

Münchenthal German Catholic Cemetery Memorial Project

Canada Office:
Brian J. Lenius
Box 58, Group 328, RR#3,
Selkirk, Manitoba, CANADA R1A 2A8
Telephone: 204-757-4339 ... FAX: 204-757-4340
E-mail: brian@lenius.ca

United States Office:
Dr. Edward F. Rozyłowicz
6750 Bright View Road,
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88007-8928 USA
Telephone: 505-647-5834
E-mail: erozyłowicz@msn.com

Saturday, April 09, 2005

Dear xxxxxx,

In late 2003 we sent you a portfolio of information on ***The Muzhylovychi (Münchenthal) Church Restoration Project***, a project whose principal objective was to research the feasibility of restoring the abandoned German Roman Catholic Church in the village of Muzhylovychi (formerly Münchenthal), Yavoriv Region, L'viv, Ukraine from its present derelict condition to its glory days of 1849. This project, one of three separate but connected endeavours in the Village of Muzhylovychi, is still active and under full consideration, but due to the large cost involved for now it is on hold.

However, since that 2003 initial correspondence we have not been idle regarding the other two projects – the German Catholic cemetery and a museum for the German Catholic colonies. Time and resources have been expended to achieve meaningful results on both and this letter is to advise you of the progress made to date on the cemetery and to solicit support from you to carry on this work.

Briefly, Brian Lenius (Canada) and Ed Rozyłowicz (USA) have forged ahead with the cemetery project and personally funded the clearing of the cemetery grounds. As it stood in early 2004, the cemetery was completely overgrown with trees, shrubs, saplings of all types and sizes, and thick vegetation of grass and weeds. This growth did not allow for any meaningful exploration. Few tombstones were visible and the overall atmosphere of the hallowed grounds was viewed as a “jungle”. Quite frankly, “the holy resting place” of our family members was humiliating.

Brian and Ed contributed enough funds to contract with the Village of Muzhylovychi to undertake the first phase clean up including the removal of all undergrowth and cutting down the majority of the trees. This work was started in June of 2004 and completed by August. Ed travelled to Muzhylovychi in July of 2004 to inspect the work in progress and to deliver payment for this cleanup. Brian travelled to Muzhylovychi in October of 2004 to further corroborate the clean up and to plan the next phase. At that time, arrangements were made with the local Muzhylovychi School to undertake periodic seasonal cleanups to control any new growth. Some images of the cemetery are shown in the gallery page attached.

During Brian's last visit to Muzhylovychi, it was determined that the time had come to create a memorial to the German Colonists buried in the cemetery and that this planned memorial monument would be made locally and erected in the cemetery proper. Initial concepts, sketches and cost estimates were compiled and the idea took off. Upon Brian's return home, the ***Münchenthal German Catholic Cemetery Memorial Project*** was formally adopted, an RFP (Request For Pricing) was developed, and communiqués with our representative in L'viv commenced to locate qualified artists and sculptors to translate our vision into reality. The successful undertaking and completion of this memorial hinges principally on meeting the financial budget that has been adopted.

We have received financial donations from a number of other individuals in Canada and Germany who are keenly interested in this project. Currently we have on hand approximately \$1,500 USD cash in donations. It is calculated that the overall costs to complete this memorial, from creation to erection, will be in the vicinity of \$5,000. Brian and Ed are committed to further donate financially to this memorial project

and are actively seeking other donors who share this vision of a lasting memorial to our ancestors, the German Colonists of Münchenthal. This is your chance to be a part of re-establishing the holy cemetery as a memorial to your parents, grandparents, or others who lived and died there.

We have taken the liberty of attaching the RFP (Request for Price) that will be used by our L'viv representative to identify and work with local artisans and sculptors to achieve our goal. We will expend maximum effort to undertake this memorial creation before the start of summer 2005 and have it completed within a few months. If all goes according to plan, the final installation may occur in the autumn of 2005 with a formal dedication of this memorial to take place in 2006. The re-dedication and holy service will be conducted by the priests of the village of Muzhylovychi and will be attended by residents of the village and hopefully a large number of the German colonist descendants who might take the opportunity to visit the village of their ancestors and partake in the ceremony.

We hope that you will take the opportunity to review the attached RFP and to note the many aspects to this effort. The memorial will not be a simple "headstone" but an elegant and prominent four-meter high handcrafted stone memorial monument that will do justice to the words "In Memory". The design is based on a composite of elements observed on typical headstones found in our German Catholic cemeteries in Münchenthal and surrounding colonies. Please note the initial sketches and try to visualize how the final memorial will look in place. From selecting and procuring the appropriate base stone, to the many intricate details sculpted and the final means of transporting and erecting the monolith, this memorial will be a fitting testimonial to our many German Colonists ancestors. We have in our possession the names and dates of virtually all colonists who may be buried in this cemetery from 1787 to 1882 and many from after that date as well. The main text message of the memorial will be engraved in the three languages most appropriate to Muzhylovychi – English, German and Ukrainian. It is anticipated that a place to recognize all donors and contributors will be located somewhere on the memorial, or at least nearby as well as on an Internet website that is being planned.

The complexity of this cemetery project is such that we are realistic in our expectations and ability to fund it to a successful completion. However, we are committed to seeing this project proceed. We hope to expand this appeal to include colleagues in Germany, Austria, Canada, and the USA. Therefore, this initial appeal is being made to a select group of individuals, such as yourself, to consider supporting this project in a financial way. No contribution may be too small. We hope to tug at your heart so that you may envision honouring your ancestors through this memorial. Imagine your parents and grandparents and how good they would feel about you remembering their parents and grandparents. We urge you to make copies of this package for your relatives – parents, siblings, cousins and others – to spread the word and make our ancestors proud of our remembrance of them.

Sincerely yours,

Brian J. Lenius
Manitoba, Canada
brian@lenius.ca

Dr. Edward Rozyłowicz
New Mexico, USA
erozyłowicz@msn.com

Enc.

Münchenthal German Catholic Cemetery Memorial Project



Uncovered - "Jost" Headstone



Uncovered - "Schönhofen" Plaque



Uncovered - "Jestadt" Headstone



Pre-2004 condition



Summer 2004 - cleanup in progress



Autumn 2004 - cleanup completed