



The Ukrainian Regional Specialized and Restoration Institute ("UKRZAKHIDPROEKTRESTAVRATASJA" for short) (left) ... is one Institute that was on our "hit list" to visit. Without going into great detail (but you may call and ask us for more), we are certain that the Lautsch side, our maternal grandfather, had his roots in one of the German Catholic Colonies of Galicia ... the Muenchental or Muzylovce area. Only 30 kilometers West of Lviv and just up the road from Grodek, the Village of Muzylovce contains one of the few remaining Roman Catholic churches in the region. Sadly, this church was abandoned long ago, used as a warehouse during the Soviet era and suffered extensive fire damage decades ago. It sits atop a knoll in the near-center of the village ... forgotten and derelict. But, this structure is still a beautiful and commanding edifice and it is hoped to rebuild or attempt to restore this structure to its past glory ... to be used as a museum, history center, and/or a research center, concentrating on German Catholic Colonies in Galicia. As a member of this restoration team (actually there are only two members - Brian Lenius is the first), we are expending our energies and personal financial resources to try to determine the means and the costs involved to undertake and complete this restoration project. We are here to meet with Dr. Ivan Mohytych, the National Architect of Ukraine, to discuss this project and to measure the Institute's interest in developing a comprehensive restoration plan (for a fee, of course). Dr. Mohytych greeted us warmly and we proceeded to get down to business. Based on Olesya's prior preliminary work, we exchanged our views on this project and touched upon a few key elements that needed clarification, such as foundation, walls and roof.

Discussion culminated with Dr. Mohytych giving us an outline for the cost and time it would take for the Institute to complete such a restoration plan – drawings, bill of materials, structural details, etc. The cost of this "documentation" was modest by US standards but it still represented heavy dollars for just two participants who have a keen desire to see this restoration take shape. If it weren't for a direct link between Muzylovce and grandfather Lautsch, perhaps we would not be sitting there. But, starting the project from the heart – we must rely on our wallets to see it through. Fund raising will be a tough task – but anything worth doing is worth doing well. We thank Dr. Mohytych, exchange deadlines by which things must happen, and depart. It was a good, sincere and fruitful meeting. Step #1 is completed!



At noon we return to the archives ... our books are there. Olesya dismissed herself and will return by 4PM. The task is before us ... we are on a search and discovery mission. Ten books and two men – the job is started. Having all the relevant family surnames in our mind ... Lautsch, Jansohn, Kammer, Lembert, DeBald ... we open the first books with breathless anticipation. The feeling is euphoric ... touching books over 150 years old (left). The book covers are faded, worn and show their ages. The inside pages are mostly brown; some pages stiff to the touch while others are brittle, needing care in turning. The writings are clear and most of the penmanship is wondrous. Viewing microfilm of such a page cannot compare to touching the original ... it is almost a religious experience. For the first few pages we cannot ignore the feeling of excitement ... but it soon fades as we locate one surname, then another, then yet more. To see the first Lautsch name jump off the page was beyond words. We read and re-read every entry. We mark every occurrence with a page marker and proceed. With one other reader in the same room we had to contain the "ahs" and "ohs" and our level of excitement. One book,

then two, then four books were scanned ... many entries, many instances that need recording. We stop our search, retrieve our digital camera and record each entry ... one shot, then another, then a detailed shot of each and every record. Who knows when we will return ... many images of every record, and hope that the camera CD will not fail us. This process is repeated throughout the afternoon ... no time to stop. No time for "the bushes" or a drink of water. Ten books with many more to scan.

By 4PM we are mentally and physically drained. Eight books completed, two still to be opened and many more potentially in que. Has to wait until tomorrow ... the archive closes soon and we must catch our breath. Olesya arrives and we are saved. Returning to the light of day we are celebrating an event that a year ago would have been an improbable dream. Satisfied with the progress over such a short time, we decide to walk the City Center. Lviv at the end of a business day is frenetic ... people rushing in all directions. Street vendors doing brisk business selling flowers and the many small shops lining the broad avenues are packed. Beggars and tziganis are ever present. We detour past the construction zones, explore a few "bibliotekas" (book shops) and head for the few open churches and cathedrals within walking distance. By 6PM, with body and mind near exhaustion, we walk another kilometer to the Post Office to mail our postcards. Locating an internet café, we send a few emails back home, then walk the narrow side streets to the main road and wait for a trolley to take us back to the apartment. A late supper, a quick bath and off to bed. It's 9PM, the dogs are barking ... but no one cares. Sleep comes easy.

Returning to the archives the next morning (right) ... was exciting as his two-man team walked the 1½ kilometers from the flat to the "walled city". Strengthened by another hearty breakfast and prospects of more success in the offing, we made our way to the second floor reading room and saw our books ... still waiting for us. Having dispatched eight books the previous day, we approached the reading room attendant, a different lady from the previous day, hoping to ask for more books. But, Olesya is not with us and neither of us speaks Ukrainian ... so, we ask in Polish, "Czy pani mowi po polsku?" Receiving an affirmative reply, we are heartened and order eight more books. Incidentally, this is something that occurs quite often here in Western Ukraine. Because of Lviv's close proximity to Poland, if you wish to get your point across, say it in Polish ... nearly always, because Ukrainian and Polish have the same linguistic foundation, you will be understood. The balance of the discussion could use hand gestures, body language or even a single word of Ukrainian. We had virtually no trouble making purchases or asking for directions because even with our limited Polish, our tonal inflection sounded Polish. People are generally accommodating and helpful ... especially the younger or professional-type. What we found often remarkable is ... that we would be standing somewhere and a person (usually a lady) would approach us and talk to us in Polish, as if we looked like Polish tourists. Is that good or bad? Anyway, we order more books and by the end of the second day have completed our task ... finding all the relevant names that have eluded us back home in Las Cruces. We took hundreds of images and recorded dozens of new bits of information ... found George Lautsch's and Margaretha Jansohn's marriage record and a host of lateral family names unique to our lineage. Villages that were previously only identifiable on a map popped off the pages for our families ... Burgthal, Kiernica, Ebenau, Brundorf, Muzylovce, Artyszchow, Weisenberg, Malkowice, and Stodulki.





Business and pleasure on Wednesday! ... Today we are planning to retrieve our ARO and drive to Muzylovice. But first, Olesya arranges for us to meet with Slavko (only name by which we knew him), the Assistant Director at the Lviv Architecture and Local Lore Museum (left), who would give us a guided tour of this complex. The museum opened in 1972 and represents a number of architectural exhibits from different parts of Western Ukraine. The museum displays dwellings dating back to 1792 and includes the Trinity Church of 1773 from Chernivchi, an example of the monumental buildings of Bukovina. We meet Slavko at 9:30AM and begin the two-hour walk of the grounds. As we do not speak Ukrainian, Slavko was quick to catch on that we spoke Polish ... which made his narrative easy for us to follow. During this

extensive, but leisurely, tour we saw all manner of 18th and 19th century huts and farmsteads, water mills, smithy's, oil-presses, and sheds, barns and building that characterize Carpathian households. On a scale similar to the Satului Museum of Bucharest, this museum showcases the architectural jewels of Ukraine in the best setting possible. Before leaving, we were offered the opportunity to view some of Slavko's work (he is a painter). As a gesture of thanks and appreciation for his time shepherding us around the museum, we purchased a small original painting (right) ... which now hangs in our Las Cruces home. For museum, see our slide show CD.



A few words about what people earn in Ukraine today! ... One of the reasons why we bought Slavko's work is because of what HE revealed during our walk. As the Assistant Director of this museum, third highest position, Slavko earns the equivalent of 165 hryvnas a month ... that roughly \$31 USD a month (\$372 USD a year). We paid Slavko \$20 USD for the painting. Imagine ... he earns \$1 USD a day. No wonder he has to travel to Warsaw twice a month to display his work and attempt to earn hard currency to live on. Olesya, on the other hand, is an English instructor at the Police Academy, teaching the police force conversational English for ease of dealing with foreign tourists. For that work, Olesya earns \$50 USD a month (\$600 USD a year). Olesya's husband Andriy is a lawyer. He stopped practicing private law (no one could afford a lawyer) and went into teaching law procedures at the University of Lviv, School of Law. Andriy is a Professor and Vice-Dean at the School, the third highest position in that Department. Andriy earns \$100 USD a month (\$1200 USD a year). This earning capacity is information that people willingly share ... not as a complaint or comparison but as a "fact of life" in the Ukraine. That is why the Ukrainian citizen is always willing to work extra to earn hard currency ... as Olesya did by being our guide, interpreter and a hostess. For her efforts we paid her \$380 USD for seven days of work, a bargain to us considering what we received in return. Just think of how this extra money impacts their lifestyle. And you thought you had it bad. The average old-time pensioner in Ukraine receives 45 hryvnas a month (\$8.50 USD). Try living on that. In August 2001, \$1USD = 5.3 hryvnas.



It's time to see Muzylovice! ... It's noon and we are anxious to drive to Muzylovice ... 30 kilometers East of Lviv. Taking the Northern high road through Ivano-Frankova (not to be confused with Ivano-Frankovsk) ... (the road through Grodek is impassable) ... we traverse the countryside encountering the same level of poverty and dilapidation as seen coming into Lviv. Ivano-Frankova is run-down and neglected with high-rises that should be torn down ... the road unbelievably bad. A few kilometers down the road we make a left turn into the Javorin Rayon (district) and head for the villages of Prylbychi and Muzylovichi (Ukrainian spelling). The road is adequate and the foot traffic of humanity and livestock (above - left & right) requires attention to driving. Open fields on both sides of the road are tended by workers wielding scythes and rake ... corn at full height ... alfalfa drying in neat rows ... not a car in sight. Ahead we see a bus ... on our side of the road ... potholes everywhere ... we pull over ... the bus is bigger. The road gets progressively worse as we pass the hamlet of Prylbychi ... soon we slow to a crawl as



the road is a washboard of holes.



Finally we arrive at Muzylovice ... time to meet the Director of Private Rental Enterprise ... a euphemism for head of the former collective farms. We ask for directions, park our ARO at the foot of a knoll, climb the rutted and muddy pathway and are greeted by a host of people milling about an old and derelict house ... the collective office. The Director is late ... a crowd gathers ... friendly banter with some old men as to our reason for being there and after 10 minutes we depart with the understanding that we will be back. We backtrack to find and tour the reason for our being there ... the "church". Climbing the rutted dirt road, we see it for the first time (left 2 - right) ... a sad and lonely red sentinel. We park ... take out the camera and start the walk-about. If Brian's pictures told the whole truth we would not have believed it ... the church is in an incredibly sad state of abandonment. Roof gone, the top portion of the walls deteriorating with every passing rain, the inside dirt floor overgrown with weeds and saplings, windows and doors long gone ... we ask, "was this a place of worship at one time?"

We walked around this edifice many times ... watching the geese and turkeys scurry away from us ... and with each circuit we saw the "church" for what it was. A solid structure, standing straight and rigid, walls plumb, many bricks missing here and there ... and in our mind's eye, restored to its former glory. Steeples replaced, roof made of tin, windows and doors enclosing an inside that is welcoming. Any disrepair or damage, neglect or vandalism could be erased quickly if only we take the initiative to save the remaining elements. Hope and inspiration was rekindled after the initial flush of disappointment. There is hope for "this lady in red".

[..... Continued in Section 7](#)