



PERM NEWS



Оксфорд и Пермь — города-побратимы

The Newsletter of the Oxford Perm Association

May 2013

Chair's Annual Report 2013

The most ground-breaking event of the year was the Vodka-tasting evening in the Old Library of Oxford Town Hall on May 10th last year, with the proceeds split between the Perm Hospice and visas for the new Perm dance group taking part in the summer international festival at Pegasus. Our very effective working group challenged the Town Hall to let us bring in Russian food, as well as vodka (and interesting non alcoholic drinks) sourced by university teachers of English who had come for Karen's Oxford course from all over Russia. We had a great deal of help with catering supplies and organisation from May Wylie, and Bill and Gill Pinkerton on behalf of OIL. A time-saving raffle, a quiz and community singing completed the evening. We charged £10 per person, and after expenses were set against all receipts we were able to give £400 each to our two good causes. It was a lot of work, but a number of people said we had a 'winning formula' and yes, we could do something like it again but NOT every year!

Crush, the new young dance group from Perm, came to the festival here in July and again we found that the young dancers were brilliant ambassadors for Perm and worth our support.

We also helped fund a successful ceramicists' exchange. Diana Bell and Marie Darkins went to Perm in June and had a very stimulating visit; then they hosted two Perm ceramicists, Ina Rogova and Natalya Korchemkina, here in September. The Old Fire Station gallery was the venue for a stunning exhibition of the Permians' work, all made that week in local studios. We hope that this sort of art exchange may be a template for the future and we appreciated Diana Bell's experience and her enthusiasm for twin city exchanges.

In October we hosted a small study group from Perm who were looking at work with ethnic minorities. They discussed diversity policy with city councillors, visited the Asian Cultural Centre and other community centres, and found out about the city's Interfaith organization and its Peace Walk. They reported to us that it had been a very productive experience.

We enjoyed our usual July summer party, hosted by Karen in her garden, and the autumn party with the Perm academic visitors at Rewley House. Our excellent newsletter continues to be a source of pride, now accompanied by our website. Thank you David Roulston, and Richard Sills.

The Perm Association was represented, along with other twin cities, at the Olympic torch relay event, and at Remembrance Day. Meeting and working with the other, often very different, twinning associations has been fruitful and fun, and we appreciate City Council support, in cash and kind, though we know that the cash it is less than it was.

For the future, of course, the public and voluntary sector context is changing both for us and for Perm, but I feel confident that the Association will continue to look at a variety of ways of maintaining the energy and innovation that have characterised us so far. We benefited over a number of years from ambitious twin city music performances, but the repertoire for those events was probably used up at about the same time as the funds. We are glad we lived through those times, but we now need to work on other ways forward. Arts exchanges will continue to be fertile ground, but there is, I think, scope for other endeavours, for instance for sport exchanges. We probably need first to find an enthusiast to get us going. But for a twinning link whose exchanges have ranged from lawyers to beekeepers, nothing should be impossible.

I must finish by praising and thanking the committee I've had the privilege of working with, and you the members. You've fed, hosted, driven and entertained Russian guests, had many brilliant ideas and contacts for visitors, and have supported our events with energy and generosity. Thank you all for making my period as chair so very interesting.

Mari Prichard
February 2013

The Annual General Meeting of the association was held on 20th February at 6 Rawlinson Road. After the chair's report of which the above is a shortened version, there was a fascinating illustrated talk by our new chairman Karen Hewitt. She described her recent travels beyond Perm as far as east and north Siberia. Members present will remember this talk and the delicious and varied food provided by members in a convivial atmosphere.

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Membership Notices

If you are not at present receiving emails from the association and you have an email address please email the Membership Secretary Daniel Scharf at: pause.forthought@googlemail.com

Newsletter articles, book reviews, letters are always welcome. The submission deadline for the autumn issue is 15th September but it greatly assists planning if you let the editor know as soon as possible if you plan to submit an item or to discuss an idea you may have. Also we welcome any suggestions regarding the web site: www.oxfordperm-assoc.org For both newsletter and web site contact David Roulston: [djrouls@btinternet.com](mailto:djrrouls@btinternet.com).

Forthcoming Events

Summer Garden Party

The annual Oxford Perm Association Garden Party will be held on Wednesday 17th June from 5pm to 7pm at 6 Rawlinson Road. Further information from Karen Hewitt on 01865 515635 or email karen.hewitt@conted.ox.ac.uk. Please do come and support this event - a great opportunity to see old friends and make new ones. Wine and soft drinks will be provided but if possible please bring a plate of 'finger food' to share.

Perm City Day which is traditionally held on June 12th in Perm. The year 2013 is a landmark one for Perm because we are celebrating the city's 290th anniversary. From Oxford, Councillors Mary Clarkson, (former Lord Mayor), David Williams and Colin Cook will be attending the celebrations along with at least two other Oxfordians.

Perm City Council invites music, dance groups or entertainers from Oxford to take part in the **International Twin Cities Festival** which will be held in Perm on September 17th to 24th 2013. The programme of the festival will consist of authentic art projects that will represent traditions, customs and flavour of Oxford and our other Twin Cities. We hope to send a team of Morris dancers, among others, to this event.

A **Summer Course on Human Rights in the Digital Era** will be held at Perm State University from 22nd June to 3rd July. The course will be taught by leading scholars of the Faculty of law (prof. Pavel Pastukhov, prof. Natalia Chernyadyeva, prof. Galina Borisevich, prof. Tamara Shershen, prof. Olga Kuznetsova, Doctor of Law, prof. Valeri Golubtsov, Doctor of Law and others). The distinguished lecture on protection of human rights in Perm Krai will be delivered by Tatiana Margolina, the Ombudsman for Human Rights in Perm Krai, professor of Law.

The above three items were extracted from information received by Oxford Town Hall. For more information please contact Sarah Jones or Rachel Capell on 01865 252537

News From Other Links

Oxford-Leiden report

A party of Carterton Lions joined Oxford-Leiden members on a visit to Holland from April 30-May 5, an initiative by the Lions' president, Don Rouse, who is also deputy president of the Oxford-Leiden Link. During the visit, there was a coach outing to the village of Gorredijk, on the Dutch-German border, where Walter Lowe, an uncle of Lion Mike Lowe, is buried. He was a crew member of a Wellington bomber which was shot down by the Germans at Gorredijk, the crew of six were buried there and the Dutch villagers have cared for the graves ever since. The other major

event during the five-day visit is Dutch Remembrance Day, with the traditional Remembrance service at the Marekerk, a silent procession through the streets of Leiden and the wreath laying at the war memorial. The Lord Mayor of Oxford, Mohammed Abbasi, will be at the ceremony.

An intriguing Oxford innovation, the Big Book, will visit Leiden in late May. It is an impressive wooden tome, standing six feet high and bound in leather, on which the only lettering is the word 'Imagine', in gold on the spine. It is the work of Oxford artist Diana Bell, who invites the public to open the book, walk inside, let their imagination go wild and write whatever comes to mind on its canvas pages. Since its launch in 2010, it has received more than 2,800 contributions in 78 languages. The Big Book will be taking part in a international symposium about language and translation, entitled The Magic of Words.

Kidlington Youth Football Club visited Leiderdorp, near Leiden, at Easter for its 25th exchange with the RCL club. The two clubs enjoyed their first exchange in 1989 and thanks to devoted work by officials, parents and players on both sides, the link has continued ever since. Contact mjpchipperfield@yahoo.co.uk

Oxford-Leon Link

The Oxford Leon Association has two events coming up: "La Misa Campesina" or Nicaraguan Peasant Mass will be sung on Sunday 30th June at Blackfriars Church, St Giles. It is very lively and was composed in collaboration with priests, fishermen and labourers. Rehearsals on the mornings of Saturday 8th and 29th June, all welcome. Swimmers are wanted for the sponsored swim on Monday 1st July at Hinksey Pool: no minimum number of lengths. The collection at the Mass and money raised by the swim will be for development projects in and near to León, Oxford's twin city in Nicaraguan. Please see www.oxleonlink.org.uk or email Jan Marshall: charltonmarshall49@yahoo.com

Anthology of Russian Poetry

Poems of Feeling, *an anthology compiled and translated by Harold Burnett.*

American publishers Xlibris have recently published under this title an anthology of Russian, English and German short poems compiled by Harold Burnett. The book contains 35 Russian poems, 35 English poems and 10 German poems. All the Russian and German poems are accompanied by original translations by Harold.

In translating the Russian poems he has made every effort to convey the literal meaning of each word but he has deliberately made it his number one priority faithfully to reproduce the rhythm and music of the Russian so as to try to convey the beauty of the Russian original to those who are not able to read it for themselves.

Try reading slowly this short poem by Sergey Esenin.

‘Oh my child, I’ve wept for you, wondering what’s in store,
Every night my apprehensions plague me more and more.
I’m convinced that soon now, soon now, at the close of day,
With funeral chant to burial they’ll carry me away.
You will see from out the window white my shroud appear,
And your heart will cease its beating out of dumb despair.
Oh my child, I cried for ages, secret warm my words,
And my teardrops metamorphosed into beads of pearls.
And I made for you a necklace, using every stone,
Put it on around your neck, for remembrance when I’m gone’.

The book is being used for teaching purposes in at least one major Russian university and a senior teacher at that university has written ‘it is amazing how precisely you managed to convey the words, the rhythm and even the rhyme...’

Full details can found in the website at www.hbliterary.com

Any enquiries, including information as to availability in UK, can be directed to Harold at hwburnet@globalnet.co.uk

Harold Burnett is an active member of the Oxford Perm Association. Ed

A Marginal Interest

As I approach the middle of my 8th decade, I become a potential source of oral history, and as such I recently found myself talking to students about the part that the Himalayas have played in my life (I did fieldwork there as part of a university career teaching social anthropology). I still regard myself as more interested in the future than the past, and have no plans to write an autobiography. But when I was sounded out about writing for the newsletter, I thought of trying something similar, asking myself what part Russia has played in my life. Compared to the Himalayas, and to countries such as France or Spain, it is a small part, almost marginal, but I value it, and its smallness made it all the more attractive. Of course Russia, being part of European cultural and political history, has contributed enormously to the world I inhabit, but that can be taken for granted. What else has fostered my interest in the country and hence in Perm?

The story starts when I was 15. In my very old-fashioned boarding school, some of us spent almost all our time on Latin and Greek, but we were allowed, essentially as relaxation, to choose a modern language as well. The master who taught me German devoted his first lesson to the Indo-European language family, and I warmed to the idea of a swathe of languages, from Icelandic to Bengali, descending from a common ancestor that was potentially reconstructable.

The next date came in my second student year at Oxford. Almost since childhood I have kept a list of books read, and it records, around Easter 1959, Everybody's Russian Reader, by one Fastenburg. I had now changed to a scientific subject, and ten months later the list includes Russian for Scientists by Turkevitch. However, I suspect my motive was less any scientific ambitions than the challenge of a new European language.

Just before starting on social anthropology in 1965, I struggled through a student edition of Lermontov's Hero of our Time, and at some point I bought a parallel-text edition of some Pushkin stories and a Penguin book of Russian Verse. Helped by the prose translations at the bottom of the page I have often enjoyed these short poems, but my Russian vocabulary was too small to tackle anything lengthy. The few great classics I read were translations.

Russian anthropology was generally regarded by Anglophones as hopelessly old-fashioned, a hangover from the days of Marx and Engels. However, it retained from the 19th Century a macro-historical perspective akin to the approach I was taking towards the kinship terminologies of the Sino-Tibetan languages of the Himalayas; and in a 1976 article I included a cautious reference to a Russian book on kinship. It was a good move. The writer, the Sinologist/anthropologist Michael Kriukov, organised a conference on kinship in Moscow in April 1992, and accommodated me in his flat. His hospitality outlasted the conference, giving me time to sample galleries and opera. But my luck continued. When I took a train to St Petersburg and asked the receptionist at the Academy of Sciences to suggest a hotel, she instead invited me to stay in her family home, where humans were almost overwhelmed by a magnificent orientalist library. She told me of the city's wartime sufferings, and helped me meet a senior scholar with a speciality relevant to my growing interest in Indo-Europaea. A.L. Griunberg had studied an unwritten language of Nuristan in North-east Afghanistan, and in a paper on comparative mythology I used an origin myth he had recorded – part of the Kafir (pagan) heritage of a culture that was only Islamized in the 1890s.

In March 2001, just before I retired, I took advantage of the Perm exchange to stay for a month with a 'family' – in fact with Galina and her ailing dog. Galya taught English and we ended up mostly speaking it; but long sessions in the University Library boosted my reading knowledge. I gave talks around the University in English, and enjoyed a few days with academic and artistic hosts in Yekaterinburg (where I finally ran down an origin myth I wanted from Ossetia in the Caucasus).

I remain frustrated by my inadequate vocabulary in Russian (as in some other languages), but even a limited knowledge is helpful in Indo-European studies, in various ways. One unexpected outcome was a trip to Madrid to examine a doctoral thesis on the Kiev Chronicle (circa 1120), viewed in the light of comparative mythology. But Russia enters my life now more often in the form of short-term visitors to Oxford from Perm and elsewhere. It is a small gesture towards repaying the hospitality I received on my two visits.

Nick Allen

Dr Allen is a longstanding member of our association and Emeritus Fellow of Wolfson College.
Ed

Chusovoy: A Town, A School, and A New Project

Last year I wrote an article for the Perm Newsletter about the industrial archaeology of the Urals region. I described how, from the late seventeenth century onwards, iron was sent on rafts and barges down the Chusovaya river to Perm. Much later, in 1879, an ironworks was founded in what is now the town of Chusovoy, at the confluence of two smaller rivers with the Chusovaya. (Members of the Perm Association who have canoed on the Silva river will be familiar with the landscape since the Silva also runs into the Chusovaya.) Today, this town of 45,000 inhabitants relies on its traditional heavy industry, and on the Urals landscapes which attract sportsmen and tourists. We hope that Chusovoy, a town of troubling and impressive contrasts, will become a special place in the Perm-Oxford, Perm Region-Oxfordshire link.

For some time the committee of your Association has been aware of the increasing prosperity of Perm; gone are the days of the homeless children, the desperate shortages, the struggles of the disabled to move around the city. As in Britain, poor people and disabled people encounter difficulties and insensitivities that we often do not notice; but it is a measure of how much attitudes as well as incomes have changed that trams with disabled access are now running on some of the city's routes.

Beyond Perm, in the villages and towns across the region, this wealth is not so widely distributed. So we thought that if we could find a small project involving other people of Perm Region, both sides would benefit; visitors to the region would have another place to explore with Oxford contacts – and any money we raise could provide practical help to those who need it. Chusovoy was chosen partly because it is now connected by an excellent new road to Perm. The 90-mile journey takes about two hours and passes close to the GULAG Perm-36 Museum, so it is possible to combine visits to both places in one day's outing.

The Chusovoy Metallurgical Works is the present title of the original ironworks which dominates the town. According to its own publicity it is technologically advanced in its production of ferro-alloys and high-grade steel, but the locals have different stories and the pollution is all too obvious. The lower town around the works is depressing, badly maintained, and poor.

The newer (post-1960s) upper town at first looks pretty much like any Russian town of that age; plenty of space; typical blocks of flats, standard public buildings, a new sports and swimming complex; a decent library; one or two new brick churches. And then you come to School No. 5, a school that we would recognise as a 'comprehensive Sixth Form College' for everyone aged 16-18 from the town and the surrounding villages. It is not at all typical of Russian schools either in its distinctive 'sixth-form' composition, or in the splendour of its buildings.

I first visited the school last September and returned this April. On both occasions I was immensely impressed. In September the Head teacher and the Head of the local education administration described its special activities with School No.15, a school for children with mental (and often physical) disabilities. As we explained at the Perm Association AGM, your committee thought we could support the links between the two schools; in fact we have already provided funds to help the costs of transporting the disabled children to School No. 5. Both schools are eager for further contacts; one suggestion was for Association members to skype with the students of School No 5.

Now the teachers of School No.15 tell us that their children would enjoy similar contacts. We have also asked students from School No. 5 to write about their town, their school and their links with School No.15. Here is the first letter.

Karen Hewitt

Liza's Letter From Chusovoy

Hello, my name is Liza. I am from Russia. I am 16. I was born and live in Chusovoy which is located in the Ural. Our town is rather small but I like it. It stands on the three rivers: Chusovaya, Usva and Vilva. I think the Chusovaya river is one of the most beautiful rivers in the world. Moreover our town is surrounded by Ural



Mountains. Our town is very sportive and it is also famous for such winter sports as mountain skiing, freestyle, bobsleigh, country cross skiing. Almost all people go in for sports. In May there's a traditional international country cross skiing competition where our guys and world champions take place.



Students of Schools 5 and 15 make cakes, style hair and craft flowers

I study at school 5. It's quite unusual school for Russia. Only senior students (of 16-18) study here. Our school cooperates with school 15. Children with limited abilities study at this school. Frankly speaking I can't describe them like that. They are good, friendly and sincere people. The children enjoy every day of their life. They come to our school several times a year. We play, sing songs and dance with them. We have different activities together. Not only we teach them to do a lot of things but they teach us to enjoy our lives and to be kind and to take care of other people. In my opinion, this kind of activity is very important for both of us. We can see the happiness in their eyes and become happy too. That's great!



There's a little angel among us!

To help and understand those who need it is very important I think. If people become kinder, our life will be better.