



Feather in Your Hat 2022-2023

AREA 9

DIRECTOR: KATHY MCLEAN

BRANCH: OTTAWA-CARELTON

PRESIDENT: SHARON CHOP

Total Number of Members: 105 members, 2 associate members, 7 life members

Number of members involved in the project: The 10 members of the executive and the Ottawa-Carleton branch members.



Sharing in the Ukrainian Experience



Goals: The Russian-Ukrainian war has been dominating world news for a year. Canada is home to 1.4 million people of Ukrainian descent - one of the world's largest Ukrainian populations. Many of our members have a Ukrainian connection. We, at the Ottawa-Carleton Branch, wanted to raise our members awareness of the conflict, as well as support Ukrainian refugees by raising funds. At present, we have had a fundraising lunch, a number of small family and friends Ukrainian themed dinners and a Ukrainian book for our book club.

The local Ukrainian community and in particular the Ukrainian Cathedral has become a haven for many refugees. The new parish priest Fr. Taras Kinash and his family arrived in Ottawa from Ukraine on Friday, April 22. He was featured at Christmas in the Ottawa Citizen and on CBC. As an aside, The Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall lit candles in this Ukrainian cathedral on the second day of their royal tour of Canada in 2022.

**The Church of the Blessed Virgin Ukrainian
Orthodox Cathedral**



November Luncheon in support of Ukrainian Refugees in Ottawa

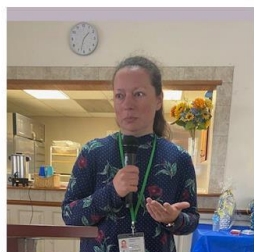


The November Ukrainian Refugee Fundraiser Luncheon held at the Church of the Blessed Virgin Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral was coordinated by our Vice-President, Irene Cameron. Before the meal, Irene translated a 150-year-old poem, 'A Prayer for Ukraine'. Irene also presented a brief historical perspective of the situation in Ukraine. (See below)



A delicious meal of traditional Ukrainian cuisine, organized and served by the League of Ukrainian Women of Ottawa was enjoyed by members and their interested friends. This event was an opportunity to invite potential new members, a goal of our organization (Recruitment, Retention and Recognition). From this event a couple of members renewed and a couple of new members joined.





The Speakers



Following the lunch, we had an opportunity to learn more about how the Russian-Ukrainian war is affecting ordinary people, from women who had experienced this war first hand. Five refugee women from Ukraine shared their unbelievable personal experiences of finding themselves in the middle of a war. What these women endured is truly amazing! Their stories were insightful, inspiring and very moving. One is in Ottawa with her baby, one had taught at university for 25 years and is here with her son, one who is an interpreter is here with her university aged children, and one has not spoken to her parents since 2014 as they are on different sides of the conflict. It was interesting to note that all but one spoke very good English. It was a reminder to all in attendance that we are very fortunate to live in Canada.

Every person attending received a souvenir bracelet of blue and yellow beads, the colours of the Ukrainian flag. Door prizes with a Ukrainian theme were given out. This important event raised \$1040.00, all of which will be used for mental health support for Ukrainian refugees in Ottawa. We thank all those who made this event a success.



Participants



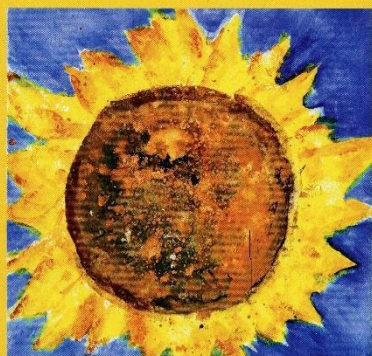
Chatting



Thank You!

Sharing a Ukrainian evening with friends and family

Thank You Note



We care

One of the favourite dishes at the Ukrainian luncheon was the delicious Borscht made by the church ladies. It was suggested in our January newsletter that members might make or buy borscht and share it with family, friends and older members living alone. We even provided a recipe! Some members prepared other dishes as well. One member shopped at a local grocery store started by immigrants from Odessa who have employed recent refugees.

Members sent photos of their evening which are included. We were reminded with the sharing of these meals of the resilience of the Ukrainian people as they face winter without food, without family, without heat and electricity and under attack. Some diners made donations to agencies looking after Ukrainian assistance.





"The Borscht was yummy!"





Sharing a Ukrainian themed book - Teachers' Teatime Book Club



There was a desire among our book club members to learn more about Ukraine's history. *The Memory Keeper of Kyiv* by Erin Litteken, published in May 2022, tells about the Holodomor, an event Ukraine's tragic history which painfully echoes its current crisis.

"I never imagined the release of my novel on a past oppression of the Ukrainian people would coincide with such a parallel tragedy." Erin Litteken.

Note: A share of proceeds from the purchase of each book is to be donated to DEC's Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal.

Inspired by her great-grandmother's story, the author decided to write a novel based on her great-grandmother's life in Ukraine before and after World War II. *The Memory Keeper of Kyiv* takes place across two timelines. It is story of a granddaughter and her grandmother experiencing losses and tragedy in the 1930s, and how the younger, discovering her grandmother's past, changes her relationship with her grandmother and her outlook on the future.

The Holodomor, as it came to be known, was a 1932-1933 genocide during which Stalin's people declared all land the property of the government and ordered all Ukrainian citizens to work for the state

in exchange for a slice of bread a day. The Ukraine was considered to be the breadbasket of Europe. We learned that this story of cruelty and starvation was suppressed by the Soviets for decades.

The world's food security is affected by this present conflict. Forty percent of the World Food Program's wheat supplies come from Ukraine. And as the UN Food and Agriculture Organization notes, Ukraine supplies up to 16% of the world's corn exports and more than 40% of the world's sunflower oil.

The book club looked at a timeline of key events in Ukraine's history and at a summary of the Holodomor. Some watched *A Bitter Harvest*, a 2017 film, set between the two World Wars and based on true historical events which conveys the untold story of the Holodomor, the genocidal famine engineered by Joseph Stalin. It is available on Prime, YouTube or Apple TV.

The discussion was lively and members who had traveled to Ukraine shared their photos and memories.



Outcomes:

Our purpose for this project was met. We learned firsthand more about the present war in Ukraine as well learning more about Ukraine's history. We raised money for mental health and some made personal donations to agencies supporting Ukraine. We truly lived up to the RWTO/OERO motto of "caring and sharing".

Further Plans:

We are planning workshops in Easter egg decorating in March and plan to grow sunflowers in the garden or pots in the summer.

Background and Prayer

Ukrainian is a country that has been struggling for independence for centuries. Due to its rich and varied resources many countries have tried to possess this land, including the Russian Empire, the Ottoman Empire, the Austrian Empire and the Soviet Union.

The desire for independence and freedom is ongoing. To this end in 1885 a hymn was created to champion this cause.

A Prayer for Ukraine is a patriotic hymn published in 1885 which became the spiritual anthem of Ukraine. It was a time that Imperial Russia suppressed the use of the Ukrainian Language. In response to this edict, the hymn was created. The text was written by Olexandr Konysky and the music composed by Mykola Lysenko.

The song became the regular closing hymn in services of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic and the Orthodox Churches of Ukraine. It gained national significance when it was performed by mass choirs during the War of Independence in 1917 to 1920. It has closed sessions of government councils and has been performed at major national functions.

Prayer for Ukraine

Lord, oh the Great and Almighty
Protect our beloved Ukraine,

Bless her with freedom and
Light of your holy rays.

With learning and knowledge
Enlighten us, your children small.

In love pure and everlasting
Let us oh Lord, grow.

We pray oh Lord Almighty
Protect our beloved Ukraine.

Grant our people and country
All Your kindness and grace.

Bless us with freedom
Bless us with wisdom

Guide us into a kind world.
Bless us Oh Lord
With good fortune
Forever and evermore.

Almighty God, bestow upon Ukraine
Strength, Glory, Freedom and Sovereign Authority.



- Russian military control
- Held or regained by Ukraine
- Limited Russian military control
- Russia annexed Crimea in 2014

Source: Institute for the Study of War (21:00 GMT, 13 November)

B B C

Respectfully submitted RWTO/OERO Ottawa-Carleton

