

Dolores and I, in appreciation for the hospitality afforded by the Boyko's, decided to treat all to a "Night at the Opera" (right). Of course the production presented during our stay was not in fact a true opera but a "folk festival", featuring dance and song ensembles from Poland and Ukraine.



Tickets were moderately priced, less than \$10 US each, so we procured six tickets a few days beforehand. We entered the Opera, found our seats and waited for the curtain to rise. The galleries were full as the audience was primed for an enjoyable evening, which started promptly at 5PM. The first ensemble to perform was the group from Poland (left – top). For 60 minutes this troupe of performers put on lively dances and spirited folk melodies. Most of the music was unfamiliar to me as they were from various regions of Poland. The dances, on the other hand, were the familiar mazurkas, waltzes and mountain dances. The costumes were bright and seemed authentic. All seemed to appreciate the performance before it was over and the intermission put a temporary halt to the festivities.



During this break we all took the opportunity to walk the cavernous interior of the Opera and admire its splendor. The galleries upstairs were emblazoned in gold leaf and masterful sconces and wall relieves. The "room of mirrors" was unique. After the compulsory photo opportunities (below) we returned to our seats and watched as the second half – the Ukrainian segment – started. The audience came alive and boisterous (loud) --- for it was their national heritage and culture on display. For the next 75 minutes this eclectic troupe of performers put on a show that can best be described as "magical".



Vividly colored costumes (left-bottom) in all shades of red, green, blue and white. The dances were spirited and extremely physical. The songs, although in Ukrainian, had a sort of melodic tempo that was toe tapping good. Twice, a Ukrainian comic came on who presented a set of skits that had the audience rolling in their seats but a total mystery to us foreigners. Still, this segment had the flavor of an accurate portrayal of Ukrainian folk art. By 7:30PM the festival was over and the audience out of breath, as we exited into the still bright evening and started our short walk to the restaurant. The evening meal would also be our treat. We enjoyed the solitude of a private dining room as this group of four sat down to reminisce about the events of the past few days and the raucous performance we have witnessed. Red wine and beer was ordered as we contemplated the entrees. I forgot what most of our guests ate that evening but I know I had the usual pierogis as a side dish. The evening progressed well; everyone was sated and the conversations cheerful. By 10PM the evening was essentially over, as we waited for a taxi to take us back to the apartment. Culture in Lviv is not that hard to find or that expensive to enjoy.

Monday morning and we have an 11 AM appointment at the Restoration Institute with the Director. With nothing to do beforehand, we wander about the apartment and finally have our breakfast. By 10:30 we leave and arrive at the Walled City gate near the Archives. Presently the Director emerges from his offices and advises us that he has a last-minute appointment and will return by noon. We wander aimlessly until the appointed hour, return to the Institute and are ushered into the Director's office. The Director is still not back but the Chief Engineer brings us up to date on the progress on the drawings. He also shows us a fragment of a floor tile that was found at the church site that would allow us to faithfully replicate the floor if the project proceeded.

The Director arrives and the meeting starts with him advising us of the cost of doing the cemetery restoration. The \$\$ number is humbling (high) but we reserve our opinion until later. For the next 30 minutes we discuss in further detail what needs to be done on the architectural plans and the timing before it is finally finished and submitted to us. Listening to all of this I get the nagging feeling that the dates given are extremely optimistic as I am learning just what "Ukrainian timing" means. Still, all seemed pleased by the conclusions and we must end the meeting for the Director has another appointment. Short meeting (right), little additional information revealed and we are ushered out. The conclusion one draws in attempting to deal with any Ukrainian individual or organization is that things move at a snail's pace ... if they move at all. Do not expect snap decisions or firm schedules. If New Mexico has "manania" ... Ukraine has "we'll see".



It was our plan to return to Muzylovice to meet with the new Village mayor and the Head of the Collective Farms. A decision has to be made on transfer of the actual church property to another organization that will manage the restored church ... if the projects goes ahead and materializes. In two cars we head out for Muzylovice to attend a scheduled (?) 3PM meeting. Slavko, Dolores and I go off in one car as we have a minor detour on the way. Last year (2001) I purchased an oil painting from Slavko that depicted a rural church setting, not far from Muzylovice. I wished to see, in person, that church so that I could appreciate it's setting. We drive out of



Lviv and approach a little hamlet called near Novojavoriv'ska, a few kilometers from Muzylovice. Pulling off the main road we bounce along a dirt road until we clear a rise and there, on the horizon, is the church in my painting (right). Slavko did a good job in depicting this pastoral scene for it was nearly identical in person to that on canvas. After lingering ever so briefly we left for the main road and eventually turned onto another backcountry road that led to Muzylovice. We stopped for a while, waiting for the other car. Eventually we all managed to arrive at the village and head for Teodosey's house. By now it was 4PM and, although the table was set with the usual assortment of food and drink (left), the two village officials have not arrived. It was a normal working day and we presumed they were busy with their other duties. As news of our arrival filtered through the village, the officials, plus a well-known town drunk, arrived at the house and greeted us warmly (except the drunk, who was pestering everyone). We all made our way into the house, settled into the



kitchen around the table and commenced with the compulsory greetings with toasts. But before the first shot glass could be raised the manner of business on hand had to be completed.

This Lviv (portion) trip, for me, was a combination family research and resolving business matters regarding the church restoration. Through Olesya's interpretation, we told the officials what was needed, drafted a document for them to write in Ukrainian and concluded the business portion of the meeting. Still, I was open-minded regarding this project. The social part of this get-together started immediately afterward that consisted of a resounding toast by everyone. Even Dolores got into the spirit of things by hoisting a shot of vodka (before switching to home made wine).

For the next hour we ate and drank and talked and laughed. Business matters were put aside and were replaced by friendly banter. By 6PM the officials left to draft an official letter to us regarding the matter discussed beforehand. The rest of us continued our "partying" until someone suggested that we walk the village. We left the house and into the streets and started our walk up the hill. Along the way a variety of townsfolk joined us out of curiosity. By 8PM the officials returned (right), handed over a two-page agreement regarding the issue discussed and left soon afterward. Our entire group wandered about the village until dark before Slavko and Olesya politely requested that we leave, as Olesya is uncomfortable driving at night. The drive back to Lviv was quiet and pensive. I kept thinking about the project and what to do next.

Tuesday morning arrived and we had BIG THINGS to do today. First Slavko would drive me back to Zymna Voda so that I could see the school; then we would re-visit Gorodok followed by a brief stop at Stodulki (Ebenau) and then we would "head for the border" and on to Przemysl. By 9:30AM we reached a compromise on where to meet in Gorodok as Slavko, Dolores and I left for Zymna Voda. We arrived at a pre-arranged point, met Yuriy and headed for the school. When we arrived at the school, Yuriy advised us that we would meet with the Director (principal) of the school and then conduct a walking tour of the facilities. As we entered the school we were greeted by a facility that was in need of some sprucing up. Although it was clean and orderly, its age was showing.

We were ushered into an office and Volodymyr Kos (the Director) greeted us. With a short introduction and a gracious welcome Mr. Kos explained the history of the school, its programs and its variety of problems. The school physically was only 15 years old but, because of a lack of funds, its upkeep has been neglected. Books are hopelessly out of date and its many programs suffer from lack of funding. If things are needed, typically the parent or a teacher purchases it because there are no available school funds. To demonstrate this situation better, we leave the office for a walk-about.

First stop an English class. In the Ukraine students learn the English language starting with the second grade; it is compulsory. The first class we enter, the entire student class rises and greets the visitor with a "Good morning, Mr. Kos". This is, we are told, a requirement and shows respect for all elders and visitors. They are told who we are and why we were, there followed by the teacher explaining the rudiments of her teaching style. We examine the material used, ask a few questions and prepare to leave. The student body rises and in unison says "Good bye, Mr. Kos". This happens in every class we enter, no exception. I'm beginning to like this show of courtesy.



The next class we visit is a computer lab (right). All students rise and greet us. We wander this lab paying particular attention to the number of students per computer. We are told that the school has a student population of 1,100 ... but only seven (7) computers. In this class there are three (3) students per computer with some students working without access to one. No money is the answer as we asked why so few computers. The lab has Internet access but it works infrequently. We enter the faculty lounge and meet the 18 or so teachers preparing their lessons or just relaxing between classes. All seemed genuinely pleased by our presence and were curious of why we were there. We take a number of group photos to send to them upon our return. We move on to other classes ... a music class where students are learning to sing and a physics class where rudimentary principles

of physics are taught. The physics lab is well stocked with basic teaching aids but all of the equipment appears aged but in working order. We move on to the gymnasium, the physical education kind. Woefully lacking in equipment it is obvious. No nets and no balls; the bleachers are old and the windows are cracked. We are told that unless a student or a parent purchases nets or balls, no games are possible during physical education classes. The small assembly hall needs a coat of paint and more folding chairs.



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