

Bridges

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LITHUANIAN - AMERICAN
NEWSLETTER

THE YEAR OF ST. CASIMIR, 1484-1984

Vol. 8, No. 1, January, 1984

THE ART OF GETTING ALONG

WE FEAST TOGETHER

WE SHRINK TOGETHER



Intriguing and pert Ann Jillian (Jūratė Naušėdaitė), star of the new TV sitcom, *Jennifer Slept Here*, jokes with her husband, Andy Murcia.

"Hollywood," says Ann Jillian, "is notorious for wreaking havoc with marriages." She and Andy Murcia have been married for seven years. Last summer they had a marital crisis; Ann smiles, "We licked the problem with common sense."

Ann and Andy come from very different backgrounds and they have been dubbed by gossip mongers as an "unlikely" Hollywood couple. At the time they met and fell in love, he was a Chicago vice-squad policeman and she was a showgirl. Her film career had begun at age ten in Disney's *Babes in Toyland*. When they married, they faced the serious problem of how to handle two potentially conflicting careers. Responding with common sense, Andy decided to resign from his job and he became Ann's full-time manager.

Success followed success. Love between two people confronted by fame which involves innumerable people can be disastrous to a relationship. "We licked that one," chuckles Ann. "People thought that in Hollywood I would soon be looking at other men. And there were beautiful women looking hungrily at Andy. I realized that to make our marriage work, we had to keep our relationship honest and open, especially in the anything-goes world of Hollywood. Andy and I trust each other completely."

They have never kept a leash on one another. "When we're at a party and women flirt with my husband, I get a thrill because I know that, when it's over, it will be me that Andy takes home."

"We talk openly about all the beautiful people here. He'll point out a handsome young man to me; and, if I see an especially gorgeous girl, I'll say, 'My gosh, what a great package!'"

Last summer's marital crisis developed when Ann was heading fast for stardom. It was then that Andy decided it was time to resign as her manager and hand over the controls of her career to professionals. "It was so courageous of Andy. Most men would have tried to maintain their positions."

Andy has become a household manager and a gourmet cook. Now he and Ann have another problem: losing weight. She quips, "We don't booze it up, but we sure love to eat." She has gone on a crash diet to lose the 22 pounds she put on for her TV role as Mae West. "When I was finished with Mae West, Andy and I were like the Pillsbury Doughboys of Hollywood. We knew it was time to diet when we looked at each other and giggled."

Today, Ann jokes that she and Andy "feast together and shrink together."



GLOBALLY YOURS

"SACRED" BORDERS

After the shooting down of the South Korean civilian plane, Andropov's spokesman Zamyatin reminded the world that the "many millions" who died to uphold "Soviet borders" in World War II make the Soviet "national" borders "sacred." Swedish Ambassador to London observed with irony: "The Soviets claim the right to violate Swedish territorial waters, but they say if anyone violates their own sacred airspace, he must take the consequences."

Moscow's rhapsodies about its borders also sound grim to Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Hungarians, Romanians, and other East-Central Europeans whose borders the Kremlin "adjusted" after Soviet armies enclosed them in the Soviet domain. And there are the people of occupied Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. And, more recently, the people of Afghanistan.

The Soviet policies of genocide and russification have surpassed those of the tsarist empire which annexed the Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, and expanded into Asia, partly at China's expense.

Soviet leaders regard themselves as carriers of "salvation" and of a new, perfect and "scientific" order to a corrupt world. While the Soviet Union officially participates in the activities of the international community, as a state among states, the Soviet Communist Party media and textbooks assert that the "capitalist" borders are "corrupt" and "reactionary" entities that will have to be transformed in the image of Muscovite "perfection".

This is not merely the "Brezhnev Doctrine" that "accords" the Kremlin the right to send its armies across the borders of the East-Central European states; it is the Marxist-Leninist right and duty of the Soviet regime, as the embodiment of the "historical process" to change the political, social, economic and cultural systems — as well as the borders! — of Germany and France, of Nicaragua and of the United States.

Elta

ST. CASIMIR THE VATICAN ARCHIVES

Rev. Vytautas Pikturna

Our commemoration of the 500th anniversary of St. Casimir's death, gives us the opportunity to get to know him better — his life and, after his death, the road his influence and fame traveled through Lithuania, Europe and the Americas.

In the Vatican archives, an ancient document was discovered written in Latin, and dated February 18, 1516. In it, the Franciscans in Vilnius appeal to Pope Leo X to grant sainthood to Casimir. The document is of interest not only to scholars of theology but it is also meaningful to Lithuania's history and nationalism.

"We find it necessary to inform your holiness", the document states, "that the Principality of Lithuania is surrounded by unbelievers such as the Tartars, Skites and the harder-than-rock Moscovites. In fact we are not only surrounded by them, but our country is infiltrated with them."

"But the most merciful God whose kindness is immeasurable wishes the inhabitants of the Principality of Lithuania to preserve their faith. For those recently converted hearts, He wants to rekindle greater devotion and to love God's laws and observe them most diligently. And for the achievement of these goals He has chosen Prince Casimir, the second son of the late King of Poland.

"The Almighty granted Casimir the virtues of fear of the Lord, knowledge, justice, steadfastness and a spirit of love to fulfill his desires, and finally called him to Himself. Casimir's grave became a most honored place where a variety of miracles have occurred.

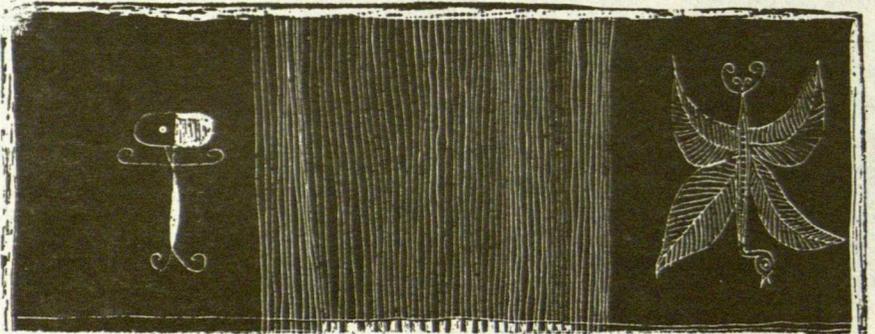
"Our holy faith obliges us to inform Your Holiness of these facts. May your Holiness listen to the pleas of a nation of faithful and for the greater glory of God start the process of beatification of this noble youth — Casimir.

"If Your Holiness deigns to grant this wish, an even greater rekindling for the holy faith will take place in our nation".

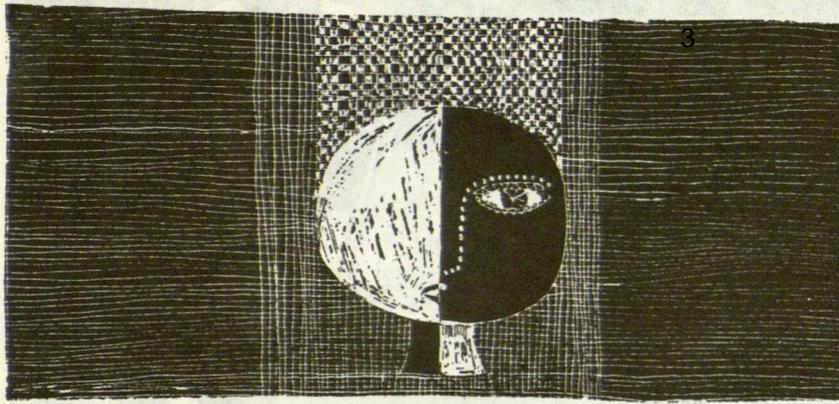
The document is signed by Povilas, a vicar in the Franciscan Province of Lithuania and by a number of friars.

It is certain that this document played a significant role in achieving sainthood for Casimir. The Franciscans put much effort into the recognition of sainthood for this pure and holy youth. And once sainthood was a recognized reality, the sons of St. Francis named their province: St. Casimir's province.

Today, Lithuania once again is on the road of martyrdom with enslavement by Russia, materialism and moral decay. In the 15th century St. Casimir came to the aid of his country. He will do so again, if we fight for the faith and independence by our own efforts. He is our Star of Hope on our road towards freedom.



Man behind the Iron Curtain and the Bird of Peace



In Lithuania, man's one side sees what his other side can not say

ST. CASIMIR FOR TODAY

Daniel Yenkevich, OFM

Every jubilee celebration has its moments of great joy, and its remembrances of sadness as well.

As we approach the 500th Anniversary year of the death of St. Casimir, Lithuanians around the world are saddened by the oppressive events in Lithuania. And it is a sign of the suffering and persecution of the Church in many parts of Europe and especially in Lithuania, that the remains of St. Casimir which were preserved in the Cathedral of Vilnius during many trying times, have now, by order of the Soviet government, been moved out of the Cathedral (in 1953) to the parish church of Sts. Peter and Paul in the nearby suburb of Antakalnis, and the Cathedral has been turned into a museum and art gallery.

In this coming year, what kind of meaningful impact can the life of St. Casimir have on us who live in our contemporary world? We look around us and we find American "Christians" whose faith is gone, whose God is money and whose burning concerns are success in competition, material prosperity, control of others, and the "justice" only for the rich. This is indeed contrary to St. Casimir's way of life.

At the same time we look at the daily life in Lithuania and we find a persecuted Church where priests are prevented from carrying out their pastoral duties; we find that the necessities of life are scarce, that not only the widows, the poor and the orphans, but all people are denied social justice and the dignity to be treated as human beings. In the persecuted churches all pastoral appointments by the bishop must have government approval, no processions or church repairs without a permit, and even in death the coffin at the time of burial must be left outside the church. Torture, assassinations, and a long sentence to Siberian labor camps are not events of the past; they are all taking place right now.

Most Lithuanians are ordinary people who may behave heroically but still retain their abundant good sense and enviable humor. They desperately want encouragement and publicity in the West. Perceptive Catholics realize that their chief enemy now is not only the Russians, but the cancer within their own people. They realize some have compromised their high ideals of democracy and human dignity and may bring even more tragedy to their nation, and this too is contrary to St. Casimir's way of life.

Lithuania knows that she cannot survive without her high ideals of freedom, her love of western democracy, her insistence on social justice, and the unrestrained practice of her religion.

JANUARY DATES IN LITHUANIAN HISTORY

- 1 1396 — Grand Duke of Lithuania Švidrigaila wages war against Vytautas the Great
- 1 1714 — Birth of poet Kristijonas Donelaitis.
- 2 1599 — Žemaičiai (Samogitia) return to the Catholic faith.
- 3 1352 — The Lithuanians Assassinate the Teutonic magistra.
- 4 1794 — Lithuania is partitioned for the third time by Russia, Austria and Prussia
- 4 1795 — The Russians seize Kaunas and Vilnius.
- 5 1226 — Rimgaudas occupies the throne of the Lithuanian dukes.
- 8 1905 — The military court at Senapolis exonerates 19 Lithuanians accused of disseminating Lithuanian literature.
- 10 1897 — The Lithuanian pupils at a school in Palanga refuse to pray in the Russian language.
- 10 1923 — Lithuanians advance under the leadership of Col. Budrys and, meeting little resistance from the surprised Germans and the French garrison policing the Mandate, take over the strip of territory extending from a point near Palanga to the Nemunas River. A provisional group of some 120 delegates gather at Heydekrug and vote for union with Lithuania.
- 14 1560 — The Lithuanians regain from the Teutonic knights the Fortress at Mierekausen.
- 15 1563 — The Russians defeat the Lithuanians at Polotske.
- 16 1215 — Svobunė, Duke of Žemaičiai, accepts Christianity.
- 17 1386 — Jadvyga the Duchess of Poland becomes engaged to Lithuanian Grand Duke Jogaila
- 19 1249 — The Teutonic knights proclaim to Lithuania the 5 Precepts of the Church.
- 20 1794 — Lithuanians stage an uprising against the Russian government in Vilnius
- 21 1529 — Vilnius is devastated by fire.
- 28 1336 — The Teutonic knights burn down the fortress at Pilene.
- 30 1396 — Vytautas the Great seizes Švidrigailą and incarcerates him.



In Lithuania, champion auto racers Arvydas and Kęstutis Girdauskas inspire a special affection in their spectators. They call their car: Lietuva. That's a brave statement of their faith in the race to preserve their nation which faces the Kremlin's orders to erase national entities and "Internationalize" which means "Russify".

DO YOU BELONG To the Lithuanian - World and Lithuanian - American Communities?

One sign of the Lithuanian talent for organization is the existence of an entity called the Lithuanian World Community, Inc. (Pasaulio Lietuvių Bendruomenė, or PLB for short). This entity in effect functions as an instrument of self-government for Lithuanian communities throughout the free world. Any person of Lithuanian descent is considered to be a member of PLB; there are no additional enrollment requirements. Membership entitles one to participate as voter and/or candidate in periodically held elections whereby officers invested with certain community responsibilities are chosen. Whereas PLB exercises responsibility for the Lithuanian emigre community as a whole, its subdivisions in each of the free-world countries with non-negligible Lithuanian populations function more or less autonomously within their own narrower sphere of responsibility. Each of these subdivisions, or National Lithuanian Communities (for example, in this country, the Lithuanian-American Community of the USA, Inc.), operates along the same principles of non-restricted membership and periodic free and secret elections of responsible bodies. The largest national organizations are

in turn subdivided into regional (*apygardos*) and local (*apylinkės*) organizations, where identical principles apply.

Each of the world, national regional, and local organizations is popularly called *Bendruomenė* (meaning "Community"). The same designation applies also to the hierarchical structure as a whole. Every body elected within *Bendruomenė* at whatever level has been entrusted with responsibility in directing all phases (political, cultural, educational, religious, athletic, social, and financial) of Lithuanian community life, but only to the extent and in the manner permitted by relevant *Bendruomenė* constitutions and by-laws and checked by the consent of its constituency.

Historically, the process of organizing *Bendruomenė* began in the late 1940's and was completed a decade later. Since then, *Bendruomenė*, both in abstract principle and in concrete realization, has received widespread recognition with Lithuanian populations everywhere. Occasionally friction arises in dealings with Lithuanian organizations that are more narrowly-based or that represent a partisan or other type of special interest

within the Lithuanian diaspora. By contrast, *Bendruomenė* aims to represent the free-world Lithuanian constituency as a whole rather than any special interest within that constituency.

It might also be conceded that *Bendruomenė* has had some difficulty in involving persons of Lithuanian descent who no longer speak the Lithuanian language or who have never spoken it. One reason, especially at the world (or PLB) level, is simply this: if there is any language that is common to all persons of Lithuanian heritage, that language most likely is going to be Lithuanian, so naturally PLB communications and proceedings tend to remain in Lithuanian. However, at the national and still lower levels, this constraint, for better or worse, has tended to loosen: in Latin American countries, use of the language is dramatically receding; while in the United States the national *Bendruomenė* organization has, without compromising in principle, made a marked effort to reach out to generally non-Lithuanian-speaking third, fourth, and fifth generation Lithuanian-Americans.

Mykolas Drunga

A Genuine Soviet Woman

("WE COULD USE A LITTLE SLAVERY...")

... I thank the Party and the Soviet Government for freeing me, a simple woman, from slavery and granting me equal rights. . . . Now I have the right to work and gladly take advantage of it. . . . I'm a bricklayer. I build houses and carry bricks. . . . My lady friends don't shun physical work either. . . . They build houses, asphalt the roads, lay out sidewalks, and lug around all kinds of things. . . . And why not! My husband is an engineer with a university degree. How much, do you think, does he earn? 120 rubles on paper. After all the deductions, only crumbs are left. A small loaf of bread costs 36 kopecks, a liter of milk — 28 kopecks, an egg — 12 kopecks, a kilo (2.2 lbs) of butter—3.5 rubles. Herrings . . . and fish are a rare sight in the stores. Nobody even knows their accurate price. As for sugar, oatmeal, peas, or macaroni . . . they fetch a heavy price.

Meat? Our poets are preparing to write odes in its honor — The shelves are empty, in almost all the butcher shops.

I often think that housekeeping and taking care of the children, educating them, is also work . . . a woman's duty. But then I immediately banish from my head this thesis devised by ideologists of rotten capitalism. These activities are not considered work by the Party and Soviet government. . . . They consider it the Soviet women's leisure time. If a woman does laundry, cooks for her family, takes care of children, sews, knits, mends, she does not create material goods for the state. Sweat and exhaustion in the collective garden on Satur-

days and Sundays? That is her rest. . . .

I sometimes think that we liberated women in the free Soviet land, could use at least a little slavery: we would not have to work that hard. . . . But I chase away these anti-Soviet thoughts. Otherwise I might speak out in a dream; some outsider might hear it and think that I'm trying to destroy the Soviet system. That may put me immediately into a psychiatric hospital or a concentration camp. I'm not afraid for myself, but for my children. All the avenues would be barred for them: they would be entered into the lists of anti-Soviet individuals. . . .

Physical work, the Soviet woman's leisure, and, pardon me, the days of rest, have exhausted me so thoroughly that I decided to get a medical check-up. I didn't go to the polyclinic. They are always crowded. One may have to wait the whole day and still not get to see the doctor. And even if you finally do get to see him, it doesn't do you much good. He'll give you a prescription for some pills, which are anyway unavailable in our drugstores. And as for the special clinics, special drugstores, special prescriptions and special services, only the Soviet master class is entitled to them. . . .

. . . I decided instead to see a good specialist at his home. I took 50 rubles I had saved and went to look for him. . . . A chubby man opened the door. I told him what I wanted, but he said that the doctor lived on the third floor. He was a veterinarian, he said. "That's even

better," I mumbled. "I want to find out at last what kind of animal I am."

The veterinarian's eyes grew wide. He looked at me, as if I were nuts, and started edging backwards. But I cornered him and forced him to listen me out. This is what I told him:

I hurry to work and back from work like a dog, with my tongue hanging out. Throughout the day, I toil like a horse. After work, I stumble to the store to buy a few things. Crowds again. When in my haste I step in front of someone in the long line, I hear: "Don't push like a pig." Losing my patience, I make an angry retort. I am told then: "Don't bark like a bitch" . . . I finally slip out from the store and drag everything home, like a mule. Back home, I prepare dinner, scurrying like a weasel. My husband comes home in a dismal mood. He quips angrily: "What have you been doing all day, you cow; why isn't my dinner ready?" I want to avoid quarrels and so I keep silent, like a dumb fish. After dinner, my husband stretches out on the sofa and reads newspapers, staring at the TV. Or dashes off to his friends. I do the ironing. Then comes dusting, sweeping. A little sewing here, a little mending there. On and on. Later at night my husband drags himself home and collapses into bed. Meanwhile, I'm still far from finished with my housework. And he says: "Kitten, sweet, cuddle up to me." I keep silent like a sheep and go to him. Tell me now, sir as a specialist of four-legged creatures, what kind of an animal do you think I am?

He looked at me, compassion visible in his eyes and said sadly: "You are a genuine Soviet Woman" . . .

*From the Underground
Publication DAWN (AUSRA)*

CHILD OF SERFS

It was a dark winter afternoon when I came home from the woods. Mother was busy at the spinning wheel while Father was plaining rope. I sat down to knit a net. Into the yard rumbled a wagon from the Manor. Father muttered angrily, "The new overseer of the serfs is here. It's a good thing it's late; maybe he won't stay long."

"Father, I do not want you to interfere with what I have to say to him," said Mother. "I will welcome him so that, having had a talk with me, he will want to go back at once where he came from."

The overseer entered the cottage and Father invited him to sit at the table. He was a middle aged man with a long brown moustache and piercing brown eyes. He seemed intelligent and pleasant enough. He listened to Mother's complaints attentively, looked us straight in the eye, and spoke with a soft va. Nonetheless, he was a hireling of the Manor. Father seemed to be afraid of him.

The overseer blinked. "Why is it so dark in your cottage?"

"We use candles only for wakes," said Mother. "Ordinarily we use *balanas*. (wooden torches)."

"Your family consists of three souls?"

"That's it," replied Father.

"And what is it you're working at?"

"All our work is for the Manor," said Mother sharply. "Much as I think and think, I still can not understand. We have just one aging lord and about a thousand serfs work for his good throughout the year, both day and night, so that he may live in luxury."

"He has to support his sons and daughter. Moreover, the workers on the estate are careless and inefficient."

"His lordship has dehumanized them," asserted Mother. "In the old days, the government had laws that protected the workman from the lords. Now his lordship observes the Russian law which gives him the right to be a judge and do whatever he pleases, while the poor serf does not dare even to open his mouth. Why, everybody knows that Vanda, the daughter of the lord Jalovecky five years ago when her favorite bitch gave birth to puppies

commanded Mrs. Adomenas to leave her four week old child and nurse the bitch's puppies with her milk. The mother wept for the life of her child, her milk went dry, and the puppies whined. Fortunately a friend who was weaning her baby took Mrs. Adomenas' child to nurse. After all, Mrs. Adomenas is a human being!"

"Have you been with the estate very long?" inquired the overseer.

"For four years I was chambermaid to the lord's daughter. That is why, when I got married, her ladyship rewarded me with a pair of her old shoes. I wore them to my wedding and now on Sundays I wear them in church."

"You spin," observed the overseer, "But you wear a tow shirt."

Mother turned red and snapped quietly. "My flax I have to spin, weave, then bleach and give to her ladyship. What is left to wear? The little we have, we wear only to church."

Father, trying to cover up her lamenting, volunteered, "It is rumored that Tsar Aleksander II told the lords in Moscow serfdom is going to be ended."

"Why, man, if you get your freedom," scoffed the overseer, "you will not know how to conduct yourselves. You'll become loafers!"

"Sir," protested Father, "when I visited my relatives in M. where the people have been freed, we found they had to pay high taxes, but their buildings were roomy, the cottages had chimneys, and the windows were large and made of glass!"

"And you just take a look at us, sir!" ordered Mother. "These two tiny windows are glass. But those three windows are not glass — but pigs' bladders and in the day give a dull yellow light."

"But you are raising a healthy red-cheeked son," said the overseer, eying me sharply.

"He grows by the grace of God," murmured Mother.

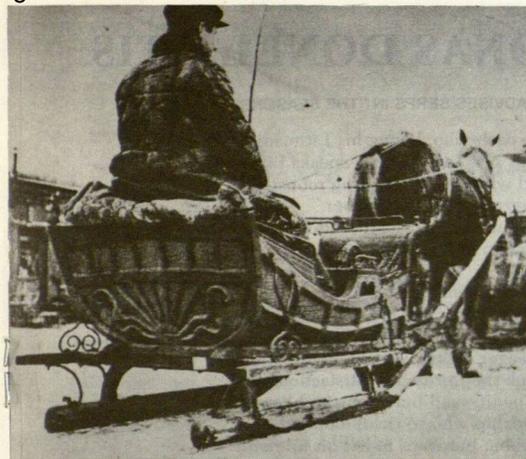
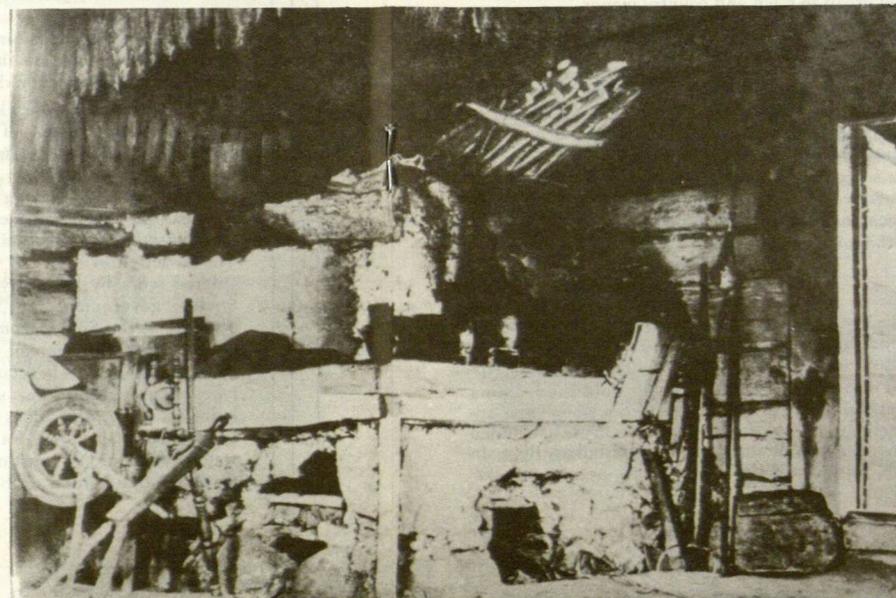
The overseer, taking his cap and walking from the table to the door, observed, "You lament too much and you mouth against the estate without reason."

(Trans. from *Fragmentai iš Praeities Miglų*)



A traditional home-spun towel is displayed on a carved towel-horse.

(Below) Interior of an old cottage: dirt floor, with spinning wheel and a smokey stove on which one could sleep. No chimney, only a hole in the roof stuffed with straw. Nights, a torcher of wood provided light.



A handsome home-made sledge for bitter Lithuanian winters



A water scoop: "It would be a disgrace not to have a fitting cup for a visitor..."



A carved fork by Buračas

Balys Buračas was a teacher, but his first love was Lithuanian folk art, local lore and customs. Acquiring a camera in 1915, he became the first self-made ethnographer in Lithuania. On foot and by bicycle, he explored the remotest areas to record the lives of peasants whose history would have otherwise been lost. He produced some 600 articles and 25 thousand photographs, half of which were destroyed during the war. In occupied Lithuania, in 1969, he was awarded the title of "Soviet Lithuania's Honored Worker of Culture" and he was elected as an honorary member of the Society of Preservation of Monuments and Local Lore. In 1971 a book of his work was published in Vilnius.

Buračas had the spirit of an artist and was no mere recorder of objects. The scenes he photographed reflected his own delight in folk art, whether it was a chair or sabot, an ancient singer of folk melodies or barefooted children indulging in the art of gathering mushrooms. Compare the flowing lines of the sledge, scoop, towel horse and fork which so compactly bring together the designs of nature. You'll get the message: "We live as serfs but our spirit is free and creative."

LITHUANIAN

FOLK ART IN WOOD

"... our spirit is free and creative."



KRISTIJonas DONELAITIS

PRICKUS ADVISES SERFS IN "THE SEASONS"

"God grant this to each who, loving his Lithuania,
Tends his chores as serf and, faithful, speaks Lithuanian:
May he meet, God willing, every spring robustly,
May he go on merrymaking into summer."
Thus, before Whitsuntide, Prickus roused the peasants
With advice on how to labor in their serfdom.

"Look, a sturdy restless body, always busy,
Seems to be a special gift from God, His finest.
Such a man will hustle roundly till he's drooping,
Bow before his meager supper with contentment,
Having eaten, thank the Lord with satisfaction,
Roll into his bed, bedrowsed but strong and happy.
He outwits the lordship who so richly tailored,
Reaches for his spoon, but stops to list his ailments.
What's the good that Mikols gives the world his presence,
Bobbling bloated paunch, himself puffed like a bladder?
Like some lowly rogue, he's troubled and uneasy,
Ever cringing, for, like Cain, he's scared of heaven.
What's the good that Diksas, poor for all riches,
Kneels before his hoard of gold and worships, groaning?
When he needs to use one coin, he's loathe to take it;
Hungering, he swallows uncooked victuals like an idiot,
Shivering in bedraggled finery, near naked.

"We Lithuanians, we're called wretches, shod in bast shoes,
We're too lowly for the lords and all their servants;
Yet we're not afflicted by their lordly ailments.
How they grunt and groan in town and country manor
While the summer comes to cheer us with a visit;
There is one with gout, he's bawling loud and loutish,
There's another, how he bellows for a doctor!
Ah, but why are rich men plagued by such afflictions?
Why does death reap up the lords before their hour?
It's no riddle; scoffing at the chores of peasants,
Lazy, shamming good, they overstuff their stomachs;
We, the serfs they scorn, our stomachs light with skimmings,
Buttermilk and whey, we hurry-scurry briskly;
With a snatch of bacon or Lithuanian sausage,
We work better at the labors forced upon us." . . .

Demie Jonaitis translation

Born in Lithuania Minor, Kristijonas Donelaitis (1714-1780) is regarded today as the greatest poet of Lithuania. He spent most of his life as a pastor of a village parish. Here he remained in close contact with the serfs of the region, and developed a deep and sympathetic understanding of every facet of their lives. At the same time, he maintained a strong interest in poetry and music, and especially in the Greek and Roman classics; it was from these that he adapted the classical hexameter to the rhythmic peculiarities of Lithuanian.

The *Seasons* embodies the qualities of the Lithuanian landscape, provides insights into the activities of the common people, and describes the lives of animals, birds and even the insects of wood and field. In it Donelaitis' didactic strictures, as well as his wealth of concrete sensory data, are couched in a tone of high ethical seriousness, and combine to portray both the joyful beauty and the ephemerality of earthly life. Donelaitis is classed among the first true realists of European literature; his poem is free from the artificial notes that appear in roughly comparable works of such of his contemporaries as James Thompson in England, Ewald von Kleist in Germany or Jean-Jacques Rousseau in France. An essential sanity, which is common to the classics, and a consummate artistry whose effects are achieved by deceptively simple means at times even by the crudities of peasant speech — are notable qualities in this poet.

Algirdas Landsbergis

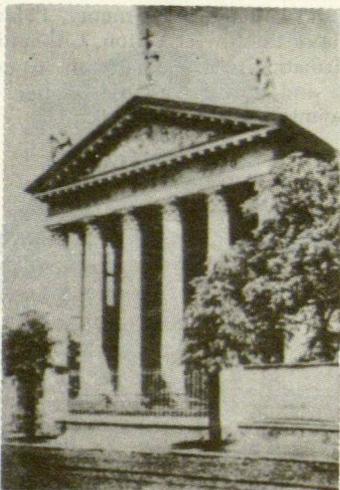
Kristijonas Donelaitis was a Lutheran pastor. His epic poem *Metai* (the Seasons) became a classic which has been translated into German, Russian, Polish, Latvian and English. A versatile intellect, he wrote fables, poems, sermons, notes and homilies in German, Lithua-

nian, Latin and Greek. He was also fluent in Hebrew and French. It is ironic that Donelaitis' manuscript *Metai* was never published during his lifetime and the poem first appeared in print form in a German translation by Liudvikas Reza in 1918.

LITHUANIAN NOBLEMEN AND CALVINISM

In the middle years of the sixteenth century, Lithuania was well on the way to becoming a Calvinist nation. The young people of prominent families such as the Radvilas and Radziwills studied in schools of Western Europe and brought home the ideas of Martin Luther and John Calvin. Vilnius and Biržai northern fortress were seats of the powerful Dukes of Radvilas. These become strongholds of the Reformed faith and it was in Vilnius that the Lithuanian Evangelical Reformed Church was founded between 1555-1557 under the name "Unitas Lituanica." The nobility and gentry had high standards of education and open-mindedness to new ideas. They made special efforts to convert and "enlighten" the peasantry.

In the county of Ukmergė in 1563, all the nobles were recorded as Calvinists. Two nobles were



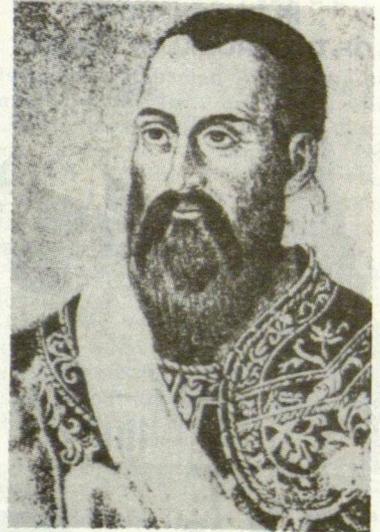
Evangelical Reformed Church in Vilnius currently used as a cinema

primarily responsible for the tremendous influence of Calvinism: Mikalojus Radvilas the Black who was palantine, marshal and chancellor of Vilnius, and his cousin Mikalojus Radvilas the Red who was palatine of Trakai. As actual rulers of Lithuania, they influenced other nobles to follow their example.

The common people, economically dependent on the nobles, followed their example. They had long regarded Catholicism as a mere formality imposed on them by the Poles and a polonized clergy and they had adhered to their old pagan customs. Ordered by the nobles, they attended Calvinist services, just as they had attended Catholic services. Frequently the nobles confiscated churches from the Catholic hierarchy and changed them to Calvinist prayer houses. It is unlikely that the common people understood this faith any better than they had understood Catholicism.

Many of the nobles themselves lacked deep religious conviction and acted more out of social and political motives and envy of the wealth and influence of the Catholic hierarchy. Therefore, they did not resist greatly when the Bishop of Vilnius in 1569 invited the Jesuits to help revive Catholicism. The Society of Jesus established schools, notably the Academy of Vilnius. They preached sermons and disseminated Catholic publications, rousing a new fervor among the people.

Most significant to Lithuania was the fact that the Protestant Reformation was responsible for

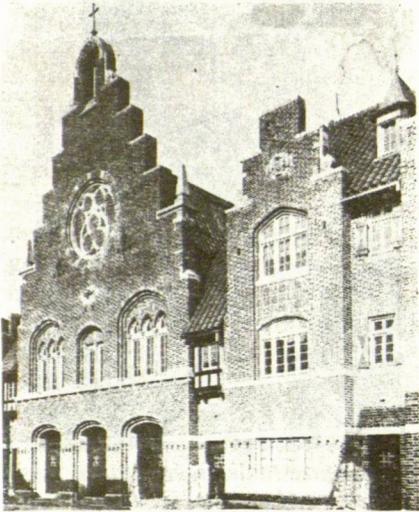


*Duke Radvilas, the Black:
Reform Movement Organizer*

the first publication written in the Lithuanian language. It was responsible for the beginning of a national Lithuanian literature.

The University of Königsberg played a vital role in the cultural and educational progress of Lithuania. It was from Königsberg that the teachings of Luther spread into Lithuania, through the efforts of such humanists as the priest Abraomas Kulvietis who established a college — the first Lithuanian institution of higher learning — in Vilnius in 1539. Kulvietis was bitterly attacked by the Bishop of Vilnius for disseminating Lutheran ideas from the pulpit of Saint Ann's church and he withdrew to Königsberg where he and another humanist, Stanislovas Rapolionis, became professors at the University. Today they are considered influential in the development of Lithuanian literature. They translated hymns into Lithuanian for a populace long subjected to the Polish of elitist priests and nobles. And they were assigned by Prussian Albrecht to prepare the first Lithuanian Catechism. They died before its completion and the project was carried out by Martynas Mažvydas who published the Catechism in 1547. This was the first book to be published in the Lithuanian language.

IN THE SHADOW OF THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE



St. George's parish. 207 York St., Brooklyn, NY 11201. 212 625-0794.

This year, St. George's Lithuanian parish in Brooklyn, N.Y. is celebrating its 75th birthday.

During the early years of the 1900's Lithuanians immigrated to "Central Brooklyn," the Navy Yard section of the city. By 1909 the numbers had grown to more than 300 families and about 2000 souls. In that same year, the the Bishop of Brooklyn, Charles Mc Donnell, asked Rev. Anthony P. Kodis to establish a parish for the Lithuanian-speaking people.

The next pastors were Rev. Norbertas Pakalnis (1926 - 1934); Rev. Kazimieras E. Paulonis (1934 - 1948); Rev. Antanas Petrauskas (1948 - 1967). During his time, in 1959, the golden jubilee of the parish was celebrated. A drive was started to refurbish the church. Even though the neighborhood had changed and the Lithuanian colony considerably dwindled, the parishioners responded to their pastor's request with an outpouring of generosity whose effects, in the magnificent main altar, the tabernacles on the side altars will impress generations to come.

Today, Rev. Bruno Kruzas is at the helm. His parishioners no longer number in the thousands but the enthusiasm and love for their parish are still there. All debts have been liquidated and the parish is financially sound.

We wish Father and his flock a most hearty *Ilgiausią metų* on the 75th Birthday of St. George's! You are only 25 years younger than our beloved Brooklyn Bridge!...

Klaipėda Regained — January 1923

THE COMMEMORATIVE MEDALS OF RIMŠA

Frank Passic

After World War I, the Klaipėda region of Lithuania was placed under Allied control and Lithuanians feared the city would be returned to the Germans or taken over by Poland. In January 1923, the Lithuanians staged an insurrection and successfully regained the city.

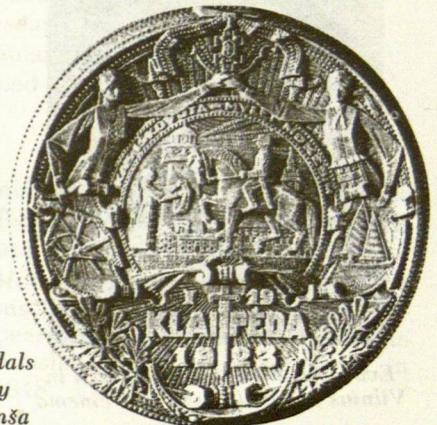
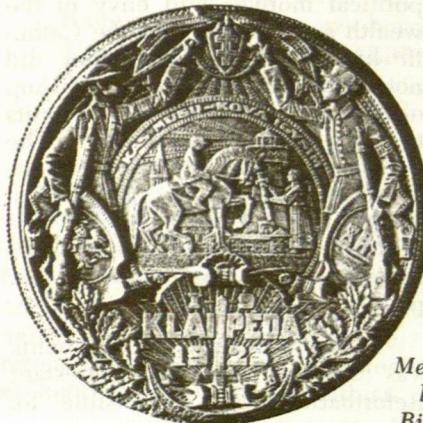
The victory was recorded by Petras Rimša (1881-1961) in his dramatic medals. Because of the unfortunate chain of events that befell the Republic of Lithuania after World War II, Rimša's medallic works are relatively unknown. Rarely available on the market, his medals are highly prized and dearly cherished by Lithuanian collectors everywhere.

The medal on the left (Below) shows a Lithuanian of the Klaipėda district (right) calling to arms a volunteer of independent Lithuania (left). The center depicts the defender of Lithuania receiving a sword from a patriotic woman, with the city in the background. Surrounding this is the inscription *Kas mūsų, kova įgisim*, which translates "that which is ours we shall fight to retain." In the left oval is the Vytis emblem, opposite is the coat-of-arms of the city. The bottom contains a sword pointed upward, with the words, I-9 Klaipėda 1923, referring to January 9, 1923, when the call for help went out. A wreath of oak leaves surrounds the design, and the emblem of the Lithuanian National Guard, the double-barred cross, appears above.

The reverse side of the medal (right) shows Klaipėda after reunification. Major Lithuania (left) joins hands with Minor Lithuania (right), representing

unity of the land and waters of Lithuania. In the center, the defender has returned, and is being bestowed with the laurel wreath of victory and honor. At the bottom is a downward pointing sword with the inscription I-19 Klaipėda 1923 signifying the day of the insurrection. Below are twigs of the Lithuanian national flower, the *rūta* (rue). In the left oval is a sailboat, symbolic of the recreation of the area; opposite are placed a rake and plow, symbolic of the industry and agriculture of the area. At the top of the medal is the Order of the Cross of Vytis, Lithuania's highest military order for honorable service at that time. The legend reads *Iškovota — Mylėt mokėsim*, which means "that which we have regained, we will know how to cherish." Rimša later issued another version of the medal with the inscription *Amžius būdėje Laisvę laimėjom*, which translates "having waited for ages, we won freedom." Specimens with the alternate inscription also bear the date I-20 on the bottom, signifying the day victory was achieved. The obverse of the later version bears the inscription *Vaduokis pats, ir būsi laisvas*, which means "Save yourself, and you will be free."

Although Lithuanian coinage history dates back to the 14th century, the country's relatively remote location in Europe and its history of repeated foreign occupations have left the field of Lithuanian numismatics virtually untouched. Often erroneously included with the coinage of Germany, Poland, Russia or the Soviet Union, Lithuanian numismatics is a specialty in its own right and offers the researcher an abundant opportunity for study.



Medals
by
Rimša

Lithuanian medallion art is an especially untouched area of study, particularly because individual medals struck by various persons or groups were outlawed after World War II by the occupying Soviets, and because much technical data and certain design themes were censored. Much of the information available about Lithuanian medallion art is found only among the memories of aged Lithuanian exiles. Dedicated members of the Lithuanian Numismatic Association, carefully recording and preserving these memories, are to a very large part responsible for the preservation of this rich and interesting numismatic field. The Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture in Chicago, Illinois, serves as an archival repository for Lithuanian cultural material; its numismatic department contains numerous rare medals brought to the United States by exiles from Lithuania.

**ST. CASIMIR 500th JUBILEE
COMMEMORATIVE MEDAL**



Actual size shown, Silver \$45, Bronze \$10. 25% discount on 10 or more medals to one address. Please add \$1 per medal for postage and packing. LITHUANIAN CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS AID, 351 Highland Blvd., Brooklyn, NY 11207 Tel. 212 647-2434

In a Soviet school, the teacher asked a pupil to use the word "communists" in a sentence.

"My cat just had kittens and they are all good communists!" stated the young boy.

A few weeks later the teacher again called on the same pupil. Now the word to be used was "capitalists".

"My cat had kittens a few weeks ago and they are all good capitalists!"

The teacher was shocked, "You told me that the kittens were all good communists!"

"Well, teacher, they have opened their eyes now!"

BRIDGES FOR F.K. LANE H.S.

BRIDGES, together with its publisher the Lithuanian American Community, USA, Inc., extends a warm Lithuanian *Ačiū labai!* to June Mastrocola, a teacher of English in New York's F. K. Lane high School where many a Lithuanian American student has studied, won honors, and gone on to greater achievements.

She presented BRIDGES with a \$50 donation so that Lane students with Lithuanian roots, as well as other students interested in ethnic cultures, could have access to copies of BRIDGES. Issues of our publication are now available in the Lane library.

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GERA ŠEIMININKĖ

COOKING LITHUANIAN STYLE

SAUERKRAUT SOUP RAUGINTŲ KOPŪSTŲ SRIUBA

1 lb. beef chuck
1 lb pork
2 qts. water
3 cups sauerkraut
1 onion
2 bay leaves
6 peppercorns

Make stock of meat, quartered onion and spices. Strain. Skim off fat. Add rinsed sauerkraut, boil 15-20 minutes. Salt to taste. Add boiled meat cut in pieces. Serve hot with potatoes.

MUSHROOM SOUP GRYBŲ SRIUBA

12-15 dried mushrooms
or 1 pt. canned mushrooms
6 cups water
1 onion
1 potato
1 carrot
2 bay leaves
1 cup sour cream

Soak, wash and pre-cook dried mushrooms, or drain the canned mushrooms and rinse in cold water. Slice mushrooms, dice vegetables. Simmer with bay-leaves and salt until vegetables are done. Stir a ladleful of cooled soup into the cream, blend thoroughly, then pour back into soup. Keep hot but do not boil.

HE SHALL BE MISSED

Last October 31st composer and musician Aleksandras Aleksis died in Waterbury, Conn.. He was 97 years old. For more than 50 years he led the St. Joseph's church choir. Since 1914 he was a member of the Knights of Lithuania, one of the founding members, reaching the rank of honorary member. He wrote many songs for

choirs and schools, also an operetta *Į Tėvynę* (Towards Homeland.)

Let us end with the last line of the Knights of Lithuania hymn which he composed. It embodies his life work in six words:

*Ei vyčiai, gyvenam tautai ir
bažnyčiai,*

O Knights, we live for our
country and church.

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Edited by Dr. Albertas Gerutis.
Translated by Algirdas Budreckis. In the Foreword the editor states: "It is the intention of this volume to trace the development of the Lithuanian people and nation from the earliest known period to the present day..." Hardcover. 458 pages. \$16.00 plus \$1.00 handling and mailing. BRIDGES, 341 Highland Blvd., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11207

Bridges published by the Lithuanian - American Community of the U.S.A., Inc. Through this newsletter, the publishers hope to re-establish ties between the detached, mobile Lithuanian-Americans and their Lithuanian heritage by presenting items on Lithuanian culture, conditions in the homeland, events and personalities in America, and the aspirations of all who subscribe to the idea that Lithuania desires to be an independent and free nation again.

Published eleven times a year. Editor: Demie Jonaitis; Associate Editor: Dalia Bulvičius. Entered as Third Class Matter at Post Office in Brooklyn, N.Y. Subscription rate: \$5.00 for one year. Editorial address: Bridges Editors, D. Jonaitis, 79-18 Park Lane South, Woodhaven, N.Y. 11421. Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by stamped self-addressed envelope if return is desired. Use of material from Bridges permissible only if proper credit is given to Bridges, authors, artists, photographers. New subscriptions, change of address and renewals: Bridges, 341 Highland Blvd., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11207.

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