look out for the odd bone fragment. Conversely, the home-made variety, and I mean home-made is excellent.

Their commercial breads take some getting used to. They are rather tasteless, tight grained and usually low loaf volume. I find this strange given the wheat grown here has earned Ukraine “bread basket of the world” acclaim and the first wheat kernels grown in Canada, came from here!

Given my 29 years exposure to flour milling and bakeries, I suspect their flour lacks protein/gluten quality due either by design or poor, out-dated milling techniques or equipment. Similarly at the bakeries, perhaps their out-dated equipment and conservation of hydro power precludes proper mixing and gluten development of the flours they do have.

Home-made breads in the 'selos' are much tastier.

Surprisingly, garlic so synonymous with Ukrainians in Canada, is not as widely used here in home cooking, except to spice up the odd foods. However, it is widely grown and readily available.

Another difference is in place servings. To date, our hosts set out forks, spoons, etc., but not knives. Don't know why yet. I guess a fork and fingers is all they need.

Sanitation in home meal preparation in the selos, is also suspect by our standards—old pots and pans—multi-use We would have chucked them out years ago or had pets eat from them. But, DA points out, in Volodymyr's kitchen, the "cooks" always wore head coverings! Yet, at the church we attended yesterday, most of the younger ladies were bareheaded.

Purchasing gasoline is interesting. Our driver first goes to a wicket and states how many litres and what grade he wants, then pays for it. He then proceeds to the pump to fill up. Once the correct amount of litres has been dispensed, the pump shuts off.

In filling, the \$ dial does not move, only the quantity measure, which is not always turned back to zero. Thus the buyer must calculate his purchase from whatever is already registered on the dial.

We take a taxi to the Trembita Musical Instrument Factory; a four storey 20 year old plant (looks much older) sitting on one hectare of land. Formerly state owned, the plant was purchased by the employees for 30 % of the appraised value. The land is still state owned but the present owners hope to buy it if they can raise the cash, \$70,000 US.

Myron Vasilovich has worked there for 20 years and was elected president for the new ownership. They are seriously considering a stock issue inviting shareholders—as long as the latter can live with a minimum return on their investment.

They employ 122 persons year round, making mostly guitars, which are sold to musicians and distributors across the former USSR and some Western European countries. Because of economic reasons, sales in the former Soviet Union are slow. They are seeking customers in Canada and the USA.

Guitar and bandura making is very labour intensive. On a one shift per day, five days per week basis, they can turn out 500 guitars.

They bring in logs of maple, spruce, sycamore and cedar from the Carpathians. They are sliced and cut into more workable sizes, then dried in a large kiln from 15 to 30 days, then with further processing, gluing, pressing, etc.—a guitar!

Sales terms are net 45 days. They occasionally borrow money, short term, at a whopping interest rate of 50 %! Once they get more business, they may be able to afford better

equipment and can do some building renovations.

Myron has a large, airy, well-appointed office. Everyone knows he's boss. He seems to have very much a "hands on" management style. We spent about 1 1/2 hours with him chatting in his office. He also gave us a rather whirlwind plant tour, allowing us to take photos.

By our standards, working conditions are rather abysmal. There is lack of proper ventilation where lacquer is applied and very few safety features like guards, shields or even "caution" signs.

He wound up the tour back at his office answering any questions we may have had and upon our leaving, gave us a souvenir of a 'miniature' (two foot long) 4-string guitar.

Myron also arranged for a driver to take us back to our apartment. A pleasant and interesting afternoon!

Nadia Shatanska calls from her place of work, at 5:30 p.m., and at 6:00 p.m. arrives with her husband, Bohdan (age 42) in his 1986 Opel, to drive to their home in the suburbs for dinner and an evening of visitation.

We are expecting theirs to be a free-standing, private home, but are wrong. They own an apartment on the top floor of a ten storey building. (When we say apartment here, read "condominium" in Canada). It reminds us a lot of Dmytro and Oryssia's place in Ternopil except this building may be a bit more complete in the "public" areas. Fortunately there is an elevator.

We are told that Nadia's father, Mykhailo Masnyk, bought this for her 20 years ago, putting down one third deposit and getting a 15 year mortgage. Today, if they were to sell, they would get between \$7,000 and \$10,000 US for it.

Her father, now dead, was some sort of a honcho in charge of collecting and distributing farm produce in the Soviet collective farm system. His priority may have been to make sure he collected more than enough for himself! His photo graces a spot on top of their 24 inch television set, which they brought in from Germany.

Nadia has seven siblings living across Western Ukraine and their home town, Dobromil, is 120 miles west of L'viv, near the Polish border. In the good old days, their town had a very large factory making "meubli" (furniture) but this plant is now closed.

For the past 20 years, and still, husband Bohdan, (Robert in English) has taught "shop", a compulsory subject, to Grades 5-9. He presently earns \$15.00 US per month.

On the other hand, Nadia now earns \$70.00 US per month. As of January 1, 2000, her position was redefined and her salary jumped from \$25.00 to \$70.00. A 300 % salary increase! Wow! Of course, this is only on paper at this time. She has not actually been paid the raise difference yet and laughs that she'll go crazy on a shopping spree once she gets the back pay—which is currently at \$225 US.

While Nadia busies herself preparing dinner, we chat at length with their younger daughter,

Yarinka, 15 years old and just completing Grade 10. She is a very pleasant, very slight person, seemingly a bright student—her favourite subject is biology. Her school is a 5 minute walk—at a slow pace.

They do not have any computers at the school! They did have several for Grades 9, 10 and 11, but two years ago their school was broken into, the computers stolen, and the laboratories were ransacked. There is no money for replacements.

Meanwhile, for Bohdan's "shop" classes, they have not had any new equipment for 10 years, thus must make do with old saws, drills, sanders, wrenches, etc.

We sit down to a dinner of salads and some meats, potatoes and a great egg white/walnut torte. In Ukraine, meat is a side dish, unlike our customs where all foods centre around the roast or steak.

During the course of the evening we make at least ten toasts. There are many laughs and jokes. I know I will have a headache tomorrow!!

Their daughter, Natalia, returns home and joins us. We had met her last Wednesday when she took us to the bazaar selling embroidered shirts. She's bright and good looking. I feel like kidnapping her!

Bohdan goes to check his car for tomorrow's trip and returns shortly. He tells us car theft and vandalism is big business in Ukraine.

We party until 11:00 p.m... It's been a long day and time to go back home, but not before two more toasts. Bohdan drives us back, to return at 10:00 a.m. tomorrow, to drive us to Chernivtsi.

We stay up until 1:00 a.m.—talking. What did you think we were doing?

DAY 15—TUESDAY, MAY 23

Morning comes early. More Tylenol!!

We pack and return the keys to Panni Maria. We say goodbye to her and tip her \$20.00 US. She cries and cries, begging us to return.

Bohdan and Nadia are waiting for us on the street at 10:00 a.m. We drop her off at work. Many hugs and kisses, but not too much crying it would ruin Nadia's make-up.

Goodbye L'viv! We've spent a week walking on your soil and your cobble stoned streets. We've admired your architecture and historical monuments. We've met many of your people, seen your beggars and your "thieves". Now it's time to move on. Hopefully we'll see you again soon.

Bohdan estimates it will take five hours to get to Chernivtsi. It is 10:10 a.m. as we leave the centre of L'viv. I would never want to drive here! Narrow cobble stoned uneven street, potholes, street car tracks, circle interchanges, jay walkers, poor lighting, hidden street

names, etc. etc. etc.

Bohdan drives fast. Sometimes too fast, taking risks passing on hills and curves. We press on.

We pass through the village of Halych and cross the Dneister River. I am not sure what historic event took place here, which led to the term “Halychena”, to which many Ukrainian Canadians refer. Halychena was comprised of the oblasts of Ternopil, L’viv and Ivano-Frankivsk.

At 1:00 p.m. we are in the city of Ivano-Frankivsk, formerly Stanislav, but renamed in honour of the poet Ivan Franko, in the early 1900’s.

Along the way, Bohdan weaves through horse drawn carts, cows, and geese crossing the road and slow moving trucks hauling everything from gravel, to logs, to oil, to gasoline.

An interesting sight is old motorcycles with side cars. Riding in one side car is an old “baba” (grandmother) with a 2 year old grandchild.

We pass dozens of shut down factories, sports centres and the like, which thrived in Soviet times, but are now mere mausoleums, with broken windows, rusting equipment and weeds everywhere.

We are through Kolomea at 2:10 p.m., four hours out of L’viv, and hit Chernivtsi city limits about 3:20 p.m. Bohdan was bang on—five hours and ten minutes.

Because we are all new to this city, rather than risk getting lost, we stop and phone the people who own the place we are staying at and which was recommended by “friend?” George Duravetz.

Ten minutes later, our co-host, Volodymyr (Volody) Kocur, appears and we transfer our luggage and bid goodbye to Bohdan, who is returning to L’viv immediately.

We offer him \$25.00 US, plus 100 hrv for gas. He refuses at first but accepts. Our Chernivtsi hosts wanted \$100.00 US.

As we arrive at their building and enter our suite, we realize the need for a rapid change of plans. You see, Ukraine’s president, Leonid Kuchma, is visiting Chernivtsi and we thought we’d invite him over for a drink, however, once we see our suite, we just know he would find it much too extravagant. Ha, Ha!

We are on the third floor of a three year old, four storey mansion of some 6000 sq. ft. Italian marble, Spanish tile, elegant Ukrainian railing and cabinetry. Owned by Volodymyr and Natalka Kocur, it sits on what was her grandmother’s garden. It cost \$100,000 US to complete, exclusive of furnishings. Today it would sell for \$6,000. US tops.

Natalka claims to have saved enough money in five years, just post independence, starting in 1992, to build this somewhat gaudy showplace. She bought clothing in Turkey and sold it in Ukraine for a profit up to 2000 %. She travelled to Turkey each month for five years.

We are paying \$100 US per night to stay here. We are crazy!! Sure it has a Jacuzzi, sauna,

pool table and all the trimmings, but who needs this! Also a breakfast is included. Big deal!

We learn that our sightseeing is not all inclusive and it will cost us another \$60 US for a return trip to Kosiv—a must see.

DA calls George Duravetz to complain. He seems to defend his buddies in crime, trying to build on the opulent positives. We don't buy in. He also misrepresented the costs. With friends like Duravetz we don't need enemies.

Our hosts, (she has family in Winnipeg and tells us their name—as if I care) and their daughter, Irenka, lay on a lovely dinner at no extra cost to us. Yeah, Yeah. Irenka is their official translator. She speaks reasonably good English. We feel this place cold, excessive and lacking the privacy that \$100 US per night should buy.

Chernivtsi the “heart” of Bukovyna, is an old city of 265,000 people. It has been spared the ravages of war and has many historic sites and the famous University of Chernivtsi. It was under Romanian control until 1940. Romania is 38 kms away.

Tomorrow we'll see more of Chernivtsi and travel to Kosiv, the home of local artisans.

Duravetz is coming by for breakfast tomorrow.

DAY 16—WEDNESDAY, MAY 24

Despite my foul mood last night, DA and I both sleep well in the clear, crisp, sub-Carpathian air. There is almost no heavy industry here, thus no smog. The foothills are quite beautiful.

I hope I am not too bitchy today. Our Taj Mahal does not have “real” beds for us. We have two bedrooms, but use only one of the beds—after all, we are still newlyweds! Both beds pull-outs. Now I have no problem with a pull-out in someone's guest room, but for \$150. CDN per night, I expected upscale Sealy, Serta or Simmons! The beds are too firm and creak with each move. The pillows are too big and too hard.

Despite its opulence, this building lacks any pictures or other wall hangings. I guess the Rembrandt originals must be on order!

Provision has been made for a chandelier, but for now, it's just a cord hanging down 1 from a 16 foot ceiling. I muse they must be having one handcrafted in the Czech Republic or elsewhere.

The building sits on an ordinary 60 foot lot. Over the fence, the neighbours have a nanny goat and kids (baby goats). The sound of roosters crowing from all directions fills the air on this rainy morning. It is 7:30 a.m.

Throughout Ukraine there seems to be a unique way of hanging pictures. I always thought they should be hung with their centre at the sight line of a person of average height. If so, here the average height must be 7 feet plus.

Yet the mirrors are too low I have to bend to shave.

By 8:30 a.m. it has stopped raining and seems to be clearing up. As we sit on our private balcony with its Italian tiles and wrought iron railings, sipping coffee, the roosters are still at it. They must be practicing for some crowing competition. I hope our roosters win!

George Duravetz arrives around 9:00 a.m. having been picked up by Volody.

Ukrainians do not seem to distinguish breakfast from lunch, from dinner. They do not believe in a light breakfast as we are used to. Ours, this morning, consists of a pork schnitzel done in an egg batter, egg plant, ham, cheese, tomatoes, kobassa, breads, an assortment of mineral waters and juices. And cake! Who the hell eats cake for breakfast??

First things first. Duravetz is embarrassed by the high cost of our stay and the fact our cost did not include excursions out of the city, as had been represented to him. We forgive him that trespasses immediately!

Duravetz, 62, was born in Winnipeg, as was his mother. His father came to Canada, from the Chernivtsi area in 1926. A teacher, he taught high school in Toronto and has lectured widely. He is a noted translator and has published English-Ukrainian (and Ukrainian- English) dictionaries and “Learn to Speak” books and still writes articles for many newspapers.

He married a gal from Kyiv and has two daughters, one in Ottawa and the other in the USA. He divorced, remarried Olha, a former policewoman, military type, in Ukraine, whom he first met here in the mid-1960's. They live in a “condominium” on the first floor, near the University, in the heart of the city .They are renovating.

Now semi-retired, he receives a pension from his superannuation as a teacher and with a pension from CPP, he lives like a king in Chernivtsi. His pension is about \$2,500 US per month. In his words: “Every day is Sunday”. He owns a second apartment in Chernivtsi for which he paid \$9,000 US and also a home on McAdam Avenue in Winnipeg's north end.

With Volody driving, George really shows us Chernivtsi! He knows the history, the politics and all the nuances of living in Ukraine, especially a Canadian living here.

First we go to a huge bazaar area. On one side of the street are hundreds of used cars for sale, brought in from Germany, Moldavia, Poland, Belarus, etc. The owners are in or near their cars, ready to negotiate and sell. What bargains!! We see Opels, Mercedes, etc., one can buy an eight year old Mercedes here for \$6,000 US.!

Across the road are perhaps 3000 tents selling literally everything. From kitchen appliances to linens, bicycles to panties, men's suits to sandals, brand name cosmetics to towels, fresh produce to mineral water, jewellery to electronics, utensils to tools, furniture to wallpaper, floor tiles, tires, etc., etc., all are new, excellent quality and real bargains. We stroll for an hour. Volody waits.

There is nothing lacking in Ukraine (except perhaps lawn mowers I hate unkempt lawns) If you have money and /or are really up on the entrepreneurial ways of trade and barter, you can do very well. George and I muse about becoming millionaires here by getting a John Deere or Toro lawn mower franchise!

The entrepreneurs live very well. They drive new Mercedes, BMW's, Saabs or Toyota 4x4's

and live in homes which would fit right in Toronto's Rosedale/Bridle path, Winnipeg's Tuxedo area or Vancouver's British Properties. We gawk at a home of a family, dripping in cash from a textile and clothing business, which DA feels would: I sell for \$2 million plus in Toronto.

Later, we drive past a brand new subdivision with homes so elaborate they rival the best we'd see in Canada. We take pictures.

The face of religion in Ukraine is changing very rapidly. While the traditional Orthodox fight among themselves as to whether the Moscow or Kyiv patriarchy is best, and while they and the Catholics know each other as a bunch of jerks, and while some Ukrainians still follow the Russian Orthodoxy (after all, there are many citizens who still are pro-Russian, pro-Soviet), the Protestant religions are having a hey-day converting the masses.

Seen as simply a "sect" or "cult" by the above traditionalists, the Mormon/Latter Day Saints, are winning over the youth in huge numbers. The later have over 300 missionaries, usually young people in their 20's, sent here to preach and convert.

Extremely well-financed, usually from the USA, they are a well-oiled, organized religious machine, very appealing to Ukraine's youth and as the older generation passes on they seem destined to carve out a large niche of believers and followers.

We visit a brand new Pentecostal church and the pastor gives us the grand tour. George has been here before. The hexagon shaped building boasts of a membership of 600 families and the padded pews will seat 1500. On certain holidays, with standing room only, etc., over 3000 have attended a service. Their youth program is very intense and seemingly well organized and a lot of fun.

Beneath the church proper is their banquet hall which will seat 500, used for I weddings (they do not dance) and baptisms. The baptism tank is 6' wide. 12' long by 6' deep. It is filled chest high with water. One must be a minimum of 18 years to be baptized as they believe that baptizing a baby is improper what can it know at that age?

Volody waits.

We then proceed to Korovia on the outskirts of Chernivtsi. This is the place from where DA's maternal grandmother, Vasylyna Romaniuk left in 1912 as a 16 year old, to marry a man in Canada whom she had never met. She wound up in Northern Ontario where Darucia's mother, Doris was born.

We ascend to the crest of a hill where stands a church built in 1908. It has Romanian printing on it. From here we have a clear view of Chernivtsi and the surrounding valleys, with Romania less than 40 kms away. It is very peaceful and serene!

We walk in knee high grass among the graves, hoping to find the site of some Romaniuk graves and meet a 70-ish lady who has come to visit the grave of her daughter, who died three years ago from breast cancer. She is quite distraught and cries openly and loudly as we pass the grave.

It is very common here to have an image or even a photograph of the deceased etched or mounted on the headstone. This must make it even more emotional for the family visiting the

site.

It is also common for the family to erect a small table and bench near the grave of the deceased. Here they bring a picnic lunch, sit, grieve and remember.

The grieving lady points out the home of some Romaniuks in the village below us and, takes us to where some of them are buried. We cannot make out the names on the three wooden crosses but know these are the ones for which we have been looking.

DA takes some photos. I am sure this was a very emotional time for her. Now she has seen the home villages of both her parents' ancestors.

Volody waits.

George Duravetz is like a walking encyclopaedia! He knows dates, history you name it!

He shows us old, new and restored buildings with Austrian, Romanian and Soviet architecture. The latter is typically ugly.

Chernivtsi is very progressive but most of the industry has shut down. It is restoring historic buildings, stripping off moss, carbon, rust and repainting. These structures look great!

George keeps pointing out luxury cars to us and makes remarks like, "How can Canada help this man" or "Maybe they should collect old clothes or have a fund raising at St. Vlad's for this guy?" Meanwhile this "guy" drives a top-line Mercedes!

He takes us on a tour of the main campus of the University of Chernivtsi, built in 1875, commemorating the 100th anniversary of Austrian occupation. It is very impressive, inside and out, has a large School of Orthodox Divine Studies, foreign languages and faculties of most disciplines except engineering. Faculties of Dentistry, Medicine, History, etc. are at other sites in the city.

Volody waits.

We return to our quarters and ready ourselves for the theatre tonight at 7:00 p.m. to watch a comedy in Ukrainian.

Our hosts "draw" a bath for DA but I have to fend for myself in the shower.

George has a one hour lecture at 6:00 p.m. this evening but will find us in the theatre by 7:30, to which Volody will drive us.

We snack before setting out.

Arriving at the Olha Kopalanska Theatre, we find out there is no scheduled performance tonight. We (and Volody) wait for George to show up. He is embarrassed.

We dismiss Volody and George takes us on a walking tour which includes the interior of the Russian Orthodox cathedral. We also go in and out of new shops selling brand, named goods very much Western style, nice displays, pricing, brightly lit, etc.

We wind up at George and Olha's apartment and decide to stay another night in Chernivtsi, but this time at no charge, at their place. This means we travel to Kosiv and the Carpathians tomorrow and will leave by train for Kyiv at 4:00 p.m. Friday, arriving there at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday.

While at George's, his doctor makes a house call! Imagine that! A doctor making a house call! Unsolicited! George has been having trouble with his knee. This doctor has helped him and was following up.

Dr. Anatoly Shapka is 27 years old and in a lot of ways, reminds me of son, Rob. He graduated from Medicine four years ago. He is very curious about the School of Medicine process in Canada and desperately wants to emigrate there. He says he'll drive a taxi or flip hamburgers to start and would definitely practice Medicine where no Canadian doctor would go outside the major cities.

By 10:30 p.m., after coffee and cookies, we take a taxi back to our "villa".

DAY 17—THURSDAY, MAY 25

I am awakened at 6:00 a.m. the crowing of our duelling roosters. What a beautiful day to see the Carpathians! Warm and not a cloud in the sky!

We pack. George has arranged for a driver to take us. Breakfast is at 9:00 a.m.

We learn about their best hotel, Hotel Cheremosh and visited it yesterday, just for a look see.

The lobby is very modern with Western appointments, bars, snack bars, restaurant, dance floor, games room, etc. Our cost would be \$70.00 US per couple, per night. There is only one problem. There aren't any customers. The occupancy level is below 10 %!

Our host, Natalka, tells us Mafia run prostitutes descend on all men from outside Ukraine. They act as "dates" or "company" and of course, will perform any sexual favours. If a man refuses the latter, they hound him anyway and most times he must pay for their company although they were not intimate.

Seemingly they even descended on 90 year old Vasily Fedak, Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Church of Canada!

Waiting for George to arrive, we hear some music and speeches. School #25 is just across the street. Today is the last day of classes and the whole school is having their closing exercises in the bright sunshine.

Every school in Ukraine offers Grades I to XI. Grade IX and XI must still write exams but the rest are out until September 1st. Today, all students are resplendent in their best clothes and finest hairdo's. The Grade I "graduates" look great, the XI boys look better and the Grade XI girls look the best.

We watch, listen and take some photos. Very moving. We hope the graduates have a wonderful future as they proceed to higher learning and look for jobs in this country in transition.

A bit later, DA actually goes into the school and into a Grade IX classroom. Their desks are small and mismatched. Need coats of paint.

(I am somewhat behind in my journal writing and am doing so now, on the train to Kyiv. The swaying of the train may render my printing illegible).

George, and our driver for the day, Ivan Dubek are 45 minutes late. The police had stopped their 1995 Lada Samara for a pollution check, which they tried to rig, but Ivan, who knows the ropes, was able to see through their trickery and they let him go.

We say goodbye to Volody and Nataalka, knowing we will likely never stay here again. We drop our luggage off at George and Olha's apartment, ask Olha to purchase tomorrow's train tickets for us and leave for Kosiv and the Carpathians at 11:00 a.m.

Ivan Dubek is Romanian, a bachelor, speaks Romanian, Russian, Ukrainian and fluent (for these parts) English. In fact, he is an English teacher, having taught in England. He earns \$20.00 US per month, but has not been paid since January.

He is fed up with teaching and how students bribe teachers with vodka and food to get passing grades. Because this works, the youngsters get trained early and develop their cheating ways to be used later in life.

Ivan, a vegetarian, also owns one hectare of land and is a painter/decorator as well. He has already started the process to immigrate to Canada. Likely Winnipeg.

Along the way, as we pass the Hotel Cheramosh, George tells us about how the Orthodox Metropolitan's name is "mud" in Chernivtsi. Seemingly, the various sects are in-fighting and Fedak has somehow offended the Orthodoxy of Chernivtsi when he was here on a visit last year. Thus the proverbial "s..." will hit the fan at a sobor or meeting later this year in Winnipeg. Quite frankly, I don't care. It just doesn't matter to me.

Further, we drive past the village of Mamoyavisi. On the edge of this selo, there is a new sign which declares, in Ukrainian, how improvements in this village were made possible because of financial aid from the Ukrainian Diaspora in Canada. No kidding!! Duravetz thinks this is rather funny and suggests perhaps St. Vladimir's Institute in Toronto should "adopt a village" in Ukraine, hold a benefit and send the profits to some selo so the mayor can build himself a mansion! That would take care of one family.

Soon we are in Hutsul country—rolling foothills. We stop at a bazaar in Vyznitsia and buy stuff for a picnic.

Nearing Kosiv, we spot a huge mansion with video security, manicured lawn, in ground sprinklers, four -car garage, etc. It belongs to a member of parliament who also made a fortune selling bottled water from a mineral spring he owns in the Carpathians. George calls this "conspicuous consumption" meaning built purely to impress. I wonder how the owner can look his poor neighbours in the eye.

We picnic in the tall grass on bread, cheese, kobassa, tomatoes and Sprite. Ivan also eats fresh raw cucumbers. We arrive at Kosiv at 2:00 p.m. George calls this a resort town with much promise. Its tourist industry is hugely under-developed. There are many artisans making

leather goods, wooden goods, hats, costumes, etc. All they need is tourists.

We locate the home of Mykola Knyshiuk, whose two sons now live (illegally) in Canada and who sell artefacts made here and to whom we are delivering an envelope. We meet his son, Oleh, who desperately wants to join his brothers in Toronto and somehow thinks I can help him get there.

We are asked to sit at their kitchen table and are served cognac, Carpathian preserved mushrooms, a Hutsul salad, “husla” a type of yogurt, and coffee, Delicious.

Having asked to visit their museum of local artefacts, where I hope to buy an elaborate Hutsul party hat, we are taken to the property of Mykola Kornyliuk. This guy has been at a party! He reeks of booze and garlic but does he ever have a museum! George was not aware of its existence.

He shows us every thing he has collected over the years, from medals to costumes, to headwear, to canes, swords, tiaras, crowns, instruments, even scissors. DA is overwhelmed. We all are. His entire presentation is laced with various references to the Virgin Mary, Jesus Christ, and God—in whose name he devotes all his efforts.

We see a typical pioneer Hutsul house and are allowed to take photographs although these are usually forbidden.

Here they also make costumes, hats and tiaras. Their beadwork is absolutely breathtaking. The work takes hours; the hats for sale are not cheap. A hat I like will cost \$50.00 US but it is too small. They all are—but I do get DA a tiara for \$30.00 US.

If there was a real tourist industry in this area, this man could be very rich. He saves business cards but in the past five years has collected only 81. See what I mean about an under-developed tourist industry?

As we leave Kosiv at 5:00 p.m., Mykola Knyshiuk asks, “Is that all? Is there nothing else? Didn't they pass on anything else?” (His sons in Canada). He means money. No, they didn't and I won't either, although I should have paid him for the cognac, I guess.

We drive back and take an alternate route, somewhat faster.

In the evening we have dinner with the Duravetz's and retire at 11:30 p.m. Separate beds, large pillows.

DAY 18—FRIDAY, MAY 26

The 520 km train ride to Kyiv will take 16 hours. Six of those hours are spent at a siding waiting for the freight trains crisscrossing Ukraine to go by. There are few double tracks in this area, so we will have to wait.

We choose the most comfortable and most expensive option, A private roomette for just the two of us, costs 102 hrv. (\$30.00 CDN). Our route, north-east from Chernivtsi will briefly pass into Moldavia, back into Ukraine, then back through a bit of Moldavia and finally back

into Ukraine and on to Kyiv.

As we have breakfast, then go for a walk, George Duravetz keeps giving us history lessons re “the many faces of Ukraine” and his take on past, current and future economics. (He was an economics teacher)

There is nothing lacking in Ukraine. All one needs is money. Modern stores and boutiques are emerging slowly and things are cheap. A 12 place china t setting with all serving dishes sells for \$120 CDN.

An average Ukrainian woman has 12 abortions in her life time. Abortion, readily available, is a form of birth control.

Ukrainian manufacturers still have not learned about customer service or respecting a customer’s specifications. They won a contract for rails under the English Channel and aluminium for wiring in Toronto. Both orders arrived, late, in higher quantities than ordered and not to specifications. Ukraine is not yet seen as a reliable, creditable source.

Car insurance is available but not mandatory here, thus purchased only by the rich for their BMW's, Audi's, etc. In a fender bender the driver at fault usually yells and screams at his innocent victim to embarrass him for “being in the way”.

The youth in Ukraine is generally better dressed than in Canada. No baggy pants, no baseball caps worn sideways. They love anything with English printing on it.

I’m a chocoholic. Chocolate made here is far superior to any made in Canada. Of course, one may buy good chocolates in Canada but it’s imported from Europe.

Ukrainians love sugar! In all forms. They use sugar from sugar beets, which are grown here in huge quantities. The per capita consumption of sugar is four times that of France.

The Ukrainian attitude towards exposing their bodies is very European. While those in North America may view it as lewd or erotic, young ladies in high heels, mostly bare legged, wear skirts so short, George Duravetz says, “you can see their tonsils when they sit down”. That George, he’s so droll! I love it. DA smiles as I ogle.

What Ukraine needs as seen as lucrative enterprise:

- know how, equipment to make clothing and footwear,
- food processing, recycling, transportation, road building and repair, home contractors, tourism, advertising, marketing, hotel management, coin operated Laundromats and lawn mowers,
- it already makes, but needs updated equipment for heavy machinery, chemicals, iron and steel, coal, military equipment, heavy tractors, furniture, wheat, flour, sugar and alcoholic beverages.

There are incentive programs for foreign investors. I hum “If I had a million dollars”.

In preparation for our train ride, we go to a very upscale supermarket to get provisions like toilet paper, bottled water, bread and cheese.

We say our “good-byes” to George and Olha, knowing we will see them again, for sure, in Winnipeg, Toronto or Chernivtsi. They’re great.

A five minute cab ride to the “Voksall” (railway station) in a Mercedes, costs us 3 hrv. (90c CDN). George sees us onto “Wagon #10” and into our “SV” (Splylniy Vagon) sleeping car.

Our “SV” measures about 6 1/2 feet long by 5 feet wide. On each side is a fold-up cot beneath which we store our luggage. It is not air-conditioned. The window is not meant to open. It is quite warm. We pay 7 hrv. (\$2.10 CDN) for pillow cases and sheets. They will serve tea and coffee later. A snack bar car is one ahead of us but seems ill-equipped.

We pull out of Chernivtsi at 4:05 p.m. and forty minutes later we make a 5 minute stop at Novoseletsia. At 5:10 p.m. we are in Mamaleha, and at 6:30 p.m. we cross into Moldavia where authorities check our passports. No problem.

In Moldavia, at Upeant, most people get out to buy wine. We buy three bottles for 14 hrv. total (\$4.20 CDN)

The two staff in our car seem quite friendly. Young “Demi” is studying railroad construction. The head honcho, a 40-ish lady is co-operative, friendly, but business-like.

At a stop at 7:30 p.m. in Lahra, we switch back and the two engines which had been trailing now pull in an arc towards Kamenetz-Podolsk.

At 8:00 p.m. we “dine” in our SV on brown bread, ham(shynka), tomatoes (pomadoreh) and cheese (sehr). We also kill a bottle of Moldavian wine, which is not bad at all. We proceed at a slow pace, not above 40 kph, through some grain fields and wave to young boys out grazing their cows.

At Vilika Soloboda we cross the Dneister River, which is up to 40 metres deep at this point. We follow it as it winds its way into Kamenetz-Podolsk where we have arrived at 9:30 p.m. It has gotten quite dark.

Our new young friend, Demi, who got off at his home, Kamenetz-Podolsk, showed us the double security features on our doors, urging us to lock all systems, so crooks who buy cheap seats, then prowl the cars when everyone is asleep, trying to break in to steal anything value, will not get in.

It’s hot and stuffy in our compartment. We keep our door open as long as possible to benefit from the breeze coming in from the windows open in the corridor. We are getting tired and by 11:00 p.m. must shut and secure our door. DA seems to fall asleep immediately. I don’t.

DAY 19—SATURDAY, MAY 27

I have not had much sleep. It was too hot for me and too noisy and I remember still being awake at 2:00 a.m. but must have slept some after that. Dawn arrives early. It's bright and clear at 5:40 a.m. as I make these entries. It has cooled off and is a lot more comfortable.

We are to arrive in Kyiv at 8:08 am.

At 6:00 a.m. we stop briefly at Popilnia. Women with large blue "torbas" (bags) jammed full with produce, etc., are scurrying about getting ready to trade, sell, and barter at their local bazaars. Along the way, we see wooden box cars, sitting idle on railway sidings, once used to carry some granular products, perhaps wheat. They seem in poor condition and are hardly comparable to our large, green "Canada" wheat rail cars.

At about 7:15 a.m., an attendant comes by with coffee, demitasses of some very bitter, espresso type brew, laced with too much sugar. My father, who took three teaspoonfuls per cup may have liked this. I think it is terrible.

I stroll forward to the "dining" car, (and I use the term loosely), only to find out it is closed and MAY reopen at 9:00 a.m.

We have now been on this train for almost sixteen hours, which is quite an accomplishment for me, given that I had been on a train only four times previously in my life, excluding the "Go" trains or any subways in Ontario.

I think a trip across Canada might be nice.

Our locomotive seems quite new. During Soviet days, all the locomotives for the entire USSR were built in Luhansk in far Eastern Ukraine.

The washroom facilities are very primitive and which, DA thinks, are designed by men. The toilet seats are wooden—no, we don't know what kind of wood and they belong in a toilet museum. I wonder if there is such a place.

Our locomotive screeches to a halt in Kyiv at 8:08 a.m. Our adventure is over. Peter waits for us on the platform and quickly whisks us through their "Voksal" and past taxi drivers, legitimate or otherwise, to his car. It is 8:30 a.m.

Too soon to go back to his place though! He takes us to Taras Shevchenko University, a massive red brick building complex and the most prestigious university in Ukraine. We also visit St. Volodymyr's, the seat of the Kyiv Patriarch, Orthodox Church in Ukraine. We spend some time inside. Some might find it beautiful. After a couple of much needed coffees, we get to Peter and Oksana's apartment. I need a shower badly and take one. After a 30 minute nap, I'm ready to go. We are on the last leg of this incredible journey. We have three nights left in Kyiv and leave for home on Tuesday.

Peter must feel we have not spent enough time in Kyiv and has planned out some options for us.

Today and tomorrow are "Kyiv Days" and we are told thousands of Ukrainians, from

everywhere, will be on the streets, to eat, drink, buy, sell, be entertained, to see and be seen.

We choose a half hour walk through a serene wooded park, past the site where Volodymyr the Great declared Christianity in Ukraine in 988, across a foot bridge spanning the Dneiper river and onto an island.

Here there are beaches with sun tanners, even some swimmers, assorted vendors with ice cream, kvas, varenyky, shish-ka-bobs and an 8 piece band which plays and sings traditional happy Ukrainian tunes and music.

Kyiv is celebrating in hot, beautiful weather.

Kyiv is happy and feels good about itself.

Kyiv invites all to enjoy themselves and come back.

Kyiv's streets are decorated brightly with flags and signs.

Kyiv is proud of its past, proud of its present, and confidently looks to the future.

Kyiv's churches sing out her praises.

Kyiv is one big mother of a city!

DA, Peter and I, park ourselves in a very South Pacific looking spot, drink beer, chat and listen. This island is only a 30 minute walk from Peter's apartment, yet it feels a jet ride away. To get here the walk was all downhill. Returning we take a cable car. Regardless, the muscles of our legs have been strained to the limit.

After a brief rest near Peter's, DA and I proceed down his street to Maidan Nezalyzhnosti, (Independence Square). It is a sea of people, singing, dancing, drinking, eating, hooting and hollering, showing off, picking up, putting down, splashing in the fountain with their clothes on! Most of the participants are less than half my age.

This is Ukraine today!

Peter joins us at 8:00 p.m. in front of one of the main landmarks on Independence Square, McDonald's. How the hell, or who did George Cohen payoff of get this location? It doesn't belong here. Today it is very busy, especially in the washrooms!

As the evening wears on, there are even more people. We walk along Hreshchatyk, (a boulevard), Kyiv's main drag, closed to vehicular traffic today. We see musicians, jugglers, tumblers and people, people, people.

We sit at an outdoor bar, sip beer, chat and soak up the ambience. On the way home we, stop for a snack of salad and varenyky. It's been (another) very long, very beautiful day. We should sleep like logs.

DAY 20—SUNDAY, MAY 28

We did sleep like logs and are up by 8:30 a.m.

Reflecting on yesterday—it was 30 degrees C—while we saw young ladies in various stages of undress, we saw only 3 or 4 men in shorts. This is hard for me to take, given I wear shorts from April to October. I just don't like sweaty legs!

Whoever reads these notes, at this time, may not have heard of Viktor Yushchenko. The likelihood is you may soon.

Yushchenko, is 48, a former swine herder, who got a degree in Economics from the University of Temopil, entered politics, progressed swiftly, was appointed head of the Bank of Ukraine upon the assassination of the incumbent and today is Prime Minister of Ukraine, the No.2 man, to President Leonid Kuchma.

He is humble, highly respected and politically “clean” (i.e. not yet corrupted), thus a threat to some of the old guard. He has recently issued a reform plan of a 1000 days which is meant to bring a better life to Ukrainians.

Why am I writing this? And why this political lesson?

Viktor Yushchenko lives on the top floor of the same building as Peter and Oksana. What does this mean to them? Plenty! Since his moving in, the corridors have been renovated, they have a new elevator with a mirror, there is a “guard” at the door 24 hours per day and other improvements are ongoing. All paid for by the State.

His Mercedes, along with driver and bodyguard, are always at the ready, parked alongside Peter's 1994 Lada.

Yushchenko travels widely and is rarely at his residence but I did see him get into his car shortly after we got to Kyiv two weeks ago. We made eye contact but he didn't recognize me. Strange!!

This morning, we step out of the apartment and sit on a park bench soaking up the atmosphere. On the way back, Yushchenko, with his bodyguards, comes toward us. We exchange “Good Day's”. Our comfort level has not grown to where I can call him “Vic” or he call me “Maz”.

Bill Clinton is due in town in early June and is expected to give a speech about a two minute walk from Peter and Oksana's. Peter has heard that any residents who may have a window facing on where he will be speaking, may be asked to evacuate US security paranoia. If so, Peter may need to temporarily evacuate.

We have “kasha” (buckwheat) for breakfast. I used to love the stuff but DA is not too crazy about it. She has some anyway. It's very good. I have a second bowl. We are in for (another) busy day. It is hot and humid but Peter feels we have not yet seen enough of Kyiv. We both break with tradition and wear shorts. Much more comfortable!

It is the second and last day of “Kyiv Days”. Again, there are thousands of people everywhere.

Peter takes us to the Ukrainian War Memorial, museum and park. Built on one of the many hills of Kyiv, in the Leonid Brezhnev era, it features an outdoor and indoor museum displaying military planes, tanks, amphibious vehicles, jeeps, etc. There are massive 20 foot high statues cast in bronze, depicting various home and military activities during World War I and World War II.

Peter has not been in the indoor museum and we decide to spend twenty minutes looking at what there might be. It turns out we spend over an hour and leave having seen less than 50%. It would take a day!

This is the most comprehensive museum of the history of what to us, is World War II. The experience was the most moving and emotional of anything in my life. I kept thinking of it for many hours and still do. What got to me most was the actual equipment, not replicas, and actual other items, not replicas, which serve as a memory to the atrocities of the Nazis. Among them:

- A guillotine to cut off heads of children.
- A bone crusher/grinder with human bones bagged to use as fertilizer.
- Gloves made from human skin.
- Soap made from human tallow.

Ugly! Disgusting! Unforgettable! Scary!

Later we visit the Mariyinsky Palace and park. This is where, in pre-revolution days, Russian tsars would stay when they paid a visit to Kyiv. A huge property, it is now used for official government business when international heads of state sign documents, pacts, etc.

It is also where demonstrators from the coal mines of the Donas Basin came to stage their protests for better wages and working conditions. For a week, they gathered and banged their helmets on the tiled street in front.

About 3:30 p.m. Peter, Oksana, DA and I, take the Metro (subway), which travels fast, to Hydro Park. There are tons of people everywhere!

Hydro Park, on one of the islands in the Dneiper River (pronounced Dneipro in Ukrainian) where Kyivians come to sunbathe, swim, eat, drink and carouse on week ends. Today it is packed.

One of the unique features at Hydro Park is an outdoor gym which was written up in the National Geographic 4-5 years ago. It has every imaginable weight lifting and exercise equipment, with a big difference.

All equipment is handmade using discarded automobile parts! Tire rims, brake drums, crank shafts, etc. are used either as weights or pulleys. Looks like a junkyard but quite effective and used a lot. We also see pommel horses, uneven bars, high bars, etc. being used by those into gymnastics. We've seen this type of performance only on T.V.

We find a shady comer and enjoy some "shashlik" (shish-ka-bobs) pork, salad and beer. Great food, great prices, poor service.

On the way back we fight our way through a sea of bodies. DA vows never to be here again on Kyiv Days. For dinner, with the family, we have chicken, a meat with a prune dish, potatoes, salad and a great chocolate cake. While the others drink wine, I choose to toast with vodka.

Oksana's mother has come to visit and baby-sit. She is a heavy set woman, deeply religious,

who lost five brothers in WW II. She has lived in Ukraine for 30 years but speaks only Russian. Oksana must translate our conversation to her.

In the evening, I stroll down to Independence Square to watch the fireworks marking the end of the Kyiv Days. On the way, there is a casino with slot machines, very much like in Canada. I invest 40 hrv. (\$12.00 CDN) hoping to hit the jackpot. I don't.

Near bed time, we four adults discuss the Ukraine of today and its needs re consumer products and services. I boast that if I were Oksana's age (32), with my experience, I may not return to Canada, but immerse myself in selling and marketing consumer goods to a hungry populace, thus becoming quite (nah, very) rich.

DAY 21—MONDAY, MAY 29

After the stifling heat and humidity of the past several days, I predicted a thunderstorm last night. I was wrong. Again.

It is already quite warm (and cloudless) as I make this entry at 9:15 a.m. Peter and Oksana have taken Anton to see a “likar” (doctor) to have his eyes checked. They are itchy and watery, causing him to rub them often. Maybe it's an allergy—but what do I know.

This is our last full day in Ukraine. I mention to Peter, Ukraine reminds me of a beautiful, young virgin, ready to be tenderly and lovingly seduced. To my chagrin, I am told such an analogy has already been used. I am devastated that someone has already used this comparison—but will recover. Peter tells me the seduction was not too pretty, leaving many suitors milked to the point of bankruptcy.

Regarding Anton's itchy eyes—I was right! It is an allergy! How about that! Type not determined.

Ukrainians drink a lot! Of everything! No one drinks tap water but they consume gallons of mineral water (flavoured and unflavoured), juices, whiskeys and beer. Boy do they drink beer! Its available everywhere! You can buy a bottle in dozens of places, open and drink it as you stroll the streets. “Obolon” is the beer brand leader, followed by “Slavotych”, “Taller” and many others including regional brands like “L'vivska”, in L'viv, Western Ukraine. I am not a beer drinker but tried several. Quite good—especially in the hot sun when it is 30 degrees C.

Because of a Ukrainian Pavilion with which we are involved in Brampton, in July, at which we expect to offer “Made in Ukraine, Obolon Beer”, I called their corporate office in Kyiv, looking for coasters, lighters, etc., as giveaways. They refer me to their Canadian agent or distributor in Mississauga, of all places, who they will instruct to co-operate with us. Our contact in Kyiv, Mykhailo Zelenka, is very helpful and positive, and considers our request as reasonable and a “no brainer” for them.

About 11:00 a.m. we set out to pick out a few gifts and souvenirs to take back home to friends some chocolates, spirits, cigarettes and a whiskey flask with a KGB insignia on it.

We believe a visit to a museum should only be on a rainy or very hot day. Today it is very hot

and we decide to visit the National Museum of Ukrainian History. The building is a massive four storey structure. There is free admission today. There are over 600,000 items on display spanning history from ancient cave man to the present day. Neither of the World Wars are included, it seems. These are reserved for the War Memorial, which we visited yesterday.

Different exhibits are in different rooms. Each room has an attendant, always a lady 65 years plus. I am not sure if they are there to help us or watch so we don't steal anything. Many seem so dour and sullen I wonder if they have ever smiled.

They all seem to be reading. One lady, however, seems much friendlier and is eager to explain those items on display in her section. Learning we are from Canada, she is curious about how the 6-7 million Ukrainians in Canada are doing. When we tell her there are but a maximum of one million Ukrainians in Canada, she is surprised because she had been told there are six times that.

The museum, like many others we have visited, is not prepared for tourists outside Ukraine or at best, the former Soviet Bloc. All items are described in the Ukrainian and Russian Cyrillic language, thus anyone unable to read and understand this language, would be at a disadvantage.

Peter sees this as a mega opportunity for translators such as him. It could take years and cost a lot of money...Sponsorship and funding from airlines which fly into Ukraine, like KLM, Lufthansa and British Airways, and who might benefit from such a project, could be sought. There are thousands of plaques, historical sites, museums, etc., where such translation is needed.

In the evening, we take Peter out for dinner. Oksana cannot join us tonight. We walk past the building where Golda Meier lived, to a small restaurant called "The Butterfly" We order 8-9 different dishes and help ourselves, some from each. Four steins of beer, four glasses of wine, and enough food to fill a horse costs 115 hrv. (\$34.50 CDN).

On the walk back, we are serenaded by gypsy music, a song and dance troupe and further along by a group of two violins and a bass fiddle.

We get home at 11:30 p.m.

DAY 22—TUESDAY, MAY 30

Today we head for home!

Our (almost) three week stay in Ukraine has flown by on one hand, yet it seems like we arrived here three months ago! We have seen so much and done so much travelled, ate, drank, and walked, too much!

We organize our luggage as Peter and Oksana take their kids to some school function. When they return, we say our goodbyes (they will be in Canada in early July) and leave for the airport at 12:15 p.m. Our Lufthansa flight departs at 2:35 p.m.

It Will be a long day.

Peter gets us to the airport at 1:00 p.m. Surprise! Our flight is leaving 20 minutes early! I have never heard of a scheduled flight leaving early.

Anyway, we whisk through the four airport control points, board Lufthansa #3261 and lift off Ukrainian soil at 2:30 p.m. Our flight to Frankfurt is two hours and thirty minutes. We arrive Frankfurt precisely at 4:00 p.m. (1 hour time difference).

Lufthansa Flight 470, which is to take us to Toronto, is 25 minutes late leaving. This gives us a chance to roam the airport.

Despite having had lunch just an hour ago, I decide to order a frankfurter and coke. What else would I order in Frankfurt? A pizza? What a mistake! A SO-SO sausage on a stale Kaiser (of course) roll, with mustard and a coke, for which I would pay \$4.00 CDN in Toronto, cost me \$10.00 US (\$15.00 CDN)!! A lesson learned.

Flight 470 pushes away at 5:30 p.m. but we are not airborne until 6:10 p.m. Our flight across Western Europe, the Atlantic and Eastern Canada, will have us at Toronto's Pearson Airport in 7 hours, 40 minutes (7:10 p.m.) but we will have been awake about 20 hours!

Once airborne we are advised that due to the delay in Frankfurt and 160 km/hr head winds, we will be 40 minutes late arriving in Toronto, now scheduled for 8:10 p.m.

We arrive in Toronto at 8:10. It takes until 9:00 p.m. to clear customs—no hassles—picking up luggage and going through other controls. DA's parents are waiting to greet us, drive us home and stay for a half hour as we give them the high lights of our trip.

We are dead tired and crash by 10:30.

And so ends our magical journey. I have mixed feelings. Both sadness on having left Ukraine and happiness for having been there. Sadness on seeing the poverty in the villages, but happiness that Ukraine is slowly recovering and could be a great place to work and live. Sadness and happiness for having visited and developed a bond with Volodymyr Masnyk and his family.

We were guests for meals and paid for accommodations for only 9 nights, plus an overnight flight to Europe and an overnight train ride from Chernivtsi to Kyiv.

We spent almost \$4000 CDN on this adventure. Our memories are worth millions. We will go back! Sooner than later.

APPENDIX I

TRIVIA ON UKRAINE

T 1: NIGHT CLUBS:

Kyiv has dozens of clubs but there are six that are quite unique.

They feature male strippers.

From 9:00 p.m. to mid-night, only women are allowed in. Booze is free.

At mid-night, men are allowed in.

They descend on dozens of women who have been drinking free booze for three hours.

What do you suppose happens next?

PS.: The above information was told to me. It is not a personal experience!

APPENDIX II

T 2: BEING BORN IN UKRAINE:

When a woman feels she may be pregnant she goes to a “zhinotche” (women’s) centre for confirmation.

Once the gynaecologist confirms the pregnancy, the mother-to-be will see this doctor on a regular basis.

Meanwhile, as the pregnancy continues, the parents-to-be, through friends’ recommendation, secure a reliable obstetrician (or mid-wife) who works with the doctor.

As the day of delivery approaches, arrangements are made at a “Polohovey Deem” (birthing home). There are no maternity wards in regular hospitals as we know them.

Nearing actual delivery, the father must leave and for medical reasons is not allowed to see mother or child until both are released from the home. Often 7 days.

They can bring food or gifts but these are left in the lobby and delivered by nurses.

Cost, including payoffs and tips: approximately \$300. US per child.

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57 APPENDIX III

T 3: GETTING MARRIED IN UKRAINE

After the civic or church (Orthodox or Catholic) ceremony, the bridal party always goes to lay a wreath at a War Memorial.

Marriage is seen as a continuation of life. thus a visit to honour those who died, so that life could continue, is seen as appropriate.

Not doing so is seen as extremely gauche.

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58 APPENDIX N

T 4; DYING IN UKRAINE

There are no funeral homes in Ukraine.

When a person dies, the body is picked up by the morgue which prepares it for burial.

For the day of the funeral, the family hires a bus from which the last six rows of seats have been removed to accommodate the coffin.

In the front, family and friends ride to the home of the deceased, the coffin is taken inside and the last rites performed as a band plays the dirge.

The coffin is then placed back on the bus and driven to the cemetery for internment.

A wake always follows.

The cost of a decent funeral is often more than six months earnings for the average Ukrainian.

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There are specialty stores which sell only funeral items, (black arm . bands, special candles, etc.).

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59 APPENDIX V

T 5: THE UKRAINIAN MIUT ARY

Ukraine still has the largest military contingent in Europe, but down to 200,000 from 350,000 at the time of Independence in 1991.

Conscription is still in effect, hopefully to be voluntary in 10 years. just before the conscripted person leaves for his two year stint, the whole town comes out for a big send off with many toasts and speeches.

If a family is wealthy enough to pay the right people about \$1500. US, a medical certificate is available, thus avoiding the draft, even though the draftee may be 1A.

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60 APPENDIX VI

T 6: USING TELEPHONES IN UKRAINE

While a few do exist, push-button telephones are still rare in Ukraine.

Most are the old style rotary type. Many homes have the portable walk-around type.

There are plenty of pay phones in the cities and many "elite" carry mobile cell phones but we did not experience using these.

Many in the villages do not have telephones.

Placing a call can be a challenge. As back home, when calling outside our immediate service area, a preIX code must be used. Regardless if

local or long distance, it often takes three or more tries to get through because the telephone lines are old and need repair or upgrading.

We had several experiences in placing or receiving calls. When we

answered, there were dial tones but no voices, yet the caller could tell

we picked up. No problem. The caller re-dials until there is a connection. This may be 3 or 4 times.

Ukrainians answer their telephones in a variety of greetings:

"Allo" -Hello.

"Ya sloohayou" -I'm listening. "Seh ya" -This is me.

"Proshoo Hovorite" Please speak. ;;

"Seh " -This is (name)

Long distance calls are relatively cheap within Ukraine. A half hour call from Kyiv to Ternopi or Lyviv, may cost only 5 hrv. (\$1.50 CON) but a long distance call to Canada will run \$2.50 US (\$3.73 CON) per minute.

Obviously at those costs one does not discuss yesterday's weather or

grocery lists, or go on hold to answer the door, or turn down the heat on the stove.

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61 APPENDIX VII

T 7: ELECTRICITY IN UKRAINE

The 1986 nuclear disaster at Chornobyl placed Ukraine into semi- darkness. Back-up contingencies are slowly being built as money is short.

Every one conserves this precious energy .

Many homes have dimmer switches or other devices whereby a six bulb ceiling fixture is wired so two, four, or all six lights are on, depending on the need.

Also, they often turn out the lights in unused rooms (i.e. when they

leave the living room to have a meal in another room, the lights in the living room are turned off.

We could learn from these people.

And of course, Ukraine, like all of Europe, is on a 220 volt system, unlike our 110, thus a converter must be used, because you just cannot put our flat plugs into their round outlets.

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APPENDIX V111 I

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i T 8: RELIGION IN UKRAINE !

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Ukrainians are extremely religious.

There are 15000 parishes in the country , dominated by the Orthodox faith (and its off-shoots) and the Greek Catholic faith with its off- shoots.

Churches are everywhere, many in different phases of restoration at great costs. New churches are being built in Western Ukraine, also at great costs. Where is the money coming from? Many don't know.

Those who do, tell us church members, who have so little, will go with- out food for themselves or their children, to give a few kopeks to the priests. We were told new church construction in Western Ukraine is largely funded by the Diaspora Ukrainians living outside Ukraine.

We happen to know of one successful Ukrainian Canadian who funded one of these churches we don't know where. He was an optometrist in Toronto and co - founder of the So-Use Credit Union. When he died in Edmonton in late 1999, his body was flown to Ukraine, to be buried at "his church".

The Ukrainians, especially women, seem to have a relentless, blind faith in the Lord. Large statues and crucifixes of the Virgin Mary (their favourite) abound in villages and cities.

It is not uncommon to see women at these public sites with their fore- heads pressed tight against the Crucifix, praying, crossing themselves and crying, even moaning and wailing. i;

Along the roads in Western Ukraine there are small "kapletsyas"

(chapels) brightly adorned with flowers, for motorists to stop and worship and they do.

Icons and other religious artifacts are sold everywhere.

Yes, Ukrainians are devoutly religious. Through their prayers they hope for a better life, or maybe death, so they can slip their surly bonds for a better life in the hereafter.

World religious organizations from the Americas, even from Steinbach, Man., recognizing the religious fanaticism of Ukrainians, are sending missionaries here to teach and convert.

This bothers me.

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63 APPENDIX IX

T 9: UTILITIES IN UKRAINE

While there are hydro meters, presently there are no meters for gas or water consumption. Thus the charges are based on a "user payn basis. To do this, the system insists all residents declare the number of residents living in their homes.

If there are three, you pay for three. If there are four, you pay for four, etc.

When the number of occupants change through birth, death or other reasons, it is inherent upon the owner to advise the authorities so that correct billing can be done.

Of course, immediately some one leaves, the owner will advise, in order save money.

We are not sure they would act so promptly if there is an addition.

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