FROM OUR READERS

Throughout the year, the staff of the Carpatho-Rusyn American receives countless letters from our readers. You have written to us both requesting and providing information — sharing with us your experiences, ideas, comments and criticisms.

We would like you to know how important your letters are to us. Frequently, this correspondence is our only chance to communicate with you on an individual basis and to know that what we write and publish is being read by a Rusyn-American community eager to learn more about its heritage.

In the past, you have moved us emotionally with letters about your trips to the homeland and about the joy at discovering your roots. You have also moved us to take action with many requests and valuable suggestions. But most importantly, your letters have provided encouragement and support to us as we strive to spread knowledge about Carpatho-Rusyns.

The staff of the Carpatho-Rusyn American and the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center would like to thank you for your letters and we look forward to hearing from more of you in the future. As we begin our ninth year of publication, we would like to share with you some of this varied correspondence. — Editor

Dear Editor:

Enclosed is a check for $200 to assist in work that is grossly neglected by many.

Paul Metro, Secretary
Greek Catholic Union, Lodge 665
Linden, New Jersey

The Carpatho-Rusyn American gratefully acknowledges this very generous donation as well as numerous others that help us to continue our work. — Editor

Dear Editor:

On November 16, 1985, your assistant editor, John Righetti, presented a day-long workshop titled: "Rusin Heritage Day."

The day was an unqualified success. At the conclusion, all of the participants appeared to be smiling and up-beat, both at the amount of information provided and the manner in which it was presented.

The Rusin Association wishes to publicly thank John Righetti for his time and fine presentation.

Lawrence A. Goga, President
Rusin Association
Brooklyn Center, Minnesota

Dear Dr. Magocsi:

I find your books very interesting and informative. I am currently in the process of reading Our People and regret that I more or less ignored my heritage until recently when I no longer have resources such as my grandparents to provide me with information about things which I now find very interesting. I couldn't count the number of times Dr. Peter Zeedick was at my grandmother’s home when I was a child or the many times I saw him as I grew older never realizing the important role he played in the history of the Rusyns in America. Your books provide me with much that I intentionally missed, but now regret having done so.

Stephanie Yovino
 Altoona, Pennsylvania

Dear Editor:

In the summer 1985 issue, you stated that you were astonished when members of a Carpatho-Rusyn dance group could not answer the question — "Who are the Carpatho-Rusyns?" I am not surprised because this appears to be an impossible position to maintain in this current modern world. Your organization seems to live only in the past and tries to hold on to an identity that has changed during the course of history. Why do you continue to confuse your readers by holding on to the ancient name of Rusyn or Ruthenian when our people have long ago changed their name to Ukrainian?!

Martin Solonynka
Bayonne, New Jersey

Dear Editor:

Could you please tell me how I might obtain a copy of The Wooden Churches of Eastern Europe: An Introductory Survey by David Buxton?

I congratulate you on the spring 1985 issue! Extremely interesting and of the highest quality, lacking any material of a polemical nature — qualities absent in most every other Slavic-American publication that I'm familiar with.

Kevin Hannan, Librarian
Czech Club
Dallas, Texas

The question of where to purchase the books mentioned in our Recent Publications column has been asked repeatedly. For books published in the United States, we suggest that you consult Books in Print, available at most local bookstores, which will provide information on how to obtain books currently available in this country. For books published in Europe, we are trying to find a dealer in the United States who could be helpful to our readers.
ORESTES CHORNOCK (1883-1977)

While the two decades separating World War I and II may be considered the era of consolidation in Rusyn-American history, it must be admitted that this very same period witnessed several instances of divisiveness that often rent the fabric of the community from the highest organizational to the most intimate familial level. In one sense, such difficulties were simply a reflection of the broader problem of adaptation to a new society. Not only did the rural Carpatho-Rusyn immigrants have to adapt to working in an industrial environment, but the cultural and, in particular, religious traditions they brought with them had in some way to be accepted in the New World.

Because they were Eastern Rite Christians operating within a Protestant and Roman Catholic setting, the process of cultural and religious acceptance was for Carpatho-Rusyns particularly problematic. In retrospect, the 1930s were to witness the last major crisis within the Rusyn-American community, in which the Reverend Orestes Chornock was to play a leading role.

Born in 1883 in the Carpatho-Rusyn village of Ortut’ova (formerly in Sariš county of the Hungarian Kingdom), the young Orestes followed in the footsteps of his father. He completed the gymnasium (middle school) and Royal Theological Seminary in Presov, after which he was in 1906 ordained a Greek Catholic priest. After only two years ministering in his Presov Region homeland, Chornock and his wife, Yolanda nee Molchany, emigrated to the United States. He was first assigned to the Greek Catholic parish in Chicagó (Burnside), then Cleveland and Duquesne, Pennsylvania, before his transfer in 1911 to Bridgeport, Connecticut, where he was to remain for the next four decades.

While in America, Chornock became concerned with the frequent transfer of parishes to the Russian Orthodox Church, a movement led by former Greek Catholic priests like Alexis Toth and Alexander Dzubay (see the Carpatho-Rusyn American, Vol. VIII, Nos. 1 and 2, 1985) because of what they felt was an infringement on the part of American Roman Catholic prelates toward their own less influential church. The situation finally seemed to stabilize after 1924 with the appointment of the Reverend Basil Takach as bishop for Carpatho-Rusyn Greek Catholics. However, when Bishop Takach reluctantly decided to enforce the 1929 Vatican decree (Cum Data Fuerit) that both reaffirmed celibacy for clergy (marriage was permitted for them in the Eastern Rite Churches prior to coming to America) as well as criticized clerical participation in secular community organizations and outlawed lay trustee ownership of church property (practices begun in the New World), several Greek Catholic priests and lay leaders decided to oppose their bishop.

Among the most active opponents of Bishop Takach and the 1929 Vatican decree were Chornock and the Reverend Stephen Varzaly, at the time editor of the Greek Catholic Union’s influential newspaper, the Amerikansky Russky Vestnik. Throughout the 1930s, these two priests and their supporters hoped to have the Vatican decree repealed, and when that approach ultimately failed, a group led by Chornock, Varzaly, and the Reverend Peter Molchany met in 1936-1937 to establish the groundwork for a new church organization that, in order to preserve the old traditions (married clergy, and clergy/lay election of bishops), would have to break with Rome.

However, this latest “return to the ancestral faith” did not mean alignment with one of the Russian Orthodox churches in America as had been done by earlier Carpatho-Rusyns. Rather, the new body was to preserve the old ways, and in contrast to the Byzantine Ruthenian Greek Catholic Church of Bishop Takach, to remain the “true” Carpatho-Russian Greek Catholic Church of the Eastern Rite.

Chornock was elected bishop at a church congress (composed of clerical and lay representatives), and in 1938 he received canonical jurisdiction from the Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople. The early years of his bishopric were especially difficult, because his church was forced to engage in numerous court battles with other jurisdictions (Byzantine Ruthenian, Russian Orthodox Metropolia) over ownership of church property as well as face an internal controversy with his old supporter, Varzaly, who during the 1940s split off several parishes in order to place them under the allegiance of the Moscow Patriarchal Russian Orthodox Church.

Bishop Chornock remained steadfast, however, moving the seat of his diocese in 1950 from Bridgeport to Johnstown, Pennsylvania, where under his direction the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Diocese (as it officially is known today) established a seminary and built a new cathedral church. In 1965, Chornock was raised to the rank of metropolitan, and by the time of his death a little over a decade later his jurisdiction included 65 churches and over 100,000 parishioners. Because nearly all the members are of Carpatho-Rusyn descent, Chornock’s “Johnstown Diocese,” as it came to be known popularly, could be considered the only Rusyn national church in America. Metropolitan Chornock should be remembered as someone who at great sacrifice and against unfavorable odds was willing and ultimately able to preserve in the New World the practices and traditions of the Carpatho-Rusyn religious heritage.

Philip Michaels
FOLK CUSTOMS OF CARPATHO-RUSYNS
THE WEDDING — PART III

Removal of the bridal wreath: The ceremony of the taking off of the bridal wreath and its substitution with a married woman’s bonnet started when the starosta would call on the senior groomsmen to remove the bride’s wreath or parta (a decoration with ribbons for the bride’s head). This was done with a mountain axe, a knife, or a fork, for the groomsmen could not touch the wreath with his hands. While doing this, the senior groomsmen asked the young woman a rhetorical question which, he repeated three times: Čy tobi maju holovu sijaty abo vinè dolov znjaty? (“Am I to cut off your head, or merely take off your wreath?”) The customary answer of the bride to the first two queries was: “Cut off my head!” Only the third answer gave permission to take off the wreath. This act was also accompanied by the guests singing songs appropriate for the occasion. Then, with the wreath on his mountain axe (knife or fork), the groomsmen danced a solo. When he finished, he “sold” the wreath to the young husband for a symbolic sum which they agreed upon after a lengthy bargaining session.

The svaska (female guests on the bridegroom’s side) then took the young bride to the closet or another place, seated her on a pail filled with water from the local stream — the pail being covered with a fur coat — and began the final stage of turning the bride into a wife. First they arranged her hair into a “bun,” and upon this they put the married woman’s bonnet. They also exchanged her single girl’s dress for that of a married woman. Like all other wedding customs, this one too was accompanied by friendly joking and singing. With the bonnet on her head, the young wife distributed the wedding cake to the nearest relatives of her husband (his father, mother, grandparents, brothers, and sisters) and to the other wedding guests. She also distributed her handmade presents among the guests — mostly articles of clothing.

Rjadový tanec (the “dance in a row”): The final step in the transformation of the bride into a married woman was “sealed” by a spirited dance of the young wife with all the male guests. In the midst of a circle formed around her, one by one the guests joined her in the dance. Since there were usually some fifty to one hundred dancing partners, the marathon was rather exhausting for the young woman. On the other hand, it brought her quite a considerable financial sum (which she did not have to share with her husband or parents-in-law). This was because each of the dancers had to pay her a certain amount of money. The nearest relatives usually gave the most, the more distant ones somewhat less. Meanwhile the husband watched the dance from a distance. When he noticed that his wife was dancing with someone for too long or that she was too exhausted, he asked for a dance himself (he had to pay her also). After several steps, he took her in his arms, broke the closed circle, and they both hid in the closet which he locked up. Some anthropologists interpret this dance as a remnant of an ancient ritual intercourse of the bride with all male relatives of the bridegroom which is recorded in old documents and which may still be practiced among some groups in remote areas of the world.

Washing the young wife in the stream: The “dance in a row” nurtured a growing excitement. When the excitement reached its peak, the starosta brought the newlyweds out of the closet and with a burning candle in his hand led them to the local stream. They were accompanied on their way by the music and by the singing of the wedding guests. The newlyweds washed first, followed by the other members of the wedding. Sometimes the wedding guests threw the starosta, the senior groomsmen, and other wedding functionaries into the water. The bridesmaids also used to throw into the stream their single girls’ head wreaths to find out from the speed with which the wreaths were carried away by the stream whether or not they would marry soon. On their way back to the house, the newlyweds leapt across a fire to “dry out.” In the house, they sprinkled the oven, the table, and icons with stream water and doused the guests with it as well. Both the water and the fire had a symbolic magic function: to purify the newlyweds and the guests from sin and thus to assure them of a happy life.

Propoj prydaný (the feast staged by the relatives of the young wife): With the bride finally “turned into a married woman,” the bridegroom’s mother sent a junior groomsmen or some of the relatives to break the news to the young woman’s parents. The bride’s parents summoned their family for a small dinner. In the course of the dinner the women of the family made a darnyk (a flagstaff on which each of the women fixed a piece of linen or a bandana). Then they formed a procession which brought the darnyk into the house of the bridegroom. There, the old ritual of “enmity” between the family of the bride and the family which took the bride away was repeated.

The bridegroom’s party locked the house, opening it only after a long bargaining session between the marsalisko (one of the chief organizers of the wedding on the bride’s side) and the starosta. The propojic or prydaňniky (the members of the wedding on the bride’s side) were then seated at the vacated tables and reunited with the bride, who was now wearing the married woman’s bonnet. The young woman first greeted her mother, who gave her the ritual bread called balec or pryvykanec. Then the bride kissed all her relatives and received their gifts. However, the “enmity” between the two families continued further. The prydaňniky and the svaska exchanged a series of songs mocking each other, but when the singing and feasting was over, the “enmity” did not prevent the guests of both parties from joining in a new round of dancing which lasted until late at night.

Popravýny or svaskačov (the gradual waning of the wedding festivities): On the third day of the wedding, usually a Tuesday, all the guests again gathered in the bridegroom’s house. This time they treated themselves from their own resources. Each of the women brought a bottle of brandy and some food from which they prepared a lunch. When the guests ran out of food and drink too soon, the men of the bridegroom’s party made a wooden horse with which they visited the households of the guests, requesting some food and drink “for the horse.” During this final stage of the festivities, there was much merry-making, music, and song, so that the revelry again lasted the whole day.

As we have tried to demonstrate, the traditional Carpatho-Rusyn wedding had a fixed pattern. It lasted three days and included many magic elements which could be traced to pagan times. Nevertheless, in the course of history, Christianity made its own decisive impact on the customs. This was seen not only in the church wedding, but also in the speeches of the starosta and the marsalisko, which invariably commenced with stories from the Bible adapted for the common folk. The traditional Carpatho-Rusyn wedding pattern also reflected many elements of the ancient matriarchal
system, life in an extended patriarchal family, ancient law based on customs, medieval military marches, and other historical components. The most outstanding feature of each ceremonial act of the wedding festivities was the singing of songs that mirrored the varied historical circumstances in which they originated.

In spite of the general rigidity of the wedding pattern, it did not remain immune to the enormous changes of modern times. The two historical milestones in the gradual disappearance of Carpatho-Rusyn wedding customs were the two world wars. After the First and Second World Wars there was a veritable "explosion" of weddings which, considering the hardships following these conflicts, took place with a substantial lack of food, drink, clothing, and in some cases housing as well. This resulted in a marked simplification of the wedding pattern that persisted even after the economy recovered. Moreover, after World War II, the Carpatho-Rusyn community lost its isolated character so that, consequently, many elements of Ukrainian, Slovak, Czech, and other wedding patterns penetrated into the traditional Rusyn wedding. This development was no doubt accelerated by the influence of the modern mass media. Given all these tendencies, it is unfortunate that there is as yet no thorough scholarly treatment of the phenomenon of the Carpatho-Rusyn folk wedding tradition — not even a single book dealing with it.

Just how much things have changed in most Carpatho-Rusyn villages can be seen from the predominant present-day wedding pattern established in the 1960s and 1970s. The wedding festivities have been reduced to only one afternoon and evening. They usually take place in restaurants, or, in some bigger places, in local "houses of culture" — multipurpose institutions with a restaurant, a place for occasional theater and film performance, meetings of various organizations, and other functions. The traditional elements in such a modern wedding have all but disappeared. Contemporary pop music emitted from amplifiers has practically replaced the traditional choral singing of the beautiful old wedding songs. The old function of the two chief organizers of the wedding for the bride and for the bridegroom have also for the most part disappeared. A kind of substitute for the old humorous customs is the public reading at the wedding feast of jocular congratulatory telegrams.

All this would seem to demonstrate that the traditional Carpatho-Rusyn folk wedding is on the wane. However, in the past few years, we have observed a certain renaissance of wedding customs. Many folklore groups have included in their repertory a number of traditional wedding songs and rituals such as the ceremonious parting of the bride from her parents. It appears that Carpatho-Rusyn youth are becoming tired of listening to commercial pop music alone, and that they have started to look for lasting values in their own folk heritage.

A certain hint of this new trend can be found in the answers to my recent questionnaire concerning the relation of Carpatho-Rusyn youth in Eastern Slovakia to folklore. In 1983, I put questions to almost 500 Carpatho-Rusyn boys and girls 16-21 years of age who studied at secondary schools in the city of Prešov. They represented not only Carpatho-Rusyn youngsters living with their parents in the city, but also youth from almost all the Carpatho-Rusyn villages and small towns in the Prešov Region. It is certainly remarkable that in answering the question about the ideal notion of their own wedding, 93.1 percent of the respondents said that of all the options available, they would favor the "folk wedding." By this they meant quite unambiguously the traditional pattern with the broad spectrum of relatives and other guests with the starosta and the maršálik, and with the old rituals and wedding songs. Only 12 of the respondents (11 of them city dwellers) favored a wedding in the narrow circle of nearest relatives. Not a single respondent favored a mere civil registration of the marriage without any kind of subsequent wedding ceremony. These answers seem to indicate that any prophecies about the imminent death of the traditional Carpatho-Rusyn wedding are premature.
Who are the East Slavs? The question is not as simple as it may seem. Moreover, there may be different answers — and legitimate ones at that — when describing the situation in Europe, on the one hand, and in the United States, on the other. Generally, contemporary scholarship divides the Slavic peoples into three basic groups: the West Slavs (Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, Lusatian Sorbs); the South Slavs (Slovenes, Croats, Serbs, Macedonians, Bulgarians); and the East Slavs. Today, in Europe, the East Slavs include three peoples or nationalities: Russians, Belorussians, and Ukrainians.

If we turn to the United States and ask the same question — who are the East Slavs? — we come up with a slightly different or more expanded answer. The authoritative *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*, first published in 1980, indicates as many as five, not three, groups that belong to eastern Slavdom. Besides Russians, Belorussians, and Ukrainians, the *Harvard Encyclopedia* also includes Carpatho-Rusyns and Cossacks, each of which has its own entry that reveals the distinct and viable cultural, social, and religious life of the group in the United States.

Beginning with the five East Slavic ethnic groups in America, we might look first at their respective size. Altogether, the five groups — including the first generation immigrants and their second, third, fourth, and in some instances fifth generation descendants — represent an estimated 2,000,000 people. Almost three quarters of that number consist of Carpatho-Rusyns and Ukrainians at about 700,000 each. Of those, all of the Carpatho-Rusyns and about 80 percent of the Ukrainians derive directly or via their parents and grandparents from the same area; that is, the regions of Galicia, Subcarpathia, and Bukovina, that until 1918 had belonged to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Added to these are at least 50 percent of people who in the United States describe themselves as Russians, even though their origins, too, are in the former Austro-Hungarian Empire. This means that of the approximately 2,000,000 East Slavs in the United States, almost 1,500,000, or 75 percent of them, come from the same three Austro-Hungarian provinces of Galicia, Subcarpathia, and Bukovina.

Yet, while the first-generation ancestors of these million and one-half Americans may have come from the same basic geographic area, in the United States they identify themselves not as a single ethnic group, but, at the very least, as three different groups — Carpatho-Rusyns, Russians, and Ukrainians — whose members more often than
themselves as Russians. Sometimes, the Russians we are from the same geographic region in old Austria-Hungary discussing go so far as to deny the existence of Carpatho-Rusyn dialects, are not accepted if they do not wish to identify and who for that matter speak originally the same language. On the other hand, the dox faith. These are, of course, identifiable quantities, because Russia as a country and its cultural representatives like Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, or Tchaikovsky, are known to most Americans of whatever background. On the other hand, the negative approach means association with Russian culture, language, and, more often than not, the Orthodox faith. These are, of course, identifiable quantities, because Russia as a country and its cultural representatives like Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, or Tchaikovsky, are known to most Americans of whatever background. On the other hand, the negative approach means that fellow countrymen who come from the same geographic region in old Austria-Hungary and who for that matter speak originally the same language or dialects, are not accepted if they do not wish to identify themselves as Russians. Sometimes, the Russians we are discussing go so far as to deny the existence of Carpatho-Rusyns and Ukrainians as legitimate ethnic groups, considering them instead as artificial constructs that ostensibly did not exist in the past and therefore should not exist now.

The vast majority of Russian Americans who hold such views are Orthodox, mostly in the old Metropolia, today's Orthodox Church in America, or in some instances, in the Patriarchal Exarchate or even in the Carpatho-Russian Johnstown Diocese. A perception of Eastern Slavic unity, described as Russian or Russian Orthodox culture, is the intellectual and emotional basis of the group of Russians we are describing here. Moreover, the force of such an identity, backed by association with the achievements of Russian civilization — whether pre-Soviet or Soviet — has had remarkable staying power in the United States, not only among the earliest immigrants but among some of their second, third, and fourth generation descendants. Yet one wonders how long such an identity can last when faced with the reality of both Carpatho-Rusyns and Ukrainians, who, by their very existence, challenge the views that all East Slavs are supposedly Russian or that they should realize that they are Russians.

When we turn to the last of our East Slavic groups in America, the Ukrainians, it is easy to notice a rather marked difference from the other two. That difference can be summed up by the word dynamism. In fact, when I spent three years working on the Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups, in which 106 groups are represented, and my colleagues (all non-Slavs) were struck by how Ukrainians stood out in the United States with regard to their proven ability to organize all kinds of organizations and social structures and to create literally a society within a society that in some instances has been able to take care of its members' needs from cradle to grave. This same, at times aggressive, dynamism can also have negative implications, however, especially with regard to interaction with fellow Americans. The closest of those fellow Americans are, of course, the other East Slavs we have been discussing — the Carpatho-Rusyns and Russians.

As among the Russians, the Ukrainian approach to the question of ethnic identity has both its positive and negative sides. For Ukrainian Americans, of whom 80 percent come from old Austro-Hungarian and later Polish Galicia, their home territories, including Bukovina and Subcarpathia, are today part of the Ukrainian SSR. Moreover, Ukrainians consider these territories historically to have always been Ukrainian, even though they may have been occupied by foreign powers in the past. Therefore, Ukrainian Americans argue that all East Slavs from those territories must be Ukrainian. In the American context, this means that there are no Carpatho-Rusyns or Russians from Galicia or Austria-Hungary, rather Carpatho-Ukrainians and Galician Ukrainians, or simply Ukrainians.

The Ukrainian community has been particularly successful in propagating this point of view and instilling it especially among its own younger generations. This has been made possible through its many fraternal organizations, its Saturday school network, and its distinct Ukrainian Catholic and Ukrainian Orthodox churches. These entities have also contributed to the preservation of the Ukrainian language, Ukrainians having one of the highest percentages of language retention among all groups in the United States. This again is in stark contrast to our other East Slavs, Carpatho-Rusyns and Russians, among whom native language retention is today virtually non-existent. English being the only means of communication. Finally, the Ukrainians have been particularly successful in maintaining and passing on to their youth a series of positive images — some would say myths — about Ukrainian culture and identity. All this does not mean that the Ukrainian American lacks problems — the stress on language retention contributes, for instance, to a certain insularity, especially in the churches which are seen by some, even within the group, to be more national than religious institutions; while the high-profile dynamism that contributes to group maintenance also often leads to friction with other groups, in particular Carpatho-Rusyns and Russians.

In fact, it is the natural phenomenon of interaction that has led in the past not to understanding between East Slavs in America but rather to their further alienation and separatism. The historic record in the United States will more than likely lead in the future not to understanding between East Slavs in America but rather to their further alienation and separatism. The historic record in the United States will more than likely support me when I say that today's multicultural exercise here in Binghamton is the rare exception rather than the rule. Yet if the East Slavs in America derive from cultures located in the same European territory, and if they live and work in basically the same areas in the United States, and if their younger generations meet in American schools and sometimes even intermarry, then why is there generally such alienation among them and how can it be overcome?

Well, perhaps it can never be overcome and one should accept as permanent these already long-term divisions that have lasted in the United States for close to a century. But if there is any value to be gained from interaction at a personal or organizational level, then there are perhaps a few guidelines that might be suggested.

There is, of course, one basic principle that must be adopted and hopefully followed by all: that is, to live and let live. After all, members of each East Slavic group often like continued on next page
to boast that they live in America, a free country. Why not, then, live up to that external reality when interacting with each other?

Much of this need for mutual respect is closely tied in with the identity questions I have been talking about. Members of each group have an important role to play in that regard. Ukrainian Americans should cease preaching to Carpatho-Rusyn Americans that they are lost sheep who supposedly don’t know that they are really Ukrainians. Analogously, Carpatho-Rusyns and for that matter Russians from Galicia should stop claiming that a Ukraine never existed in the past and therefore that Ukrainians today are somehow a dubious nationality created in the twentieth century by foreign powers that were intent on destroying Mother Russia.

On the other hand, Ukrainians should realize that arguments based on present-day realities in Europe may have little bearing on the existence of ethnic groups in America. In another context, can anyone imagine German Americans denying the existence of the Amish, or French Americans denying the existence of the Acadians, or for that matter Israelis denying the validity of Yiddish-American culture simply because such groups no longer exist or had never existed in the European homeland? In other words, the existence of the Ukrainian SSR and the present-day Ukrainian self-identity of inhabitants in the original homeland of the East Slavs that we are discussing does not invalidate intellectually or sociologically the continued existence of Carpatho-Rusyns and Russians in the United States.

Efforts at mutual respect and cooperation might contribute to a greater understanding of one’s own place in the world without necessarily threatening one’s identity. Who knows, maybe the Binghamton initiative will be repeated again here and in other cities where the three groups reside. And maybe Russians and Ukrainians will find something of value in each other’s culture as well as in Carpatho-Rusyn culture and vice-versa. We all know the problems that have existed in the past and we are all guilty of having harped on those problems more than is necessary. Why not put the problems aside for a while and see if it is possible to communicate and to learn from each other? The challenge is there, and hopefully representatives from each group, especially from among the younger generations, will be able to take advantage of whatever future opportunities may arise.

Paul R. Magosci
Toronto, Ontario

A THANK YOU TO CONTRIBUTORS

During 1985, the Carpatho-Rusyn American received $744.00 in unsolicited donations. Many of these were included with subscription renewals. Of the 65 individual donors, some of the largest amounts were received from Polly Chubeka (Monessen, Pennsylvania) — $25.00. Thomas A. Flanagan (Scarsdale, New York) — $25.00; Joseph Kovach (Crown Point, Indiana) — $25.00; Paul Metro (Clark, New Jersey) — $25.00; Josephus J. Beskid (Pacifica, California) — $20.00; Maria Kasianchuk (Troy, New York) — $20.00; William J. Kolsun (Bristol, Connecticut) — $20.00; and Eugene A. Petrick (Oakland, California) — $20.00.

All contributions, whether small or large, help us to continue publishing the Carpatho-Rusyn American, and they are tax-deductible. Our warmest thanks to all of you for your generous support.

FROM OUR CENTER

The year 1985 proved to be a banner year in the history of the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center (C-RRC). We far surpassed our previous records set in 1984 for the number of items sold and orders filled, and in these two categories we increased respectively by two and one half and six times the amounts set in our very first year of existence — 1978. At the same time, the number of subscribers to the Carpatho-Rusyn American quarterly also gradually continued to increase. During our first eight years, the C-RRC has filled a total of 6,360 orders, which represents the distribution of 12,876 publications. A sample of this activity is provided by the following statistical comparison:

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The statistical growth from year to year, especially between 1984 and 1985, reveals both an increasing and continuing interest on the part of Americans of Carpatho-Rusyn descent in the heritage of their forefathers. We are particularly encouraged by the number of people we have been able to reach. In 1978, our original mailing list was approximately 800. Today it has reached 4,763. Even more remarkable is the geographic scope of our list. This means that our publications are received by individuals and institutions in every state of the United States as well as in most European countries — including Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, Poland, Hungary, Yugoslavia — and in less expected places like Israel, Taiwan, and Japan.

The third edition of our Carpathian passport-catalog was published in 1985. It, too, has grown to 24 pages and includes 25 titles on all aspects of Carpatho-Rusyn studies both in the homeland and North America. By far, the best seller is Our People, the first general introductory history of the Carpatho-Rusyn community in America, which in its one year of existence has already sold over 2,600 copies.

Best-selling titles 1978-1985

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<td>Shaping of a National Identity</td>
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The basic task of the C-RRC is to spread knowledge about Carpatho-Rusyns, and we have also done this in ways other than the distribution of publications described by the above statistics. Because of the growing success of our distribution service, our non-profit center has been able to promote new scholarship and cultural contacts. We have published five books ourselves (two of which have already been reprinted). We have distributed last year (gratis to all our customers) a six-page brochure on what to see when
travelling to the homeland. We have funded two choreographers from Pennsylvania to study dance in the Carpatho-Rusyn homeland. We have answered hundreds of inquiries from libraries, scholars, students, and others interested in Carpatho-Rusyns.

In 1986, the C-RRC will co-sponsor with the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia a scholarly conference in Carpatho-Rusyn studies. Most significant is a new long-term project already underway and titled Classics in Carpatho-Rusyn Scholarship. This will include a series of translations into English (commissioned by the C-RRC) of the major works that have appeared on some aspect of Carpatho-Rusyn studies. The first to appear in this series in early 1987 will be a beautifully-illustrated monograph (from Ukrainian) by Pavlo Markovyč on Rusyn Easter eggs from the Prešov Region. Other works planned include a general description of Rusyn history, religion, and culture (from Hungarian) by Alexander Bonkalo and a history of Rusyns in the late medieval period (from Russian) by Alexei L. Petrov.

The Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center looks forward to another successful year during which it can promote new and existing scholarship and, most importantly, share it not only with Americans of Carpatho-Rusyn background, but with all others worldwide who have become increasingly aware and appreciative of the rich heritage of our people.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS 1982

With this issue we begin a new year in our survey of recent publications compiled by Philip Michaels. These are from 1982 and will be listed alphabetically. Many are from Eastern Europe and are difficult to obtain. Most, however, 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


This most recent volume of the irregular periodical Annals is, like the first two, edited by Ivan Hvozda and arranged in the same format, including studies, memoirs, documents, bibliographic information, and letters. All but one of the articles is in Ukrainian, and all focus on Lemkos who, before their mass deportation in 1947, lived just north of the Carpathian mountain crests in what is today southeastern Poland.

As in previous volumes, most of the material deals with the years since World War II, and as many as 12 of the 15 articles are reprinted from previously published works. Of particular interest are Ukrainian and Polish documents on the deportation of Lemkos (pp. 121-165) and a brief survey of Lemko scholars and bellettrists from the past by Vasyl’ Chomyk (pp. 92-98).


Ivan Bajcura is best known for his informative discussion of Carpatho-Rusyns in the Prešov Region since 1945 which appeared in The Ukrainian Question in Czechoslovakia (1967). Like his earlier Slovak-language book, this one emphasizes the supposedly positive results of the Marxist-Leninist solution to the nationality problem, although it does not avoid describing the many difficulties and shortcomings of that policy in the past.

Bajcura’s newest work is a comparative study based on the experience of each of Czechoslovakia’s nationalities. The Carpatho-Rusyns (or Ukrainians as they are designated) are treated at numerous places throughout the book as well as in three sections devoted specifically to them (pp. 94-97, 129-136, 159-163). The author is critical of the forced implementation of the Ukrainian national orientation in the early 1950s and the manner (although not the ultimate goal) of liquidating the Greek Catholic Church, a policy described as stumbling “from one blunder to another” (p. 163). Among the many interesting observations drawn from the many recent statistical tables that appear in the book is the fact that from among all the national groups in the country — including Czechs — Carpatho-Rusyns (Ukrainians) have the highest percentage of students in high school and university.


Subcarpathian Rus’ (Transcarpathian oblast) became the object of attention and source of inspiration for many writers and artists after it became part of the Czechoslovak republic in 1919. The extreme poverty that dominated the area, which seemed to worsen during the economic depression of the 1930s especially caught the attention of belles lettrists and journalists not only in Czechoslovakia, but in many other European countries as well.

This anthology contains a representative sample of journalistic essays and a few prose works by authors especially of left-wing or socialist political persuasion. All the material was written and/or published for the first time during the 1920s and 1930s and is presented here in Ukrainian translation. Among the authors represented in this collection are the Czechs Ivan Olbracht, Julius Fučík, Stanislav Neumann, Vašek Kaňa, Karel Nový, Jaroslav Zaltoukal; the Slovaks Laco Novomesky, Peter Jilemnický, Frano Král; the Hungarians Gyula Krudy, Zoltán Fabry, István Vaszári, Dezső Győry, Béla Illés; the Germans Ludwig Renn, Anna Seghers; the Austrian Bruno Frei; and the well-known American author Erskine Caldwell, who visited Subcarpathian Rus’ in 1934 and again in 1938 (together with the outstanding photographer Margaret Bourke-White).

The compiler has provided an afterword describing the interest of foreign writers in Subcarpathian Rus’ as well as substantive notes on each of the authors whose works appear in the collection. Several photographs of the authors during their visits to the region are also included.

Bilak, S. M. “Istoria Zakarpatskoj Ukraïnii dosovetskogo perioda v krivom zerkale fal’sifikatorov’” (The History of continued on next page

This short study, which appears in a Russian-language collection of articles that describe the manner in which Ukrainian history is presented in the West, attempts to point out the ideological fallacies of non-Soviet writers who have written about Subcarpathian Rus' (Transcarpathian oblast). Particular attention is given to the works of the post-World War II Subcarpathian immigrants living in the United States: Peter G. Stercho, Vasyl' Markus, and Augustine Stefan (who is confused with his magyarone contemporary Agoston Stefan). Besides the attacks on these and other American authors, Bilak also criticizes virtually all Czech and Hungarian writings about Subcarpathian Rus' that appeared before 1945.

Dukljaj, Vol. XXX. Nos. 1-6 (Prešov, 1982), 80 p. each issue.

Besides new works of prose and poetry by Ukrainian-language believers in Czechoslovakia, this volume of Dukljaj contains only a few articles of historical and general interest on Carpatho-Rusyns. Among these are: a brief discussion by Josyf Šešeco on the influence of two Slovak writers on the nineteenth-century Carpatho-Rusyn national leader Aleksander Pavlyovč (No. 4); a history by Ivan Pryslups’kyj of the interwar founding of the Communist party in the Humenné district (No. 5); a survey by Fedir Kovác of the role of Dukljaj on the development of Ukrainian literature in Czechoslovakia during the past three decades (No. 6); and a discussion by Mychajlo Cornyi of the supposed resolution of the “nationality question” among the Ukrainians (Carpatho-Rusyns) in Czechoslovakia (No. 4). There are also brief commemorative biographies of the contemporary Carpatho-Rusyn linguist Mykola Štetc’ (No. 2); the writers Ivan Cendjej (No. 3) and Vasyl’ Basarab (No. 5); the painters Ernest Kontratovč (No. 5) and Havrýlo Hľjuk (No. 5); and the historians Pavlo Uram (No. 3) and Jurko Bryskár (No. 6).


A section of this article (pp. 376-382) deals with the Carpatho-Rusyns and their activity in politics in the United States. Even though too much attention is given to developments in the homeland and on the Ukrainian orientation there and among Carpatho-Rusyns in the United States, the author does nonetheless provide an accurate, if brief, survey of the community’s political and cultural life.


Despite the title of this volume, only three of the nine studies deal specifically with dialects in the Carpathian region, which includes southern Galicia and northern Bukovina as well as Transcarpathia. M. Sjus’ko traces Hungarian and Romanian influences on Rusyn words for animals (pp. 97-109); T. M Rozumyk analyzes adverbs in the dialectal speech (pp. 127-135); and V. I. Dobos provides an extensive study of pronouns, reflexives, and helping verbs (pp. 136-155).


This brief article points out some of the grammatical similarities between M. Smotryc’kyj’s famous Church Slavonic grammar, first published in the early seventeenth century, and the unpublished eighteenth-century grammar of Carpatho-Rusyn (with many Church Slavonic borrowings) by Arsenij Kocak, which was used for several decades in the school at the monastery of Krásny Brod.


This attractively-illustrated volume surveys the hundreds of species of trees and flowers that have been brought from all over the world since the late nineteenth century and which still grow in the Transcarpathian oblast. A detailed text describing the various trees and flowers is followed by a complete list of each species (including names in Ukrainian, Russian, and Latin) with its place of origin and year of introduction into Transcarpathia. There are also 46 pages of relatively good color photographs.


This second volume of Grendža-Dons’kyj’s works, compiled by the author’s daughter Zirka Danylak and edited by Vasyl’ Lev, comprises a few short poems, but mostly the author’s epic poems about the supposed glorious historical past of the Carpatho-Rusyns. These include “Červona skala” (The Red Cliff), “Sava Tur,” “Za volju Sribnoji zemli” (For the Freedom of the Silver Land), and “Corna chmary” (Dark Clouds). Although some of these works were written originally during the interwar period, all are presented in their revised versions prepared by the author after World War II.


This collection of 12 articles is intended to reveal the changes that have taken place in Subcarpathian Rus’ (the Transcarpathian oblast) since the outset of Soviet rule in 1945. Emphasis is placed on cultural activity, particularly in scholarship, literature, art, theater, education, and popular culture. There are also 32 pages of color photographs.


After having published seven volumes of folk tales from the Prešov Region of Czechoslovakia, each in its original Carpatho-Rusyn dialect, the ethnographer Mychajlo Hyryjak has begun a three-volume publication which will contain many of these same folk tales but reworked by the author
and translated into literary Ukrainian. This first volume contains 33 tales and its large format contains some handsome illustrations as well.


Before the planned inundation of several Carpatho-Rusyn villages in the Starina valley of the Prešov Region takes place in the late 1980s, researchers have collected much ethnographic data from the local inhabitants. This anthology of 134 songs transcribed from Jurko Kolyncak, a former resident of Starina, is one result of such research. The vast majority of the songs — many with music — come either from the wedding cycle (37) or are lyrical in content (74) and concerned with love, family relations, going off to war, and the experience as immigrants in the United States. The volume concludes with an essay on Kolyncak and his songs by the compiler (pp. 152-191); resumés in Russian, Slovak, and English; a list of Carpatho-Rusyn dialectal words with explanations in Ukrainian; and several photographs of Kolyncak.

**RUSYN FORUM**

**St. Paul, Minn.** On May 3-5, 1985, for the second consecutive year, the Rusin Association of Minnesota represented Carpatho-Rusyns in Minnesota’s Festival of Nations held at the St. Paul Civic Center. The association sponsored a booth, titled “Harmony,” which featured taped Carpatho-Rusyn music. Visitors to the booth could listen on earphones to traditional Carpathian church plain chant, or to Rusyn folk songs, performed by the Kruzhok ensemble of Parma, Ohio, as well as by association member Bill Lechko, well known throughout Minnesota for his accordion talent.

**Pittsburgh, Pa.** On June 29, 1985, a number of people gathered at St. Pius X Byzantine Catholic Church in Pittsburgh’s South Hills to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the dissolution of the Greek Catholic Church in Subcarpathian Rus’. A memorial service was held for this region’s Carpatho-Rusyn bishops, with members of the Rusyn dance ensemble of St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church in McKeesport, Pennsylvania, participating in the service dressed in Carpatho-Rusyn folk costumes.

**Barberton, Ohio.** The choir of St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church sponsored a parish picnic on July 14, 1985. One of the highlights of the event was the performance of Carpatho-Rusyn folk dances by the Carpathians folk ensemble of the church.

**Smihtown, NY.** The Byzantine Bazaar, a biannual pan-Slavic festival sponsored by the Byzantine Catholic Church of the Resurrection was held August 29 to September 2, 1985, on the church grounds. Initiated 14 years ago, the festival celebrates the cultures of the Carpatho-Rusyns, Slovaks, Poles, Russians, and Ukrainians and is attended by tens of thousands of people from throughout the metropolitan New York area as well as from Pennsylvania, Delaware and New Jersey. This year’s festival featured the foods, crafts, and folk dancing of these five Slavic groups.

**Uniontown, Pa.** From August 30 to September 2, 1985, thousands of people from throughout the United States converged on the grounds of Mount St. Macrina for the 51st Annual Pilgrimage of the Byzantine Catholic Metropolitan Province in the United States. This year, the pilgrimage commemorated the 1100th anniversary of the death of St. Methodios, one of the two Byzantine missionaries who converted the Slavs in Central Europe to Christianity. This annual pilgrimage has played a significant role in the religious and cultural life of Carpatho-Rusyn Byzantine Catholics in America.

**Livonia, Mich.** Sacred Heart Byzantine Catholic Church’s Fall Festival, held September 7 and 8, 1985, was the scene of a traditional Carpatho-Rusyn wedding play (_predstavlenja_) performed by the Beskidý folk ensemble. In addition, traditional Carpatho-Rusyn folk dances were performed by the Krajané folk ensemble.

**UPCOMING EVENT**

**Minneapolis, Minn.** The Rusin Association of Minnesota will be sponsoring a symposium titled “Rusins, Who Are They?: Perspectives on Rusin Ethnicity,” to be held on Saturday, May 3, 1986. Beginning at 8:00 a.m., the all-day symposium will examine Rusyn ethnicity from Ukrainian, Slovak and Russian perspectives, as well as from the Carpatho-Rusyn perspective. Among those presenting these various views will be Dr. Paul R. Magosci of the University of Toronto; Dr. M. Mark Stolarik, Director of the Balch Institute of Ethnic Studies; and Dr. Myron Kuropas, Vice President of the Ukrainian National Association. The symposium will be held in Room 2-690 of the Malcolm Moss Tower at the University of Minnesota’s Main Campus. Those interested in more information can contact Mr. Lawrence Goga, President, Rusin Association, P.O. Box 29002, Brooklyn Center, Minnesota, 55429.

**OUR FRONT COVER**

Hutsuls of Subcarpathian Rus’ in 1939 waiting with baskets of food to be blessed for Easter.
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THE CARPATHO-RUSYN AMERICAN

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