FROM THE EDITOR

1987 is a year of change for the Carpatho-Rusyn American. Most of you are aware of the decision on the part of Pat Onufak and John Righetti to step down from their posts as Editor and Assistant Editor in the face of the pressing demands of family and career. Their decisions were not taken lightly and they will both be sorely missed. They did exemplary jobs during their tenure with the newsletter, and though they will not be an official part of the staff, they will continue to support the Carpatho-Rusyn American and make contributions to it from time to time and will, of course, maintain their strong commitments to the Carpatho-Rusyn community. All of us extend our heartfelt thanks to John Righetti and Pat Onufak for their past contributions and look forward to working with them again as circumstances permit.

The Winter 1986 issue introduced your new editorial staff, myself (John Haluska) and Andy Kovaly. We both appreciate the vote of confidence the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center has given in entrusting us with the Carpatho-Rusyn American. Our intent is not only to maintain the quality the newsletter has been known for since its inception, but to make it an even more valuable asset to the Carpatho-Rusyn community. With that in mind, you will find a questionnaire included as part of this issue. Our intent is to determine what you, the readers, want of the Carpatho-Rusyn American and to respond to your requests as our talents and resources allow. Please take the time to complete and return the survey, and we will publish the results and our response to them in subsequent issues. We eagerly look forward to the results of the survey to help us chart the future course of our publication.

One result we are anticipating is a request for an expanded newsletter. Therefore, each issue in 1987 will have a minimum of twelve pages. The special circumstances of this issue require sixteen pages, but twelve should be the norm for this year. This modest expansion will accommodate a more comprehensive “Rusyn Forum” column and a larger “From Our Readers” column. The other areas will remain unchanged with the exception of “Recent Publications” which, in expectation of the soon-to-be-published annotated bibliography of Carpatho-Rusyn studies, will only list here titles of works.

In the expanded “From Our Readers” column, we will print, as space allows, a wide range of opinion from our readers. Since no other publication of our Carpatho-Rusyn ethnic and religious press has the equivalent of an open editorial page, the Carpatho-Rusyn American will provide one. We will not steer clear of controversy and will gladly print commentary critical of ourselves and our positions and of other institutions or personalities of our community. We will require that all letters be signed and include a return address and phone number so that authorship can be verified. We will always take pains to publicize all sides of any issue.

This issue of the Carpatho-Rusyn American inaugurates a series of articles which will deal extensively with the Lemko aspect of our people’s story. My first introduction to this tragic tale was a personal one, coming from what are now mostly vaguely recalled conversations with my relatives about letters from Europe telling of aunts and cousins who had been forced from their homes in Poland in the late 1940s to the Ukraine. Many did not survive the journey, and the one thing I vividly remember from those mysterious letters is that those who died were described by the survivors as having been dumped from a train or tossed from a wagon. And if they had been buried, those who wrote did not know by whom or where for they had not been allowed to attend to the dead.

The living went to the Ukraine or to northern Poland, and my relatives went to both. Of those who went to the Ukraine, only one survived, and she and her new husband eventually made their way to the others and settled with them near Braniewko in Poland. What they had not already been forced to abandon in their native village of Radocyna, they subsequently lost during their return on foot — with just the clothes on their back — from the Ukraine. That they survived at all is remarkable considering their age and the rigors of their trek. Yet even this was not extraordinary in comparison to the hardships so many others faced.

What is astonishing in all this is not just the strength of these poor individual Lemko refugees but their resilience as a people. Having suffered so much for so long at the hands of so many, it is amazing that the Lemkos have survived at all, let alone that we are witness to what we all hope will be a successful revival in the homeland. Our 1987 series will not just attend to the dead, it will celebrate the living and give testimony to the continued existence of the Lemko people and their struggle to survive.

There is much for the Rusyn-American community to learn from the experience of our Lemko brothers. If they can survive what fate has dealt them and can manage a revival, we in the West should certainly be able to renew our own community and fulfill our responsibility to our forebears who endured so much to establish our people here. It always astounds me that we have every opportunity to preserve and strengthen our nationality, yet we do so little. Most of our people go to great pains not to admit, let alone celebrate, their Carpatho-Rusyn heritage in a country in which they have every opportunity to do so. Even our Rusyn institutions, our churches and fraternals, seem to avoid public identification with their Rusyn heritage, seeking instead success in the illusion of America’s melting pot at the expense of the unique Carpatho-Rusyn nationality their founders struggled so hard to protect. It will be ironic if the Lemkos succeed in resurrecting themselves in their own hostile world while America’s Carpatho-Rusyns fade away. However, I think that the joy and pride we can feel for their successes will give us strength to work for ours. If so few can raise themselves up again in Eastern Europe, surely there is still hope for our people here.

We also memorialize Andy Warhol in this issue of the Carpatho-Rusyn American. Although famous for his artistic work, his heritage was often obscured. Often reluctant about his roots, he was born, lived, died, and was buried a Carpatho-Rusyn, and he was probably not as far removed from the artistic traditions of his people as most believe. Andy Warhol’s memorial is the work of Jerry Jumba, an instructor at the Advanced Cantors’ Institute in the Byzantine Catholic Archdiocese of Pittsburgh. At the request of the Warhola family, he cantored at the funeral services.
There is perhaps only a handful of Rusyn Americans who know that since the 1960s two important painters of Carpatho-Rusyn background have lived and worked in North America. Undoubtedly the most famous within American and international cultural circles is Andy Warhol, the son of Carpatho-Rusyn immigrants who first became renowned in the world of art (and cinema) during the 1960s. Despite the fact that both his parents were natives of the Prešov Region, there is little if anything in Warhol’s canvases that relates to his Carpatho-Rusyn heritage.

Much different is the work of Julijan Kolesar, who this year (1987) is celebrating his sixtieth anniversary. Kolesar came to the New World less than two decades ago, and his art has remained deeply impregnated with the Carpatho-Rusyn religious and secular culture he left behind in Europe.

Julijan Kolesar was born in 1927 in Djurdevo, a village in the Vojvodina region of present-day Yugoslavia inhabited in large part by the Vojvodinian or Bačka Rusyns. His parents, Dragen and Milana (née Hornjak) Kolesar, worked as peasant farmers and were descendants of those Carpatho-Rusyn immigrants who in the eighteenth century began settling in the Bačka and Srem regions of what was then the southern part of the Hungarian Kingdom and which after 1918 became part of the new state of Yugoslavia. Despite geographic separation from their Prešov Region homeland (which they call Hornica—the mountainous region), the Carpatho-Rusyns of the Bačka (at present Vojvodina) and Srem regions have been able to preserve their Carpatho-Rusyn language and culture to this very day. In fact, it is only in present-day Yugoslavia where the local Rusyns (or Rusnaks as they call themselves) have their own distinct East Slavic literary language taught in schools and used in publications, on radio, and even TV. It is from this patriotic Backa-Srem Rusyn environment that Julijan Kolesar derives.

After completing his studies in 1954 at the School of Applied Arts in Novi Sad, Yugoslavia, Kolesar began his career as a professional artist by participating in several exhibits in his homeland. He also began to write poetry, and his first book of verse, Kol'iska slunkova (The Sunny Cradle), appeared in 1969. By the late 1960s, he travelled abroad, first to Bruxelles and Paris, and in 1970 to the United States where he lived for a few years in New York and Philadelphia. In 1973, he left for Montreal and has remained in Canada since then.

Kolesar’s art is marked by a wide variety of style and technique. His paintings range from icons that follow the rigid guidelines of Eastern Christian medieval iconography to the even more frequently neo-realist, expressionist, and abstract canvases that remind one of the earliest currents in twentieth-century painting. These stylistic peregrinations suggest that Kolesar is continually experimenting and searching for whatever medium and style can express best his fecund artistic imagination.

If stylistic experimentation is one of the hallmarks of Kolesar’s art, the other is the lingering influence of his Rusyn (Rusnak) heritage. This is particularly evident in the themes of his paintings, whether specifically based on Rusyn village life or on East Slavic culture in general, and also in the rich and creative use of bright and vibrant colors that are so reminiscent of the folk art of his native culture. And whereas Kolesar has also done paintings that are seemingly typical of contemporary Canadian or American art and that have no particular ethnic content, it is nonetheless works that draw on his Carpatho-Rusyn heritage that predominate in his creative corpus to date.

That traditional Rusyn culture remains a fertile source for Kolesar’s art is related to his continual research into the historical and especially ethnographic and cultural heritage of his native land. In fact, since settling in Canada, Kolesar has become a prolific writer as well as painter. Since 1973, he has published over one hundred works on some aspect of Rusyn history, ethnography, language, literature, and art. All appear in his native Backa-Rusyn language (which he calls the Pannonian Rusyn language), and all have been printed by himself under the nominal sponsorship of the “Julijan Kolesarov Rusnak Institute of America,” which he set up in 1975. Therefore, scholars interested in the Vojvodinian (Bačka) Rusyns of Yugoslavia as well as art lovers have much to learn and appreciate from the prolific artistic and literary work of Kolesar that has appeared in the last two decades.

Julijan Kolesar is one of those rare examples of a talented recent immigrant of Carpatho-Rusyn background who has enriched himself and the artistic world of North America by researching, reshaping, drawing upon, and sharing with others his rich and unique ethnocultural heritage. For that we are all grateful, and on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday we wish him many more years of creative endeavors.

Philip Michaels
IN MEMORIUM: ANDY WARHOL (1928-1987)

In the 1960s, Andy Warhol gained virtually instant fame as one of America’s most innovative artists. Although he came to be a most public figure, his natural shyness served to obscure the fact that he was of Carpatho-Rusyn background. Most of his work was done in New York City, but he never left his Pittsburgh roots or his Carpatho-Rusyn heritage far behind. His unique sensibility was shaped by Pittsburgh influences, including ethnocultural ties, religious life, Byzantine iconography, art classes at Schenley High School, Hornes department store display windows, and the artist and teacher Robert Lepper at the Carnegie Institute of Technology (now Carnegie Mellon University).

As an internationally recognized painter, photographic craftsman, film maker, and pop art celebrity, Warhol appeared reluctant to discuss his origins. Once when asked about his background, he replied, “Why don’t you make it up?” In dealing with the media, he liked to be mysterious, provocative, and even something of a riddle. Perhaps this is why a number of contradictory statements from reputable reference books and newspapers have appeared.

The facts of Andy Warhol’s background were revealed through discussions between the Warhola family and Dr. Paul R. Magocsi who wrote: “Andy Warhol was born as Andrew Warhola in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1928. Both his parents came from Miková, a tiny Carpatho-Rusyn mountain village just west of Medzilaborce in the Prešov Region of northeastern Slovakia.” (Carpatho-Rusyn American, Vol. III, No. 2, 1980, p. 3)

Family ties were important, because the brothers John, Paul, and Andy had lived through some hard times. Their family was always close to the church. John Warhola commented on Andy: “When Andy was a boy, we thought he was going to be a priest. Even under pressure, he never swore. He believed in working hard.” Paul and John Warhola vacationed with Andy nearly every year in New York City, where Andy attended church and was a supporting member of St. Mary’s Byzantine Catholic parish on East 15th Street in Manhattan. Among his New York staff it is common knowledge that at 1 p.m., for 15 minutes everyday, he stopped to pray at a nearby Roman Catholic Church. St. Vincent Ferrer. Finally, we recall that in 1968, when Andy was shot, he called upon a Byzantine Catholic priest from Manhattan for anointing and the last rights.

After Andy Warhol died in a New York hospital on February 22, 1987, the older brothers, John and Paul Warhola came to take his body home to Pittsburgh.

From listening to the family, one can easily gather that the Warhola clan would hope that Andy Warhol is remembered as a creative sensibility whose art made a social commentary which was provocative and artistic enough to justify its existence. They hope that his work will endure as a continuing influence.

As for being accused of indulgence in self flattery and being an elitist, Warhol had a sense of humor about the artist’s image. He gave an insight into his thinking when he said in a 1979 interview, “You can do anything you want, anytime.”

A number of writers about contemporary art have used the fascinating expression “pop icon” to describe much of Warhol’s art. Perhaps Warhol’s religious and ethnocultural roots can help to explain some of the energy behind the leap from Warhol’s early commercial art to his pop iconography. His idealization and interpretation of secular images from show biz selections, comic strips, ad pages, and television were prefigured in an ancient yet classic style of Eastern Christian art emanating from the Byzantine era.

Warhol was raised in a religious Carpatho-Rusyn family that practices Byzantine Rite Catholicism. In his formative years from 1928 to 1949, he was exposed to the many icons which were so common in Rusyn-American homes, prayer-books, and churches: icons depicting a matter-of-fact yet other worldly presence and images resonating a spiritual message in just two dimensions de-emphasizing the flesh and pointing to the dominance of the spirit. These were the images of Andy’s youth.

On Thursday, February 26, 1987, Andy Warhol received a traditional Byzantine Catholic funeral service with a liturgy that hails back to Christian centers of Byzantium. The service was in English, but some Church Slavonic was also sung. Internment was at St. John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Cemetery in Castle Shannon, a suburb of Pittsburgh. Andy was buried next to his parents. There, at the gravesite, his associates from New York mourned together with family and friends over the passing of a great man whose personality, talent, energy, and passion for work had inspired them. The burial ended with the chanted prayer:

This grave is being sealed until the second coming of Christ, in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen. Grant eternal memory, O Lord, and give him blessed repose. Vičnaja pamjat’, blažennyj pokoj, vičnaja jemu pamjat’, Andreju.

Jerry Jumba
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
THE LEMKO RUSYNs: THEIR PAST AND PRESENT

During the past decade, many Americans have written the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center inquiring about their ethnic origins. Quite often these people are parishioners in an Orthodox “Russian” church and they know that their parents or grandparents came from the Carpathian mountain region of old Austria. Sometimes they have more specific information: that their ancestors actually came from the province of Galicia, from mountain villages near the towns of Sanok, Krosno, Gorlice, or Nowy Sącz that are today in Poland.

Russians, Austrians, Galicians, Poles — who are these people and where did their forbears actually come from? What was it like in the old country and what is it like today? To anticipate our story, here are some quick answers. (1) the people in question are the people of Rus', who traditionally call themselves Lemkos, Rusnaks, or Rusyns (rendered sometimes in English incorrectly as Russians); (2) their European homeland is known as the Lemko Region, in the historic province of Galicia, which was once part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and since 1918 is part of Poland; (3) today most of the Lemko Region has been emptied of Lemko Rusyns, who were forcibly driven from their homeland forty years ago.

Therefore, this year — 1987 — is the fortieth anniversary of the forced deportation of Lemko Rusyns from their native land. On this occasion, the Carpatho-Rusyn American decided to introduce the Lemko Region to its readers and at the same time to commemorate this most tragic event of the recent past. The present article will provide some geographic and historic background information for articles on various aspects of the Lemko Region and Lemko Rusyns that will appear in the next several issues of the Carpatho-Rusyn American.

Geographic Location

Like their brethren living south of the Carpathian crests, the Lemko Rusyns traditionally inhabited the mountain valleys and foothills on the northern slopes stretching from the Dunajec River in the west to the San River in the east. This area is geographically marked by the gently rolling hills of the Lower Beskyd range and the higher and more rugged Upper Beskys (Bieszczady) with peaks between 3000 and 4000 feet in the far east. Several passes in the Lower Beskys, the most famous known as the Dukla Pass, had at least before the establishment of strictly controlled borders in the twentieth century afforded easy access to the southern slopes of the mountains inhabited by fellow Carpatho-Rusyns.

According to present-day political divisions, the Lemko Region is located within the far southeastern corner of Poland, divided between two administrative units known as the Nowy Sącz and Krosno palatinates (wojewodztwa). However, it is the old administrative districts (powiats) that are best remembered when describing the various parts of the Lemko Region. These are named after the district centers

![](https://example.com/map.jpg)
and from west to east they include: Nowy Targ (Rusyn: Novyj Targ), Nowy Sącz (Novyj Sanč), Grybów (Grbyb), Gorlice (Gorlyci), Jasło, Krosno, Sanok (Sjanok), and Lisko (Lesko). On the eve of World War II, there were 178,000 Carpatho-Rusyns living in 303 villages located in the southern sectors of the above-named eight districts.

Actually, most scholars consider that on linguistic and ethnographic grounds the Lemko Rusyns extend only as far as the Osla and Solinka River valleys, excluding therefore most of Lisko county. But Lemko writers and publicists both in Europe and in the United States consider their homeland to extend as far as the San River. Moreover, the Lemko Region, together with the Prešov Region (now in Czechoslovakia) and Subcarpathian Rus’ (now in the Soviet Union), forms the historic land of Carpathian Rus'.

**Early History**

The Lemko Region seems to have been inhabited by the earliest Slavic tribes known as the White Croats, who came to the area in the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. For a long time, however, the mountains remained a sparsely settled frontier region between three medieval states that were formed during the tenth century — Kievan Rus’ in the east, Poland in the west, and Hungary in the south. The Lemko Region was actually divided between the Polish Kingdom and the Galician principality of Kievan Rus’ roughly along a line above the Dukla Pass which was to remain the midpoint between the western and eastern portion of the Lemko-inhabited lands. The most important event during these early centuries was the coming of Christianity in its eastern or Byzantine form, which reached the Carpathians via the west (the Cyril and Methodian mission in the late ninth century) and the east (Kievan Rus’ after 988). This meant that the Lemko Region was to remain within the sphere of the Eastern Christian or Orthodox world.

With the fall of an independent Galicia in the mid-fourteenth century, the whole Lemko Region came definitively under Poland. The Polish kings encouraged settlement of the area, and in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the newcomers began to reach the mountainous areas. Most of these settlers were Rusyns from the east as well as the so-called Vlachs from the south (actually Rusyns and perhaps some Romanians designated as Vlachs because of their work as shepherds). To attract settlers to the generally infertile mountainous area, the Polish kings and landlords provided tax-free incentives, so that the small-scale Rusyn farmers in the valleys and the shepherds in the mountains were generally left alone by governmental authorities.

In the seventeenth century, Polish landlords tried to extend actual control over the Lemko Region, but their attempt to introduce serfdom and to increase taxes and other duties among the peasants and shepherds basically failed. This was due to the general inaccessibility of the highland region and, in part, to armed bands of mountaineers led by Robin Hood-type leaders, the most famous in the Lemko Region being Vasyl’ Bajuš from Leszczyń (Liščyn) and Andrij Savka from Dukla.

The seventeenth century also witnessed another kind of attempt to impose Polish or western influence on the Orthodox Rusyns. Already in 1596, several Orthodox Rus’ bishops in Poland agreed to the provisions of the Union of Brest, which united them with Rome and brought into being the Uniate Church. It was not until the very end of the century (1692) that the bishop of Przemyśl, who was responsible for the Lemko Region, finally accepted the Union. But even this did not really effect the Rusyn masses, since they continued to practice the Byzantine rite (with its liturgy in Church Slavonic) and to use the Julian calendar (at that time 14 days “behind” the western Gregorian calendar). Moreover, these cultural characteristics, together with their East Slavic language, was what distinguished Rusyns from the Poles living in the lowland villages.

**Austrian Rule**

The rather lax and ineffective aspects of Polish rule came to an end after 1772. In that year, the first partition of Poland took place (the whole country was to disappear from the map by 1795), whereby the Lemko Region was annexed by the Habsburg-ruled Austrian Empire. Now part of the Austrian province of Galicia, the Lemko Region became subject to Habsburg decrees issued from the imperial capital in Vienna. While it is true that the peasants were liberated from serfdom in 1846, before then they had never been greatly burdened by feudal obligations to faraway landlords generally uninterested in unproductive mountainous lands. But the Austrian government prohibited free use of the forest and it carefully registered all land holdings in order to have a better control for assessing and collecting taxes.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the pastoral lands in the Lemko Region had been taken over by farmers, although their plots were continually subdivided and unable to support a growing population. In the absence of any industry in nearby cities, the Lemko Rusyns began to seek extra income by crossing the mountains each summer to do harvest work on the Hungarian plain. Then, beginning in the 1870s, a few Rusyns from the Lemko Region began to go to the United States, where they would work for a few years and then return home to buy land — incidentally pushing up prices and driving fellow villagers into even deeper poverty.

While it is true that extreme poverty seemed to be characteristic of the Lemko Region in the decades before World War I, there were some benefits under the benign rule of the Habsburg Emperor Franz Joseph (reigned 1848-1916). Austria had a constitutional system governed by the rule of law, so that Lemko Rusyns were not discriminated against because of their religion or ethnic identity. In that regard, the second half of the nineteenth century also allowed for the beginning of cultural activity.

Some Lemko Rusyns were even able to make distinguished careers, especially in the ranks of the Uniate, or as it was renamed by the Austrians, the Greek Catholic Church. Among these were two metropolitans: Josyf Sembratovyc (consecrated 1870) and Sylvester Sembratovyc (consecrated 1885); and three bishops: Toma Poljans’kyj (consecrated 1885), and Julijan Peleš (consecrated 1885), and Josafat Kocylievskyj (consecrated 1916).

With regard to the population as a whole, elementary schools were set up in nearly two-thirds of the Lemko villages and gymnasia (high schools) were opened in the nearby towns of Nowy Sącz, Gorlice, and Sanok. The region was also exposed to the nationality question that faced all of Galician society: namely, were the inhabitants who called themselves Rusyns part of the Russian nationality or Ukrainian nationality, or perhaps did they form a distinct
World War I

The stability and order in Lemko life that prevailed under Austrian rule began to break down on the eve of World War I. Austria-Hungary was especially suspicious of the Russian Empire and of the Orthodox movement that had begun to take hold in Galicia, in particular in the Carpathian region. Former Greek Catholic immigrants to the United States had returned home as Orthodox converts and they frequently encouraged the establishment of Orthodox churches in their native villages. For its part, the Austrian government suspected Orthodox priests and parishioners to be supporters of Russia (indeed, some Orthodox believers did see the Russian tsar as their earthly saviour), and Habsburg authorities even brought some clergy and peasants to trial on charges of treason.

This situation only worsened with the outbreak of World War I in August 1914. Within one month, tsarist Russia’s armies had rolled into Galicia and controlled the province as far as the San River. Then, by March 1915, they moved farther west, bringing all of the Lemko Region under their control. For many months during the winter of 1914-1915, the western Lemko Region in particular was in the war zone and the scene of many bloody battles, the fiercest being near Gorlice in May 1915.

During its presence in the area, the Russian military and civil administration were friendly to the Orthodox and Russophile Lemkos, although they persecuted pro-Ukrainian activists. On the other hand, many Lemkos suffered at the hands of the Austrian administration both before the Russian military advance that began in August 1914 and its retreat from Galicia in June 1915. During those months, the retreating and then returning Austro-Hungarian forces summarily shot, hanged, or arrested priests and peasants simply because they called themselves Rusyns, said they spoke Rusyn (rus’kyj), or because they were Orthodox and suspected of being pro-Russian. This led to the first forced deportation of Lemkos in 1914-1915, which brought several thousand innocent peasants to Austrian concentration camps in the western part of the empire, the most infamous of which was at Talerhof near Graz, where they remained for the duration of the war. It is also from this time that the Ukrainian problem became an issue for many Lemkos. Some had fought with Ukrainian units in the Austro-Hungarian Army during World War I, and as a result became conscious Ukrainian patriots. On the other hand, many who experienced the Talerhof internment blamed pro-Ukrainians in Galicia for having cooperated with the Austrian regime in “uncovering” Russian sympathizers or simply Rus’ patriots among the Lemkos.

The Interwar Years

With the end of World War I and the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the closing months of 1918, Carpatho-Rusyns in the Lemko Region like their brethren south of the mountains formed several national councils to decide the political fate of their homeland. On December 5, 1918, hundreds of Lemkos met in the village of Florynka (Grybow district) where they formed a Rusyn Council of the Lemko Region. Initial proposals to unite with Russia were rebuffed, and spokesmen like Andrej Vagatko and Dmitrij Visloc’kyj proposed instead to negotiate with fellow Rusyns south of the mountains who had just set up their own national council in Presov. The goal was to have Lemko Rusyns join with their brethren in the Presov Region to form a single Carpathian Rus’ autonomous state within the new republic of Czechoslovakia. To achieve this, a joint Lemko and Presov Region Carpatho-Rusyn National Council was formed on December 21, 1918, which prepared several memoranda proposing a unified Carpathian Rus “state” within Czechoslovakia. These were submitted to the new Czechoslovak government and to the Paris Peace Conference which in early 1919 was redrawing the boundaries of Europe.

While leaders in the western part of the Lemko Region were speaking of Rusyn national unity and seeking to unite with Czechoslovakia, some other Lemkos farther east under the leadership of the Greek Catholic priest Panteleimon
Monument to those Lemkos who died during World War I at the Talerhof internment camp. Erected in 1933 in the village of Bartne.

Špiška, gathered at Komarča (Sanok district) to declare their loyalty to the West Ukrainian People’s Republic, which since November 1918 had been engaged in a fierce battle with the Poles in an effort to establish an independent Ukrainian state. However, the pro-Ukrainian Komarča initiative lasted only a few weeks in February 1919, and four months later the Galician Ukrainian Army and government were driven entirely out of Galicia which henceforth was administered by the Poles.

The Poles were also able to block any efforts to have the Lemko Region unite with Czechoslovakia. Left for a while on its own, the Rusyn National Council in Florynka set up an administration headed by a local lawyer, Dr. Jaroslav Kačmarčyk. Popularly known as the Lemko Republic, it administered the western Lemko Region (Nowy Špacz, Grybów, and Gorlice districts) for nearly sixteen months. But by March 1920, the Polish government brought an end to Lemko “independence.” Kačmarčyk was arrested (and later put on trial and acquitted), while other Lemko Republic Leaders fled to Czechoslovakia. In Poland, there was to be no question of a distinct Lemko political entity.

The interwar years in Poland were marked by a heightened political, national, and religious struggle for the allegiance of the Lemko Rusyns. In the political sphere, the Polish government tried its best to undermine Ukrainian influence by supporting the idea of Lemko distinctiveness, allowing the Lemko Rusyn dialect to be taught in schools, and sometimes arguing that Lemkos were no more than an ethnographic branch of the Polish people. While it is true that during the interwar years many Polish publications began to overemphasize the affinity of Lemko to Polish culture, some of the best scholarly research ever done on the Lemko Region was begun in the 1930s by the Polish ethnographer Roman Reinfrus and Polish linguist Zdzisław Stierer.

Ukrainian activists, on the other hand, argued that Lemkos were Ukrainians, and they were particularly successful in having a Ukrainian identity accepted by many inhabitants in the eastern Lemko Region (Sanok and Lisko districts). They made few inroads, however, in the western Lemko Region, and to counter the growing sense of Lemko distinctiveness there, pro-Ukrainian Lemkos established during the 1930s a Lemko Museum in Sanok and a Lemko Commission farther east in L’viv, which published a biweekly Ukrainian newspaper. Naš lemko (1934-39) and helped to promote the belletristic and cultural writings of Franc Kókov’s’kyj, Hryhorij Hanuljak, and Julijan Tarnovyč (pseud. Julijan Beskyd).

With regard to religion, the movement to “return to Orthodoxy” that had begun before World War I, now increased rapidly. This was, in part, because Lemko villagers resented the Ukrainian orientation of the Greek Catholic Church, and instead associated Orthodoxy with their own Rus’ identity. Concerned that the Greek Catholic Church was tied too closely to the Ukrainian movement and afraid, therefore, that this would alienate further the Lemkos, the Vatican decided in 1934 to establish a separate Greek Catholic Lemko Apostolic Administration with a pro-Rusyn, even Russophile oriented hierarchy under the Reverends Vasylij Mačuk and Jakov Medvečki.

As for the majority of Lemkos, they were struggling to survive economically. Interwar Poland remained an underdeveloped agrarian society and was unable to improve the economic situation. Not surprisingly, the poverty-stricken Lemkos were attracted to left-wing and pro-Soviet political parties that called for the establishment of a Communist society.

Lemkos also continued to emigrate abroad, to the United States and most especially to Canada. This increase in the number of Lemkos abroad, including national leaders like Dmitrij Višloć’kyj and Simeon Pysh, led to the establishment of the first Lemko-American newspapers (Lemko, 1928-39, Karpatska Rus’, 1938-present) and permanent organizations, such as the Lemko Association (Lemko Sojuz) in 1929 and the Carpatho-Russian American Center in 1939. Pro-Ukrainian Lemko immigrants founded their own Organization for the Defense of the Lemko Region in 1934. Besides trying to fulfill the social and cultural needs of Lemko immigrants, these organizations also sent moral and financial help to the European homeland.

In the homeland, the question of national identity — whether Lemko Rusyn, Russian, Ukrainian, or Polish — was still being fought over among the intelligentsia. For its part, the populace in general, whether Greek Catholic or Orthodoxy, was content to have its own language taught in schools (after 1933) and its own Greek Catholic administration (after 1934). Therefore, with the exception of the far eastern districts (Sanok and Lisko) where a Ukrainian orientation predominated, the majority of villagers in the Lemko Region
continued to identify as Lemkos or Rusyns and to have reinforced a sense of national affinity with their Rusyn brethren south of the mountains in Czechoslovakia. The Lemko ideology was best represented at the time by Metodij Trochanovs'kyj, the author of Lemko language elementary school texts (a primer and two readers) and editor of the weekly newspaper *Lemko* (1934-39); Dr. Orest Hnatyshak, the head of the Lemko Association (Lemko Sojuz) in Krynica (Nowy Sącz district); and the lyric poet Ivan Rusenko.

**World War II**

The outbreak of World War II in September 1939 changed the situation radically. Under the combined attack of Hitler’s Nazi Germany and Stalin’s Soviet Union, Poland was wiped off the map and the San River became an international border between the two countries. As for the Lemko Region, it fell into Nazi hands as part of the so-called Generalgouvernement, a colony of “Greater Germany.” The new German regime welcomed Ukrainians from east of the San who were fleeing Soviet rule. A Ukrainian Central Committee was set up in Cracow to coordinate cultural and educational activity.

The German rulers accepted the view that Lemkos were Ukrainians, so that Ukrainian technical schools (in Sanok and Krynica), a teacher’s college (Krynica), and cooperatives were set up throughout the Lemko Region. The Lemko Apostolic Administration of the Greek Catholic Church also received a new administrator, the Reverend Oleksander Malynovs'kyj, who in contrast to his predecessors was sympathetic to the Ukrainian orientation. Besides their serious cultural work, Ukrainians from east of the San also were given jobs as policemen and as local officials in the German regime. These elements were less sympathetic to the peculiarities of the Lemko Region, especially the continuing Rusyn or pro-Russian national orientation of the population, the strength of pro-Russian Orthodoxy, and the pro-Soviet sympathies (by 1940 as many as 4,000 Lemkos voluntarily emigrated to the Soviet-controlled territory east of the San River).

The potential for friction increased after Hitler’s Germany invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941. In the Lemko Region, many Orthodox priests and other suspected pro-Russian individuals were arrested as well as the families of Lemko partisans (organized in a Subcarpathian Formation headed by Ivan and Michal Dons’kyj), who in cooperation with Polish Communists were fighting against the German regime and the local Ukrainian-dominated administration. Some Lemko writers have subsequently blamed their suffering during World War II on the excesses of Ukrainian “nationalists” working under the Germans.

**The Final Tragedy**

The clash of national orientations at the local level meant nothing, however, in the face of international politics. In the closing months of World War II, the Germans were driven out of the Carpathian region and for that matter out of all of Eastern Europe by the Soviet Red Army. Poland was to be restored, but its borders were changed radically: all its pre-war eastern territories beyond the San River were annexed to the Soviet Union, while in the west and north, lands formerly belonging to Germany (Silesia, Pomerania, Danzig, part of East Prussia) became Polish. More ominous was the fact that Poland and the Soviet Union—like many other countries at the time—felt that the problem of national minorities was a primary cause of the war, and that to avoid future international conflict these minorities should be moved, or “repatriated,” in order to make lands within new boundaries ethnically homogeneous.

Thus, on September 9, 1944, Poland and the Soviet Union signed an agreement on population transfers. According to this agreement, “people of Ukrainian, Belorus-sina, Russian, and Rusyn nationality” living in postwar Poland should be “evacuated” to the Soviet Ukraine and Soviet Belorussia; in return, Poles and Jews in the Soviet Ukraine and Soviet Belorussia should be repatriated to Poland. Although this movement was to be voluntary, many people were strongly pressured and even forced to move eastward by local Polish officials and armed vigilante groups still active in the immediate postwar period.

As a result, between the spring of 1945 and early summer of 1946, an estimated 130,000 inhabitants from the Lemko Region were settled in the Soviet Ukraine. The highest percentage of these were from the eastern Sanok and Lisko districts, where the population had generally come to identify itself as Ukrainian, and from the Jaslo and Krosno districts (near the Dukla Pass) which had suffered much destruction in the closing months of the war. This meant that about 35,000 Lemkos—generally those who rejected identification as Ukrainians—remained in their native villages, most especially in the western Lemko Region.

However, even those remaining Lemkos were not left in peace for long, and they got caught up in the ongoing Ukrainian problem. As the Soviet Red Army had advanced westward across the Soviet Ukraine in late 1943 and 1944, Ukrainians who opposed both German and Soviet rule organized a Ukrainian Revolutionary Army (UPA). Against overwhelming odds, the anti-Communist UPA persisted even after the end of World War II, fighting a guerrilla war against Soviet and Communist Polish forces and hiding out in the Carpathian Mountain border region. The UPA also tried—in vain—to stop the exodus of Lemkos and Ukrainians eastward to the Soviet Union. During one of their battles with Polish forces, the UPA killed in March 1947 General Karol Świerczewski. This act prompted the Polish Communist government, in full cooperation with the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia, to rid the mountainous region not only of the UPA but of the remaining population as well.

The plan was called the Vistula Operation (*Acja Wisła*), and it called for the forced deportation of all Ukrainians from the eastern regions of Poland to its new or “Recovered Lands” (*Ziemie Odzyskane*) in the western and northern part of the country that were recently acquired from Germany. Thus, from late April to July 1947, Lemkos were simply told to pack up their belongings and to leave the homes that they and their ancestors had inhabited for centuries. They were identified as Ukrainians and accused of helping the UPA “bandits,” even though the vast majority of Lemkos who had survived the “voluntary” deportation of 1945-1946 actively rejected a Ukrainian identity and gave no aid (nor in most cases were they even near) to the UPA.

But there was no choice. Sometimes given only a few hours to collect what they could carry, the Lemkos were put on transports and resettled in the “Recovered Lands” of western and northern Poland, that is in lowland areas that were completely foreign to their mountainous ways. As for what they left behind, some Lemko villages just died...
Houses and churches were left to decay, and after a decade they crumbled. Others were resettled by Poles brought in by the government from other parts of Poland or from among Poles who were repatriated from the Soviet Union. There were even some Greeks and Macedonians who came as part of the program of aid given by Poland to pro-Communist refugees fleeing the civil war in Greece.

Whatever their origin, these newcomers had no sense of pride or respect for the Lemko villages they were given. They chose the best houses and land, leaving the rest to decay. Moreover, during the long winters, it was easier to gather firewood by tearing down a nearby house, barn, or church than by felling trees in the forest. Thus, during the early 1950s, the material and cultural vestiges of the Rus’ past in the Lemko Region were (with the exception of cemeteries) largely obliterated.

The Lemkos Since Their Dispersal

Without their Carpathian homeland, Lemkos were forced to survive as best they could in the emigration. They are found in large numbers in three countries: the United States, the Soviet Union, and ironically, Poland.

After World War II, there were a few thousand Lemkos who reached the United States and to a lesser degree Canada. The vast majority of these were pro-Ukrainian activists who fled in the face of the advancing Red Army, who remained for a while in camps in Germany, and who then emigrated as “displaced persons” (DPs) to North America. As anti-Communists and nationally-conscious Ukrainians, these Lemkos were unable to interact with the older established Carpatho-Russian and often pro-Soviet organizations like the Lemko Association. Instead, they reactivated the Organization for the Defense of the Lemko Region and founded new organizations like the World Lemko Federation (1973) and Ukrainian-language publications like Łemkivs'kyi visit (Lemko News, 1958-present), Łemkivs'cyna (The Lemko Land, 1979-present), and the scholarly journal, Annały (1974-present). Among the more active leaders of the Ukrainian Lemko orientation have been Mychajlo Duda, Stepan Zeneckyj, Ivan Hvozda, and in Canada Julijan Tarnovyc (pseud. Julijan Beskyd).

Meanwhile, the older Lemko Association which had taken an active role in sending financial aid as part of the American War Relief program to the Soviet Union during World War II, continued to publish its weekly newspaper Karpatyka Rus’ in Lemko dialect and to adopt a pro-Soviet and anti-Ukrainian stance. They also were able to expand their social activity by opening up in 1958 a resort, Lemko Park, in Monroe, New York. Some of these older Lemko immigrants led by Bridgeport, Connecticut industrialist, Peter S. Hardy, also established in 1946 a Lemko Relief Organization to aid the deport ed Lemkos in Poland. That group even reached an agreement in 1957 with the Polish government to allow the continuance of the American Lemko aid program to their brethren in Poland.

However, the vast majority of the post-World War II Lemko emigration (about 130,000) went eastward to the Soviet Ukraine, where they were settled in historic eastern Galicia, especially in the Ternopil’, Sambir, and L’viv regions. But life in the war-devastated and Soviet-regimented Ukraine was not easy for anyone, let alone Lemko newcomers from Poland, who were often looked on with suspicion by the local Ukrainian inhabitants. A few thousand Lemkos were even permitted to return to Poland in the late 1950s.

As for the majority who remained in the Soviet Ukraine, most have become assimilated to the larger Ukrainian society. However, it is ironic that even after four decades of experience and education in Ukrainian society and schools, some Soviet Lemkos still retain a sense of distance from the culture surrounding them. Their only outlet for such feelings is to emphasize a regional identity, and this is part of the reason for the enormous popularity of the choral ensemble, Lemkovyna, founded in 1969, and the Bajko sisters vocal trio who specialize in Lemko songs. Also, Lemko folk culture and architecture is well represented at the outdoor ethnographic museum in L’viv. The director of the Lemko display there, Ivan Krasovs’kyj, is also the author of a multivolume Lemko encyclopedia (unfortunately published only in serial form in Poland) and the most prolific writer on Lemkos anywhere today.

Finally, there are the Lemkos who were resettled on the “Recovered Lands” of western and northern Poland. By 1947, when the Lemkos arrived there, they were given the less attractive homes and lands abandoned by the Germans (themselves forcibly deported to what remained of Germany). In terms of cultural identity, the Lemkos were officially designated as Ukrainians, and many among the younger generations born far from the Lemko homeland of their ancestors accepted this new identity. On the other hand, being a Ukrainian in Poland was never an enviable thing (considering centuries of Polish-Ukrainian antagonism), so many young Lemkos found it easier and certainly more socially functional to remain at best crypto-Lemkos or simply to assimilate with Polish culture.

Nonetheless, despite their deportation and the official pro-Ukrainian policy regarding their national identity, older
Lemkos raised and educated before World War II continued to retain a distinct Lemko-Rusyn identity, and some of them have passed on such attitudes to their children. Several attempts were even made to set up Lemko cultural organizations in the areas where they were resettled. But the Polish authorities did not permit this, arguing that Lemkos like other Ukrainians should express their needs through the official Ukrainian Social-Cultural Society (USKT), established in 1956. For a while there was a Lemko section of that society and a Lemko-language supplement (Lemkovs'ke slovo, 1957-64) in the society's Ukrainian weekly newspaper Naše slovo, published since 1956 in Warsaw.

Of course, Lemkos really wanted only one thing: to be able to return to their homeland. Several requests submitted to the Polish government for permission to return were rejected. Nonetheless, some Lemkos could not be deterred, and by the late 1950s about 3,000 managed to return to their beloved Carpathian Mountains, a process that has continued slowly, so that today about 10,000 (out of an estimated 60,000 throughout Poland) live again in their native villages.

The return has hardly been easy. The Polish government has to this day never denied the validity of the Vistula Operation that led to the forced deportations in 1947, and since then it has placed numerous legal and administrative hindrances to block Lemkos from returning. Nor could the Poles who took over Lemko villages be enamored with the return of the real owners. The ultimate irony for those Lemkos who did manage to return was that they had to buy back from Poles the very homesteads they or their parents had built.

The Lemko Region Today

Against seemingly all odds, the Lemkos have persevered, and present-day Poland is witnessing a Lemko revival. In the early 1970s, the Lemkovyna Song and Dance Ensemble was established to propagate Lemko folk music in towns and villages where Lemkos live. The Lemko section of the regional outdoor Ethnographic Museum in Nowy Sącz has drawn much attention to traditional Lemko culture, and besides this state-supported institution Lemkos themselves have taken the initiative in preserving their heritage. Two specifically Lemko museums have been set up at private initiative in Bielanka (Gorlice district) by the Lemko poet Pavel Stefanovs'kyj and in Zyndranowa (Krosno district) by Fedir Goć. The best known Lemko activist today, Goć was also instrumental in building the first Eastern Rite church (Orthodox) in the Lemko Region since World War II. Since the completion of the Zyndranowa church in 1985, others have been rebuilt (Rozdiele and Komaricza) or are under construction (Krynica).

Most recently, annual Lemko folk and cultural festivals called Vatra (The Hearth) have been held for two and three days each summer since 1983 in a different Carpathian village to where Lemkos have returned in large numbers (Krynica, Hanczowa, Bartne). The festivals have even prompted the appearance of the first Lemko-language newspaper (if only an annual) to appear since the interwar years—Holos Vatry (1984-present). As many as 4,000 people have come from various parts of Poland to attend the Lemko Vatras. The majority are young Lemkos living in western and northern Poland who are curious to see firsthand “their” Carpathian homeland and to learn about (through cultural “quiz shows”) their ancestral heritage. Also among the Vatra audiences are Poles, who find these displays of Lemko culture exotic or quaint, and Ukrainians who wish to be assured that the Lemkos remain or become Ukrainian.

What is most remarkable is that all these aspects of the Lemko “revival” have been carried out beyond official channels and often with great difficulty. There are several reasons for this. The Polish government argues that Lemkos are Ukrainians and should therefore not have their own organizations but seek assistance from the government-supported Ukrainian Social-Cultural Society (USKT). Lemko activists respond that they are discriminated against by the official Ukrainian organization and are not allowed to preserve their distinct cultural traditions.

For their part, the Ukrainians and pro-Ukrainian Lemkos are concerned with a revival of what they call Lemko-Rusyn “separatism,” which they seem to blame on Polish writers and cultural activists (Jerzy Harasymowicz, Antoni Kroh, Andrzej Kwilecki, Tadeusz Olszanski). These Poles, the Ukrainians argue, may pretend to be concerned with Lemkos but, in fact, they really wish to separate them from Ukrainians and eventually to polonize them. (It is true that in recent decades icons removed from Lemko churches and displayed in museums and publications are generally called Polish art, as is the work of the popular Lemko-born painter Nikifor Drovnjak of Krynica). To stop such efforts at “Lemko separatism,” Ukrainian publicists like Professor Volodymyr Mokryj of Jaggiellonian University have since the mid-1980s filled the pages of Polish newspapers (especially in Cracow) with articles on the Ukrainianess of all Rusyns and Lemkos.

Finally, the Roman Catholic Church has its own agenda. It accepted the liquidation of the Greek Catholic Church between 1946 and 1950 throughout the Carpathian Rus’ homeland, and while it has permitted Greek Catholic priests to serve liturgies in Roman Catholic churches, this “right” is dependent on the cooperation of the local parish priest. In the Lemko Region, Polish Roman Catholic priests have generally refused such permission to Greek Catholics and they...
have done their best, as well, to block the establishment of Orthodox parishes in those villages where Lemkos have returned.

So once again, the Lemkos are caught between conflicting political, religious, and national struggles. For their part, the Lemkos who are active in or are affected by the recent cultural revival and interest in them have no desire to change the centuries-long reality of living in Poland. They do, however, wish to be recognized neither as Polish nor Ukrainian, but simply as Lemko Rusyns with the right to return to their native Carpathian homeland (mainly of concern to the older generation), to set up their own distinct Lemko cultural organizations, to build (or reacquire from Roman Catholics) Eastern Rite churches, and eventually to have their own language taught in local schools.

It is among a younger generation of Lemko activists like Petro Murianka-Trochanovs'kyj, Jaroslav Trochanovs'kyj, Volodyyslav Hraban, Olena Duc, and Semen Madzelan that such efforts are being undertaken. These and other educated Lemkos—all born after World War II—have begun to publish once again poetry in their native tongue, to collect and perform folk and church music, to complete a major anthology of Lemko literature (including writers as well from the Prešov Region), and even to begin work on a Lemko dictionary in order to standardize the literary language that they use.

All things considered, these are remarkable achievements for a group of Rusyns who forty years ago were thrown out of their homes and dispersed hundreds of miles from their Carpathian homeland. Now, four decades later, the tide has begun to turn and the Lemkos are once again beginning to reclaim that which is rightfully theirs. Will all who wish to do so be able to return to their Carpathian villages? Will Eastern-rite churches (whether Orthodox or Greek Catholic) be built or reopened? Will the people at large continue to identify themselves and their culture as distinctly Lemko Rusyn, or will they simply become assimilated Poles? These remain unanswered questions and problems that only the future will resolve.

Paul Robert Magocsi
Toronto, Canada

One of the many literary quotations set up at the 1986 Vatra festival in Bartne. This one by Ivan Rusenko reads: "From the oldest to the youngest/Respect your native language/While we've lost everything/Only our language has remained."

RECENT PUBLICATIONS 1983

With this issue we begin a new year in our on-going survey of recent publications. These are from 1983 and are listed alphabetically. Many are published in Eastern Europe and are difficult to obtain, but most can be found in research libraries of major universities (California at Berkeley, Harvard, Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, Indiana, Toronto, Yale) or in institutions like the Library of Congress, New York Public Library, and Cleveland Public Library. Although these places allow limited access, do note that many local libraries can obtain these works upon request through Interlibrary Loan. Titles which can be purchased will be designated as such.—Editor


OUR FRONT COVER

Consecration of the cross for the Orthodox church in the Lemko Region village of Zyndranowa, July 1982.
The intent of the following questionnaire is to help the staff of the Carpatho-Rusyn American determine how the newsletter can better serve the Rusyn community and respond to the needs of our readers. Please take the time to complete this questionnaire as soon as possible and return it to the address on the reverse side. Simply separate the questionnaire from the balance of the newsletter, fold it so our address shows clearly, staple or tape it securely, and affix adequate postage. You need not confine your comments to these questions alone and feel free to expand your answers beyond a simple yes no, but we would like answers to all the questions.

Your cooperation is sincerely appreciated.

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Do you think the Carpatho-Rusyn American is fulfilling your needs about Rusyn culture and history?
   ___ Yes ___ No

2. Would you like more materials on the following:
   2.1) History of Carpatho-Rusyns in 20th century Europe? ___ Yes ___ No
   2.2) Articles about Carpatho-Rusyns in present day Europe? ___ Yes ___ No
   2.3) History of Carpatho-Rusyns in Europe before the 20th century? ___ Yes ___ No
   2.4) Articles or materials on present-day North American Carpatho-Rusyns? ___ Yes ___ No
   2.5) Articles on Carpatho-Rusyns in North America in general? ___ Yes ___ No
   2.6) Articles on Carpatho-Rusyns in North America during the immigration? ___ Yes ___ No
   2.7) Carpatho-Rusyn folklore and fables? ___ Yes ___ No
   2.8) Carpatho-Rusyn customs—wedding, religious, funeral, etc.? ___ Yes ___ No
   2.9) Carpatho-Rusyn village life? ___ Yes ___ No
   2.10) Carpatho-Rusyn poetry? ___ Yes ___ No
   2.11) Carpatho-Rusyn music? ___ Yes ___ No
   2.12) Bibliography and available books and materials on Carpatho-Rusyns in general? ___ Yes ___ No
   2.13) Announcements of future Carpatho-Rusyn activity in North America? ___ Yes ___ No

3. Would you like more pictures of Carpatho-Rusyn places and individuals? ___ Yes ___ No

4. Would you like articles of Carpatho-Rusyn fiction? ___ Yes ___ No

5. Do you like the general appearance of the newsletter? ___ Yes ___ No
   Suggestions _______________

6. As far as the subscription price is concerned:
   6.1) The present price is fine? ___ Yes ___ No
   6.2) The present price is too high? ___ Yes ___ No
   6.3) The present price can be increased? ___ Yes ___ No
   6.4) Would you pay more if the format or content was changed, improved, or expanded? ___ Yes ___ No
   6.5) Would you drop your subscription if costs force us to raise the subscription price in order to continue publishing the newsletter? ___ Yes ___ No

7. Do you believe that we should explore an idea of creating a group of “Friends” of the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center, whereby donations of a substantially higher amount — say $25 per year — would include an annual subscription to the Carpatho-Rusyn American, a 10% discount on books sold by the C-RRC, and, perhaps, an annual meeting and fellowship, with possible other benefits too? ___ Yes ___ No
   7.1) Would you consider becoming a “Friend” along the lines described above, if such an organization was developed? ___ Yes ___ No

8. Would you support a national Carpatho-Rusyn festival? ___ Yes ___ No

(over)
9. Which religious orientation, if any, do you feel we may be favoring or emphasizing too much? 
   ___ Byzantine Rite Catholic  ___ Orthodox  ___ Both are treated fairly equally

10. Do you have any pictures or articles that you would like to submit or other topics or areas that you would like to suggest?  ___ Yes  ___ No

11. Comments
   
   
   
   
   

Return Address

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Cambridge, Minnesota 55008

PLEASE NOTE THAT SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1987 ARE NOW DUE AT THE ANNUAL RATE OF $12.00 PLEASE TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO RENEW OR SUBSCRIBE
RUSYN FORUM

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. On Sunday, December 7, 1986, the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation sponsored a “Ethnic Holiday Tour” in McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania. The tour concentrated on four Slavic Churches of the industrial “bottoms” area, and included the churches of Carpatho-Rusyns, Poles, and Ukrainians. At Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Church, Sister Jean Marie Cihota, OSBM, led a discussion highlighting Rusyn culture in the Byzantine Rite. This was followed by a spirited, well-received performance by Rusyny, the Carpatho-Rusyn Folk Ensemble from McKeesport, Pennsylvania.

Passaic, New Jersey. On February 4, 1987, the Reverend George M. Kuzma was installed as Auxiliary Bishop for the Byzantine Catholic Diocese of Passaic, at services in the Cathedral of St. Michael, Passaic, New Jersey. Consecrating bishops were the Most Reverend Stephen J. Kocisko, Archbishop and Metropolitan of the Pittsburgh Archeparchy, and Bishops Thomas Dolinay and Michael Dudick. The ceremonies were well attended; bishops, fraternal leaders, and the media were present to record the event. The Carpatho-Rusyn American extends best wishes to the new bishop. Mnohaja lita, Vladyko!

FROM OUR READERS

In this column we will print letters the editorial staff has received from the readers of the newsletter as well as letters that have been sent to the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center. We reserve the right to edit letters to fit the constraints of allowable space, but will make every effort to preserve the perceived intent of the author, to give all sides of any issue a fair hearing, and to provide an open editorial page for our readers.

To the Editor:

I have thoroughly enjoyed the wedding tradition series. It may be of interest to you that several of the customs listed were used in my own wedding in 1949. Both of my parents were from the Carpathian Mountains and are Carpatho-Rusyns. I am first generation, thus enjoy the customs and traditions of weddings and holidays. In our house (my husband’s people were from Galicia) we still keep many of these traditions—at least for the holidays.

I have a very small dance group, only three couples, but we are powerful! Our program features dancing (as learned from Jerry Jumba), an explanation of our authentic costumes (we do have some originals), and an explanation of either wedding traditions or customs of the Carpatho-Rusyn people. This past April 30, our 1 1/2 hour program featured wedding traditions . . . we had a standing ovation! We also taught a lot of people a little bit about the Carpatho-Rusyns—many had never heard about them!

So you see, your newsletter gives me a lot of valuable information.

Catherine Posternski
Mansfield Depot, Connecticut

To the Editor:

We received the book Our People as a hospitality gift.

One of the greatest thrills of my life was when I saw the picture, “Wedding of a Priest,” on page 25. I started to recognize so many of my mother’s and father’s closest friends—like Father and Mrs. Mihalick (my godmother), Father (my godfather) and Mrs. Lodomersky, and then shouted when the couple on the right (priest’s arms folded), I recognized as my own father and mother, Reverend Anthony and Yolanda Mhley. Then I recognized my whole family.

It is most interesting to know our history, since there have been priests in our family since the 13th century. We priests’ children are a type of “Last of the Mohicans.” It is such a loving, beautiful heritage.

Loretta Mhley Chegin
Key Biscayne, Florida

To the Editor:

Many months ago I received my copy of Our People, and ever since I’ve been meaning to write to express my appreciation. I was moved to tears when I saw my mom and pop looking back at me from the picture of the mock wedding at St. John’s in Perth Amboy.

My brothers and I have so often questioned who and what we are, and we’ve been given different answers by different people. Even today, there is such confusion among otherwise well-informed people. I often bite my tongue when I hear my college educated fellow parishioners say that we are “slavish.”

Elizabeth Cechur Short
Union, New Jersey

UPCOMING EVENTS

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The City of Pittsburgh has announced the Seventh Annual Heritage Day Parade to be held on Saturday, May 16, 1987. The parade has become a “tradition” in Pittsburgh, and marks the start of festivities celebrating the ethnic variety of the nation’s “Most Liveable City.” The Carpatho-Rusyns have been part of the Pittsburgh Folk Festival for over twenty-five years. We invite our readers who live or plan to be in Pittsburgh in May to experience the activities.

Waterbury, Connecticut. A Bible study group composed primarily of Carpatho-Rusyns has come to our attention. Their origin is documented by Dr. Paul R. Magocsi in the Rutland Historical Society Quarterly, Volume XV, Number 2, (1985), in an article titled “A Heritage Recalled—Prorochesko Svitio.” We hope to provide more details in future newsletters. Those who wish information now, can contact them by writing “Cornerstone,” c/o Charles and Yvonne Svitlik, P.O. Box 845, Waterbury, Connecticut 06720.

If you have news for Rusyn Forum, please let us know. Upcoming events should be submitted well in advance, in order to fit our deadlines. Mail to “Rusyn Forum,” c/o Andrew Kovaly, 625 Manning Avenue, Port Vue, Pennsylvania 15133.
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THE CARPATHO-RUSYN AMERICAN

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