



PERM NEWS

Оксфорд и Пермь — города-побратимы

О П А

Oxford Perm Association

Newsletter October 2020

The bonding of first-year students in Perm under Covid-19

Kate Antineskul, Zhanna Plesovskih, Perm State University

Most recently, in the context of the pandemic, a very important event was held for our esteemed first-year students. This is 'Bonding'! The students were very happy with the celebration, because they had been forced to give up such important holidays as the 'Last Bell' and the Prom. The Bonding which took place on the territory of Perm State University consists of unusual quest-obstacles. The students were divided into teams and sent along different routes to pass entertaining contests. This certainly allowed the team to get to know each other better and get acquainted with the territory of their native University. The celebration was not without refreshment, various sweets and hot tea on a huge table in Perm State University which lifted the mood in rainy weather. Older students told a variety of interesting stories that they had experienced during their time of study at the faculty of Economics!

All were grateful to the Department of Marketing for the fact that we were able to carry out our long-awaited meeting with newcomers, despite the difficult coronavirus situation. After all, becoming a student is one of the most important stages of a person's life. We look forward to meeting new first-year students of our University in 2021!



бабье лето and золотая осень Indian summer and golden autumn

Daniel Simpson

When I moved from my Oxfordshire home to mighty Moscow in the throes of Winter 2013, I foolishly assumed that the 4 seasons I had become accustomed to would be honoured by Russia, albeit with a frostier bite. Not even Vivaldi could have anticipated the dramatic fluctuations I would endure;

Winter rotating to spring in 48 hours, snowfall in May and a record breaking dearth of sunlight in December.

I found each Russian season colourfully crammed with cultural curiosities; the Дачники¹ of Summer, wafting their Шашлык² through silver birch forests, the Банщик³ whipping away the Winter, and the блины⁴ that usher in the green flourishes of Spring.

No season left such an impression as the often overlooked Autumn however. Never had I seen girls sporting a венок⁵, harking proudly back to their slavic ancestors, nor had I tasted Чай из облепихи⁶ This was золотая осень - a golden Autumn.



As we cling to the last remnants of our own Indian summer in Oxford, I remember fondly the energy that бабье лето⁷ brings to Russians; enough to pull them through the long Winter ahead.

My career has taken me across Russia, meeting and teaching some of the country's brightest students and creating bridges for ambitious students to fulfil their study dreams abroad and in the UK.

With my suitcase now collecting dust back in Oxfordshire, my assistance to Russian students extends from my employment base at Oxford International Study Centre.

1. Residents of 'Dachas' or summer houses in the countryside

2. BBQ

3. Banya attendant, specialised in providing sessions of birch branch whipping

4. Pancakes

5. Headdress made of autumn leaves

6. Sea Buckthorn tea

7. Indian summer

Note: To Oxford/Perm Association Russian readers: Oxford International Study Centre would like to offer discounted courses to all students wishing to study with us, to help the flow of Russian students to Oxford once more, and the chance to experience a Golden Autumn in Oxford.

BOOK REVIEWS

Using Russian Vocabulary, by Terence Wade

Reviewed by Chris Cowley

When travelling to Perm last September on the Trans-Siberian, my request for a spoon received a puzzled look from our carriage attendant (проводница). It turned out that rather than using the Russian word for a spoon (ложка), I had asked for a boat (лодка). I am familiar with both of these words, but at the critical point, the incorrect one came to mind. Consequently, when Lockdown started, I thought it would be a good opportunity to work on improving my Russian vocabulary and turned to *Using Russian Vocabulary* by Terence Wade, a book which had been on my bookshelf for some years but only partly worked through. Six months later, I have just finished the final chapter.

This book is aimed at intermediate or advanced students of Russian. It is made up of 18 units covering a wide range of topics: Agriculture and Industry; the Human Body and Health; Perception; Personality and Human Behaviour; Education, etc. Each unit has 3 separate levels: a student of intermediate level could simply work through Level 1 of each unit. A few units have additional material and exercises at the end of the unit, also graded, for example Appearance and Movement which deals with verbs of motion.

By way of example, the section on road transport lists the following vocabulary: Level 1 – engine (двигатель); driving licence (водительские права); to park (по/ставить); seatbelt (привязной ремень); Level 2 – windscreen (ветровое стекло); to brake (за/тормозить); to accelerate (разгоняться/разогнаться); service (техобслуживание); Level 3 – silencer (глушитель); rear-view mirror (зеркало заднего вида); to puncture (прокалывать/проколоть); central reservation (разделительная полоса).

The introduction claims that the book introduces over 5,000 words and provides over 1,000 exercises. I found the exercises varied, enjoyable, and helpful in consolidating the vocabulary. Examples include: matching words to definitions in Russian or English; providing the correct form of a verb or the correct preposition; matching adjectives to nouns to make phrases; listing words of a similar type (such as types of cloth or building materials); and, inevitably, sentences to translate from Russian into English and English into Russian (the latter being by far the most challenging). There is an answer key to all the exercises in the back of the book. One drawback is that there is no index and it's not easy to re-locate a particular word from a previous unit. For this reason, I always had a Russian-English dictionary beside me when I was working. The book already has over 600 pages so I imagine it would have been impractical to include an index as well, particularly as there's only a paperback format available.

Terence Wade died in 2006, 3 years before *Using Russian Vocabulary* was first published in 2009. One of his last wishes was that this, his final book, should reach publication and thanks are expressed to a number of people who helped make this possible. However, there are points in the book where the absence of overall editorial control is apparent.

Using Russian Vocabulary is published by Cambridge University Press and is available from Amazon at £39.28. Not a cheap book but since I estimate it has kept me occupied for well over 130 hours, it represents good value for money. I certainly cannot now claim that I know all of the 5,000 words and phrases (or, indeed, even half of them!), but I find that I recognise a good proportion when I come across them in another context so my 'passive' vocabulary has definitely increased. Let's hope that another trip to Russia will be possible next year so that I can see how I get on in real-life Russian situations.

Young Doctor's Notebook, by Mikhail Bulgakov *Reviewed by Catherine Cooper*

When enthusiasts of Russian literature hear the name Bulgakov they invariably think of his masterpiece *The Master and Margarita*, a brilliant satirical dark comedy and often considered foremost of Soviet satires. They may not immediately think of his semi-autobiographical novel *A Young Doctor's Notebook*, in which he relates his early trials as a young, inexperienced 23 year old graduate doctor in the provinces during the Russian Revolution. To reach the remote village of Muryino, in order to take up his position his horse-drawn vehicle took 24 hours to cover 40 versts (one verst being the Russian equivalent of one kilometre).

Some of us who have had to shield during Lockdown may be able to relate to his feelings of isolation cut off from society in the depths of freezing rural Russia. To make matters worse medicine and doctors were viewed with dread and suspicion by the locals.

Within a very short space of time Dr. Vladimir Bomgard (Bulgakov's hero) finds himself coping with all manner of medical emergencies including his worst nightmare a difficult childbirth. You wouldn't get away with it today, but on the pretence of getting his cigarettes, he rushed back to his room to consult his Doderlein's Operative Obstetrics. Fortunately the midwife Pelageya Ivanovna knew exactly what was required and from her hints and encouragement he manages to successfully deliver the baby feet first.

Soon after this he has to deal with a mother who left her 3 year old daughter for five days suffering from diphtheritic croup. The idea of giving consent to cut open her daughter's throat was so horrific that she refused. But Bomgard was not to be deterred – he instantly banished her from the operating theatre!

Old wives' tales and folklore abound in the village and help to illustrate how backward the peasants were. For example, a peasant who was told to put mustard plasters on his front and back to cure laryngitis complained they didn't work. They eventually found them stuck on the back and front of his sheepskin coat. Or the tales of the old wives who gave pregnant women hair to chew in the hope of an easy birth, or who put lumps of sugar in the womb in the hope of tempting the baby out. Even the more literate miller diagnosed with malaria decided that rather than take the quinine sachets every four hours he would take all ten at once to save time, resulting in his near death. He was only saved by a stomach pump and quick action from Bomgard.

But worst was yet to come. Syphilis was rife and soon symptoms appear in the form of sore throats, rashes on the adults and even the children. In despair Bomgard recommends treatment until such time as their symptoms improve but it proves almost impossible to persuade them. On another occasion he extracts a soldier's tooth using pliers which results in him pulling out the long root and much of the jaw bone too.

Bulgakov lived through the Soviet crackdown and his career was plagued by Soviet censorship, but he found a way to laugh at life even when it was at its blackest. He was lucky in his third wife, Elena, who worked tirelessly after his death and up to her own to ensure his work received the recognition it undoubtedly deserves. *'Everything will turn out right, the world is built on that.'* *The Master and Margarita*

Past Events

Karen Hewitt

In a summer under lockdown it has not been easy to organise Association Events. However, Karen was able to host three 'mini-garden-parties' with six members at each of them. We all brought food and enjoyed talking to each other.

If you have not yet looked at the International Virtual Exhibition on [Contribution to Victory](#) on our [website](#), please do so under 'Past events'. It was a joint effort, and I think all of us discovered some surprising facts about Oxford during the Second World War. You can also see photos and descriptions of what was going on in Perm and in Louisville, Perm's American twin city.

Future Events

Karen Hewitt

We are planning a series of online events which will take place in Oxford and in Perm during October and November, especially from 10th - 20th November.

Federico Varese will be giving a Zoom talk on 'Berezniki – the development of a Soviet City' at 5.30 pm on Thursday 19th November. Those who want to hear it should contact Karen Hewitt by email.

Geron Swann of FilmOxford is working with people from Oxford on a video about our city for Perm. There are schemes to teach Morris dancing to Perm dancers, and Perm folk dances to Oxford dancers and to show a video of their efforts.

The Oxford Perm Journalists Seminar will now be held online with four separate sessions during October and November. Andrew Adams is organizing this project

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Newsletter information

David Roulston

We are very grateful to our members who continue to submit interesting articles for Perm News. Please note that articles, including book reviews, etc. are always welcome. The submission deadline for the winter issue of Perm News is 21st January but it is helpful if you let the editor (contact details above) know sooner if you plan to submit an item. Articles should be sent as email attachments preferably in docx format and not exceed about 650 words plus two jpg images (also as attachments), or approximately 850 words with no images. Shorter articles are always welcome. Note that individual permission for publication is now required for any photos which include recognisable people. Readers can browse past newsletters on the web site www.oxfordperm.org. The editor is grateful to Sue Gregory for her invaluable proofreading each issue of Perm News.

Please send any photos of visits to Perm or Perm Association events for the website photo gallery to Jessica at jessica.vlaslova@gmail.com or to her WhatsApp on 07766 025313. Note that under GDPR rules, individual permission is required for any photos which include recognisable people

Obituary:**Nick Allen***Mari Prichard*

Nick Allen – anthropologist, writer, Fellow of Wolfson College, Oxford University Reader in Social Anthropology and long-time member of the Oxford Perm Association, died on 21st March this year. Some of us knew him well, others may have come across him in meetings, or ferrying Permian visitors, for whom he and his wife Sheila were generous hosts. But his career and his Russian interests demonstrate the diversity of reasons that have taken people to Perm, and the wealth of friendship, knowledge and experience that the Perm Association has gathered in its membership.

Having learnt the languages that enabled him to compare mythology and literature across Celtic, Classical, Indian and other Indo-European traditions, and edited periodicals that included *World Anthropology* and the *Journal of Hindu Studies*, he wanted to practise his Russian (self-taught in his twenties) and Karen arranged a host with whom he stayed in Perm for a month. He and Sheila then returned the favour, hosting many Russians in Oxford. They enjoyed the talk of their Perm visitors – and their music, Sheila being a musician herself. They were perfect hosts for the repeated return visits of Karavai, Perm's virtuoso balalaika quartet.

Nick's last book, published in November 2019, was *Arjuna – Odysseus: Shared Heritage in Indian and Greek Epic* (Arjuna being a hero of the Sanskrit epic, the Mahabharata). Even with that finished, and an old cancer come back, he was still writing up to his death. He will be much missed by his friends in the Perm Association.

Perm was awarded the honorary title 'City of Labour Valour'*contributed by City of Perm*

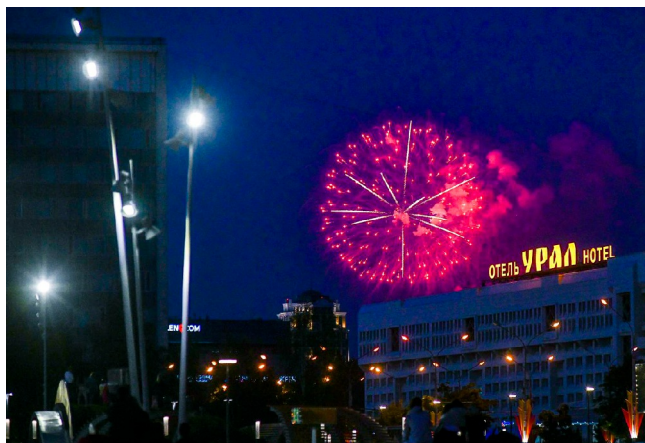
On July 2, 2020 President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin signed a Decree to award the honorary title 'City of Labour Valour' to the City of Perm.

The new honorary title established in 2020 is bestowed upon the citizenry of Russian cities whose residents made a substantial contribution to Victory in the Second World War, provided uninterrupted manufacturing of military and civil-purpose products by city plants and factories, and demonstrated massive feats of labour and self-sacrifice.

In the war-time the city of Perm bore the name of Molotov and numbered 255,000 residents. More than 100 thousand Perm men, women and children worked hard at various industries. In addition to Perm factories, 64 industrial enterprises were evacuated to the city from the areas occupied by enemy forces. During the war Molotov/Perm produced more than 13 million mortar shells, about 3 million charges for Katyusha rocket launchers, over 10 million pairs of boots and helmets, 650 thousand telephone sets. Every third artillery shell was equipped with a Perm fuse. All combat aircraft built during the war were provided with Perm fuel equipment. Two-thirds of all missile

charges manufactured by the country's powder industry were produced in Perm. During the war years the factories of Molotov were rewarded with 11 Orders - the highest state awards.

Apart from working hard, Molotov/Perm citizens donated 500 million rubles to the Defence Fund, sent 170 train carriages of warm clothes to the front and 280 carriages with gifts for soldiers; Perm donors provided 35 thousand litres of blood.



In accordance with the President's Decree, in all 20 Russian cities received the title "City of Labour Valour": Perm, Nizhny Novgorod, Yekaterinburg, Chelyabinsk, Samara, Perm, Nizhny Tagil, Saratov, Omsk, Kazan, Novosibirsk, Yaroslavl, Magnitogorsk, Izhevsk, Ufa, Tomsk, Ulyanovsk, Ivanovo, Novokuznetsk, Irkutsk and Borovichi.

The award was marked with marvelous fireworks which proud Perm citizens could watch at night on July 3rd.

Информационный вестник • май 2020 г

Extracts by David Roulston & Jessica Vlasova

The following is an extract of topics from **Perm Twins Newsletter, May 2020** edition. (The newsletter in pdf format is available on our web site [here](#)).

The first article reports the celebration of the World Day of Twin Cities, which started in 1944 with the twinning of Coventry and Stalingrad. It notes that this year World Twin Cities Day on 30th April celebrations took place in unprecedented conditions due to Covid-19 virus. The cities twinned with Perm are listed: Louisville (USA), Oxford (UK), Qingdao (China), Agrigento (Italy), Duisburg (Germany) and Amneville (France). Mayors of sister cities and Head of Perm, Dmitry Samoilov, sent congratulatory letters on the occasion of the holiday.

A report is given of the Perm Regional Public Forum held in November 2019, in which experts from Great Britain, France, Germany, as well as representatives of the cities of Arkhangelsk, Kirov and Ulyanovsk regions took part with more than 800 attendees. Included was a section on "Territorial public self-government (TPS) - development strategy and partnership "

Another item reports on the link between *Perm Business Class* newspaper and British newspapers *The Oxford Times* and *Oxford Mail* which started in 2016. And the visit to Oxford of Vadim Skovorodin, Chief Editor of Business Class in February 2020. [many OPA members will have attended his talk in Oxford]

An item on Chinese literature reports that this year, a record number of applications were submitted in Perm from those wishing to pass the international Chinese language proficiency test HSK. It took place at Perm Gymnasium No. 2. According to the organizers of the exam, 260 people were registered - this is a record for the city, indicating that interest in China is growing every year.

The "Friendship begins with the New Year Christmas trees" event was organised by the Palace of Children's (Youth) Creativity of the city of Perm. Winter holidays became an occasion for the Perm children to get acquainted with the history and culture of the twin cities and, of course, their young inhabitants.

The final item in the Perm Twinning Newsletter explains that under the emergency conditions of restrictions due to the novel coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic, Perm's twin cities began to use online resources to maintain contacts and work on joint projects. Exchange of information to ensure the safety of citizens, links to online broadcasts of theatres and museums and video appeals are just a small part of the types of support between residents of the twin cities. Referring to Oxford, the newsletter commented on the establishment of five resource centres to help residents. With four thousand volunteers for this work by the Oxford partnership "Oxford: we are together". Reports are also given from Duisberg, Louisberg, Qingdao and Agrigento.

A Tale of the Unexpected

Jonathan Gardner

A couple of years ago I was idly looking at books in Oxfam, Summertown when I spotted a title in Russian. I took the book off the shelf and looked through it. It was called *Feast of the Soul*, was beautifully bound and printed on fine paper and had an English translation in parallel text.. I was intrigued. I had never heard of the author, a certain Nikolai Glushkov. It was a little pricey for me, but as I was trying to revive my long-dormant Russian, I decided to buy it - and, of course, the money was going to a good cause.

Back at home, I immediately flipped open my computer and googled "Nikolai Glushkov author" - nothing, just a few articles about a Russian businessman (a friend of Boris Berezovsky), as well as various Nikolai Glushkovs scattered around Russia. I skimmed through it and then put it on my bookshelf with the intention of studying it later to improve my Russian.

Not long after, the country was awash with speculation about the novichok poisonings in Salisbury. Then, just a week later, Russian businessman Nikolai Glushkov was found dead in his London home, another suspicious death among the Russian emigres living in England. His face was splashed over the news. Something seemed familiar about his features. Surely he couldn't be the author of the mystery book? I leafed through the book again, and there, in the middle, was his face displayed in an arty portrait reflected in a mirror.

Mystery solved. Well, in part. As in the real world, where tragically many questions remain unanswered about Nikolai Glushkov's sad end, I have my own unanswered questions. Nikolai Glushkov clearly lavished a lot of love and expense on his book. It was self-published using a high-end English company; the translator he hired, Andrew Bromfield, is one of the leading translators of Russian fiction, including many of Boris Akunin's novels; and only 300 copies were published. So, what should I do with this unusual book? What would a literary critic make of the writings of Nikolai Glushkov? And most intriguingly, who was given the copy I bought - who was among the maximum of 300 people in the world to own a copy? And why did they decide to donate it to Oxfam, here in Oxford?

About the quarantine period in Perm

Pavel Sannikov

Since the end of March 2020, a quite strict quarantine has been announced in Russia and in Perm. The quarantine restrictions meant that you can leave the house only once every 3 days for food and /or medicine. Even walking was prohibited. Most people started remote working. All kindergartens, schools and universities were also closed. Only some services, which ensure life and order in the city, continued working: police, hospitals, communal services, government. This situation did not change for a long time.

For our family, one of the main consequences was the limit of physical movement. Every ordinary day each of us took 5-7 thousand steps. But in the quarantine period it became impossible. The number of steps per day dropped to 1-1.5 thousand. So, our family would quickly lose fitness and gain extra weight. To prevent it, we decided to do a special set of simple exercises (for which no special equipment is required) three or four times per week. There was only one problem - how to keep our child Georgiy busy for the duration of the exercise period. Our son could not spend an hour or an hour and a half alone in a room. This became clear immediately.



During training, he constantly comes to us and starts asking, demanding something, interfering, and so on. The solution turned out to be very simple. We started training together, with Georgiy. Of course, he couldn't do all the exercises perfectly. In some exercises, Georgiy just amusingly repeated our facial expressions, tried to copy our tense sounds, instead of real exercises. But the main thing is he really liked to do something new with mum and dad. And the problem was resolved.

Moreover, when we did not do exercises for more than two days, Georgiy asked: "When are we going to train? Why are we not training today?" Those questions encouraged us to make the training regularly.

When the quarantine regime became less strict, walks were allowed. To make walks more safe, we began to explore different remote parts of the city (different parks, squares, forests, river banks), where we could walk alone for a long time and not use masks. As a result, we recognized that in Perm there are several good places where you can walk along the Kama river. If the weather was good, such walks were very interesting and memorable. There, Georgiy learned to throw stones into the water very well and looked through binoculars for the first time. There are many very beautiful places along the banks of the Kama. Look at the photo below. If you don't know where is it, you might think that this photo was taken somewhere in the Indian Ocean in the Maldives.

Another positive consequence of the quarantine – my wife Ksenia began to drive a car. She

actually got her driver's licence about 6 years ago, but since then she has almost never driven a car. That's why the skill was lost. During the pandemic I made time to arrange and teach her to drive again. Now Ksenia can easily take Gosha to the kindergarten and drive to work by car.



Coronavirus in Perm State Pedagogical University

Galina Grigorieva, Teacher of English

It was quite shocking to wake up one day last January, read the news and realise that the world had drastically changed and quite soon a wave of dramatic changes would bring new rules of life and death, to which we had to find wisdom to adapt.

As I see it, the coronavirus restrictions were introduced by the federal government and the local authorities in adequate forms and timely. We felt that the authorities bore responsibility and tried to do their best to work out the coronavirus policies and find a compromise between risks and safety. So the majority of us took it for granted that we were to follow the new rules.

I can't say that it was difficult or annoying to go through the spring lockdown. Having a habit of positive thinking and an ability to accept new practices, I could now spend more time on housekeeping and hobbies. The point is that Perm is a vast city and it usually takes me hours to get from home to the University and then back home through traffic jams. Day after day, these long distances steal heaps of time - in fact, a light-day each week. Remote teaching granted time to me, as I just didn't have to travel to teach at the University now. Teaching was organised perfectly well by the University via Microsoft Teams, an online platform for e-learning. No lecture or seminar failed, all classes were arranged strictly according to the established time-table and, which is really great, all my colleagues and students could afford and technically manage that.

What is devastating in the new environment is the nature of remote education itself. It is limited. I assume that such subjects as, let us say, Differential Geometry or Macroeconomics can be taught online without substantial detriment to the quality of education. But I teach English and we stick to the communicative approach. It means, students and teachers constantly speak, discuss topics and practise responses in the foreign language. I can say it for sure that, no matter how much energy I am putting into the online process, it cannot substitute for the traditional classroom communication between me and my students. I thought at times that it may be the matter of habit and skill to start teaching online in the same qualitative way as I did face-to-face. But probably no, people can never feel quite connected via a machine. Even with our webcams on, when we can see each other on the screens, there is no feeling of emotional understanding. In the small icons on the screen there are no prompts about how much each of the students is engaged.