

Canadians should appreciate freedom, Sheans say

12 The Acton Free Press, Wed., August 28, 1974



WAITING AT KIEV International airport for their return trip to Canada, Chris and Boris Shean sit on the airport bench, laden with gifts to bring home. One important present is a bandura, a stringed instrument which has about 50 strings and is the national instrument of Eastern Ukraine.



CULTURE OF THEATRE and arts is an important feature in Ukraine and seen is a theatre in Lviv, capital of Western Ukraine.



BORIS AND CHRIS had to hunt for thatched-roof houses. Houses in Ukraine today are similar to the one pictured but have tin roofs. Many people still live in primitive manner with most houses in villages without indoor plumbing or floors.

Bad smell at tournament

Spectators at the Atom softball tournament Saturday tryside and they didn't at- were plagued by an annoying tribute to Beardmore. bad smell. Some thought it

PROCLAMATION

The Council of The Regional Municipality of Halton, on behalf of its Area Municipalities, the City of Burlington, Towns of Halton Hills, Milton and Oakville, declare September, 1974, as "CONSTRUCTION SAFETY MONTH."

THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF HALTON

Allan M. Masson
Regional Chairman
Garfield Brown
Regional Clerk

When Boris and Chris Shean left Acton June 29 for a trip to the Ukraine they had not planned the visit as ordinary tourists. As first and second generation Ukrainian Canadians they were anxious to see the home-land of their ancestry and to meet their many relatives with whom their own Canadian families had kept in touch since leaving Europe.

According to Mr. and Mrs. Shean, who made the trip with two friends, they covered about 15,000 miles during their three-week stay. They visited places of interest as part of an organized tour itinerary, slipping in some unscheduled visits to villages, to meet with relatives they had never met.

The Acton couple tell of the constant fear of the Ukraine residents to speak openly and express their attitudes of dislike of Russian domination. They tell how the Russians have insisted on control and use the word, "Russification," referring to the Russian attempt to stamp out national identities of their and other republics in the Soviet Union, by making Russian the official language.

Abolish churches
Mr. and Mrs. Shean said that Moscow has managed to almost completely abolish all churches, converting them into museums. "The communist theory is that religion is a drug—an opiate," said Boris who explained that there were still a large number of people he saw praying, but it was more the older people. He said that, in villages, Ukrainians seemed to be less afraid to express their views and patriotism than in the cities, and that village children were more exposed to religion with icons and monuments retained in the homes.

On their tour Mr. and Mrs. Shean and their friends visited Kiev, capital of Ukraine and Lviv, capital of western Ukraine. They stopped off at Chernivtsi, a city near the Rumanian border, Yalta on the Black Sea, and also visited the palace at Lavidia where Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill met for their important World War Two conference.

The last city they saw was Zaporizhia, the ancient base of the Cossack defenders who held off the Turks, Tartars, Russians and Poles in the 1800's.

It was a marvellous trip for the Acton couple but one which was also sad. To visit their families, consisting of uncles, aunts and cousins they had to slip away into unauthorized areas to villages where tourists are generally not allowed. They had to jeopardize their rights to take such trips and could have been interrogated if caught.

Alphabet
Having attended Ukrainian schools in Canada, neither Mr. or Mrs. Shean had difficulty understanding and speaking their native tongue. Well versed in English the two Canadians believe it is

important to know both languages. They explain it as a slightly more difficult one to learn than English as it is based on a different alphabet (Cyrillic).

The Ukrainian state has much rich farm land and many valuable mineral deposits. It produces a large part of the Soviet's grain, coal, steel and machine goods. The couple said that many of the village people are allowed to keep small plots of land on which they raise their own vegetables and sell them at local markets.

In talking about their awareness of the constant oppression of the people they gave as an example of intimidation, "Russian soldiers guard bridges with guns, and military bases are placed everywhere." According to the travellers, monuments of Lenin and Communist propaganda advertisements are placed on billboards everywhere. "One of the Communists' favorite slogans on the billboards," said Mr. Shean, "was 'equality.' But we didn't see any equality when we were there."

Reportedly, clothing in Ukraine is not unlike our own, with kerchiefs an important part of the dress. "Much of the clothing is sent from relatives in Canada and other places outside the country," Mr. Shean related.

What was marvellous in the Ukraine from the couple's point of view were the great cultural palaces and museums. They visited numerous art galleries and buildings where theatre and the arts are part of the natural environment. "In the Ukraine, there are great buildings where ice shows and national dances are performed," Boris said. The couple said streets in the city were beautifully scenic, "lined with trees and abundant with parks and squares."

Hospitality
An important feature of the Sheans' trip was the hospitality of the Ukrainian people. The two teachers said, although they had never met relatives whom they visited they were warmly welcomed. They returned to Canada laden with gifts and remembrances bestowed on them by people who could not afford to spend money even on themselves.

Mr. and Mrs. Shean returned to Acton, July 20. They feel their trip was both rewarding but disturbing. They are happy to return to Canada to realize the

Carrier service

House-to-house postal delivery is due soon, so arrangements are being made to have the Free Press delivered Wednesday afternoons by carrier boys and girls after school. There are more details in an ad in today's paper.

freedom they have in living here but feel that Canadians generally are not thankful enough for that freedom.

Although both the Sheans are Canadians, they are proud of their Ukrainian background. Professionals in Ukrainian dancing, they teach a group of youngsters in Preston and both perform with a Ukrainian dance group named Chalka. Together with 14 other members they have many times presented their national Ukrainian folk dancing ensemble at important concerts in the U.S. and Canada.

In adhering to their customs and keeping alive their inherited traditions the Ukrainian people in Canada apply the philosophy of Taras Shevchenko, the Ukrainian poet laureate who said "Absorb all cultures but forget not your own."

What struck the Sheans was the poverty of the country. They said that most of the strength of Ukrainians today is in Canada because in

Europe, the people are so dominated by Russian power they can't fight back any longer. Boris said that at one time, Ukrainians in Canada would send money to support the underground but as it died out in 1969 they had to stop. Now they attempt to retain their country's traditions by adhering to old Christian customs and celebrations, and keeping dances and other cultures alive.

Because of their Ukrainian background Mr. and Mrs. Shean could feel for the people. They said that despite fears many of the older generation continue to valiantly hold to their Ukrainian heritage, especially in the smaller villages. Boris explained that, through the rigid school system, the younger people are gradually becoming indoctrinated and slowly growing more Russian and communist oriented.

Sympathetic with their country's views, the Sheans

can see the slow envelopment by the Russians over the other republic countries as well, including Estonia, Lithuania, Rumania, Latvia, and White Russia, etc.

They can see the dying out of the marvellous festival traditions of the old small countries with such celebrations as St. John the Baptist Day diminishing from festive feast days with gaily and parades, to attempts at keeping traditions alive.

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OCTOBER 21st, 1974

A penalty of 1 percent per month will be charged on the first day of default and on the first day of each calendar month until Taxes are fully paid. Interest at the same rate is applicable to tax arrears beginning January 1, 1975.

Taxpayers are reminded that the Ontario Property Tax Credit as provided through the 1974 Personal Income Tax Return is based on the Property Taxes of the Taxpayer's Principal Residence being paid in 1974.

Please contact the Finance Department if there are any questions pertaining to your Business or Property Taxes by: Telephone 877-5185, or by mail:-

Treasurer,
Town of Halton Hills,
Finance Department,
36 Main Street South,
Georgetown, Ontario,
L7G 3G4.

Grant F. Usher
Deputy-Treasurer
and Tax Collector

Henry E. Henderson
Treasurer
and Tax Collector



A TYPICAL FARM cart is seen as it moves along the country roads in Ukraine.

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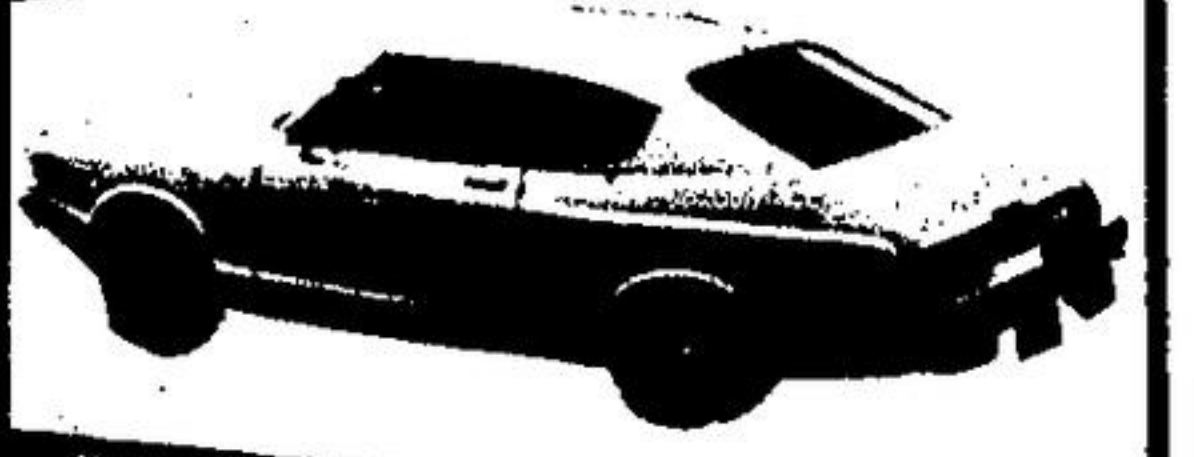
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