

bridges

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art



november 2009

L I T H U A N I A N A M E R I C A N N E W S J O U R N A L

Letter from the Editor

I am always excited when a new writer sends an article to Bridges. I am especially thrilled when we hear from a young writer. Audra Kriaučiūnas is showing us Lithuania through the eyes of a teenager during her first trip to Lithuania. Not only can she write, but her photographs are excellent, including this month's cover. For all of you who would like to try your hand at writing, please do so. If you are sending something to Bridges we need to have your topic relate to something Lithuanian here or abroad. Don't be shy, I don't think any of us will be nominated for any literary honors, so give it a try.

Many of you commented on seeing my photo in the September issue saying you could now put a face on the name. I have had the name and the face for many, many years. You have read the name and now you have seen the face. Until Rimas Gedeika can find a camera that makes me look younger, thinner, and less like a retired school marm, I am going to retire the photo. Since that camera has not been invented yet, I may relent and drag the photo out once a year. The picture was taken in St. Andrew's rectory in Philadelphia after Mass one Sunday.

Speaking of St. Andrew's, Father Peter Burkauskas makes a very valid point when he reminds us not to forget the deceased priests and presents the sobering facts that at one time Philadelphia had eight Lithuanian priests and now there are two priests ministering to three parishes.

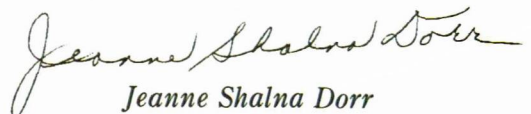
You will find an update in this issue on St. George Church in Shenandoah. The church has been closed since May of 2006. The parishioners have filed a lawsuit to stop the church from being razed because of its historical significance. The court date is December 1 and we will let you know the outcome. We wish them good luck. On a very sad note St. George Lithuanian Church in Cleveland, Ohio is now shuttered. The 114-year-old Cleveland parish, once the heart of immigrant life, celebrated its final Mass in October.

I hope you enjoy the photo of the mushroom that Gema's friend from Lithuania sent her. I'm sure many of you remember when Fall meant it was mushrooming season. I remember how shocked I was when I discovered that people bought mushrooms in stores. Every Saturday in the Fall was spent picking mushrooms in the woods. These were put into bushel baskets and left on the back porch until Sunday. On Sunday we went to the earliest Mass, came home and started cleaning the mushrooms while my mother presided like a general over the stove. Oh, they were great with winter meals. About fifteen years ago my husband and I went mushrooming with our good friend, Msgr. Leonas Jakimavicius, in the Alytus area of Lithuania. I didn't expect much from my husband because he wasn't Lithuanian and wasn't into mushrooms. But when I came back with a full container and Msgr. dumped them all on the ground and asked me if I was trying to kill everyone, I realized my mushroom picking days were over and I better stick to the store.

"God gave you a gift of 86,400 seconds today.

Have you used one to say "thank you?" ~William A. Ward.

Happy Thanksgiving to you and your families!


Jeanne Shalna Dorr

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HOMECOMING LITHUANIANS**

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* Cover: The cover photo is of the Baltic Sea in Palanga. It was taken
by Audra Kriauciūnas of Indianapolis, Indiana.



In 2008 the Federal Bureau of Investigation marked its 100th Anniversary. I doubt that any reader of this article has not heard of the FBI and the heroic exploits of its famous “G” men. The Bureau as it is commonly known by its members has been gloried in stories, movies, and television dramas for decades. Still few know of the early history of this law enforcement organization and still fewer know that it has a Lithuanian connection.

Although the U.S. Marshal’s Service has existed as long as there has been a federal court system and the U.S. Secret Service since the American Civil War, the U.S. Government had not had a real investigative arm. The Marshal Service was largely responsible for enforcing and maintaining the operations of the court system and the U.S. Secret Service protecting the President and counterfeiting. It was only during the later years of the 19th century with congress’ enactment of interstate commerce laws did the need for a federal investigative arm become crucial.

It was Attorney General Charles Joseph Bonaparte, a relative of the famous French Emperor, that the U.S. Department of Justice moved to establish such an

LITHUANIAN FBI CONNECTION

investigative organization. The new organization was officially established on July 26, 1908 during the Presidency of Theodore Roosevelt under the name the Bureau of Investigation (BOI).

Its first official assignment was to combat interstate prostitution which had been made federally illegal under the Mann Act which was unofficially known as the White Slave Traffic Act. The organization was renamed the United States Bureau of Investigation in 1932 and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in 1935.

Surely the most famous head of the FBI was J. Edgar Hoover who served as Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation for over 48 years. It was largely under his direction that the original small federal investigation organization grew to be the premier law enforcement which it is today. During the 1930’s, the FBI became legendary in tracking down notorious criminals such as John Dillinger, “Baby Face” Nelson, Kate “Ma” Barker, Alvin “Creepy” Karpis, and George “Machine Gun” Kelly. FBI agents then went on to confront the Ku Klux Klan, confront Nazi sabotage, and fighting the Communist menace. Today, through the efforts of its Directors and Special Agents, the FBI stands second to no

investigative organization in the world.

Many have heard of the legendary Director J. Edgar Hoover who led the FBI from 1924 to 1972, but few have heard of the name Alexander Bruce Bielaski who served as the Director of the Bureau of Investigation from 1912 to 1919. Even fewer know that Bielaski was of Lithuanian origin. Although his family name has been Polonized over time, his family roots can be traced directly back to Lithuania. His grandfather, Captain Alexander Bielaski (Beleskis) had been born on August 1, 1811, in Lithuania. Being raised under Czarist Russian occupation, Bielaski as a young man was educated in a Czarist Russian military school. After graduation, he had been commissioned as a Topographical Engineer Lieutenant and assigned to duty in the Russian Army. With the start of the 1830-1831 Polish-Lithuanian Insurrection, Bielaski resigned from the Russian Army and became severed on the Staff of General Dembinski. Dembinski’s Corps consisting of 3,500 Polish regulars and several hundred Lithuanian guerrillas fought heroically to defend Lithuania from the advancing Czarist Russian forces. Still the gallantry they displayed could not stop the superior numbers of the Russians and they were forced to withdraw. In an epic march, General Dembinski led his small force back to Warsaw. During the retreat, Bielaski took command of a small 300 man rear guard whose mission was to



Kpt. Aleksandras Bielaskis

hold the vital river crossing at all cost while the others fled to safety. Fighting heroically, Bielaski forces successfully held the forge until the other rebels had reached safety. They did not withdraw until their numbers had been reduced to about 30 men which Bielaski then led into nearby woods. Through his skill the survivors successfully withdrew to Warsaw while constantly skirmishing with the pursuing Russians. By the time Bielaski reached Warsaw he only had one man still under his command. Bielaski then fought with distinction at the Battle of Grochowo until he was seriously wounded. A bullet ripped open one side of his face and pulled out his teeth before it came out of his neck. Although knocked to the ground, Bielaski continued to fight until he was stabbed in his shoulder by an advancing Russian. Being left on the battle field as dead, Bielaski recovered from his wounds only to learn that the

insurrection which he had fought so valiantly for had been crushed.

Refusing to continue living under Russian occupation, Bielaski left Poland for France and eventually arrived in the United States. In 1835, he served as a civilian surveyor with the U.S. Army in Florida during the Seminole War and later settled in Illinois. He eventually obtained employment and gained fame as an engineer for the Illinois Central Railroad. Bielaski

became an American citizen in 1841. After having lived in various parts of the country, Bielaski married Mary Ann Carey, an Illinois resident, in July 1842 and would eventually father three boys and four girls. While residing in Illinois, Bielski became an intimate friend of Abraham Lincoln who would later become the President of the United States. In 1844, Bielaski was appointed Chief Draftsman for the U.S. Bureau of Patents and moved with his family to Washington, D.C.

With the start of the Civil War, Bielski offered his services to the Union and returned to Illinois to serve as a Lieutenant with Company F of the 30th Illinois Volunteer Infantry Regiment. On September 1, 1861, Bielaski accompanied his regiment to Cairo, Illinois, where it was assigned to General John A. McClernand's 1st Brigade of the District of Cairo under the command of General Ulysses S. Grant. Due to his prior military service, Bielaski was

subsequently appointed an aide-de-camp to General McClernaud with the appointment being recommended by President Abraham Lincoln. In this position, Captain Bielaski took part in the Battle of Belmont on November 7, 1861, where the Union forces commanded by General Grant engaged the Confederate forces under the command of General Leonidas Polk. As the federal forces were moving against a Confederate entrenched artillery supported position, Captain Bielaski rode forward encouraging the advancing troops. When his horse was shot out from under him, Captain Bielaski chose to continue the attack on foot. Seeing the national colors falling, Captain Bielaski quickly grabbed the fallen flag and continued its advance through withering enemy shot and shell. While carrying the Stars and Stripes of his new homeland, Captain Bielaski was killed by a cannon explosion and his body never recovered. Although the advancing column succeeded in driving the Confederates from their position, they were later forced to withdraw. General McClernaud is quoted as having stated that "A braver man never fell on the field of battle. His bravery was only equaled by his fidelity as a soldier and patriot. He died making the Stars and Stripes his winding sheet." Although many men had fought with great distinction, like some battles in the Civil War, the Battle of Belmont held no strategic importance. Its only importance to the war was it showcased the talents of previously unknown General Ulysses S. Grant who eventually led the Union forces to total victory.

With Captain Bielaski's death, his older children immediately sought employment to support the family. His son, Oscar Bielaski, born on March 21, 1847, in Washington, D.C. decided to follow in his father's footsteps and joined the Union Army as a drummer boy with a Union Cavalry Regiment. During lulls between battles, Oscar learned how to play baseball. After the war, he returned to Washington, where he secured a position as a government clerk and continued to play baseball. Oscar Bielaski went on to become one of the first professional baseball players. His professional career lasted five years during which time he played with the Washington Nationals, Baltimore Canaries, and Chicago White Stockings. Another son, Alexander Bielaski, graduated from St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland and the Boston Theological Seminary and became a distinguished Methodist Episcopal Minister. The Reverend Doctor Bielaski and his wife, Roselle Bielaski, had three daughters and three sons.

His son, Alexander Bruce Bielaski was born on April 2, 1883 in Montgomery County, Maryland. He attended George Washington University and after obtaining his law degree in 1904 received an appointment with the U.S. Department of Justice. His initial assignments included an appointment as a special examiner and reorganization of the Oklahoma court system following its admission as a state. Upon returning to



Alexander Bruce Bielaski

Washington, Bielaski was assigned to the Bureau of Investigation and eventually became the Administrative Assistant to Director Stanley W. Finch who had been appointed as the first Director of the new organization.

Upon Finch's departure from the Bureau of Investigation, Bielaski was appointed to replace him. Bielaski remained as the Director of the Bureau of Investigation from April 30, 1912 to February 10, 1919. During that time, Bielaski oversaw a steady

increase in bureau resources and responsibilities. After leaving the Bureau of Investigation, Bielaski entered into private law practice. While on a trip to Mexico in 1921, Bielaski was kidnapped by Mexican bandits and a ten thousand dollar ransom paid for his release. After being held for three days, Bielaski managed to escape and took the paid ransom money with him. During prohibition, Bielaski worked as an undercover decoy in a speakeasy in New York which resulted in many arrests and convictions. He later went on to head the National Board of Fire Underwriters arson investigator team and serving as the President of the Society of Former Special Agents. Alexander Bruce Bielaski died on February 19, 1964. Like his Lithuanian immigrant grandfather, Alexander Bielaski made an outstanding contribution to his nation and deserves an honored place in Lithuanian-American history.

Henry Gaidis

Henry Gaidis is a contributor to Bridges. He is a member of the Board of Directors of JBANC and among his many interests is military history

TRIVIA QUESTION

(No.33)

Back in the 14th,15th century, what was a requirement in order to become a "BAJORAS" (nobleman)?

- (a) Take a civil service exam.
- (b) Serve as a warrior for a Grand Duke.
- (c) Marry a Polish noble's daughter

Answer to Trivia Quiz on page 18

More about Žemaičių Kalvarija

English translation: Samogitian Calvary. Many years ago, it was called Seda, and was mentioned in the acts of Mindaugas in 1253. During some of the years of the Soviet occupation, 1964-1989, the town was changed to Varduva, then the name was reinstated.

The population has ebbed and flowed over the years: 713 (1925); 1000 (1940); 798 (2001), and there have always been inhabitants of small villages in the surrounding area who have come to Žemaičių Kalvarija for shopping, church services, and school.

Žemaičių Kalvarija is located about 24 km. from Telšiai (north-west corner of Lithuania), 9 km. from Alsėdžiai. Plungė, the 2009 Cultural Capitol of Lithuania, is located only a short drive away, as is the Žemaitija National Park.

It is known for its Stations of the Cross, chapel-sized buildings, built on the hills around the basilica where a miraculous painting of the Mother of God is housed. The highest of the hills, is about 195 meters above the sea level, and is called St. John's.

In 1637 Bishop Tiškevičius got the permis-

sion of Pope Urban VIII to build the Stations of the Cross and the area was named Kalvarija. In order to not confuse the spot with other places called "Kalvarija", the name "Žemaičių" (since it is in the Žemaitija region of Lithuania) was added. The

Bishop walked through and measured out the spots for the Stations of the Cross (chapel-size) to mirror those in Jerusalem, and he brought dirt from Jerusalem.

Since 1649 the Žemaičių Kalvarija church (now basilica) enshrines the relics of the Holy Cross, brought from the Dominican monastery in Lublin. It is 3.2 cm long and 0.6 cm wide – the largest in the Baltics.

Each summer beginning July 2nd for up to 10 days, thousands of pilgrims flock to Žemaičių Kalvarija for "atlaidai"- Mass and stations of the cross. Outside the basilica, vendors set out their products of a religious nature.

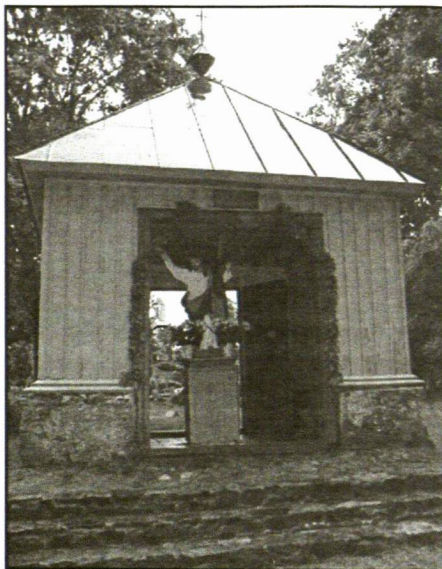
The images of both the Stations of the Cross and the picture of Mary of Žemaičių Kalvarija are found in many Lithuanian churches in the USA: in Nativity B.V.M., Marquette Park (Chicago), East St. Louis, IL, in the convent of the Sisters of Immaculate Conception in Putnam and other places.

Ramunė Kublius

2009

This year marks the
370th anniversary of
"Kalvarijos kalnai"
(the ways of the Cross),
measured out (1639-1642)
by Bishop Jurgis Tiškevičius.

This year is also a
commemoration of the
600th anniversary of
the christening of Žemaitija.



*Stations of
the Cross,
chapel-sized
buildings*



*Thousands
of pilgrims
flock to
Žemaičių
Kalvarija
for "atlaidai"-
Mass and
stations of
the cross*

Remembering the Dead...



Holy Cross Cemetery in Yeadon, PA is the resting place for thousands of deceased Lithuanians. One section is reserved for Lithuanian Priests.

Every November Catholics throughout the world remember their deceased loved ones. On Nov. 2nd graves are visited by family members and friends who bring flowers, light candles, dust off monuments, and wipe tears from their eyes as they recall the lives of the dead. Memories are a very important part of living and encourage us, not only to remember the dead, but also to pray for them. For All Souls Day many parishes invite their parishioners to inscribe the names of their beloved departed on envelopes so they may be prayed for at the altar.

The month of All Souls is also an invitation to pray for the forgotten dead. Many graves go unvisited and without flowers. Perhaps there are no survivors of the deceased, or perhaps they have just been forgotten. No one has inscribed their names on the All Souls Day envelopes or requested a Mass for their eternal happiness. Fortunately, at every Holy Mass prayers are offered for *all* the dead - so at least the

In this "YEAR OF THE PRIEST"

Church entrusts the forgotten to the merciful embrace of the Good Shepherd.

Perhaps the most forgotten are the deceased Priests of our parish churches. We just took for granted that Priests would always be living in our rectories, and when they died they would be replaced and parish life would go on as usual. The reality of today's vocation shortage to the Priesthood paints a different picture. Many of our once thriving Lithuanian parishes have closed, or been joined with neighboring parishes, because, as the Bishops say "I don't have a Lithuanian Priest to assign to your church." We might ask - where are all the Lithuanian Priests? Sadly, we must answer - dead and buried. Even sadder, most are now forgotten.

These were the pioneer Priests who founded the Lithuanian parishes and worked tirelessly to do fund-raising to build our beautiful churches. They supported efforts to establish various Lithuanian organizations and parish schools. As pastors and curates they offered Masses in our churches, conducted devotions and led so many closer to God and the saints. They baptized infants, blessed marriages, brought the sacraments to the sick and dying, and gave final blessings to loved ones at the grave. And now, they themselves rest in cemeteries awaiting the resurrection of the dead along with our loved ones. But they also await your visits, prayers, and remembrances.

In Holy Cross Cemetery, located on the outskirts of Philadelphia, where Lithuanians have buried their loved ones for many years, a special section has been reserved for the burial of Lithuanian Priests. A large granite cross towers over the monuments of Lithuanian clergy and shadows the graves of the Priests who, in the youth of their lives, gave up all to follow the Call of Christ and serve our Lithuanian parishes. In Philadelphia, where three Lithuanian parishes are still functioning, only two Priests now serve where years ago there were eight. New generations do not recognize the names of the Priests who are buried, nor appreciate all they had done for the Lithuanian immigrants and community.

Pope Benedict XVI has proclaimed this year - June 19, 2009 to June 19, 2010 - YEAR OF THE PRIEST. It is a time for us to pray for Priests and vocations to the Priesthood. It is also an appropriate time to remember our dead Priests. Make an effort to remember them and pray for the blessed repose of their souls.

May they rest in peace!

Rev. Peter Burkauskas Pastor of St. Andrew's and St. Casimir's Parishes Philadelphia, PA

**Photo by Edward Kamarauskas*

Father Joseph
Writes
Blessed George and you
PART I

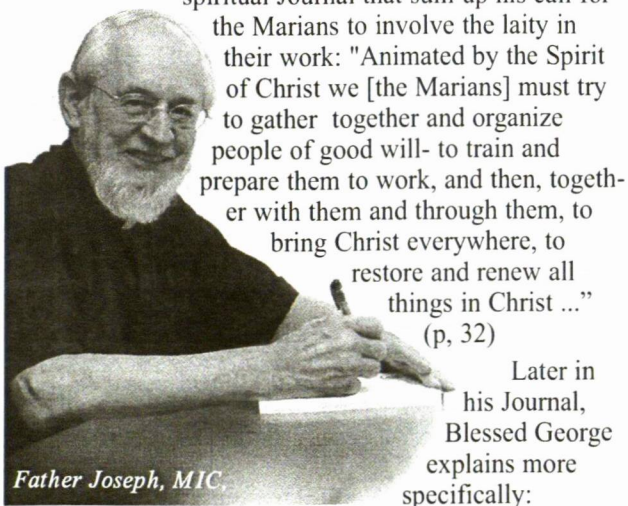
In this issue of Marian Helper, we are celebrating the 100th anniversary of the renovation - the rescue - of our Marian Congregation by Blessed George Matulaitis Matulewicz. Discover in our cover story on pages 12-14 how he rescued the Marians from extinction in 1909.

There's more to his legacy, however, and it concerns you as a Marian Helper. In seed form, Blessed George founded the present-day Association of Marian Helpers when he established the Marian Fathers' Auxiliaries in the 1920s.

These were chapters or groups of the lay faithful attached to parishes in the Chicago area, where the Marians first located in the U.S. These auxiliaries supported the Marians through their prayer, apostolic works, and financial assistance. In turn, the auxiliaries were remembered in the Masses, prayers, and good works of all the Marian Fathers and Brothers. By 1926, there were more than 20 chapters of auxiliaries in the U.S.

If you are a longtime Marian Helper, this kind of spiritual benefit society may sound familiar only it is no longer limited to particular parishes. That's because Fr. Walter Pelczynski, MIC, used the Marian Fathers' Auxiliaries as his model when he formed the present-day Association in Stockbridge, Mass.. in 1944.

So as the Marians celebrate Blessed George's role as their Renovator, you can find encouragement in him as the founding father of the Association. Consider, for example, these stirring words from Blessed George's spiritual Journal that sum up his call for the Marians to involve the laity in their work: "Animated by the Spirit of Christ we [the Marians] must try to gather together and organize people of good will- to train and prepare them to work, and then, together with them and through them, to bring Christ everywhere, to restore and renew all things in Christ ..."
(p. 32)



Father Joseph, MIC

Later in his Journal, Blessed George explains more specifically:

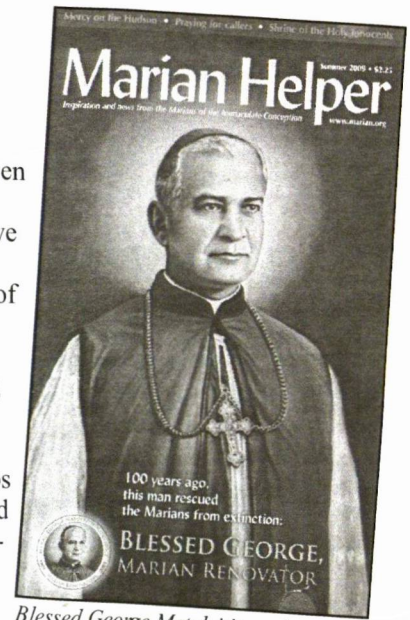
Lay men and women could do so much good", once they have been instructed and educated in matters of faith and better informed about the needs of the Church; fired with holy zeal. they could then be organized into groups and actively involved in the task of spreading the faith, they could bring Christ into those places where we priests do not have access. We should gather such people of good will around us and prepare them for such an apostolate, which would certainly result in the greater glory of God and promote the welfare of the Church (pp. 46-47).

In light of this powerful vision of Blessed George for the laity, I invite you to think of the many ways we the Marians seek to educate you in the faith and inform you about the needs of the Church. We share with you in this magazine our devotion to Mary Immaculate and encourage you to spread the Divine Mercy message and pray for the Holy Souls in Purgatory. We also present you with opportunities to support the Marians' ministries here in the U.S. and around the world.

In all these ways, we seek to form you as part of our Marian family and inspire you to strive for personal holiness.

I especially encourage you to prayerfully read this current issue of Marian Helper and consider how you can help us promote the Divine Mercy message during this year of the North American Congress on Mercy.

In the words of Blessed George, may all these efforts to promote the message of Divine Mercy "result in the greater glory of God and promote the welfare of the Church."



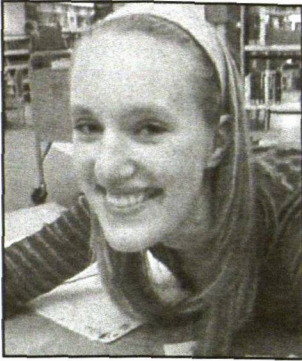
Blessed George Matulaitis on the cover of "Marian Helpers" - Summer 2009

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Marian Helpers-Summer 2009 - www.marian.org

"Father Joseph, MIC," is the honorary title of the director of the Association of Marian Helpers. The current director is Fr. Seraphim Michalenko, MIC.

MEET OUR YOUNG WRITERS...

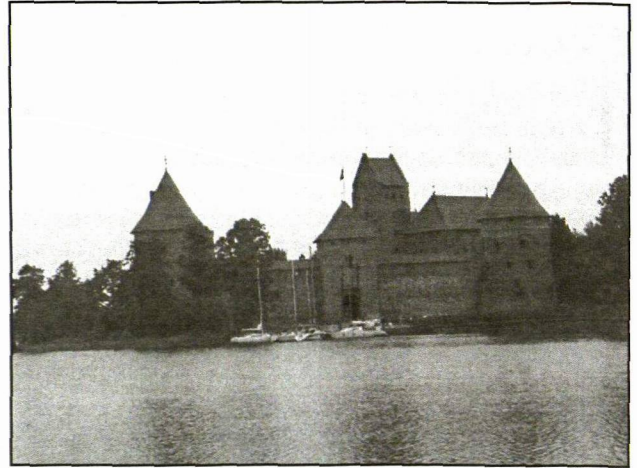


Audra Kriaučiūnas

A Teenager's First Trip to Lithuania

Part 1

The summer of 2009 marked the start of a new adventure in my lifetime; an adventure that would forever change my life. I had always wanted to visit Lithuania, the place of my heritage, and now I would finally get to visit. Being a sixteen-year-old high school junior, I got the opportunity to go to Europe for the first time in order to see Lithuania, and England. It all started July third, 2009 as my mother, father, brother and I left for the Indianapolis airport, my aunt drove us in her pickup truck, to embark on our journey. After traveling to Washington D.C. we discovered, after waiting the six hours for the scheduled time of our next flight and then another five or six hours for the plane to be fixed, that our flight to Copenhagen for that night had been canceled. After waiting in line with about 300 other people we got a hotel voucher from the airline, SAS, so we would have a place to stay for the night. The next day we arrived at the airport by noon for our 5:15 pm scheduled flight, so we could check in our bags and go through security. By now we had gotten used to waiting in long lines. At 5:15 we were finally on our flight to Copenhagen and after an eight hour flight we arrived in Copenhagen in the early morning hoping to catch our supposedly rescheduled flight into Vilnius, but after consulting both the flight crew, and the SAS people, and even enduring a shouting match, we were placed on a later flight to Stockholm Sweden and then from there to Vilnius. After finding a mysteriously hidden gate number in Stockholm we were on our way to Vilnius in a little propeller plane; an hour and a half later I was looking out of the window and down on Lithuania for the first time.

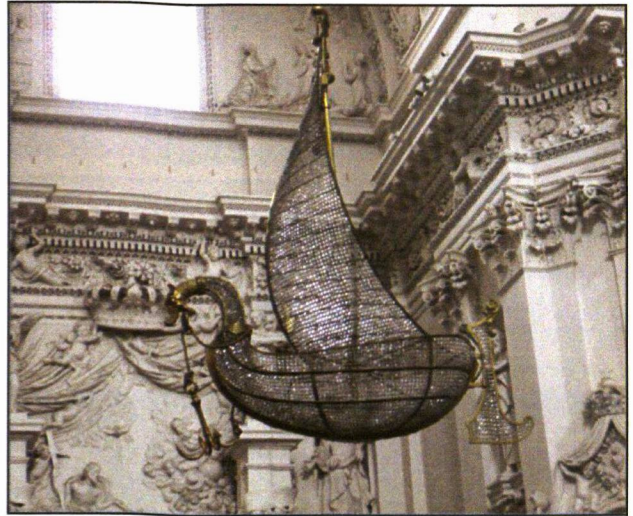


Trakai

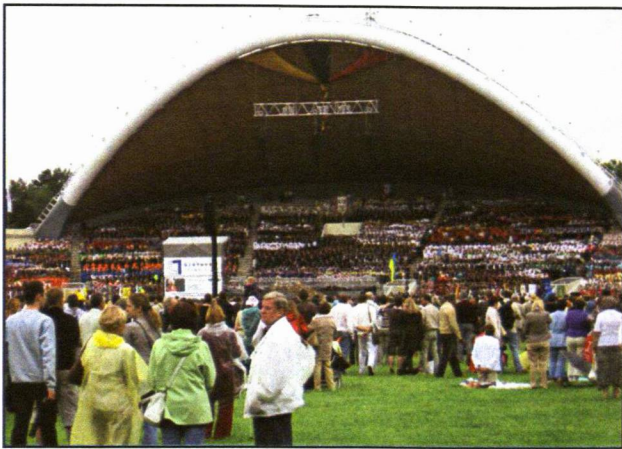
I tried to pick out familiar landmarks that I had heard about, but I was too far away. I could, however, make out the Nemunas river, and my brother claims that he saw Trakų Pilis. After touching down to the ground and enjoying the wonderfully cool weather that Lithuania had to offer, we were inside the airport in Vilnius learning that all of our luggage had been lost as well as the luggage from most of the other passengers. After filling out the lost luggage paperwork, we went out into the main part of the airport, and were greeted by my uncle Aldas, and his brother-in-law Romas. Dèdè Aldas had a flower for me and my mother which made me feel welcomed immediately, and he gave us a tour of old town Vilnius as we made our way back to our hotel where we would be staying for the next week or so. We'd already lost two of our precious vacation days in Lithuania, so we had to make the best of the days we did have. Already I was noticing that the driving habits were different in Lithuania than in America. The drivers were more dangerous, and didn't use turn signals as much. Also the streets were different because there weren't as many street markings and the street signs were on the buildings instead of hanging out over the roads. Also, unfortunately, there was quite a bit of graffiti. I've seen graffiti in downtown Indianapolis, but there was more here. I wasn't expecting that.

We arrived at our hotel, the Mona Liza, a little later and got to see where we would be staying. The room, which was a suite, was very nice. It had two bedrooms, a sort of living room, and a bathroom. It was beautiful, but my favorite part of the room was the windows. You could open them all the way up

and just look out to see what was happening, and they had a nice wide place you could sit and be right by the window. You could watch people walk down the cobbled road and see what was happening. You could also hear snatches of different conversations in Lithuanian all around. After checking out the hotel room we went to the Dance Festival even though we had already missed half of it. When we got to the stadium we weren't allowed to go in because we didn't have any tickets, so my Uncle went around trying to get in at all of the entrances. We opted to stand outside with all of the Lithuanian dancers, many of whom were teenagers, trying to see what was happening inside. It was cool to see how Lithuanian teenagers interacted with each other, and even though I couldn't understand what they



Sts. Peter and Paul Church, Vilnius



Song Festival

were saying, I could still tell what they intended to say sometimes from the tone of their voices. I tried to pick out what words I could, but wished that I was fluent in Lithuanian. I felt like I was at a huge disadvantage because all of these people could do something that I couldn't. Then, however, we were allowed to go inside the stadium and we could watch the dancers and hear the music. It was the first time I felt home in Lithuania. Music just has a way of making you feel safe and secure when nothing

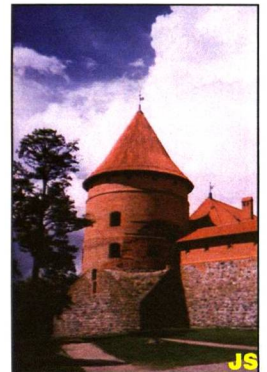
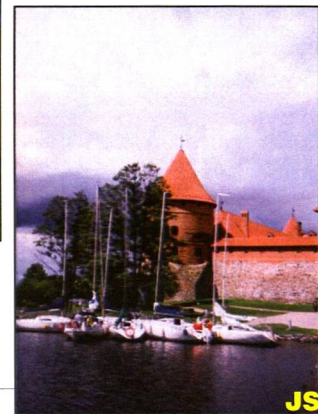
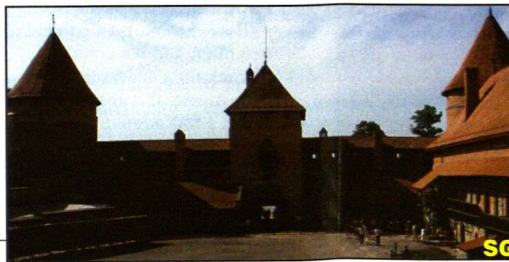
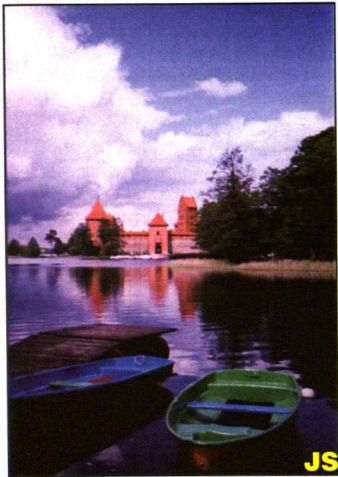
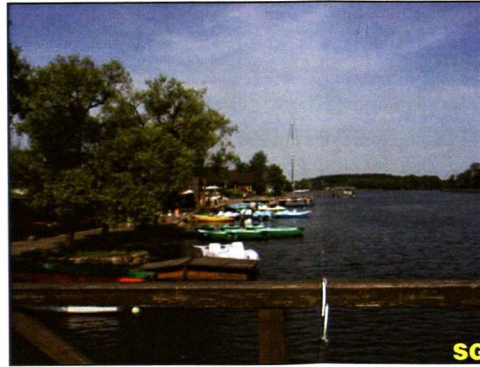
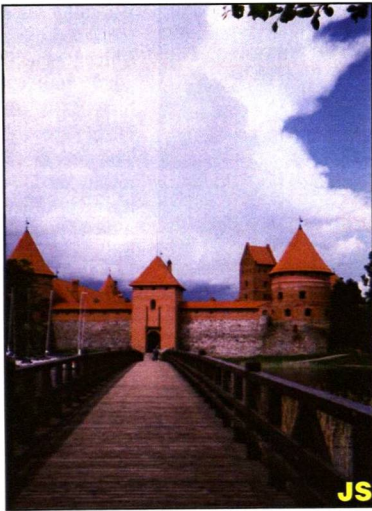
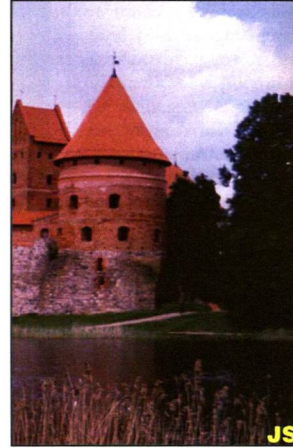
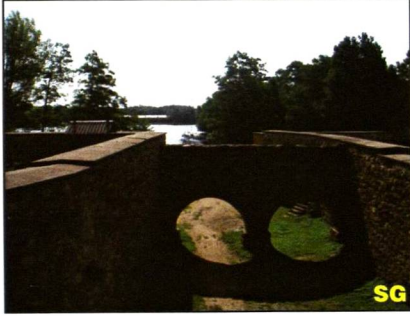
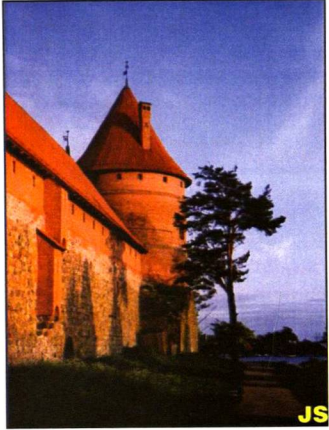
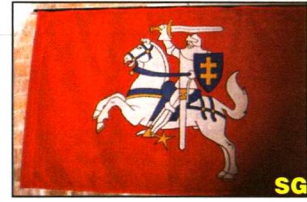
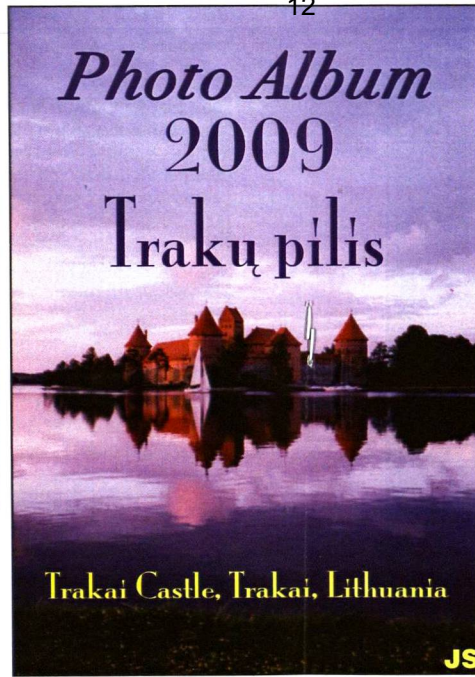
else can. Music is universal. It doesn't matter what language it's in, it still has an impact on you. Watching the dancers was really fun because it reminded me of seeing Lithuanian dancers in Chicago and Toronto. It was pretty funny when the whole audience started doing the wave, and then there were fireworks at the end which was unexpected but exciting.

The next morning we ate breakfast in the hotel restaurant for the first time, and after unsuccessfully trying to order "daug sulčių" I learned a new word which was daugiau. After breakfast we headed to the nearest MaXima which was a three 'X' one as opposed to a one 'X' or a two 'X' (the more X's, the more stuff the store had) so we could buy some basic toiletries and some underwear to try and replace what we had lost. Another thing I noticed about Lithuania, was that a lot of people walked everywhere and that there weren't too many obese people in the country. In fact I couldn't remember seeing a single obese person. Everyone was skinny. At Maxima, all of the signs were in Lithuanian and I could read some of them which was a confidence boost. Although the food at Maxima was a little different, they still had some traditional things that I was



School House

Continued on page 14



Photos by: SG - 14 year old Saulius Gečas, Phila., PA JS - Julie Skardenis, Bronxville, NY

reflections

Continued from page 11

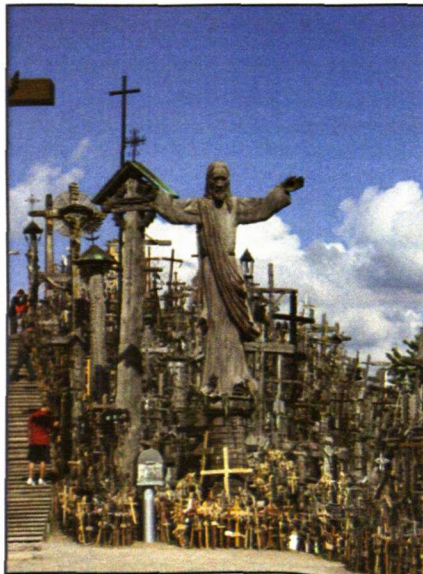
used to, like coca-cola for instance. Also, sizing was different because everything was small, medium, or large. That afternoon we met up with my cousins, and my aunt and uncle who were visiting from Lafayette, Indiana, and we walked to the Lithuanian Song Festival. The Song Festival was exciting because we got to listen to many Lithuanian songs such as Trys Milijonai. Even more exciting, however, was when I got to try kibinai for the first time. It was extremely delicious, and I was hungry for more Lithuanian food. On our way back to the hotel from the song festival we saw a new rock statue that was unveiled right before the song festival to commemorate the thousand year anniversary of Lithuania being mentioned in an historical document.

The next day was the start of the 3 day tour of Lithuania, which we would be undergoing with my aunt, uncle, and two cousins. We met at the church of Saints Peter and Paul which housed a beautiful glass boat. I hadn't seen anything like it before, and the church was beautifully ornate as well. When my uncle arrived in the rented mini-van, we all piled in and left for our first destination: Gustonys, which was the site of the school where my great grandfather and great grandmother taught. The current teacher of the school was there to open it for us and we got to go inside and look around to see where my Senelis had lived and went to school during his youth. There was even a picture of my Senelis visiting with the students from his recent trip. We also got to see the place where my uncle dug up the dishes my great grandfather buried during the war over 50 years ago. Nearby the school was a lovely garden that had fresh vegetables growing in it. It was cool to see where our food comes from and that somewhere people were getting food the old fashioned way. I even took a bite of a carrot that had been pulled right out of the ground. We got to eat sweets with the teacher and her sister, which they had prepared for us, as was the courtesy and custom in Lithuania. For lunch we went to a restaurant inside a three story windmill. The windmill was beautiful, as was the land



Windmill

surrounding it. There were beautiful flowers, plants, a small pond, and even a little playground that had fun things to play on, some of which I had never seen in America. We also saw a couple of poles that had stork nests on top. I had never seen a stork nest before, and they were huge! Another thing I had never seen before in America was antennae on top of a water tower. It was interesting to see the way they utilized all of their energy and the way the water towers had a dual purpose. Next we went to Šiauliai to see Kryžių Kalnas, which I was looking forward to the most since I had heard so much about it at Camp Dainava located near Manchester Michigan. At first I thought that it looked small, certainly smaller than I had imagined, but then I saw how many crosses there



Hill of Crosses



WaterTower

were and it blew me away. Although a book said there were 200,000 crosses there, I figured there had to be a lot more. There were so many crosses: Big ones, little ones, ornate ones, simple ones. Many different people had been here and left their mark and it was a very powerful experience. I felt lucky to be able to leave my own cross, which I put my name on so I'd be able to find it later, on the hill. Now the hill bore my mark as well. That evening, we drove to Palanga which was near the Baltic Sea. After a picnic, the food was bought at a local MaXima, we went down to the beach. The water was freezing, but I waded in anyway. It was the first time I had seen the Baltic Sea and I enjoyed it. I have always loved lakes and oceans. They're very calming. We tried, unsuccessfully, to find amber which we knew would be hidden in the seaweed, and then we watched the sunset until the sun had completely disappeared. After the sunset we walked through the town of Palanga back to the hotel and got to experience a little bit of the night life. We saw rides there, and many people were out and about. Much to my surprise, unlike stores in the United State, shops in Lithuania closed around six or seven so the employees could go and enjoy the night life. I also got to try a waffle on a stick with chocolate sauce on top. It was very good!

Audra Kriauciūnas

Audra Kriauciūnas is a sixteen-year-old junior at Pike High School in Indianapolis, Indiana. She has played soccer since she was eight years old, and is involved in show choir. She currently sings in an all girls show choir at her school. Audra enjoys writing, traveling, and being outdoors through activities such as camping and biking. She hopes to study Psychology in college, as well as music and writing.

Continued next month.....



Dear Ms. Dorr,

I am an avid reader of Bridges. Years ago I looked forward to finding Saturday Evening Post, Colliers and Life magazines. Now I eagerly await the next issue of Bridges. Fortunately, it keeps coming. Do not tire! When I see photographs/articles of universal interest I photocopy and send them to select friends in the hope that they too will subscribe.

I am thrilled to see the West 69th Street story (Bridges July/Aug 2009). In 1948, my parents and I came to this country and Marquette Park where this street is located became the gathering spot. Chicago turned into a magnet of sorts drawing Lithuanians from elsewhere.

My "memory box" won't stay shut. Hopefully yours, staff members and a multitude of readers won't stay shut either.

*Sincerely,
John Vazbys, New Jersey*

"BARAVYKAS"

One of Lithuania's little treasures



"Baravykas" (Boletus edulis Bull)

On September 26, 2009, Banga Grigaliūnaitė found this mushroom by the "Balzio" lake, near Vilnius, weighing 780 grams or 1 lb 11oz. It is considered a medium size mushroom. Some of the "Baravykas" grow up to 3 kg or 6 lb 10 oz.

News and Views

FINANCE

Lithuania could only adopt euro after 2013 - finance minister

Vilnius- Lithuania, which narrowly missed a euro adoption goal in 2007, could now aspire to adopt the single currency after 2013, the finance minister was quoted on Monday as saying.

The country missed the euro goal in 2007 due to inflation being slightly too high. Inflation is now going down due to recession, but Lithuania faces mounting public sector budget deficits. They are expected to more than 9 percent of GDP in both 2009 and 2010.

"We can speak about any dates for euro adoption starting from 2013 ... Our goal is to bring the deficit under 3 percent of GDP in 2012," Finance Minister Ingrida Simonyte was quoted as saying on the website of the state broadcaster.

That would mean Lithuania failing to meet the European Commission recommendation to cut the budget deficit under 3 percent by 2011.

"An earlier date (for euro adoption) than 2013 would demand disproportionately huge efforts," Simonyte said.

The deficit surged after the economy nosedived into its worst recession since early the 1990s and budget revenues fell.

President Dalia Grybauskaite, a former European Union budget commissioner, has said euro adoption for Lithuania was possible between 2013-2015.

Next year to be still stressful for Baltic economies - SEB

Vilnius (ELTA) - Eastern Europe is

the region hardest hit by the global credit crisis and recession, largely due to its relatively large exposure to foreign currency borrowing. During the summer, the economic cycle has nevertheless bottomed out in Eastern Europe as well. But the recovery will be shaky and uneven, predicts SEB in its October 2009 issue of Eastern European Outlook.

The main reasons for the shaky recovery are public sector budget consolidation and the fact that credit tightening will ease only slowly.

Exports will gradually strengthen. Domestic demand will remain weak in the coming year, however. Households will be squeezed by a weak wage and salary trend and by rising unemployment, while corporate capital spending will be hampered by large idle production capacity and cautious lending practices.

"Our conclusion is that the recovery in Eastern Europe will be highly dependent on a continued upturn in the world economy, especially in the euro zone, which is a major export market for Eastern Europe," says Mikael Johansson at SEB Economic Research.

Poland is the only EU country to start its recovery without having fallen into recession and SEB expects a continued gradual strengthening of Polish growth in 2010-2011. Russia will recuperate at only a moderate pace from its historic GDP decline in the first half of 2009, despite being buoyed by higher commodity prices. The Ukrainian economy will return to only weak positive growth in 2010. Of the three Baltic countries, Estonia is best positioned for recovery, with GDP growth ending up around zero in 2010 and rising the year after. In Latvia and Lithuania, GDP will continue to shrink next year, though only moderately. These countries will resume positive growth on an annual average basis only in 2011.

"Our main scenario is that the Baltic countries' fixed exchange rates against the euro will survive and that the international loan programme will remain on track. The coalition government in Latvia will probably work out a new austerity proposal for 2010 that the EU, the IMF and the Nordic countries will accept," Johansson says.

POLITICS

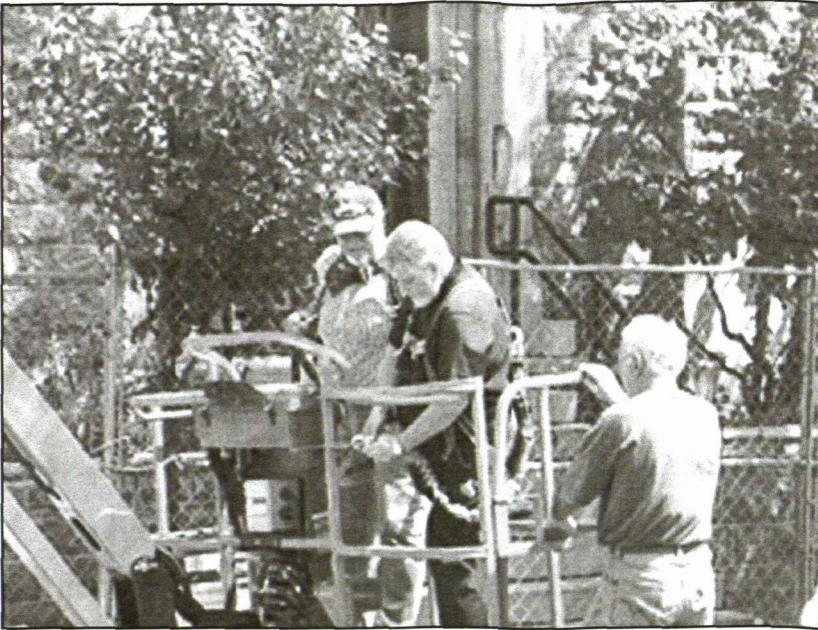
Over 350 Lithuanian emigrants have gathered at the World Lithuanians' Centre in Lemont, suburb of Chicago, and honored former President Valdas Adamkus. "Adamkus grew among us. We felt that we should thank him and his wife Alma for their work in Lithuania," said Rimantas Griskelis, chairman of the Lithuanian Fund Council. The participants wished long years for Mr and Mrs Adamkai. A ticket to the ball cost 100 dollars and honorary guests contributed to the fund at least 200 dollars each. It was expected to receive 10,000 dollars during the ball, but America's Lithuanians managed to donate over 12,500 dollars even in the face of the economic downturn. The donated money was transferred to the newly established Adamkai grant fund for students of environmental sciences. Before taking the presidency of Lithuania, Adamkus had worked at the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for a long time. Adamkus was awarded a gold medal for his achievements in the area of environmental protection. LIETUVOS RYTAS

HUMANITARIAN AID

Children of Afghanistan will endure winter in Lithuanian caps

Vilnius (ELTA) - Caps collected from Lithuanian people via the "Warm Caps for Children of Afghanistan" campaign will be passed to rotation ten of Chaghcharan PRT during a ceremony. The ceremony will be

Continued on page 17



Workers preparing to raze the church. Parishioners question the haste of the decision to demolish the church.

Update St. George Church

Shenandoah, PA

Despite the valiant efforts of St George parishioners and friends the home of the first Lithuanian parish in the United States was closed in May 2006. For

three years the parishioners worked tirelessly to have the church reopened. Eventually, they filed a lawsuit to keep the church from being razed.

On Wednesday, October 7, 2009, Judge Dolbin, Schuylkill County Courthouse claimed that there is a separation of Church and State and would not grant the Injunction to stop the demolition of St. George Church. However, on December 1, 2009, Judge Dolbin will rule on the Historical Significance of St. George Church. He will also rule on the funds for the maintenance, improvement and renovation of St. George.

It is claimed that St. George is a "Danger to the Public" and cannot be saved. The cost for demolition is \$371,000. To date the Diocese has not allowed the longtime WJP Structural Engineers and Houck Specialty Contractors to evaluate this situation. Let us hope this magnificent edifice will be spared because of its historical significance.

Submitted by Jeanne Dorr

Sources: Compiled from Internet Updates

News and Views

Continued from page 16

attended by the Minister of National Defence Rasa Jukneviene, Director General of "Caritas" Lithuania priest Robertas Grigas, and Lt. Col. Gediminas Macijauskas - Commander of the Lithuanian-led Chaghcharan PRT-10.

The campaign was organised by the tenth rotation of Chaghcharan PRT and "Caritas" Lithuania, the initiative was also supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During the campaign's span from August to September people of Lithuania brought around two thousand knitted, crocheted, and felt caps for the children of Afghanistan to wear during winter. People from Lithuania and

Lithuanians from abroad, volunteers serving in Lithuania, members of "Caritas", staffs of other religious, governmental and non-governmental organisations and institutions, and schoolchildren took part in the campaign.

Caps will be taken to Afghanistan by Chaghcharan PRT-10 who will deploy in November. Last year a campaign of a similar character was organised by PRT-8 - they took scarves knitted by Lithuanian children to Ghwr.

Winters bring abundance of snow and are really cold with temperatures as low as -40°C in the remote and mountain-surrounded province of Ghwr in the north-west of Afghanistan. Ghwr is also one of the poorest provinces in Afghanistan -

delivering international and central Government's assistance to Ghwr is a challenge due to complicated road communication. Locals living in huts made of clay often are not able to heat their homes to temperature above zero, bare-foot lightly dressed children on snow is a common sight.

Currently PRT-9 made of Gen. Romualdas Giedraitis Artillery Battalion provides security in Ghwr. In November it will be replaced the tenth rotation based on the 1st Territorial Unit of the Dainava Military District of the Lithuanian National Defence Volunteer Force, reports the press service of the National Defence Ministry.

Information Center for Homecoming Lithuanians

To Auntie Flo with admiration

White Gloves

Youthful, hopeful, anticipating hands open a box holding a pair of white gloves.

Before God with a heart and spirit of purpose, commitment, and promise, the white gloves find a snug, warm, comfortable place on my hands.

To wear with pride for service. duty, honor. In a time of war, a world war, a second world war.

I stand straight, at attention, saluting with respect, and devotion, and justice for the cause.

...I remember...I remember those white gloves as I see my Granddaughter wearing her white gloves.

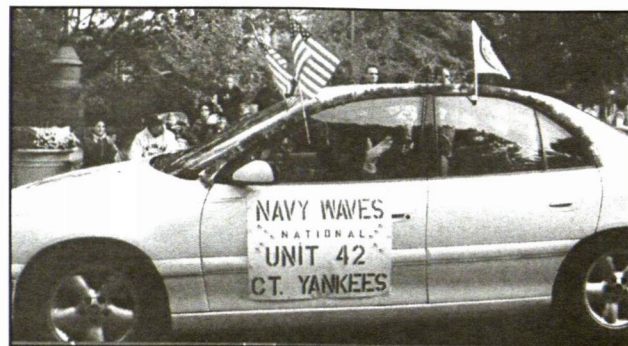
With justice for the cause, devotion, respect, she salutes, at attention, standing straight.

In a time of war, a global war, a war on terror. With honor, duty, service with pride she wears them.

On her hands, comfortable, warm and snug placed

there with promise, commitment, purpose of spirit and heart before God,

White gloves, Held in a box, Opened by her hands, Anticipating, Hopeful, Youthful



Editor's note: I received the following note and poem from Florence Morkus who lives in Connecticut. Florence is a proud veteran of World War II and a member of the "greatest generation." Thank you, Florence, for sharing these precious words with us.

Dear Jeanne,

Among the many photos on my fridge the one that stands out to me is my granddaughter, Jessica, in her Air Force uniform. She is standing Honor Guard and holding the rifle in white gloves.

When my nephew Peter's wife, Mary, recently visited I

mentioned how my granddaughter's white gloves remind me so much when I was in the US Navy during World War II and we wore white gloves with our uniforms.

Not long after I received this lovely poem, "White Gloves" composed by Mary with a photo they took of driving my car with Navy members in a Veterans' Day Parade in Hartford, CT.

I treasure this so much I want to share it with all the Navy gals who wore the white gloves.

Sincerely,
Florence

ANSWER TO TRIVIA QUESTION

Trivia Quiz on page 8

Source: Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

"In the late 14th century Grand Dukes Jogaila and Skirgaila began forming professional forces instead of calling all men to war, a class of professional warriors"- "BAJORAI" (future nobles)-was formed. In the early 15th century, Vytautas the great reformed the army of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania further: as there were not enough warriors, Vytautas relieved soldiers from taxes and labor on the land granting them *vel-damai*, dependent peasants. At first the land was given to the serving men until death (*benefice*), but during the 14th and 15th centuries most of it became patrimony, granted by privileges of the monarch. Whilst during the 14th century the Grand Duke owned

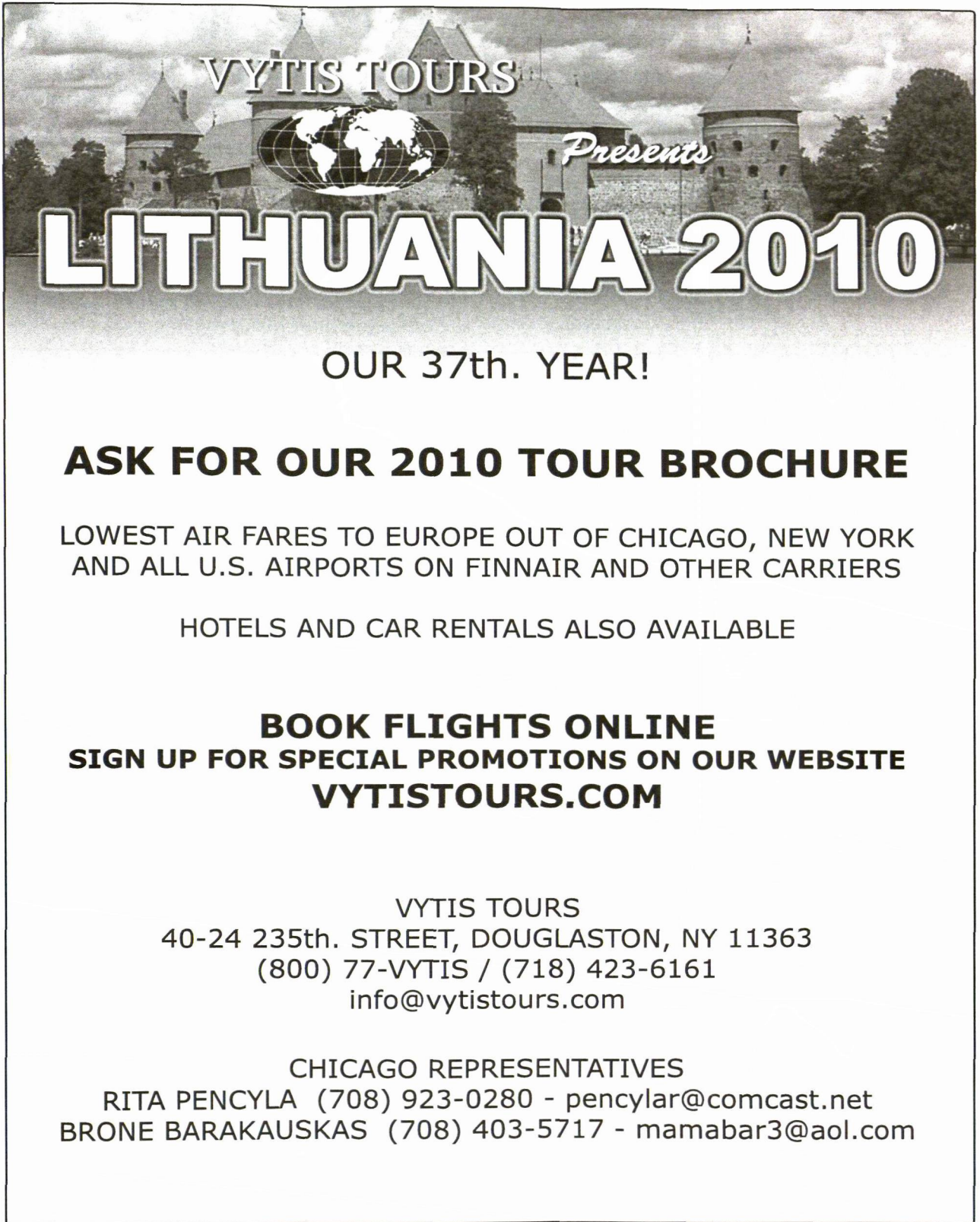
about 2/3 of the Duchy's land, by 1569 he was a direct owner of only 1/3.

In the 15th century, the noble social class was already formed in Lithuania; for quite a long time it remained open and anyone could be ennobled for services to the Grand Duke. In time, the influence of lesser nobles decreased and greater nobles acquired increasingly more power, especially during the inter-regnum fights following Vytautas death.

In the 16th century, Lithuanian nobility stopped calling themselves "BAJORIA"; they adopted the Polish term SZLACHTA (Lithuanian: SLEKTA) instead. Landlords called themselves ZIEMIONYS or ZIEMIANE.

Edward Shakalis

Edward Shakalis is a retired Electrical Engineer and a ham radio operator. He and his son Rick run "The Lithuanian Open" golf tournament.



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HOW AN OLD MAN WAITED FOR DEATH

There was once a farmer who had many children.

Time passed and his sons and daughters were all married, and the oldest son and his wife waited for him to give them his farm. But the old man was still strong and had no wish to give up farming.

Still, he did have thoughts of death and knew that sooner or later the farm would pass into his son's hands.

So off he went to see a sage and learn from him how many years of life were left to him.

The sage looked at the old man and said:

"You'll know your death has come when you have sneezed three times."

Much saddened, the old man went off home. On he walked and all he thought about was how to keep from sneezing.

He had only just come into his own front yard when he suddenly felt a tickling in his nose and gave a great sneeze!

"O Heavens me, I've only two more sneezes left!" Sighed the old man.

On the following day he went to the mill to grind grain. The dust there got into his nose and he sneezed again.

"There is nothing to be done!" Sighed the old man. "I have one last sneeze left and then my end will come."

And out he ran from the mill so as not to

sneeze for the third and last time. But the flour was ready and had to be taken away. So back he came inside again, threw the sack of flour over his shoulder and made for the door.

By that time his nose was full of dust and the old man felt that he was going to sneeze. He tried not to but could not stop himself.

"A-tishoo!" Went he.

"O Heavens me, here am I dead!" Sighed the old man, and, dropping his sack, stretched himself out on the ground.

Seeing the sack of flour, the miller's hogs came running up and began tearing at it.

The old man looked at them and sighed.

"You villains you!" Thought he. "Were I alive I'd have shown you, but what can a dead man do!"

Just then the miller came out into the yard. What was his surprise when he saw the hogs tearing at the sack of flour while its owner lay there and did nothing.

"What are you doing?" Asked he.

Said the old man in reply:

"Why, just lying here, of course! What else can I do now that I'm dead? Were I alive I'd have driven off your hogs. Do me a favor, will you, and drive them off for me."

The miller was more surprised than ever.

"Oh, so you're dead!" Said he. "How very sad that is."

He took a whip and began flogging the hogs and he sent the whip flying over the old man's back, too.

Up jumped the old man from the ground.

"Thank you for bringing me back to life," said he. "If it weren't for you I'd be dead still."

With this he heaved the sack of flour on to a wagon and drove home. And he won't hear about dying to this day!

"Source: "Tales of the Amber Sea" 1987 Raduga Publishers, Moscow

Lithuanian American Community Marketplace



Coming soon ...

... information on how to acquire various Lithuanian cultural items and other products such as DVD of the 2006 Lithuanian Song Festival in Chicago, DVD of the 2008 Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival in Los Angeles, DVD of the 2008 Lithuanian Theater Festival in Chicago and CD's of various Lithuanian artists. In the meantime, information is available from the Bridges office: Rimas Gedeika, 78 Mark Twain Dr., Hamilton Sq., NJ 08690 email: GedeikaR@aol.com



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Calendar of Events for Nov.²¹ Dec., 2009 - Jan./Feb., 2010

Please verify all events as places & times are subject to change.

NOVEMBER

November 1, 2009 -11:00am
Rudenėlio Šventė/Fall Fest Bear Creek Park, pavilion #3 - Volleyball, relay games, and singing songs (accompanied by a guitar or two). Pot-luck event so please bring food enough for your family. Please bring charcoal and skewers if you plan on using the BBQ grill. Info: www.houstonlithuanians.org
 Sponsor: Houston Chapter of the LAC

November 2, 2009 - 12 noon
All Souls Remembrance
 Mass will be held for our dearly departed members of our community at Our Lady of Assumption Church, 76 Wianno Ave., Osterville, MA. After Mass we will meet at St. Francis Cemetery in Centerville for prayers and the traditional lighting of candles at the gravesites of our members. Info: Regina Petritis, regina-pet@comcast.net.
 Sponsor: Cape Cod Chapter of the LAC

November 7-8, 2009 - 12 Noon - 6pm
Lithuanian Festival (Mugė)
 Lithuanian Music Hall
 2715 E. Allegheny Ave., Phila., PA 19134
 Admission - \$1.00
 Lithuanian food, music, vendors and much more. Fun for the entire family
 Info: ewashofsky@verizon.net.

November 17, 2009 - 7 pm

Philadelphia Amber Roots
 Lithuanian Heritage Club Meeting
 Lithuanian Music Hall
 2715 E. Allegheny Ave. Phila., PA
Use side door on Tilton St.
 Info: milliemarks@aol.com
 or 610-497-5469

November 21, 2009 -10-4 pm
Margarita's Mugė - Lithuanian Holiday Marketplace - Lithuanian Foods, Arts, Crafts and Music.
 Lenexa Community Center
 Lenexa, KS.

November 21, 2009 - 7pm
CONCERT - Virgis Stakėnas, Country music performer
 Lithuanian Club, 877 E. 185th St.
 Cleveland, Ohio Info: 216-531-2131
 Sponsor: Lithuanian Athletic League of North America

November 22, 2009 - 1 pm
CONCERT - Virgis Stakėnas, Country music performer
 Divine Providence Church Hall
 25335 W. 9 Mile Rd.
 Southfield, MI 48033
 Info: 248-854-6677

November 27, 2009 - 8 pm
CONCERT - Virgis Stakėnas, Country music performer
 "Kunigaičių Užėiga" (Grand Dukes)
 6312 S. Harlem Ave., Summit, IL 60601
 Info: 708-594-5622

November 29, 2009 - 1:00 pm
LITHUANIAN CHRISTMAS TREE

LUNCHEON

St. Elizabeth Seton Parish,
 9728 W. Palmeras Drive, Sun City, AZ
 Traditional food, Christmas music, Christmas tree decorated with Lithuanian straw ornaments & activities for children
 Info: mashoban@yahoo.com.
 Sponsor: Arizona Chapter of the LAC

DECEMBER

December 6, 2009 -3-6pm
 KC Lithuanian Community Christmas Party **Kūčios** Table Traditional Christmas Eve Dinner - Folkdancing, Music, Games. Davis Hall, Wyandotte County Lake Kansas City, KS.
 Info: www.kclith.org
 Sponsor: Kansas City Chapter of the LAC

December 6, 2009 - **Kūčios**
 Transfiguration Church Maspeth, NY
 Reservations: 718-849-5725

December 6, 2009 - 2:00 pm
 Lithuanian Traditional
"Kūčios" McKeon Center
 Mission San Luis Rey
 4070 Mission Ave., Oceanside, CA 92054
 Info: www.lithsd.org
 Sponsor: San Diego Chapter of the LAC

December 6, 2009 - 1 pm
CONCERT, Virgis Stakėnas, Country music performer
 Lithuanian House, Toronto, Canada
 Info: 416-769-1266

December 8, 2009 - 7 to 9 pm
 (Tuesday) Annual **Kūčios** Bring a

Lithuanian dish
 Lithuanian Music Hall
 2715 E. Allegheny Ave Phila., PA
 Use side door on Tilton Street
 Info: milliemarks@aol.com
 or 610-497-5469

December 11, 2009 (Friday)
Lasagna Take-Out Dinner
 4-6 pm (pick up) To order please call 412-885-7232 by December 7
 Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God - Pittsburgh, PA.

December 12, 2009 - 2:00 pm
Christmas Social
 Fraternal Order of Eagles Hall
 1151 S Galena Street
 (just west of Mississippi & Havana)
 Denver, CO 80247
 Info: www.coloradolithuanians.org
 Sponsor: Colorado Chapter of the LAC

JANUARY 2010

January 22 (Friday)
LITHUANIAN HERITAGE NIGHT WITH THE PHOENIX SUNS -US Airways Center, 201 E. Jefferson Street, Phoenix
 Come celebrate our Lithuanian heritage with the Phoenix Suns as they take on the Chicago Bulls. This is a great opportunity to enjoy the national sport of Lithuania with family and friends. Our special package. Tickets are \$34 each plus a \$5 handling fee. Orders directly - David Segal (602) 379-7593 or dsegal@suns.com.
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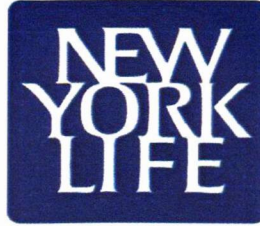
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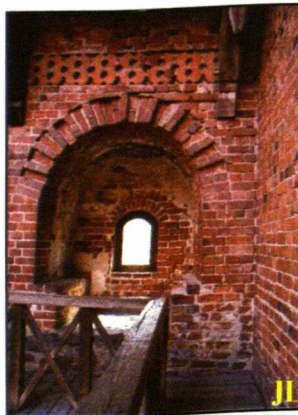
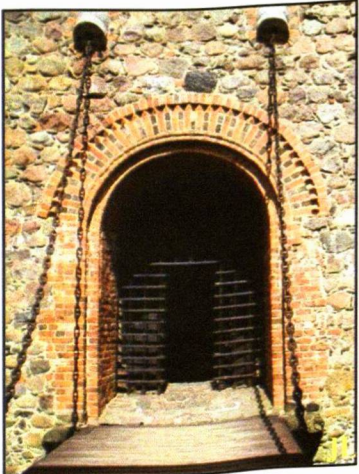
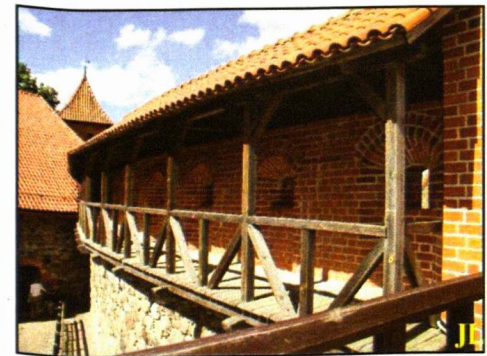
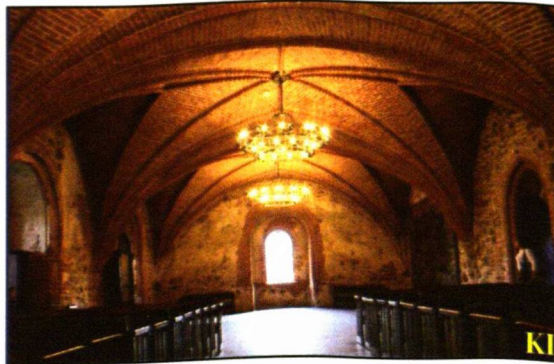
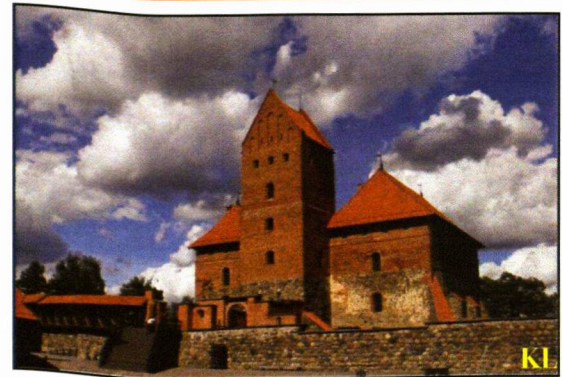
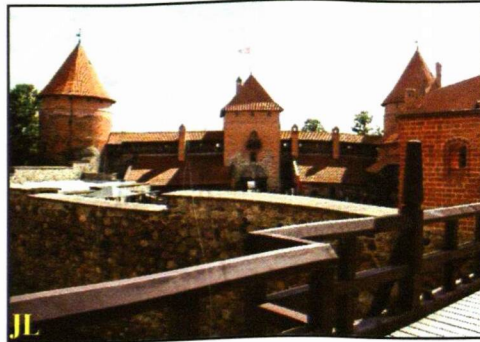
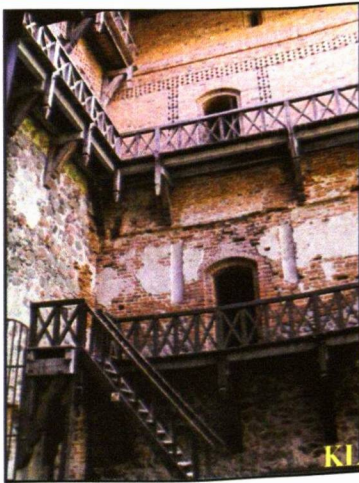
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November 1-All Saints Day,
November 11-Veterans' Day

November 2-All Souls Day
November 26-Thanksgiving Day