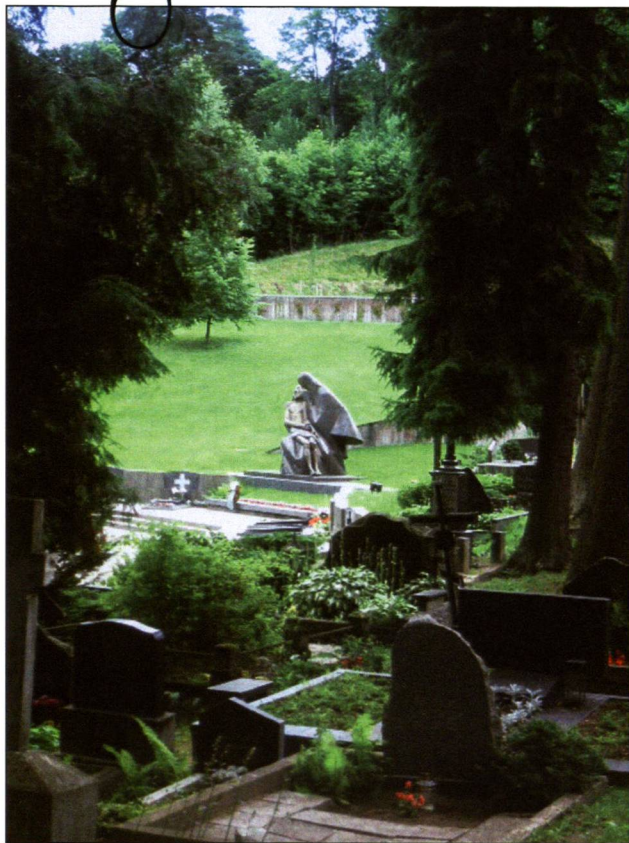


bridges

1

abc.



november 2010

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

As we approach Thanksgiving I always have a good feeling. It's not a holiday filled with commercialism, but rather a day to reflect on what we have, rather than what we don't have. We have so many things to be grateful for with friends and family. Our gratitude takes in an even greater realm, a free and democratic Lithuania. Would we have thought it possible even twenty five years ago? But we also should reflect on what the world lacks; countries longing for freedom, clean drinking water and healthy children to name only a few things we take for granted every day. In our own America we see people unable to find jobs and others losing their homes. So while we are grateful for what has been given to us, let us not forget others who are not as fortunate. We must especially not forget to give thanks for the one thing money cannot buy, good health. The Bridges staff is thankful for you, our subscribers, to our wonderful and dedicated writers and to our sponsors. We are so grateful to the people whose names you will never see in Bridges. They work behind the scenes helping with technical support, answering questions for us in fields where they are the experts and supporting us in every way they can to make each issue a success.

A very special thank you to our military who are currently serving all over the world and also to our proud veterans. Happy Veterans Day!

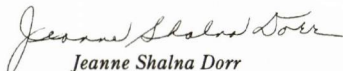
Congratulations to Holy Trinity Church in Hartford, Connecticut. In October the parish celebrated its 110th anniversary. That certainly is quite a fete after reading so much about parish closings. Congratulations are also in order to St. Peter Church in South Boston which was very close to being closed. The parish is not only alive and well, but thriving. It had the highest number of active parishioners attending the "Arise" program in the Boston Archdiocese. This Lithuanian parish topped approximately 290 other parishes.

I would like to encourage you to give a subscription to Bridges for the person on your Christmas list who has everything. They will have this gift for ten months. It doesn't stop giving after Christmas. Are you really trying to think of something different as a gift alternative? Please check out our Market Place page. Surely, there is something for even the hardest to please.

We would like to thank the Lithuanian Foundation for their financial support of Bridges. This helps us reach more people in keeping our culture and traditions alive.

The Bridges staff wishes you and your families a Thanksgiving holiday filled with happiness.

"Thou who hast given so much to me, give me one more thing... a grateful heart!" George Herbert



Jeanne Shalna Dorr

Lithuanian American Community Chapters

THE BOSTON LITHUANIANS

Lithuanians began arriving in Boston around 1880 – 1890, with a dramatic influx around 1904. Some Lithuanian immigrants were fleeing conscription in the Russian Army, others were fleeing persecution for participation in revolutionary activities in 1905. Still others came to America looking for jobs. Some returned home after saving up what they needed, but most found a home here and stayed. A second wave of immigrants arrived after World War II, around 1949-1951. The third wave of immigrants continues to increase the Lithuanian population in the Boston area.

<http://boston.lietuviu-bendruomene.org/index.html>

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

Seattle boasts a small but active Lithuanian community that was established in the 1960's. Our community's independent individuals treasure their Lithuanian heritage and customs. We maintain close ties with the Latvian and

Estonian communities and together support the Baltic Studies Program at the University of Washington.

The Seattle Lithuanian American Community encourages other Lithuanian organizations, traditions and events, such as: VASARIO 16 MINĖJIMAS - Lithuanian Day, LIETUTIS/LINAS/LANKAS/LAŠUTIS - our Lithuanian folk dance groups, TULPĖ TIMES - a quarterly newsletter in Lithuanian and English, LANKAS FAMILY CAMP - a weeklong camp and cultural experience for children, ŪKANA - a song and music ensemble recreating the sounds of Lithuania, DAUGHTERS OF LITHUANIA - a women's charitable organization that sponsors the annual BLUEBERRY PICNIC - a family favorite, CONCERTS featuring local and visiting Lithuanians, EGLUTĖ - St. Nicholas celebrates Christmas with the children, ŠIAUD- INUKAI- Lithuanian Christmas tree decoration ornaments.

<http://seattle.lietuviu-bendruomene.org>

BRIDGES

Lithuanian American News Journal
USPS 017131 - Published 10 times per year
(Jan./Feb. & Jul./Aug. combined).

Address of publication is:

LAC, Inc./BRIDGES,

3906 Lakeview Dr., Racine, WI. 53403

BRIDGES

is the official publication of the
Lithuanian American Community, Inc.

National Executive Board

2715 E. Allegheny Ave., Phila., PA 19134

Tel: 800- 625 -1170

Fax: 856-428-6014

E-mail: LithuanianUSA@yahoo.com

BRIDGES Consultants

Jeanne Dorr Editor

Gema Kreivenas Art Director/Production

Rimas Gedeika Treasurer & Subscription Manager

Copyright ©2010 Lithuanian American Community, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of the publication may be reproduced without written permission of the publisher. All statements & opinions, including product claims, are those of the organization/advertiser making those statements or claims. The publisher does not adopt, or put forth, any such statement or claim as his own, & any such statement or claim does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the publisher.

Address all editorial correspondence to:

BRIDGES

Jeanne Dorr

4 Shrewsbury Yard,
Riverton, NJ 08077-1038

E-Mail: Jeanneshalna@aol.com

For subscription & advertising information,
please contact:

LAC, Inc./BRIDGES,

Rimas Gedeika
78 Mark Twain Dr.,
Hamilton Sq., NJ 08690

Subscription rate is \$20.00 annually, 2 full years for \$38.00 (US Mail serviced subscribers). Subscriptions to other addresses are (US \$35.00), payable in advance (US funds). Periodicals postage paid at Racine, WI & additional locations.

Contact us on the Internet at:

<http://www.lithuanian-american.org>

Postmaster: Send any address correction &/or changes to:

LAC, Inc./BRIDGES,

Rimas Gedeika
78 Mark Twain Dr.,
Hamilton Sq., NJ 08690



**Lithuanian-American
Community**

CONTACT INFORMATION:

WEBSITE

WWW.LITHUANIAN-AMERICAN.ORG

TELEPHONE

800-625-1170

in this issue**2 editorial**

Letter from the Editor
Jeanne Dorr

2 lac Chapters

*The Boston
and Seattle,
Lithuanians*

4 embassy news

**ŽYGIMANTAS
PAVILIONIS**
*New Ambassador of
the Republic of
Lithuania*

3 reflections

"Turkey See,
Turkey Do"
Ina Bertulyte Dorr

2 here at home

ARISE/KELKIS
Anthony J. Shalna

8 cultural

Vytas Jonas
Bakšys
Milda Richardson

9 reflections

**THE LITHUANIAN'S
HOME**
Part III
*English translation and
adaptation
by Gloria O'Brien*

9 reflections

All Souls' Day
*Danutė Brazytė
Bindokienė*

10 history

History of the
17th Lithuanian
Lancer Regiment
Henry L. Gaidis

12 photo album

Mosėdis,
Lithuania

15 education

LISS Heritage
Luke Murphy

16 reflections

Part V
**IN THE DEATH-
CAMPS &
BANISHMENT
REMINISCENCES**
JONAS KREIVENAS

18 sports

The Road to
Racing in
America
Rimas Gedeika

21 calendar

*Cover: *The beautiful Antakalnis Cemetery in Vilnius.*
Photo by Julie Skurdenis, Bronxville, NY.

TRIVIA QUESTION

(No. 28)

Goddess

Author: Edward Shakalis

In Lithuanian mythology, who is known as the
goddess of destiny?

(a) Lada (b) Laima (c) Gabija

Answer to Trivia on page 6



ŽYGMANTAS PAVILIONIS

New Ambassador of the Republic of Lithuania

Biographic sketch

Ambassador Pavilionis joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1993, where he was instrumental in achieving Lithuanian accession into NATO and the European Union. Between 1993 and 2009, he has held various high-level positions in the Lithuanian MFA, most focused on Lithuania's relationship with the European Union. Most recently Ambassador Pavilionis acted as Ambassador –at-Large and Chief

Coordinator for Lithuania's Presidency of the Community of Democracies and Chief Coordinator for Transatlantic relations. He has a Master's Degree in Philosophy and Postgraduate Diploma in International Relations and Doctoral Studies. He pursued both degrees in Vilnius University, Lithuania.

Pavilionis is married to Lina Pavilionienė and has four sons.

Courtesy of the Lithuanian Embassy

"Turkey See, Turkey Do"

Ina Bertulyte Bray

It was spring in the early 1940s, war time in German-occupied Klaipėda. My parents lived on the outskirts of that city, in Giruliai, a new development carved out of the woods. But the 1939 occupation had made us local Lithuanians into foreigners, if not enemies, and since Eastern Europeans in the Nazi lexicon were considered "Untermenschen" i.e. subhuman, the oppression was harsh.

By that time, World War II was raging on both the Western and Eastern fronts, draining Germany of manpower and resources. The lack of food had become a major problem throughout the country, but for us non-Germans, the government-issued ration coupons barely provided enough to stay alive. Whatever the nationality, people had to use all their ingenuity to supplement what was officially available. Meat in particular was scarce. Stores rarely carried it, and when they did it was instantaneously bought out.

Government policy or not, my younger brother and I were growing children and our bodies needed protein. It seemed that in my early years almost every disease ever discovered had to try out what it could do to me. You name it, I had it: Diphtheria, Whooping Cough, Polio, TB, Measles, and a number of others. We were both skinny, frequently anemic. My mother worried constantly about our health, yet she could find no way to get a bigger official meat allotment for us kids.

Then someone suggested a solution: Turkeys are easy to raise, she was told, and provide plenty of meat. Just because she had never raised these enormous birds before - she was an elegant, beautiful city girl - did not mean that she could not try. Thanks to her resourcefulness, already there were geese, hens and a rooster wandering around in our yard, providing eggs and the very occasional roast. Adding a few turkeys should not be problem.

But before we talk of turkeys, you might ask, why didn't my mother increase the size of the flock of hens or geese? Government policy again: One was allowed only a limited number of fowl of each kind. Once the flock exceeded the limit, you had to deliver a certain number of eggs and hens or geese to the government distribution center. And to ensure that you complied, an inspector occasionally made a surprise visit, counted your flock, and confiscated the "overage." We neighborhood kids were given strict instructions by our par-

ents that, should we see this inspector (and we all knew who he was), we were to immediately alert other kids. Then we were to dash home, grab a specific number of hens, stuff them into the grain bin, and lock the lid. The hens now would find themselves in "fodder paradise", happily and very quietly pecking away, and would be safely hidden until the danger passed.

Back to turkeys. To expand the diversity of her fowl, somewhere my mother acquired six turkey chicks. No mother turkey to raise them? Never fear. A goose would fill the role just fine. After all, it was spring time and one of our geese had just hatched her own goslings. Adding a few darker cooler chicks to her collection of yellow fluff balls should be no problem. And it wasn't. We kids would laugh watching momma goose waddle ahead of the brood of cheeping hatchlings, with turkey chicks pretending to be goslings. Turkeys are notorious for their stupidity.

Goslings grew, turkey chicks grew. They bonded, and in a bunch moved merrily around the yard. All went well as long as the sun was shining and we were home. The feeble-brained, half-grown turkey chicks, however, did not realize - since no one had taught them - that rain and puddles were detrimental to their health. In fact water could make them very sick, and that ignorance nearly did them in.

This is how it happened: One day, my mother went to town. Since it was summer and vacation time, my brother and I went along. The geese, the blended goose family and the flock of hens, she left locked in the yard so they would be safe from foxes who might slink in from the woods across the road. The train would bring us back before dark.

We were still in the city when almost without warning the sky turned black and dumped buckets of rain on us. We knew that at home some of our "feathered livestock", i.e. the hens and rooster instinctively would dash for cover. But the geese, and mother goose and her goslings in this deluge would feel in seventh heaven. Water on their feathers and puddles everywhere, what a chance to polish their swimming skills!

The turkeys, however, would be another story. Watching the clouds gathering, and no train scheduled to take us home, my mother was almost frantic knowing what might happen to her precious turkey chicks.

When the train finally pulled into our station, we raced home. I still vividly remember the six sopping "teen-age" turkeys, with their dark tails drooping to the ground, standing on the edge of a huge puddle watching a bunch of goslings frolicking in the muddy water.

No doubt, there vanished my mother's visions of mounds of roast meat, nutritious soups, contentedly munching children, and, of course, feathers for new pillows. But the look on her face said that she simply would not let the turkey chicks die.

She scooped them all up into her soft shawl and took them to the kitchen. Out came a huge pot into which she quickly packed a pillow. Then she got some aspirin, and – vodka. One by one, the turkeys had to say “aa ah” and deftly my mother stuffed a small part of a tablet down their gullet, followed by an eyedropper-load of vodka. Her words were “if they are going to die, they might as well die happy.” My brother and I watched wide-eyed! She then arranged the turkey chicks on the pillow in the pot, covered their by now limp bodies with a towel, leaving the long necks dangling almost lifelessly over the edge. She shoved the pot into the barely warm oven. To me they all looked hopelessly washed up, dead.

We left the kitchen to do other things. It must have been an hour later when suddenly my mother remembered the turkeys. She tore into the kitchen, with us close behind. Expecting little corpses in the pillowed pot, she flung the oven door open: “Cheep! Cheep! Cheep!” Greeted her. Six small wobbly heads tried to hold themselves upright, obviously totally drunk, but also quite alive and wondering where the hell they were!

I don't know whether they ever repeated their water experience. At least I never witnessed one again. But as summer turned to fall, I do remember some delicious dinners, courtesy of these now fully grown, but once inebriated turkeys. Whenever a goose or a hen in my mother's menagerie had to meet its untimely end, invariably I cried. Why, these had been my loyal play-

mates. Together we had romped around the backyard, we had played games in the sandbox. How many buttons the geese had pulled off my dress or jacket when I was building sandcasts, I could not even count. Those backyard birds had given me so many hours of fun and enjoyment. How could I possibly consume them?

The turkeys, however, were quite another matter. No games with them. No chasing or be chased by them without being nipped, and that hurt! When they had to go, their extremely limited intelligence and equally dull personalities elicited little sympathy from me. The taste of the feast they provided, far outweighed any attachment I felt to them.

Ina Bertulyte Bray is a past president of the Washington State Lithuanian American Community and a former member of the National Council of the Lithuanian American Community.



Happy
Thanksgiving!

ANSWER TO TRIVIA QUESTION

Trivia Quizon page 3

**Source: *Of Gods & Holidays, the Baltic Herita*
Edited by Jonas Triinkunas**

“Laima - goddess of destiny, the all knowing. A superior goddess, common to all Balts, was Laime, the goddess of fate. She dispensed human happiness and unhappiness, as well as determining the duration of a person's life. She controlled not only human life but also that of plants and other living things. Her name is inseparable from laime, “happiness”.

Fate usually appears in the shape of this one deity, but is referred to in stories as three or even seven

goddesses of fate, analogous to the Greek moirae and German Nornen.

In Lithuanian songs she is sometimes called by a double name Laima-Dalia, “happiness-fate”. The Latvians also had Dekla who was very sympathetic to humans, took care of small children, and grieved over the birth of a baby who was destined to have an unhappy life. Laime, though standing close to the earthly life, is related in her functions to Dievas, the sky god and the Sun”.

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

ARISE/KELKIS

Anthony J. Shalna

St. Peter Lithuanian Parish leads all Parishes in the Archdiocese of Boston in attendance in the ARISE/KELKIS program.

St. Peter Lithuanian Parish in South Boston earned a unique distinction in regard to the concluded Spring 2010 ARISE/KELKIS program sponsored by the Archdiocese of Boston. St. Peter Parish had the highest percentage of active parishioners attending the program out of approximately 290 Parishes in the Archdiocese.

The ARISE/KELKIS program was adopted by the Archdiocese to share and strengthen the faith of the parishioners enabling them to see the need to learn more about their faith.

St. Peter Parish added two groups to the program this past season, one being a young adult group and the other consisting of parents of the Confirmation students. One attendee stated that she has grown closer to the members of her group and has established a strong bond with them at church functions. Another claimed that attending ARISE/KELKIS helped her to feel pride again in her Catholic faith during these difficult times for the Church.

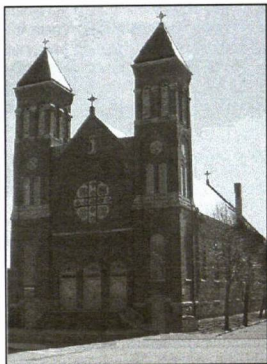
The groups were also fortunate that our pastor, Fr. Stephen Zukas was able to attend many of the sessions and lend his support.

All of the groups came up with social justice actions they felt they could best address. Some of the areas consisted of one group of retirees compiling a list of all the housebound parishioners and also those in nursing homes, so they were able to be in touch with them.

Others assembled baskets of food and "plotkelės" for delivery during the Christmas season to those unable to get to Church and to assure them that they would be remembered in our prayers. Our parish is also collecting food for the food pantry of a neighboring Parish in a collaborative effort.

With great satisfaction in our accomplishment, the Parishioners look forward to the new Fall program of ARISE/KELKIS.

Anthony Shalna and his wife Joanne are members of the St. Peter Parish Parochial Council. He is Clerk of the Corporation: Friends of St. Peter Lithuanian Parish and is retired from Honeywell Fire Safety. President of the Southeastern Signalmen of Massachusetts, Past President of the Automatic Fire Alarm Association - New England and a regular contributor to the Journal of the International Municipal Signal Association.



St. Peter Lithuanian Church



Kelkis attendees near the altar at St. Peter Church late last spring.

Photo by Aldona Lingertat

Vytas Jonas Bakšys

Milda Richardson



New Englanders who celebrated our nation's birthday on July 4, 2010, with the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra, Keith Lockhart, conductor, were treated to the Boston premier of *The Dream Lives On. A Portrait of the Kennedy Brothers*. This stirring composition by Peter Boyer for narrators, chorus and orchestra, with text adapted by Lynn Ahrens from various Kennedy speeches, was performed against a dramatic backdrop of an orange and lavender sunset over the Charles River.

Vytas J. Bakšys performed the piano and celeste parts of the orchestral score and participated in the recording of *The Dream Lives On* for the BSO Classics label. Vytas is also the pianist that many saw on television for the rendering of *Impossible Dream* with Broadway star Brian Stokes Mitchell. The *Impossible Dream* was performed during the celebration of the life of Senator Ted Kennedy, held at the Kennedy Library on August 28, 2009, the evening before the Senator's funeral Mass in Boston.

Vytas earned all of his academic degrees in piano performance and was elected to Phi Kappa Lambda: The Doctor of Musical Arts in 1991 and Master of Music with High Honors, 1983, both from SUNY at Stony Brook; Bachelor of Music with Distinction in 1982 from New England Conservatory of Music. His principal teachers were Angel Ramon Rivera, Victor Rosenbaum and Gilbert Kalish. He began attending the New England Conservatory

Preparatory School at the age of 5 and gave his first piano recital at the age of 7.

Vytas has had extensive solo and ensemble performances in North America, Europe and Asia. Vytas received critical attention for his performance of "Simple Gifts" by Aaron Copland with the Boston Symphony Chamber Players. Richard Dyer, music critic for the *Boston Globe*, wrote:

The best tune, "Simple Gifts," on which Copland rings some delightful changes, comes from Shaker tradition. Older members of the Shaker community at Sabbathday Lake in Maine recall it as a fast tune for dancing. Copland's take is more solemn and sentimental... the players — Vytas Bakšys in the crucial piano part — cradled the music tenderly and made it sing.

From 1992 to the present Vytas has been a keyboardist for the Boston Symphony Orchestra, James Levine, director; Seiji Ozawa, laureate; and the Boston Pops Orchestra, Keith Lockhart, director; John Williams, laureate. Vytas has been associated with the Tanglewood Music Center since 1989, and appears as a guest artist with a wide range of ensembles such as Boston Symphony Chamber Players, Boston Musica Viva, Boston Secession, Rivers School Conservatory, Concord Chamber Music Society, and the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra.

He has also written about a dozen compositions and numerous transcriptions for piano, voice and other instruments. The premier of his composition for four hands *Goulash Mélange*, commissioned by the contemporary music ensemble Boston Secession, took place at the Tanglewood Music Festival in August 2005, and was written up in the November 2005 issue of *Bridges*.

Vytas was born in Boston and is the youngest son of Viktoras and Sofija Bakšys, who immigrated to Boston in 1949. He is married to Sandra Nortier, a violist. Their daughter Emilija attends the Woodward School for Girls. Emilija began performing in *Kaziuko Mugė* and *Eglutė* plays with the Lithuanian Girl Scouts and the Boston Lithuanian School. She currently sings with the Cambridge Family Opera. This summer she is traveling through Europe as an ambassador with the People to People program.



Kiemas - The Courtyard

Whether a traditional or roadside kaima, or a single establishment (vienkiemis), each sodyba had a courtyard - the kiemas: big or small, it was the open space between buildings. Through the courtyard ran paths to all the farm buildings and the well. Most often, this yard was divided by a fence, separating the "švarusis kiemas" - the space between the dwelling and the granary - from the

THE LITHUANIAN'S HOME

Part III

Author: Angelė Vyšniauskaitė -

English translation and adaptation by Gloria O'Brien

working yard (*ūkinis kiemas*), that was the space between the house and the barn. The *švarusis kiemas* included a flower garden (*rūtų darželis*) beneath the house's south and eastern windows, also separately fenced. The working yard was securely fenced off, to prevent loose livestock from straying into the clean yard. Some sodybas in Žemaitija had a large pond (*kūdra*) just outside the kiemas, stocked with several kinds of fish, which served well for feeding guests, or for the more important fast days. Sometimes, in older days, this pond was situated just outside the barn and within the working yard; however, sodybas of newer construction completely eliminated this feature and it is no longer found.

Lithuanians in Lithuania Minor (Prussia), escorting a departed to the cemetery, would carry the coffin out of the house, and set it down on the ground, to allow the relatives another chance to mourn their loss. That was the departed one's last farewell to his native land, his homestead, familiar to him since his birth and childhood, where he ran and

played and worked all the days of his life. This custom spread and continued for many years, through the 20th century, and the coffin with the departed was brought to rest on the ground beside the house, even though the reason for doing so was forgotten. Most often, it was an opportunity for taking photographs.

The cleanliness and orderliness of the kiemas was an indicator of the householder's worth, and his family's soundness. Each Spring, most often before Easter, they would carefully sweep about the garden, barn, and threshing-floor, setting their pathways in order with chipped stones. Not just before holidays, but also every Saturday evening, the girls would put the gardens in order, and the householder would sweep all paths and sprinkle them with fresh sand. Such attention to one's natural surroundings may not be seen today.

Gloria Kivytaitė O'Brien is a frequent contributor to Bridges. She grew up in Brooklyn, Annunciation Parish.

Gloria can be contacted at Senaboba@aol.com.

**Art work from book "LITHUANIA My Heritage"*

All Souls' Day

Since days of old, the Lithuanian nation has believed in the afterlife. In paradise of heaven the souls of the dead lived just like the living: they used the same tools, weapons and articles. They were joyful or sad, happy or unhappy. Written accounts have survived from the 14th and 15th centuries stating that in autumn (probably the end of October or the beginning of November) Lithuanians celebrated a major feast during which they paid special tribute to their dead.

This ancient memorial holiday was transferred to All Souls' Day, also celebrated at the beginning of November, the 2nd. The feast gathered rapid acceptance in Lithuania but its rituals (as those of other feasts) still contain old customs and traditions.

People knew and believed it necessary to pray for all the dead on All Souls' Day ((Velinies), not merely for loved ones and relatives but especially for those whom no one remembers. The country folk believed that all souls are released from Purgatory on All Souls' night, they no longer need to suffer at least for that night.

In many places, processions to the cemetery were held on the eve of All Souls' Day. The marchers sang hymns, prayed the rosary and carried a lit candle. At the cemetery, a brief service was conducted for the dead and afterwards the candles were placed on the graves. People tried to light a candle and pray for those whose graves were unkempt and unlit.

*Lithuanian Customs and Traditions
Danutė Brazytė Bindokienė*

History of the 17th Lithuanian Lancer Regiment

Henry L. Gaidis

Without question the most romantic era of European history surely occurred during the Napoleonic period. Although bloody beyond question, the Napoleonic Wars can be considered an extension of the chivalric era of the Knights of old and the last of the gentleman's war where two men frequently stood facing each other in eye to eye combat. Famous paintings depict the historic charges such as the British Scots Grey's at Waterloo and the Light Brigade at Balaclava hang in museums and have been the topics of countless movies. Unfortunately, most histories are written by the victors who only glorify their own historic deeds.

The great deeds of the vanquished are generally relegated to just foot notes in obscure text. As a result such deeds of glory are today only known to a handful of historians or military buffs who take an interest in such obscured topics. Such has been the case of the numerous deeds of glory preformed by the Lithuanian soldiers who fought and died for Napoleon in quest of a dream of liberating their homeland from foreign occupation.

Few historians and still even fewer Lithuanians are aware of the part played by the Lithuanian soldier during the Napoleonic Wars. Thousands of Lithuanians fought and died for Napoleon in a vain hope of liberating their country from Russian occupation. Most of these heroes died in nameless engagements trying to save Napoleon's Grand Army during its epic 1812 retreat from Moscow. Still one Lithuanian Napoleonic regiment rose to a place of prominence as well respected as any British, French, German, and Russian unit of the period. It is little doubt that the 17th Lithuanian Lancer Regiment formed during Napoleon's 1812 Russian Campaign was and is still worthy of that honor. The below paragraphs briefly recount the history of the most famous Lithuanian military unit which served in the Napoleonic Wars.

The history of this Lithuanian Regiment has largely been preserved due to the fact that the son of the unit's original commander, Count Joseph Tyszkiewicz, wrote a history of the unit entitled the *Historie de 17me Regiment de Cavalerie Polonoise (1812-1814)*. This history published in Cracovie, Poland in 1904 documenting the distinguished military



Badge - 1812 - 17th Lancer Regiment - Vytyis - Helm Plate. Gaidis Collection



17th Lithuanian Lancer Regiment - 1812 Regimental Seal

record of this unit has allowed the exploits of the unit to live in history. The following passages represent a brief summary of Count Tyszkiewicz's regimental history combined with various articles and books written subsequently to that work.

On July 13, 1812, Napoleon decreed that Lithuania form four cavalry regiments with their regimental numbers to be a continuation of the numbers in use by the Duchy of Warsaw. As a result, these Lithuanian formed infantry regiments were assigned numbers 17 through 20. The first of these Lithuanian cavalry regiments was therefore designated as the 17th Lithuanian Infantry Regiment and the unit's recruitment depot was established at Kupiskis. Napoleon appointed Count Michael Tyszkiewicz, a former cadet officer in the Army of the Duchy of Warsaw, as the Colonel of the new regiment. A number of the junior regimental officers had formerly served in the 2nd Polish Lancer Regiment of the Duchy of Warsaw.

Recruitment for the new regiment was conducted from among the local population of the counties of Wilna, Zawiley, Braslaw, Wilkomierz, Uptia, Rosyeynie, Szawke, and Telsze. Colonel Tyszkiewicz was apparently very successful with his recruitment efforts for by early August 1812, he reported to the Lithuanian Provisional Government that his regiment had been formed and was ready for duty. By December 18, 1812, the 17th Lithuanian Lancer Regiment was composed of 500 officers, non-commissioned officers, and troopers.

The regiment's senior officer consisted of Colonel Count Michael Tyszkiewicz the Regimental Commander; Major Antoine Gedroy, Adjutant-Major until he assumed command of the 21st Lithuania Infantry Regiments; Adjutants 1st Lieutenants Jan Bochanowicz and Piotr Fiorentyni; Chefs d' escadron Captain Adam Strowski who later served as Major and Lieutenant Colonel and Captain and later Major Adam Soltan and Surgeon Franciszek Kwiatkowski. Regimental Squadron Officers were Lieutenants Bilewicz, Julian Lebkowski, Antoni Pryami, Walenty Walecki, Zylewicz, Jozef Chyrosz, Antoni Kopunski, Michal Korbut, Augustyn Kurdzikowski, Michal Nester, and Bogumil Pietraszewski.

While still in training, the 17th Lithuanian Lancers learned of Napoleon's tragic retreat from Moscow. Due to the urgency of the situation, the 17th Lithuanian Lancers were immediately sent northward to join Macdonald's forces then withdrawing from Latvia through Samogitia towards Königsberg. Official French records, dated December 18, 1812, indicated that the 17th Lithuanian Lancers at that time numbered some 500 officers, non-commissioned officers, and troopers. Other Lithuanian units, joining Macdonald's column were Colonel Rajewski's 19th Lithuanian Lancers, contingents of Lithuanian mounted gendarmes, and Plater's Chasseurs à Pied.

During Macdonald's retreat, the troopers of the 17th and 19th Lithuanian Lancer Regiments were ordered to protect the rear and flanks of his column from Cossack attacks. These soldiers fought with such bravery and determination that upon the column's arrival in Königsberg, the two Lithuanian cavalry regiments, unlike the other retreating Lithuanian

formations, was retained in East Prussia. There, the regiments continued fighting rear guard actions against the advancing Russian forces.

During the period from December 1812 to February 1813, the 17th Lithuanian Lancers were engaged in numerous skirmishes with the Russians. The regiment took part in fights on December 28, 1812, at Tilze, on December 29, 1812, at Labiau, on December 30, 1812, at Krolewccen, on January 19, 1813, at Schwerynie, and on February 4, 1813, at Brandenburg. On February 11-12, 1812, the 17th Lancers were surprised by a large Cossack force at Zirke (Sierakowem) and as a result sustained a great number of casualties. General Ronald Giedroyc and a great many troopers were taken as prisoners. Colonel Tyszkiewicz received three lance wounds and was replaced as commander by Colonel Franciszek Brzechwa.

Other 17th Lithuanian Lancer Regiment staff officers during the 1813 German Campaign included Adjutant Major Ignacy Pruszyński and Jozef Kosłowski and Chef d'escadron Lieutenant Colonel Adam Strowski, Major Jozef Kosłowski, Major Adam Soltan and Major Count Henry Tyszkiewicz.

Even with their heavy losses, the survivors of the regiment continued in action. On March 1, 1813, some two hundred and fifty survivors of the regiment again engaged the Russians during Marshal's Davout's French withdrawal to Magdeburg. At Magdeburg, the regiment was officially assigned to Davout's French Army Corps. They had performed most admirably for the French military since their initial creation and this point was not lost on Napoleon himself. On March 31, 1813, the regiment was paid an exceptional high complement when Napoleon selected 120 members of its Lancers to replace trooper losses in his own elite 1st Polish Lancers of the Imperial Guard Regiment.

On April 20, 1813, the surviving members of the 19th Lithuanian Lancer Regiment were consolidated into the 17th Lithuanian Lancer Regiment. The reinforced 17th Lithuanian Lancer Regiment was then placed under the command of Colonel Brzechwa and the former unit officially ceased to exist. After this date, the history of the two units became the same. As a result of the consolidation Lieutenant Colonel Adam Strowski, Major Jozef Kosłowski, Major Adam Soltan, and Major Count Henry Tyszkiewicz, became the regiment's four Chefs d'escadron.

On May 29, 1813, the reorganized 17th Lithuanian Lancer Regiment had an official strength of 43 officers and 410 non-commissioned officers and troopers present for duty. To this number one can add another 6 officers and 159 NCOs and troopers convalescing from their wounds. In addition, the regiment also had another 5 officers and 400 troopers waiting at Gdansk for horses and equipment. These troopers would later join the regiment when additional mounts became available.



Print - 17th Lithuanian Lancers
by Bronislaw Gembarzewski (1872 - 1941)

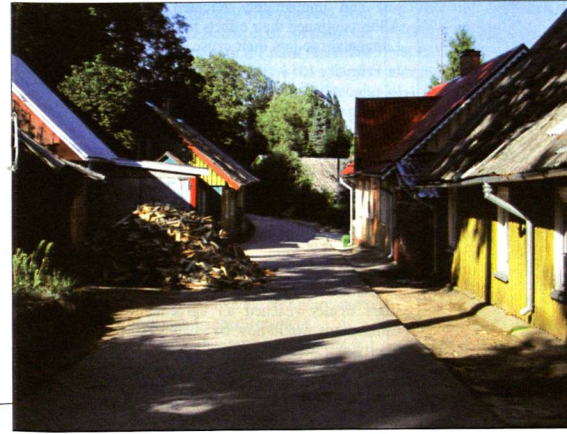
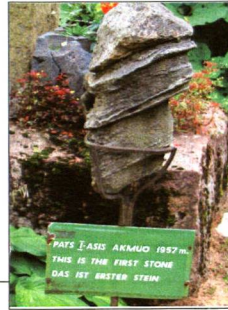
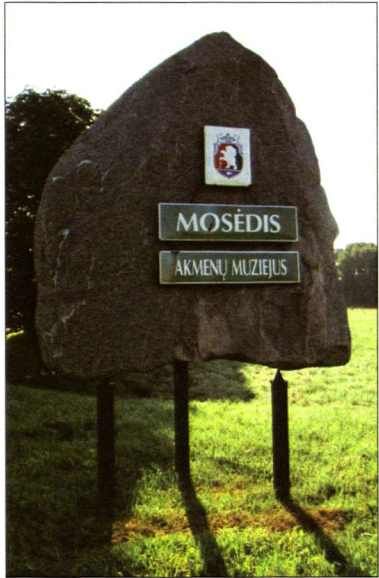
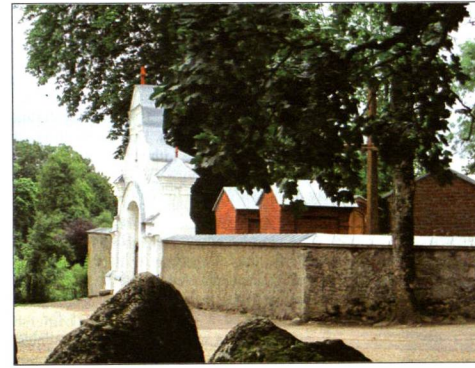
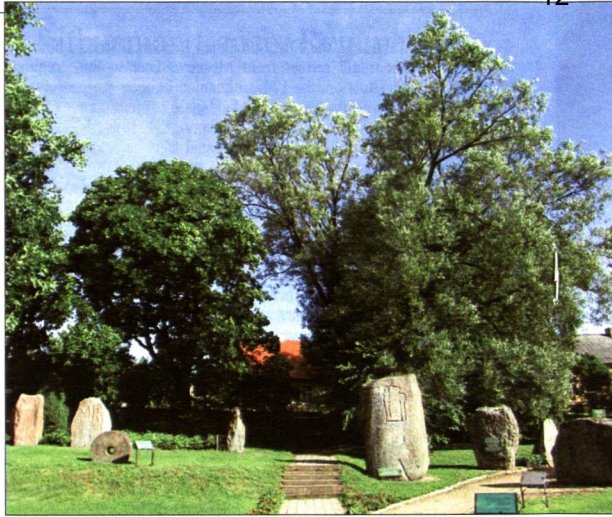


PHOTO ALBUM of Mosėdis, Lithuania

The town of Mosėdis was first mentioned in the Crusaders' written documents in 1253.

In 1551, the first wooden church was built. At that time, the settlement spread to the Baltic Sea and areas of current day Latvia. In 1785, the Church of St. Mykolas Archangelas was built. Construction was completed in 1884 when the towers were made taller.

In 1841, the town had 709 inhabitants. In 1907 fire greatly destroyed the town. Again on June 6, 1962, fire destroyed the town's center. The damaged area was rebuilt with brick, and trees and greenery were painted everywhere. This area became the town's most frequently visited spot.

The town houses the Vaclovas Intas Museum of Rare Stones.

Information from
www.muzejai.lt/skuodas/Akmenu_muzejus

Photos by Ramune Kubilius and
Audra Kubilius Daulys



In July 1813, the 17th Lithuanian Lancer Regiment was ordered to Hamburg, Germany. There it was reequipped and assigned to General Baron Gerard's XIII French Army Corps as the Brigade's Vanguard. While the 17th Lancers were at Hamburg, Mayor Mosznski arrived from Warsaw and decorated Colonel Rajecki, Lieutenant Colonel Strowski, Captains Krzyszkowski, Wojnilowicz, Zuchowski, Xzwery Rymza, and 1st Lieutenants Karol Hrehorowicz and Joseph Chmarcznski for their demonstrated bravery in combat.

In August 1813, after being reequipped the regiment was reassigned to General Baron Allemande command. This Lithuanian regiment was then given the honor of being selected to the forward guard for his Allemande's Cavalry Brigade. While so assigned, the regiment participated in fighting on August 26, 1813, at Katzback and again on September 6, 1813, at Dennewitz. In October of 1813, after Napoleon's defeat at Leipzig, the regiment took part in Marshal Davout's defense of Hamburg, which was being threatened by the ever advancing Germans and Swedes.

In December of 1813, the 17th Lithuanian Lancer Regiment was officially separated from French service and reassigned as an auxiliary unit to the Danish Corps under the command Marshal Prince Eckmuhl. As a result of this transfer, the 17th Lithuanian Lancers took part in the Prince Frederick of Hesse campaigns in Holstein and Denmark. While serving with the Danish Corps, the regiment received many honors from the Danes and served with great distinction.

The 17th Lithuanian Lancers again fought with distinction on December 7, 1813, at the Battle of Bornhoft and on December 10, 1813, at the Battle of Zeestadon (Sehestedt). Among the members of the regiment cited for special commendations was Lieutenant Joseph Kaszyc. He personally wounded and captured Major von Schill, the famous Prussian cavalry officer, in personal combat near Lubeck. Lieutenant Kaszyc later led 50 troopers on a daring raid that captured 50 enemy prisoners and 200 horses. For such exploits the regiment was greatly honored by the Danish Army and the government for their service in the defense of Denmark.

On December 15, 1813, the Danish Army unexpectedly declared an armistice with the advancing allies and their government thereafter declared war on France. This unex-



Original 17th Lithuanian Lancer tunic, Polish War Museum-London, England

pected switching of sides by the Danes resulted in a major dilemma for both the allies and for the 17th Lithuanian Lancers. Although the Danes had chosen to change sides, the Lithuanians remained loyal to Napoleon and the dream of liberating Lithuania. Due to the great respect the Danes held for the 17th Lithuanian Lancers, Colonel Brzechwa and his Chefs d'escadron Strowski and Tyszkiewicz were allowed to remain in command. The regiment continued to be supplied and was quartered in Rendsberg under the condition that no provocative actions would be taken against them as long as they did not engage in hostile action. Although their situation was somewhat similar to a military interment, the Danes granted the Lithuanians an additional privilege unheard of in the annals of military history. The officers and troopers of this now enemy regiment were allowed to remain fully under arms while negotiations continued for the next three months. During that time, the allies remained steadfast that the Lithuanians would not be allowed to return to French service and the Lithuanians refused to betray their sworn oaths to Napoleon.

In an attempt to win over the Lithuanians, General Bernadotte, the King of Sweden and a former Marshal of France, proposed that the Lithuanians be hired as mercenaries and offered all officers and troopers in the regiment full salaries commensurate with their own forces. The regiment was offered a one-year contract for such service with a second year option available if their service proved reliable. This proposal was however received by the regiment as a jest and immediately rejected. Still the Allies continued their efforts to persuade the Lithuanians to join their cause.

In February 1814, the regiment was allowed to relocate to quarters located at Tondern. Here again tempting offers were made to the officers and troopers, but the Lithuanians remained steadfast to the oaths they had given to Napoleon. During this extended period of negotiations between the Lithuanians, the French, and the Allies, General Gerard described the Lithuanians as an unequivocal example of devotion, bravery, and fidelity.

On June 27, 1814, after numerous exchanges of communications and deliberations, all sides finally reached an agreement. The Lithuanians would now be guaranteed their liberty and they would be allowed to return home under arms and with full honor.



Period painting of a 17th Lithuanian Lancer Officer (1813)

It should be noted although the 17th Lithuanian Regiment was never able to re-join Napoleon they never violated their oath to Napoleon. The agreed upon terms were not accepted until some two months after Napoleon, through his abdication, had released them from their duty of honor.

In a final tribute, General Count de Bardenfleith, Commander-in-Chief of the Danish Army, advised Colonel Brzechwa that his government desired that he, along with Colonel Strowski, Colonel Tyszkiewicz, and his other officers of his regiment, be decorated for their service and fidelity. Such was the esteem that the Danes held for the Lithuanians who still remained loyal to Napoleon. General Bardenfleith's recommendation for the decoration was forwarded to the Emperor Alexander and Prince Constantine. The Danes thus hoped that the regiment would leave Denmark with no bad sentiment or memories related to their service.

The last known muster of the 17th Lithuanian Lancer Regiment, dated April 14, 1814, listed two Colonels, one Lieutenant Colonel, one major, 17 Captains, 14 First Lieutenants, 24 Second Lieutenants, 16 Non-Commissioned Officers, and 58 troopers. A total of 59 officers and 74 NCOs and troopers survived the Russian and German Campaigns and returned home.

In July of 1814, the survivors of the 17th and former 19th Lithuanian Lancers left for Posen and on December 27, 1814, arrived at Warsaw where the unit was released from active duty and ceased to exist. So ended the distinguished history of the most illustrious Lithuanian fighting unit to ever have fought for the freedom of the nation. Still their sacrifice was not in vain. The telling and retelling of their story around countless fireplaces kept the spirit of Lithuanian freedom burning in the hearts of all who remembered and continued to tell the story of their glorious deeds. That burning kindle of flame inspired the Lithuanian 1831 and 1863-64 Insurrections which in turn led to the obtaining of Lithuanian Independence in 1918. May we always continue to honor their memory and keep alive the past glory of the 17th Lithuanian Lancer Regiment.

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.



LISS Heritage

Luke Murphy

CONCLUSION

My Job

Labas!

After almost four weeks in the country I feel less like a tourist and more like a participating member in Lithuanian society. I take classes at the university, go to work, run, grocery shop, cook, and spend my weekends exploring different areas of Lietuva. This weekend the LISS group attended a private party at the United States Ambassador's house in Vilnius and then travelled to Palanga where we spent three days meeting vacationers from around Eastern Europe. It was a relaxing weekend in Vilnius and the Baltic Seashore, but now it is time to get back to work!

Monday through Friday I work as an intern for the Political Science Department at Vytautas Magnus University. My assignments thus far have been to conduct research for the university on how they can better market themselves to international students, specifically from the European Union and the United States. Internationalizing Lithuanian undergraduate institutions is an investment for VMU and Lithuania because hosting international students increases the university's visibility, and it also allows for a larger influx of international perspectives into the country. Vytautas Magnus University is on the forefront of this effort and I am proud to help them achieve their goal. On Thursday Ambassador Anne Derse spoke about her own experience studying abroad in France as a student and how she too was interested in creating closer educational ties between the US and Lithuania.

Ambassador Derse welcomed the LISS group by first speaking in Lithuanian and then closing her remarks in English. As an American trying to learn Lithuanian from scratch, I know how daunting it is to speak in front of native speakers, so it was inspiring for me to see her converse with confidence after only one year of study. Birutė Bublioniė also addressed the group and she commended the ambassador on her work in Lithuania. On behalf of the LISS program I extend my gratitude to the US Embassy in Lithuania for a wonderful evening.

In the upcoming week I will give a presentation on studying in Lithuania for VMU's incoming Lithuanian Diaspora Academy and I will edit the English in academic essays that are submitted to journals that VMU publishes. I am also preparing for a trip to Vilnius where I will visit the Lithuanian Commission to the European Union and the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, both organized by Žydrunė Žemaitytė, who manages my internship.

I look forward to the week ahead and I thank LISS and the Lithuanian-American community's support of the Heritage Internship Program!

Ačiū!

IN THE DEATH-CAMPS AND BANISHMENT REMINISCENCES

By JONAS KREIVENAS
CHICAGO, IL - 1981

Editor's Note: In Part IV Mr. KREIVENAS wrote of suffering a terrible illness and the horrors of life in the camp.

Part V

All the officials and guards of the KZ camps had nicknames. Their real names were kept secret. This chief of guards was called by the nickname "Kolia".

One day our group was taken to Panenska's railroad station to unload two cars of lumber. An adjacent car was filled with sunflower seed husks, suitable only for feeding cattle.

When the hungry prisoners started eating those husks, cruel Kolia started to beat them with the butt of his rifle. Suddenly I felt a blow to my head, collapsed, and passed out. When I came back to my senses, I was lying in a puddle of blood. A large wound on the right side of my head, above the temple, was still bleeding. Nobody dared to help me, because everyone was afraid of Kolia. After work, friends helped me to walk back to the camp. Three other prisoners, being more seriously wounded, had to be carried.

The blow of the rifle caved in the bone of my skull. The cave is about 1" x 1/2" in size and about 1/4" deep. The wound got infected and did not heal for a month. In the camp there was no doctor or any medical help. For a month I washed the wound with boiled water and bandaged it with clean rags. I still have this mark on my skull today, and anytime the weather changes, I feel sharp pains.

At the end of 1944 and at the beginning of 1945, the inmates were happily talking that the war was just about over and after the war we would get amnesty. To our disillusion, after the war all Soviet prisons and KZ camps were overfilled with new prisoners, mainly former Red army soldiers, who were prisoners of war in Germany, and civilians, who had government jobs during the German occupation.

Finally we were permitted to write one letter a month to our families and friends. I did not receive any news about the fate of my family.

One day I was called into the camp's office to receive a

package. The package was damaged, but I was told to sign regardless of its condition. When I opened the package, I found nothing but two bricks. The entire contents had been stolen.

In 1947, within three months I unexpectedly received three bundles of Lithuanian newspapers. The sender was a lady whom I did not know and who lived in Klaipeda, Lithuania. These newspapers had a twofold importance for me: they informed me about my homeland, and, after reading them, I could sell them. For two sheets of newspaper I got three rubles or 300 g of bread. Smoking inmates would use the newspaper to wrap their tobacco into cigarettes. After receiving the third bundle of newspapers, I wrote a note of thanks to the unknown benefactor, and this was the end of my contact with my homeland. In 1947 and the following years, Lithuania's freedom-fighters fought a life-or-death war with the Soviets. Tens of thousands of young men and women died in this war. Chances are, that this unknown lady had been arrested and deported, or had gotten killed.

1948 was my last year of the eight year sentence in the KZ camp. In the last months of my punishment, I was working in a building and repair brigade. Every evening, when returning from work, we had to wait, while the guards searched through other brigades, which worked in the vegetable gardens.

One evening, while waiting at the gate, a large carrot rolled close to my feet. Hoping that our brigade would not be searched, I hid that carrot inside the leg of my boot. To my horror, the guards found the carrot and wrote down my name.

Next evening and all following evenings after work, a politruk called me for interrogation, pressed to admit my guilt, and when I refused, he finally suggested collaborating with KGB agents upon my release from the camp. I did not consent, because my sentence was almost completed. Unfortunately, the politruk was very vengeful, and this single carrot had very grave consequences in my future life.

In banishment

After the completion of my eight year sentence, I was hoping to be free again. Instead, I was transported to Sara tow's prison. There I was "body searched" in the Soviet style and locked up in a chamber. Within one month, the number of inmates in our chamber grew from five to 18.

At the beginning of October, we were transferred to Sol-Ilezk prison, south of the Ural Mountains. Every evening we had to undress ourselves naked for a "body search". Guards cut all the buttons out from our clothes, took out shoelaces, stole our money, etc.

A week later two orthodox nuns and I were sent by train to the Soviet Republic of Kazakhstan, to the town of Ksyl-Orda. From there the MVD sent us to Tereni-Uziak, which is approximately 50 miles northeast from Ksyl-Orda. In Tereni-Uziak we received deportees' documents and were instructed every seven days to register at the MVD office. I was assigned to a mechanized forestry organization, called Mech-lies.

Our group of about 90 deportees was sent approximately 70 miles away to a collective farm to thrash the rice harvest. There we worked and slept in the rice field for one week, without any shelter and almost no food. All deportees in our group were Muslims.

After we were back in Tereni-Uziak, a new larger group of deportees was formed. Our assignment was to go by foot about 100 miles deep into the Kysylkum desert and to harvest saksaul (a very hard and heavy species of wood), which was to be used as heating fuel in larger cities.

We lived in "zemliankas" or holes, dug in the ground and covered with poles, canes and soil. Like animals, we slept directly on the ground: no beds, no pillows or blankets. Food was very meager and of a quality, which should rather be called feed, than food. A good Lithuanian farmer would feed his cattle and horses with a better feed.

We worked in the Kysylkum Desert under these caveman's conditions from the first part of November, 1948, till the end of April, 1949. When we completely exhausted our food supplies, we were allowed to return at our own risk to Tereni-Uziak.

I knew how to find the direction by referring to the sun, the moon and the stars, and was accepted as a leader of the returning group. Without any food, we walked through the desert for three days and two nights. Luckily, the days and the nights were clear and we did not get lost. Upon reaching the first settlements of the collective farms, some deportees were too exhausted to continue, but within two weeks all reported themselves at the MVD office, and the dangerous journey was over.

For the next three months I worked as a night watchman in a local bakery. During the day I slept in a stable. In the bakery I got plenty of hot, fresh-baked bread to eat, which I washed down with water. This kind of food did not agree with my stomach, and I asked to be transferred.

I was assigned to work on the construction of a narrow-spore railroad, which was being built for saksaul transportation purposes from the Kysylkum Desert to Tereni-Uziak. We worked 12 hours daily, without any Sundays or holidays. 250 of us lived in one large barrack, previously used by Japanese prisoners of war.

When the railroad was completed, there was no bridge across the Syr-Darja River and railroad cars had to be transferred by a ferry boat. One young locomotive engineer, who was a member of a Communist youth organization, not a deportee, decided to break all endurance records. Without any sleep, for three days and nights he drove his train back and forth between the desert and the river. Early in the morning of the fourth day he fell asleep and drove right in to the river.

After that incident, the Mech-lies organization decided to build a bridge. Syr-Darja River at that point was approximately 1000 ft. wide. I was assigned to the bridge construction brigade. In the spring after construction was completed, the middle portion of the bridge was washed out, and during the next flood the whole bridge collapsed.

The saksaul business grew, and the Mech-lies organization needed more help. The only way to attract more workers was to build more homes for them. A brickyard was improvised and laborers were hired. Bricks were made by mixing local clay with the river's water, then forming and drying in the sun. When the brick making plan was almost completed, accounting discrepancies were discovered. An auditing committee came to compare work results against the monetary expenditure claims. At night someone opened the water locks and flooded all the bricks, thus destroying any evidence of fraud.

For the next two years I was working in a carpenter brigade, building new homes. After the completion of a settlement project, the Mech-lies organization received as war booty from Germany, a portable power station, built on a railroad platform. Electrical overhead lines were built to each new house, but nobody knew how to start up the power station. After several weeks of unsuccessful efforts, local engineers assumed that the power station was faulty, and the brand new and expensive piece of machinery was scrapped for metal.

One year after my deportation, in 1949, an MVD agent disclosed that I was deported to Kazakhstan for the duration of my life. But in 1953, after the death of Stalin, the Soviet regime became somewhat milder. Those deportees, who were deported for a limited time, began to receive amnesty documents. Instead of a week registration at the MVD, we were required to register only once a month. Like the other workers, we began to get paid for our work. I received my amnesty in the fall of 1956.

Conclusion next month---

*Copyright by the author
Library of U.S. Congress catalog card No. 80-85198
Edited by E. Jasiunas
Printed by M. Morkonas Printing, Chicago, IL*

The Road to Racing in America

Rimas Gedeika



Relaxing after the grueling Liberty Classic Race

Photo by Rimas Gedeika

Shortly after Lithuania gained her independence, many of her athletes began to feel that their dreams of playing professionally might indeed come true. And that the best road to attain that dream was through America.

The initial wave of Lithuanian athletes taking this road were basketball players who were convinced that the way to further refine their skills was to play on an American college basketball team. Going this route would give them a better chance to play in the NBA, or if not in the NBA, then in Europe's Division I.

For some, their long sought dreams did come true - Darius Songaila, Šarūnas Jasikevičius, Linas Kleiza - played in the NBA, while many more played in Europe's Division I. In addition to this group of college NBA basketball players, there was another group of very talented, older players who had already become stars in the Europe and who were eagerly sought by the NBA teams. They were: Arvydas

Sabonis, Šarūnas Marčiulionas, Žydrūnas Ilgauskas and in the Women's NBA, Jurgita Strimeikytė

Basketball players were not the only group to play on American professional teams. Lithuania also had players in the NH-Dainius Zubrius, and Darius Kasparaitis.

Bicycle Racers

A far less known group of athletes, but just as talented as the NBA and NHL players were the bicycle racers. For a small country, Lithuania has produced many world class bicycle racers—three women's world champions - Diana Žiliūtė, Edita Pučinskaitė and Jolanta Polikevičiūtė, a third place finisher in the 2002 Tour de France, Raimondas Rumša, and several world track bicycle champions.

Although they and many other Lithuanian bicyclists have raced on the best European professional racing teams, none have raced on the top American racing teams. This all changed in the year 2010.

In January 2010, Colavita-Baci, one of the top three American professional bicycle racing teams, invited Modesta Vzesniauskaitė to join its ranks. Thus, Modesta became the first Lithuanian to become a member of an American professional bicycle racing team.

M. Vzesniauskaitė was born twenty six years ago in Panevėžys, the bicycle racing capital of Lithuania. She started racing when she was twelve years old and in the process has won numerous Lithuanian and European age group titles.

In 2004 Modesta turned professional, racing on some of the best German, Italian, French and Swiss racing teams and in the process, becoming one of the elite international racers.

The year 2008 was an especially memorable one for Modesta Vzesniauskaitė. That year she not only won the Lithuanian Women's Race Championship, but she also represented Lithuania in the Olympic Games in Beijing.



Modesta at her very best.

Photo by Jonathan Devich



Modesta preparing to race in the Liberty Classic.

Photo by Rimas Gedeika

Colavita-Baci Racing Team

Racing for the Colavita -Baci team Modesta has been successful. She placed third in three races, helped the Colavita-Baci team win third place in the Philadelphia's Liberty Classic, won third place in Ottawa, and in August she helped the team win the National Racing Calendar Title.

The Liberty Classic

Every year, one of the most prestigious bicycle races in America, the Liberty Classic, takes place in Philadelphia, Pa. It is America's biggest and longest running one day bike race.

This year (May 30th), on a very, hot, humid morning, 120 of the world's finest women's international cyclist set out to challenge the rugged, hilly course. Besides having to overcome the sweltering heat, the riders had to conquer the very long, very, steep "Manayunk Wall" - not once, but three times !!

Colavita - Baci was one of the favorites to win the race. And, it was Modesta's heroic effort, on the final climb up the "Manayunk Wall," that

almost brought them the victory.

As the team approached the last climb up the "Wall," Modesta's front tire developed a flat. The team's supporting staff quickly changed the tire and Modesta began to frantically pedal after her teammates. She caught them just as they began to climb the "Wall." Being a very strong hill racer she did not hesitate for a second, but continued her charge up the hill, pulling her teammates along. At the top of the hill, Modesta was completely exhausted, but her gallant efforts pulled her teammates into a good position for the final surge to the finish line.

Colavita - Baci got third place -- the distance separating them from the winner was less than one half of the radius of the bicycle wheel.

Why race in America?

After the race I had an opportunity to talk to Modesta about why she wanted to race in America. She said that for years she had raced throughout Europe and that she always wanted to experience racing and living in the USA and when the opportunity presented itself -- she took it.

To get acclimated to her new surroundings was not an easy task. Her biggest problem was that she did not speak English. To overcome this obstacle she received great support from her teammates and the team's management. As big as this problem was, it did not affect Modesta's racing skills. Day after day her results continued to improve. They showed that Colavita - Baci did not make a mistake in signing her. Shortly after the start of the racing season Modesta became a starter on the team.

Future Goals

As to her future, Modesta, in September, traveled to Australia to represent Lithuania in the Women's World Championships, and in 2012 she hopes to once again represent Lithuania in the Olympic Games in London.

Rimas Gedeika lives in New Jersey and is a member of the National Executive Committee of the Lithuanian American Community serving as Vice-President for Special Projects. He is also active in the Lithuanian Sports Community and is the administrator of Bridges.



Modesta leading the way

Photo by Jonathan Devich



THE COMPANY YOU KEEP

NEW YORK LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

Agents:

George Vytas Karalius

(610) 660-7641

Patricia Karalius Andris

(610) 617-4489

Robert G. Karalius ChFC®

(610) 660-7691

555 East City Avenue

Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004

**Retirement Planning, Life, Health*, Disability Insurance*,
Long Term Care Insurance, & Fixed Annuities* ***

*Products Available through one or more carriers not affiliated with New York Life; dependent on carrier authorization and product availability in your state or locality.

**Issued by New York Life Insurance and Annuity Corporation

Calendar of Events for November & December 2010

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

NOVEMBER

Nov. 6-7, 2010

Lithuanian Festival (Mugė) Noon to 6 pm
Lithuanian Music Hall
2715 E. Allegheny Ave,
Phila., PA

Lithuanian food, music,
vendors & much

Nov. 12-13, 2010

Christmas Craft Sale

*Friday, Nov. 12, 2010

1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

*Saturday, Nov. 13, 2010

10:00 am - 2:00 pm

Inexpensive & handmade
gifts & holiday decorations.
Join our senior

Sisters for this annual
holiday event for some

great deals, as well as a
mini-bake sale featuring

pumpkin pies, brownies &
cookies from our kitchen.

3603 McRoberts Rd.

Pittsburgh, PA 15234

Sponsored by Senior
Sisters of St. Francis of the

Providence of God

Info: 412-885-7232 or

www.osfprov.org

Nov. 14, 2010 - 2 pm

BATTLE OF ŽALGIRIS

Commemoration & Concert

Lithuanian Music Hall

2715 E. Allegheny Ave.

Phila. PA

Prof. Rimvydas Petrauskas,

from Vilnius University will

be the guest speaker.

Sponsored by the Cultural
Affairs Council of the LAC

Nov. 16, 2010 - 7-9 pm

(Tuesday) The Philadelphia
Lithuanian Heritage Club,

Amber Roots

Lithuanian Music Hall

2715 E. Allegheny Ave.,

Phila. PA

Please use the left side

entrance & proceed
downstairs. After the

program, refreshments will
be served. All are invited to

attend. For info: Call Millie
610-497-5469 email

milliemarks@aol.com

Nov. 20, 2010 - LAUNA

(Lithuanian Athletic Union
of North America) Meeting

Starting time 11am

Lithuanian Club

877 East 185th St.

Cleveland, OH 44119

Info: tel./fax.

732-317-9195

DECEMBER

Dec. 5, 2010 - 10am - pm

*Crèche Display

*Over 200 crèches &
nativity scenes will be on

display in the lecture hall.
The Crèche Display is free

for all to attend.

*For info. or directions,
call (412) 885-7232.

The Sisters also invite

members of the commu-

nity to enter their crèches
to be displayed at the

event. For eligibility,
crèches must be received

with completed registra-
tion forms at the

Motherhouse by 5:00 pm

on Friday, Nov. 19th.

Those interested in
entering a crèche or

nativity scene should call
Sister Mary Ann Lostoski

412-885-7232.

3603 McRoberts Rd.

Pittsburgh, PA 15234

Dec. 5, 2010 - 3-6 pm

"**Kalėdų Vakaros**" -

Christmas Party

Davis Hall at Wyandotte

County Lake Park

91st & Leavenworth Rd.

Kansas City, KS

913 573-8327

www.kclith.org

Sponsor: Kansas City LAC

Dec. 10, 2010 (Friday)

Soup Take Out

*Pick-up:

*4:00 pm - 6:00 pm

*\$5.00 for a quart of soup,

plus 2 dinner rolls.

*To Order Call

412-885-7232, by

Friday, Dec. 3rd at 5pm

3603 McRoberts Rd.

Pittsburgh, PA 15234

Sisters of St. Francis of the

Providence of God

December 11, 2010

Lithuanian Christmas
Eve dinner & children's

program

Latvian Hall

5500 SW Dosch Rd

Portland, OR 9723

www.portlandlithuanians.com

Sponsor: Portland Chapter

of the LAC

Dec. 11, 2010 - Kūčios

Lithuanian Christmas Eve

Observance. Traditional

dishes, songs & more,

admission only by advance

purchase of tickets

(no tickets at the door).

More info. will follow

Latvian Hall

10710 3rd Ave NE,

Seattle, WA 98125

[http://seattle.lietuviu-](http://seattle.lietuviu-bendruomene.org)

[bendruomene.org](http://seattle.lietuviu-bendruomene.org)

Sponsor: Seattle Chapter

of the LAC

Dec. 12, 2010 - 12 Noon

Kūčios, Traditional Lithuanian

Christmas Eve Dinner

St. Andrew's Parish Hall

19th & Wallace Sts.

Philadelphia, PA.

\$15 donation -

\$5 children 12 & under

Tickets & Reservations call:

Maryte: 215 - 969 - 2117

Laima: 609 - 268 - 8045

Reservations will be

accepted till Dec. 7

Sponsor: Phila. Lithuanian

Scouts Association

Dec. 14, 2010 - 7-9 pm

Kūčios (Tuesday)

Lithuanian Music Hall

2715 E. Allegheny Ave.

Phila. PA.

Please bring a meatless

dish, Lithuanian if

possible. Use the left side

entrance and proceed

downstairs. All are invited

to attend. The Philadelphia

Lithuanian Heritage Club,

Amber Roots

For info:

Millie at 610-497-5469

milliemarks@aol.com

Dec. 18, 2010 - 2-4 pm

Christmas Social

Christians Party (free)

Bring a wrapped gift

marked with child's

name for Santa

Adult Dinner & Dance -

attire - coat & tie

6:00 pm doors open

7:00 pm dinner

8:00 pm band playing

9:00 pm dancing

Fraternal Order of Eagles

Hall 1151 S Galena Street

(just west of Mississippi &

Havana)

Denver, CO 80247

www.coloradolithuanians.org

Dec. 26, 2010 - 2 pm

Christmas Concert

Lithuanian Hall

851 Hollins St

Baltimore, MD

bridges

Your Subscription:

Name (please print)

Address

City

Apt. No.

State

Zip

Subscription ORDER FORM

Please check:

New Renewal Gift Donation

Subscription Gift To:

Name

Address

City

(please print)

Apt. No.

Name

Address

City

(please print)

Apt. No.

State

Zip

Please send me 10 issues BRIDGES

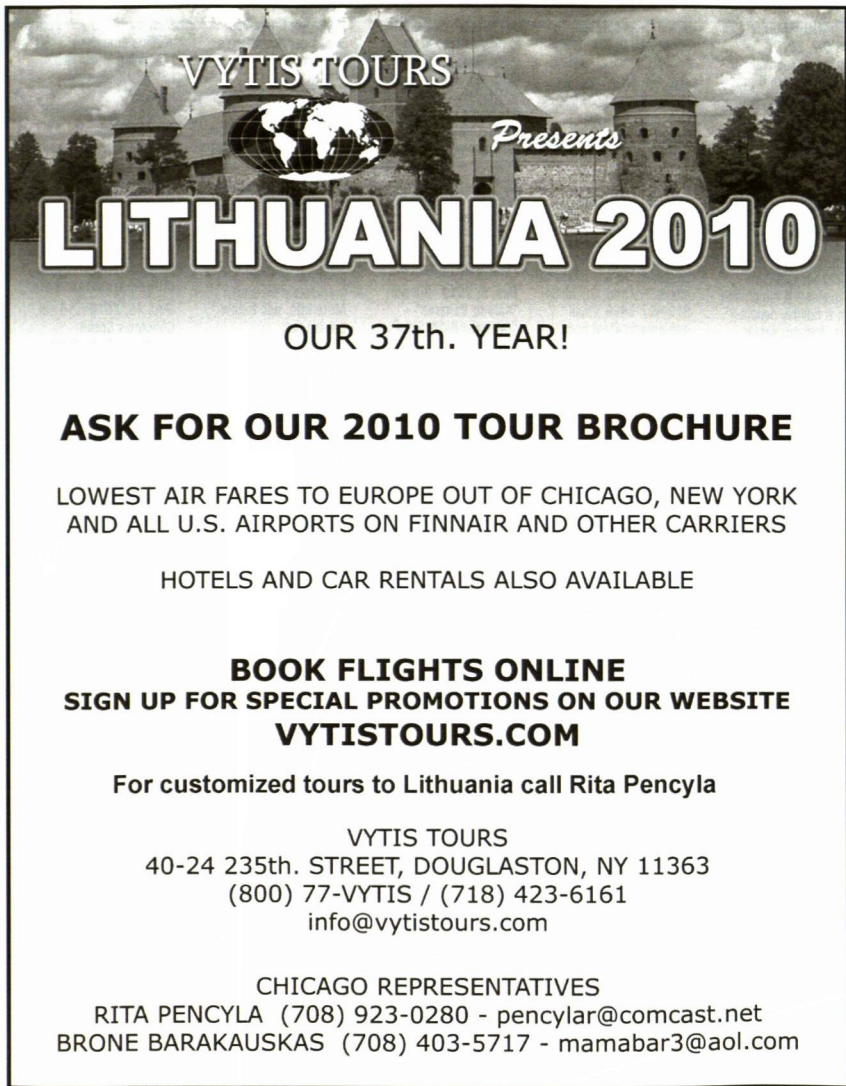
1 full year for \$20.00 - 2 full years for \$38.00 US Mail serviced subscribers;

Subscriptions outside the country \$35.00 payable in advance (US funds).

Please enclose the subscription payment.

LITHUANIAN - AMERICAN NEWS JOURNAL

\$ 20.00
For 10 Issues
GOOD GIFT
Subscription



VYTIS TOURS
Presents
LITHUANIA 2010

OUR 37th. YEAR!

ASK FOR OUR 2010 TOUR BROCHURE

LOWEST AIR FARES TO EUROPE OUT OF CHICAGO, NEW YORK
AND ALL U.S. AIRPORTS ON FINNAIR AND OTHER CARRIERS

HOTELS AND CAR RENTALS ALSO AVAILABLE

BOOK FLIGHTS ONLINE
SIGN UP FOR SPECIAL PROMOTIONS ON OUR WEBSITE
VYLISTOURS.COM

For customized tours to Lithuania call Rita Pencyla

VYTIS TOURS
40-24 235th. STREET, DOUGLASTON, NY 11363
(800) 77-VYTIS / (718) 423-6161
info@vylistours.com

CHICAGO REPRESENTATIVES
RITA PENCYLA (708) 923-0280 - pencylar@comcast.net
BRONE BARAKAUSKAS (708) 403-5717 - mamabar3@aol.com

LITHUANIAN MARKET PLACE ONLINE: WWW.LACGIFTS.COM



29 - Baseball hat
\$ 20.00



20 - Amber necklace &
bracelet - \$ 30



27 - CD by Exultate / Rita
Klorys, director - \$ 15



29 - CD by Steel Wolf -
\$ 20



5 - CD by Jurga
"Instrukcija" - \$ 20



6 - CD by Jurga "Aukso
Pieva" - \$ 20



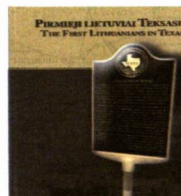
7 - CD by Vainora (ethno-
cultural music) - \$ 20



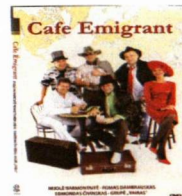
8 - Vytis decal approx (3" x
3") - \$ 3



23 - Exploring Lithuania & Exploring Vilnius (2 set DVD with 3
hour total viewing time) - \$ 45.



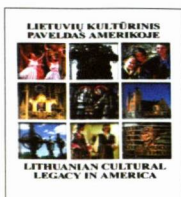
25 - Frist Lithuanians in
Texas, 116 p. - \$ 25.



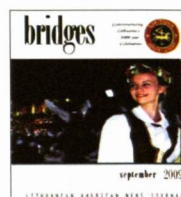
28 - Café Emigrant DVD -
\$ 25



13 - DVD or 13th Folk
Dance Festival at Galen
Center of USC \$20.00



14 - Cultural Legacy Book
(hardcover, 224 pages) \$45



15 - Bridges subscription
\$20 for 10 issues



16 - Set of 6 DVD's of XII
Theatre festival (in
Lithuanian) - \$ 45



17 - Car license plate
holder \$12



18 - LT sticker (4" x 9"
approx) - \$ 4.



19 - LIETUVA decal (1" x
2.5") - \$ 3

Or order by mail
(add \$5.00 for shipping).
Make check payable to
LAC, Inc. and send to
78 Mark Twain Drive,
Hamilton Square, NJ
08690

bridges

VOLUME 34 ISSUE 9

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Rimās Gedeika
78 Mark Twain Dr., Hamilton Sq., NJ 08690



All Souls' Day "Savanorių kapai", The National Defense Volunteer Freedom Fighters' Cemetery, Alvitas, Lithuania. Tribute to the soldiers and volunteer soldiers' graves of those who died for Lithuanian independence and freedom is shown by prayer services, lighting candles and flowers placed on their graves, and one minute of silence to show respect. Organizing the yearly tribute and caring of the graves is done by the school children and teachers. The Cemetery was founded in 1935.

Photo by Juozas Lukoševičius, Alvitas, Lithuania

November 1 - All Saints Day November 2 - All Souls Day
November 11 - Veterans Day November 25 - Thanksgiving Day