



SUMMER 2013

50 Years of Culture and Leadership

The Board of Directors and staff at St. Vladimir Institute (SVI) have announced an eventful year of festivities to celebrate the Institute's 50th anniversary of Ukrainian cultural programming and post-secondary housing for students.

On **Saturday, September 7th**, in conjunction with Ukrainian Heritage Day in Ontario, SVI will host an informal Birthday Bash/BBQ for friends of SVI in the local and surrounding communities. Entertainment, food and activities in an open-house style will highlight our cultural programming and open our doors to showcase the value SVI has been providing the Toronto area for the past five decades. With Kosa Kolektiv participating as our musical guests, this event is bound to be a memorable experience.

On **Saturday, October 19th**, SVI will host a formal gala event at the St. Volodymyr Cultural Centre on Dundas Street West, Oakville. With entertainment by Big Band Orpheus and a menu to reflect the spirit of the '60's, we will celebrate five decades of memories through pictures, music and stories from past and present members and residents. Sponsorship opportunities are still available and more information can be obtained through our website. We are also asking alumni and current members of SVI to contact us to submit your memories and stories to share at this gala evening.

The founders of SVI in 1963 envisioned it to be a central downtown location for social, educational and cultural based programs and activities. That location has remained to this day at 620 Spadina Avenue, Toronto.

Throughout 50 years of evolution, their vision hasn't changed and still remains our primary goal. In addition to housing 46 post secondary students year-round, SVI is an active home to the Ukrainian Museum of Canada (Ontario Branch), the Ukrainian Research and Documentation Centre, Ukrainian Self Reliance League (SUS) Foundation, Canadian Foundation for Ukrainian Studies (CFUS), and the Ukrainian Students Club (University of Toronto), and Chair of Ukrainian Studies Foundation University of Toronto.

"This is an exciting time for St. Vlad's," said SVI President Paul Strathdee. "The cultural values we have developed for our Canadian Ukrainian community will be on display throughout the year and we are very proud of what we've accomplished. We invite everyone to visit and experience everything SVI has to offer."

For more information, please call (416) 923-3318 or e-mail at cultural@stvladimir.ca.



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Дякуємо за допомогу у підготовці цього випуску *Visti*:
Іванці Іваночко, Стефанові Йонці, Христині Кузик, Дарці Лібер, Клавдії Микитюк, Маркіянові Микитюку, Романові Смілці, Іванові Станьку, Павлові Стретді, Павлові Терефенку, Оресті Тицькій, Славці Фодчук.



Passing On the Torch: The Next 50 Years and Beyond



St. Vladimir's Board members in the early years:
(standing) A. Oryschak, Dr. G. Gorchinsky,
T. Mudry, M. Evanetz,
(sitting) Rev. V. Fedak, Dr. P. Smylski (Chair),
A. Figus Ralko, (SVI Administrator).

St. Vladimir Institute this year is celebrating its Golden Jubilee. In this issue you will find the reflection of the past 50 years in photos and stories. The younger generation and many new-to-Toronto visitors don't realize how the Ukrainian community in Toronto has built its noticeable presence in Canada, and how much has been accomplished by the dedicated builders of St. Vladimir's to make this successful Golden Jubilee come to being.

This issue of *Visti* contains some recollections of contributors who are not necessarily representative of all Ukrainian organizations. They are from individuals who were a part of St. Vladimir's history through their dedication, vision, spirit and hard work, representative of the many who made St. Vladimir's "a place to go and grow" as longtime member Dorothy (Darka) Liber put it (see interview on Page 6).

In the process of collecting basic historical facts of the success of St. Vladimir's growth I discovered valuable treasures of human devotion and creativity. Those inspired and dedicated individuals and organizations made St. Vladimir's a notable place in Toronto. Without their enthusiasm and hard work we would never have achieved our present standing. Those emotional recollections of St. Vlad's half-century history will be included in the next issues of *Visti* throughout the next year.

St. Vladimir Institute these days is proudly sharing its premises with Ukrainian Museum of Canada, Ontario Branch, Ukrainian Canadian Research and Documentation Centre, Ukrainian Students Club, University of Toronto, Canadian Foundation for Ukrainian Studies, Ukrainian Self Reliance League (SUS) Foundation of Canada, and the Chair of Ukrainian Studies Foundation University of Toronto.

Working together, we are continuing the history that has been established and nourished with love by our bright and hard working and visionary predecessors. We are proud to carry on the torch of their love, passion and vision.

Lidia Smilka, Visti Editor

Dr. Peter Smylski Was the Spirit and the Guiding Light

Dr. Peter Smylski, one of the founding members of St. Vladimir's, was the most enthusiastic supporter of the principles of Ukrainian presence in Canada. Running his private practice, he was also a lecturer at the Faculty of Dentistry at the University of Toronto in the mid-fifties. In 1964, Dr. Smylski accepted the Chairmanship of the Department of Dental Oral Surgery which he held for 12 years.

While working at the University of Toronto, Dr. Smylski came to realise that the Toronto Ukrainian community needed a residence near the campus. The idea had been floating around for some time, but Dr. Smylski decided to put it in motion. He was instrumental in getting things "off the ground" for the current building and the acquisition of the original residence at 651 Spadina Ave. Heading up a relatively young board, his efforts were rewarded with the eventual establishment of St. Vladimir Institute. As Dr. Smylski put it: "Young people either do or don't, and this group did". Quite unique at the time, the Institute stood out as a non-denominational Ukrainian students residence. Today's Institute is more than just a residence, housing various organisations' offices, a resource centre, space for meetings, and art displays.

After retiring from dentistry, Dr. Smylski remained a participant in the Ukrainian community. He always set an example with his enthusiasm and readiness to realise cultural projects. Dr. Smylski passed away in 2002.

From his rural roots as a farm boy in Keld, (12 miles NW of Dauphin, Manitoba), to championing Ukrainian causes, to being a trailblazer in the field of Oral Surgery, Peter Smylski served as an example to us all of what great community leadership one can achieve when applying actions to ideas.



Dr. Peter Smylski (right), a founding member of St. Vladimir Institute, receives an honorary award from Victor Krisel, President, 2001.

Warm Friendships Recalled by St. Vlad's Pani "I"

My term of Office as Administrator at St. Vladimir Institute was from 1980 to 1985. I was respectfully known as Pani I and am still referred to as that by many of the Institute's board members. I was hired by the Institute's board, headed at the time by Dr. Peter Smylski. After Dr. Smylski's term expired Leo Atamanchuk became head of the board.

It was a memorable time for me, always filled with joy and laughter but some tasks were not really part of my job description. These included coming in on Sunday mornings to vacuum and set up before an event that day, or working into the evening to open up and close off the previous night's events. There were several custodians before the dedicated Pan Ivan and Pani Hania Welekanycz were invited to work here, thanks to Bohdan Mykytiuk from Immigrant Aid.

I had a wonderful working relationship with the librarian, Vera Skop, and secretaries Joan Nimchuk, and Financial Campaign staffer Irka Holowaty.

Even though Bill Kereliuk (or Karl as he was lovingly called), was no longer the Director, he was ever present and always active as he headed the Institute of Ukrainian Studies in the office next door. Both he and Adele, his wife, still lived upstairs for a while. That was an interesting time.

The kitchen staff was headed by Mr. Belski, along with Pani Krasilowych and another lady. The sounds and aromas that emanated from the kitchen were always colourful, to say the least.

There were quite a number of students from Ukrainian backgrounds, due to the diligent promoting and canvassing that Dr. Smylski and other Board members undertook in the surrounding areas of Ontario.

Victor Kytasty was hired for a period of time as the Cultural Director and served as mentor to the students. During the last year or so, Professor Edward Burstynsky lived at the Institute and also served in that same capacity.



(standing) Bill Kereliuk, Orest Koropecki, Ed Burstynsky; (sitting) Julian Romanko, Claudia Mykytiuk, Bohdan Mykytiuk, and Halia Sluzar

651 Spadina Avenue was purchased in 1963 and with its large fireplace, became St. Vladimir Institute. It also changed the lives of members Bohdan Mykytiuk and Claudia Koropecki who met, eventually married, and begat two little "M's. When the original building was to be demolished, the old fireplace found a place in our home.

From the new building at 620 Spadina Avenue, serious fund raising activities continued. Dinner-dance evenings at the Royal York Hotel often ended with everyone returning to the Institute around midnight to gather around the piano and sing Ukrainian songs.

In May 1972, a unique fund raising dinner-dance event was held at the newly opened Ontario Place (their first event). The evening air on the lake cooled considerably as the sun set, and since there was no heating, many of us danced in our coats. However the nighttime view of Toronto and Lake Ontario was spectacular.

Both Mykytiuk progeny, Mark and Melanie, volunteered as children by filling balloons for *Malankas* and clearing Caravan dining room plates (sometimes for tips!). Later Mark danced with Danovia Stechishin's Ukrainian Academy of Dance and was part of *Malanka* entertainment. Both held summer jobs as front office assistants. Still later, they volunteered on the board (Melanie) and lived in the students' residence and designed SVI logos (Mark).

During that time there were many exciting events with which I was fortunate enough to be involved. Some of the most interesting and prominent guests were also "residents" for a time at the Institute, including:

- Yuri Kalischuk - I can still hear his melodic voice as he strolled down the corridors. Metropolitan Yuri now resides in Winnipeg.
- Professor Lubomyr Luciuk spent a summer at the Institute. He was and is still deeply involved with the documentation of the Internment of Ukrainians.
- Yuri Luhovy and Slavko Novytski shared an apartment at the Institute when they were in the process of documenting and producing the documentary film "Harvest of Despair".

Most notably, "Chysta Komedia" rehearsed and performed at the Institute during that period.

By Yvonne Ivanochko, current President and long standing member of the Ukrainian Museum of Canada, Ontario Branch.



Friendships: (standing) C. Mykytiuk, Dr. R. Sluzar, and Y. Ivanochko; (sitting) Rev. Y. Kalischuk, O. Sushko, H. Sluzar.

Fifty Years of Memories by the Mykytiuks

We experienced the excitement of Caravan and our very successful Odessa Pavilion – with long queues waiting to see the shows produced by Taras Shipowick, the singing and dancing of many SYMK youth, along with the food, the market, the make-your-own-pysanka table, the atmosphere, and the lovely Odessa Princesses – particularly future daughter-in-law Tanya Brechun (1999). Bohdan (Bob) Mykytiuk kept the long lines of people waiting for performances amused by offering "special Ukrainian garlic-flavoured jelly beans" or "Free beer downstairs...the glass is \$3.00" or by placing a sign on the stairs "WATCH YOUR STEPPE".

Bohdan's initial funding secured the first Toastmasters at SVI in 1993, whose future son-in-law Matthew joined on arrival from the USA.

Bohdan's always creative fund raising raffles, such as: *Gold and Sunshine Raffle* (1973 – 1st prize 16 oz. gold bar), *Gold and Sunshine Lottery* (1974 – 1st prize 16 oz. gold bar), *Anti Inflation Lottery* (1976 – 1st prize 25 acres of land near Bancroft, note: No road access!), *Recession Raffle* (1982 – 1st prize late model used auto – value approx. \$8,000).

The Ukrainian Museum of Canada, Ontario Branch, moved to the Institute (official opening in 1982) and became a beacon of knowledge and pride for so many of us.

Friday night *Malankas*, the celebration of old style Ukrainian New Year were initiated. They continue to feature so many family and cultural traditions. Particularly special and moving is the greeting of the New Year by joining of hands of all those present and together singing as one voice - "Де згода в Родині". Thanks for the memories.

The Mykytiuk Family

Some Memorable Moments Captured Over the Years

1960s



The Hon. John Yaremko (4th from left), Ontario Provincial Secretary and Registrar, presenting St. Vladimir Institute Charter to the Board, September 25, 1961.



The original St. Vladimir Institute building at 651 Spadina Avenue.

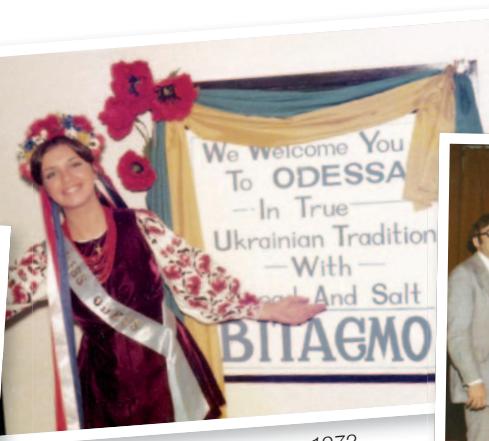


Members of St. Vladimir's Women's Auxiliary.

1970s



St. Vladimir's Ukrainian pavilion called Odessa at the Caravan festival.



Darusia Minor, Miss Odessa 1972, Odessa Pavilion's Princess, the first year of Caravan.



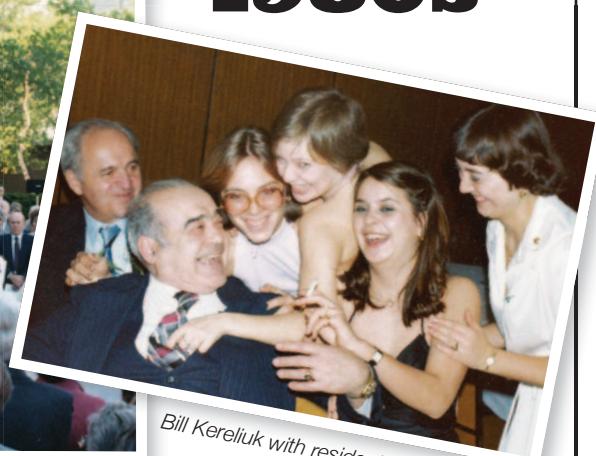
SVI Board members 1975: E. Luczkiw, G. Fedchun, S. Yonka, S. Olynyk, Dr. M. Lazarowich (Chair), Halia Sluzar, Prof. Ed. Burstynsky, N. Trufyn, T. Mudry.



Anna Troyan, Olha Hamara, Dorothy Hutsulak, Jean Wachna, Yvonne Ivanochko (Chair), Halia Sluzar, volunteers of the Ukrainian Museum of Canada at the official opening of the Ontario Branch at St. Vladimir Institute in 1982.



Unveiling the Prince Volodymyr statue in front of the institute.



Bill Kereliuk with resident students

1980s

1990s



Ted Woloshyn, radio personality, broadcasting from the Odessa Pavilion.



Dr. Markian Sluzar and Prof. Ed Burstynsky, Odessa Pavilion Mayor.



Tanya Brechun, Miss Odessa 1999, is flanked by Leon and Zenia Kossar, founders of the Toronto International Caravan Festival; Mathew Bochnewicz, Caravan Mayor; and Tatiana Martschenko, Odessa Pavilion organizer.



Halia Sluzar, Claudia Mykytiuk, and Marie White, Museum volunteers at the Bloor West Ukrainian Festival.



Icon writing class participants.

2000s



SVI resident students at St. John's Institute, Edmonton, Alberta, during an Ukrainian student exchange program.

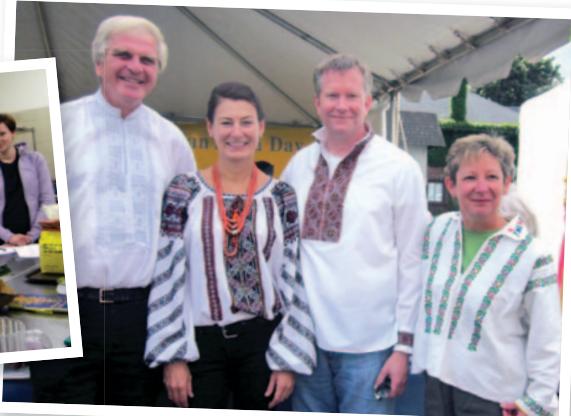


Student Exchange '12 - representatives:
Anna Teskey, SVI, Toronto; Suzanna Brytan, St. John's Institute, Edmonton; Fr. Roman Bozyk, St. Andrew's College, Winnipeg; Lida Cymbaluk, SVI, Toronto; Lucille McInnes, Petro Mohyla Institute, Saskatoon.

2010s



Culinary class participants learning Ukrainian food preparation.



Victor Krisel, Christine Kuzyk, Paul Strathdee (Chair), and Nadia Skop, SVI Board members at the Bloor West Ukrainian Festival.

St. Vlad's: The Place to Go and the Place to Grow

Notes from a recent conversation with Ms. Dorothy (Darka) Liber and her close friend, Mr. Steve Yonka, long standing contributing members of St. Vladimir Institute.

Ms. Dorothy Liber began actively participating at St. Vladimir Institute since the first building at 651 Spadina Avenue (across from the current new residence) was purchased. The new residence was established as a “home away from home” for Ukrainian students, who came from across Canada to study at Toronto’s colleges and universities. Dorothy was among a dozen of the most active members in the Ukrainian Women’s Club at the time. Women, like Dorothy Liber, Olga Stanko, Natalka Kulyk, Stefania Olynyk, Irene Shipowick, Claudia Koropecki, and many others would bake lots of cookies and sell them at St. Vladimir’s bazaars.

This dedication takes roots from the time that Dorothy was a child. Her father, Mykola Liber, was very active in the Toronto community at the time, especially in helping to build Ukrainian People’s Home, *Narodnyj Dim*, and St. Volodymyr’s Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral in Toronto.

What was special about St. Vladimir Institute?

Dorothy: After the Second World War many new immigrants arrived to Toronto from Ukraine. They spoke Ukrainian well and were very eager to establish their own Ukrainian organizations. The main motto of these new organizations was to speak Ukrainian only inside their organizations. However, many Ukrainians arrived in Toronto from western Canada, where they were born in farming communities either by Ukrainian parents or from mixed marriages. They didn’t have the chance to study good Ukrainian, oral or written.

The advantage of the newly-established St. Vladimir Institute was that everybody was able to speak Ukrainian or English (“half-napiv”) there, as long as they were willing to practise their culture and traditions. The students, who came to live and study here, felt at home at St. Vladimir’s. They were able to study Ukrainian and participate in various Ukrainian events, either in a theatre performance, for example,

in singing groups or folk dance groups. The Ukrainian community worked hard in an attempt to raise their own elite, which would be highly educated, and able to take jobs as Canadian intellectuals, and actively participate in and support the cultural life of Ukrainian Canadians.

Steve: St. Vladimir Institute in Toronto became the fourth educational organization founded by the Ukrainian Self Reliance League of Eastern Canada and established by the Ukrainian Orthodox community for students, after St. John’s Institute in Edmonton, St. Andrew’s College in Winnipeg, and St. Petro Mohyla Institute in Saskatoon, which all became very successful in raising future Ukrainian professionals. So everybody was eager to contribute in order to preserve and pass on our cultural traditions. Our dream was to raise an educated Ukrainian Canadian society, and St. Vladimir Institute became our means to accomplish that idea.

There were several places in Toronto to study Ukrainian dance, and to participate in choirs to sing Ukrainian songs, but they were like small segments in a greater whole; we needed all of that in one location on a permanent basis.

Dorothy: Then “Caravan” became another way to show that we had a high level of culture and established traditions. There were many locations of Caravan in Toronto, where visitors would buy food, souvenirs and attend various presentations and concerts. St. Vladimir’s was named Caravan Odessa Pavilion.

I was selected as Odessa Pavilion Chairman in 1977 and as Mayor for the following year, and did my best to organize everything for its success. I would move in to St. Vladimir’s for up to nine days and nights to co-ordinate the events during Caravan. People would walk from pavilion to pavilion, get their “passports” stamped, and there was always a long line of visitors waiting to see our Odessa programs. The cultural exposure was through dance, songs, souvenirs, and food, all of which became very popular. Visitors quickly learned the words *mamalyga, perogies...*

St. Vladimir’s residents eagerly participated in various programs. We didn’t just share our culture, we enjoyed the process; we were promoting and celebrating our traditions. Everybody would contribute something to the success. We provided the programs, cleaned the premises, cooked food, washed dishes, cleaned costumes. Staying at St. Vladimir’s during Caravan time wasn’t easy, however, we enjoyed it. As a result, a multicultural Toronto population became more respectful and understanding of each other’s cultural heritage.

St. Vladimir’s became our life. SVI was the place to go and the place to grow...

Looking back, has St. Vladimir’s over the last 50 years become what you expected when it was founded?

Dorothy: SVI is a wonderful place where we still feel at home. For me, St. Vladimir’s represents our culture. SVI is going up, and Visti is a great newsletter which reflects St. Vladimir’s high standards. St. Vladimir’s has more than met our original expectations.



Steve Yonka speaks at an SVI event.



Donna Shipowick, Miss Odessa 1978 with Dorothy Liber, Odessa Pavilion Mayor

Upcoming Events

Made possible in part by a grant from the SUS Foundation of Canada

Fall 2013

Ukrainian Heritage Day Celebration 2013

Friday, September 6

2:00 – 3:00 pm: Ceremony in front of the Ontario Legislature

Events at St. Vladimir Institute:

3:30 - 4:00 pm: "Settlers'-style" Refreshments

4:00 - 5:00 pm: Opening of exhibit of *On the Wings of Song: The Story of the Ukrainian Bandurist Chorus of T.H. Shevchenko, 1918 – 2013* at the Ukrainian Museum of Canada, Ontario Branch

5:00 pm: The St. Vladimir Institute Collection: Works of art collected over the last 50 years include those by Kurelek, Bidniak, Surmach-Mills, Novakiwsky, Senkiw.

St. Vladimir's Birthday Bash/BBQ

Saturday, September 7 at 2:00 pm.

In conjunction with Ukrainian Heritage Day in Ontario, SVI will host an informal Birthday Bash/BBQ for friends of SVI in the local and surrounding communities. Entertainment, food and activities in an open-house style will exhibit our cultural programming and open our doors to showcase the value SVI has been providing the Toronto area for the past five decades. With Kosa Kolektiv participating as our musical guests, this event is bound to be a memorable experience.

Toronto Ukrainian Festival – Bloor West Village

Friday, September 13 – Sunday, September 15

www.ukrainianfestival.com

"Be Ukrainian for a Day" at the St. Vladimir Institute booth, with displays by the Ukrainian Museum of Canada, the Genealogy Group, the SVI library, Koota Ooma Children's Bookstore, and the Documentation Centre.

Also at the St. Vladimir's booth: Children's Crafts by Kosa Kolektiv. Programs run Saturday & Sunday, 12 - 5 pm.

Co-operative Events

September 27-28

HREC & CIUS present an international symposium of scholars on the Holodomor: at the Munk Centre on September 27 and at St. Vladimir Institute on September 28.

9am – start time at St. Vladimir's; 4:15 pm – reception at UCRDC

Friday, October 4 at 7:00 pm

Professor Alexander Motyl, (Rutgers University, U.S.), will be presenting his new book, "Sweet Snow", a novel about the 1933 Ukrainian famine. This event is organized in co-operation with the Holodomor Research and Education Consortium.

Sunday, October 6 at 2:00 pm

Presentation of the memoirs of Professor Motyl's parents: "Pid Trioma Okupatsijamy – Spomyny Oleksy Motylia", and "Spohady Mariji Motyl". This event is organized in co-operation with the Ukrainian Canadian Research and Documentation Centre.

For more information call St. Vladimir Institute at 416-923-3318, Ext. 104, or email at cultural@stvladimir.ca.

50TH ANNIVERSARY
BIRTHDAY BASH &
ANNUAL HERITAGE DAY
OPEN HOUSE

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 7, 2013

ST. VLADIMIR INSTITUTE 2:00 PM
620 SPADINA AVENUE GREAT MUSIC, GREAT FOOD
TORONTO, ONTARIO & ENTERTAINMENT



50TH ANNIVERSARY
Gala

SATURDAY OCTOBER 19, 2013

ST. VOLODYMYR COCKTAILS 6:00 PM
CULTURAL CENTRE DINNER 7:00 PM
1280 DUNDAS ST WEST FEATURING BIG BAND ORPHEUS
OAKVILLE, ONTARIO \$175 • BAR INCLUDED

CONTACT: svi@stvladimir.ca (416)-923-3318



ST. VLADIMIR INSTITUTE

50TH ANNIVERSARY

Gala

SATURDAY OCTOBER 19, 2013

FEATURING **BIG BAND ORPHEUS**

ST. VOLODYMYR CULTURAL CENTRE
1280 DUNDAS ST W, OAKVILLE, ONTARIO
COCKTAILS 6:00 PM • DINNER 7:00 PM

ADVANCE TICKETS ONLY:
\$175 (BAR INCLUDED)

FOR TICKETS CONTACT:

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