

Taking our leave of the "church" we head back to the collective office ... the Director is still not back. We survey the surrounding area and note the large and abandoned "collective buildings" in back of us. Unused ... a monument to a failed State policy. In the distance we see the "church" ... it sits high and majestic at the edge of an open field (right). How better it would look with a steeple pointing to the sky ... its walls plastered in white shimmering in the late afternoon sun. Can wishing make it happen?



Frustrated and impatient we leave the collective office and drive to see an old friend of Brian's ... Teodosiy Demus. A respected member of the community, Teodosiy (left) is motivated to see this restoration started as it would be a shot-in-the-arm for the village ... economically and spiritually. Teodosiy welcomed us to his house and no sooner did our discussion start, in walked in Petro Kmit, the Collective Director. He found us by seeing our ARO parked in the street (the only car in the village). Understanding our reason for us being there, he rushed out and came back 10 minutes later with Ivan Mykhajlovich, the Village Chief. Now we had a quorum of the key players ... men who could decide the direction of this restoration ... from the village's point of view. Over the next 30 minutes we had a frank and direct discussion on what the village is willing to do to push this project forward. Questions such as ... "who owns the property" ... "is the village willing to turn the property over to a museum" ... "labor and material availability" ... "cost management" ... among others. Sensing that they must act ... both men agreed to hold a village meeting and allow all to understand this project's immense importance ... and to let us know in writing their decision by months end, before we could

move forward with the "documentation". We like fast and productive meetings ... this one was to the point and resulted in action. This was cause for celebration and the mandatory wine, vodka (which we brought as a gift), cold cuts, bread and fried eggs was placed before us and the toasting began. We could not leave until all were satiated and the spirit of cooperation was confirmed. This driver politely begged off but nonetheless consumed his share of the edibles. Ukrainian hospitality ... personal and intimate in the country. Soon after, we left for Lviv.

Has this been a successful week or not? ... Yes it has ... thanks to good preparation, Olesya's legwork and our desire to achieve results by hard work and tenacity. Although a few things were still unresolved ... Olesya would follow up on them after we leave ... we felt the time and expense was worth it. We achieved results in our genealogical research ... we visited the places most important to our family ... we touched base with the people that would directly impact the restoration project ... and we started to assimilate some of the Ukrainian culture. What was left was to top of this trip by taking the time to tour this city ... to see the best of the culture and history of this most ancient and most beautiful of cities - Lviv.



Thursday was our last day in Ukraine. We elected to leave one day early as we accomplished all we set out to achieve. With a spring in our step and a full-day agenda, we set out after another hearty breakfast (of potato pancakes with real sour cream). Andriy drove us to the base of the highest hill (at 413 meters) in Lviv ... we walked up the "Visokyi Zamok" (High Castle). Although the early morning mist and haze obscured the city panorama, the views were incredible. Laid out to the horizon and to the distant hills, we gazed upon the carpet of old Gothic Lviv, with its church steeples, green copper domes and red tiled roofs. The city was beginning to stir to life but the distant din was barely heard. The remnants of the high castle (destroyed in 1704, only a section of the castle wall remains) caused us to reflect on that city of old with its defenses and parapets. After drinking in the majesty we walked down to the city proper ... through the "High Castle Park", past the "Old Lion" (1591) (left) and the TV tower and broadcasting center. We strolled through the "old Rynok" park, King's Church (right), the oldest church in the city and to the "Old Lviv" section. Words cannot adequately describe the sights and



sounds as we strolled down the cobble-stoned streets, peeked into many churches, studied the wall frescoes, analyzed the numerous architectural details of old houses and zigzagged our way past beggars and street vendors.



We made our way to the Latin Cathedral and Boims Chapel ... two jewels that should not be missed. It should be noted that we attended and marveled at so many churches that we are certain that we have earned our way to heaven. City Hall and "Rynok Square" we circled to drink in the architecture of homes that dated back centuries. Some were clean and princely but most were dark and gloomy, needing some steam cleaning or sand blasting. All unique ... we entered house #6* (for a fee, of course), Korniyak's Palace, its "Italian Courtyard" an open arcade resembling a Renaissance courtyard of Florence. It was nearly noon by now ... a stop at an outdoor café for coffee and ice cream ... ignoring the ever-present tziganis that swarmed like flies ... we planned our next route. Detouring off the main



avenue, we chanced upon an open market ... a dizzying array of arts and crafts, painting, ceramics and all manners of wood products ... from bowls to carvings, nested dolls to baskets. We mill around, mesmerized by the bright colors and inviting waves of the vendors. We stop by a booth ... inspect and finally purchase two sets of wooden nested carvings (eggs and dolls) ... total cost \$20 USD. Appreciating our business, the vendor offers us a free gift, a tiny wooden basket with tiny wooden mushrooms. We move on ... over there is the George Hotel and the Grand Hotel, expensive and catering to Westerners. At the end of Svobody Avenue is the Opera House (below - top), grand and

imposing. At the beginning of the boulevard sits the stone fountain of the Virgin, the city patroness (1904) and then another monument respected by Lviv citizens ... the monument to Taras Shevchenko (an artist) and a 12-meter high symbolic stele (previous page - right). While in the area we pop into the Museum of Ethnography and Crafts and are given a preview of the new displays. Time flies fast ... we move on to meet Andriy at the University of Lviv.



The University (left) building sits in the heart of the City ... its façade of gleaming sandstone ... ornate when facing the main street, dark on its backside. We enter through a side door ... past security ... up a few flights of rickety stairs and are ushered into the office of the Vice-Dean – Andriy. Modern and orderly, the office speaks highly to the stature of this man. Hot and sticky with no air conditioning we exchange pleasantries and are given a few tokens from Andriy, representative of the School of Law. He walks us over to the next-door office ... the Dean's ... it is plush, elegant and air-conditioned. Position does have its privileges. Staying with our plan, we exit the building, retrieve Andriy's car parked in front (on the sidewalk, of course) and depart for St. Mary of Magdalene Church (left - middle), a few blocks away. The church is no longer a church ... it has been converted to a concert hall, but its edifice and towering steeple still majestic on a little rise above the street. How sad ... this is the church where our mother and our aunts were baptized ... where our Lautsch grandparents worshipped at the turn of the 20th century. We walk the grounds taking photos ... the doors are dosed and locked, we cannot see the



inside, which is best perhaps. We could not imagine the altar being replaced by a stage. Next we are driven to the pearl of old Lviv architecture – the Greek Catholic St. George Cathedral. Through the gate decorated with allegorical figures we walk to a large yard. To our left we can see the main façade of the cathedral with a huge portal ... to the right stands the palace of metropolitans (left – bottom), built in the Rococo style with elements of classicism. Pope John Paul II stayed here during his 2001 State visit.

Weary and exhausted we closed the day by taking the Boyko's to dinner. Our first choice was packed with diners so we found an out-of-the-way local neighborhood restaurant ... devoid of other diners. Table cloth, clean glasses and the plate settings were inviting. A fivecourse meal was ordered that started with a local beer and mineral water, a fish appetizer plate, followed by soup, sliced vegetable salad, an entrée of sautéed wild mushrooms, plate of pierogis and ending with "meat". Cost with tip – 200 hryvnas (\$45 USD for four). While Andriy left for home to check on the kids, the three of us walked again to the Post Office to mail postcards. Somewhere along the way we stopped and purchased some cultural Ukrainian CDs. How we got home we do not recall ... perhaps we walked, perhaps a micro-bus. The excitement of the day clouded our recall. It was a good day ... in old Lviv. You must see the slide show CD!



Leaving is such sweet sorrow! ... The night before our departure, the four adults sat in the tiny kitchen and reflected upon this new friendship. Talk of politics, economics, religion and cultural differences permeated the late hours. The Boykos presented Laurentiu with a bottle of vodka that was made "especially for lovers" ... in light of his bachelorhood. To this old timer they presented two bottles of vodka ... one with "gold flakes" and one labeled "Hetman" ... because we were "the head man" on this trip. Sleep embraced us we prepared for an early departure. By 6AM we were up ... a light breakfast eaten ... our ARO retrieved (ransom of \$20 USD) and packed ... Lviv growing smaller in our rear-view mirror as we headed East. It was a Friday but the roads were empty ... of course, it's Ukrainian Independence Day. Driving carefully through the morning mist, pass horse-drawn carts and police units on the lookout for "easy money" we find the road to Chernivchi and head South. Gas is low so we stop at a few stations for a fill-up ... all are closed. Don't worry ... be happy is the chorus from the navigator. As the morning mist burns off we eventually find a station in Rohatyn. Comforted that we can reach the border by noon we race on (at 90kph) to "freedom" and Romania. Skirting Ivano-Frankovisk we get lost

and wind up 20 kilometers off the track ... touring the real backcountry of Ukraine. Dirt roads and dead-ends force us to backtrack to IF and find the right road. Because of Independence Day, every little hamlet has their own way of celebrating, which necessitated closing the main road through town for their parades. Forget noon ... if we can manage it perhaps 2PM, if we do not get lost – which happened in Kolomyja and especially in Chernivchi. Remember that Ukraine does not believe in road signs or giving directions. Eventually, by 1:30PM we reach the border and cross our fingers. With few cars and a fair number of tourist buses in que, the wait, for both control points, ate up over 3 hours ... 3 ungodly hours of waiting with no obvious reason as to why. To Laurentiu's credit, with his limited grasp of Ukrainian, he was able to get the paperwork approved and, after forking over 75 hryvnas (\$15 USD) for "ecological purposes" (?), after 2 hours, we passed the Ukrainian side to the Romanian side ... where we waited another hour. No one seemed in any hurry but it did appear that the Romanian authorities were "getting even" with Ukrainian nationals crossing over, for their delay tactics, by singling out Ukrainian for a full search-and-destroy. No one was upset (except the Ukrainians) and after having our passports stamped we "peeled rubber" into freedom and our next port of call.



Being Friday and having time to reach Bucharest by Sunday evening, Laurentiu arranged to have us tour the Northern Bukovina area and visit a number of the most wondrous of Romanian Orthodox monasteries. First stop, being late Friday afternoon, was the Monastery at Putna. South of Siret, the border point, we turned right onto local roads leading into the Carpathian Mountains and headed towards Radauti, which for some strange reason appeared once in the Rozyłowicz lineage. With a light rain starting to fall we navigated our way over 40 kilometers to the tiny village of Putna. Nestled in a cleft in the valley, between two green and forested hills and along the Putna River, this hamlet was deliciously clean and tidy ... except for the horse poop on the roadway. Weaving and darting to avoid the horse cart traffic, we manage to reach the end of the village and enter the Monastery grounds. The rain has picked up and jackets were needed. We walk the short distance to the massive entrance, Putna is a fortress-monastery (left), we pay our fees (\$1 USD + \$1 USD for camera) and start our tour. As with all churches of this time



period (1466) the projects of the churches is triforium (previous page - right) and build in the style of an open veranda. The polygon shaped apses are adorned with long ornamental architectonic designs. The many exterior frescoes are wondrous and mesmerizing ... to survive all of the centuries exposed to the elements. The grounds are immaculate and peace and serenity is the rule. The interior is dimly lit, as there are virtually no windows to the outside. The various enclaves contain historic elements such as the tomb of Stephan the Great. History cannot be learned in one hour ... we purchase booklets on Putna to absorb the details later. The senses are overwhelmed as we take photo after photo trying to capture the essence of this religious experience. Our slide show CD does justice to this place. The rain picks up and after one hour we depart as its also getting towards 7PM. Returning to the village of Putna we spy a tourist hotel and agree to spend the night there. Clean ... a nice room with fresh sheets and blankets, we pay \$15 USD for two which includes an ample supper with wine and a hearty breakfast ... but no hot water. Our alarm clock is not barking dogs but the characteristic sound of horse hooves on pavement.



By 8AM we are sated, packed and finished checking out the ARO. Our itinerary for the day is to visit four more monasteries ... all within kilometers of each other before departing for Tarnaveni in the County of Mures. In the order visited, we see Sucevita, Moldovita, Humor and the best of the best, Voronet. Suffice to say all of the monasteries began to look similar with nearly identical triforium floor plan and an open veranda style. The notable differences were that some were built in a fortress style and others were open, part of a village. Each had its particular flavor and motif ... Humor was particularly interesting because of its high defensive tower (left) ... Voronet (right) because of its frescoes. Unless one reviews the photographic images of each they seem to blend-in as one. Each monastery was well attended by visitors with fees ranging in the same \$1 USD range. Vendors hawking their goods were everywhere and we did pick up a couple of locally made table-runners and blouses as gifts. By 1PM our senses were overloaded and we departed for points South and our next stop - Tarnaveni to visit the Morar family.



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