



The Scotland-Russia Forum Newsletter
Issue 3 September 2003
scotrussforum@blueyonder.co.uk

It is intended that the *Newsletter* will appear 4 times a year, in March, June, September and December. Any items for inclusion should be sent to the editor by the end of the month before: contact details are given at the foot of the page. Reviews of books, films or other performances, and reports of events will be welcome.

Forum Programme, September to December 2003

All events start at 7pm. Further details: 0131 662 9149 or scotrussforum@blueyonder.co.uk

Thursday 25 September **450 years of Russo-British Relations 1553-2003 - Professor Paul Dukes**
It is exactly 450 years since Richard Chancellor, more or less accidentally, visited the Russia of Ivan the Terrible — and drowned off the Fife coast on his return three years later. Paul Dukes, Emeritus Professor of History at Aberdeen University and author of a number of books on Russian history, will trace the development of Russo-British relations since that time.

7 pm, Prince's Suite, 2nd floor, Royal Over-Seas League, 100 Princes St, Edinburgh. Open to members and non-members. £2 members, £4 non-members (incl. glass of wine or soft drink) available at the end.

Thursday 23 October **Pushkin - Tim Binyon**

Dr Binyon's recent biography of Russia's greatest poet was awarded this year's prestigious Samuel Johnson Prize for Non-Fiction. One critic described it as "poignant, brisk and at times downright funny: the best possible tribute to the changeable and elusively fascinating character of its subject" (Guardian). Dr Binyon lectures in Russian literature at Wadham College, Oxford.

This is a joint event with Thins bookshop. Copies of *Pushkin*, HarperCollins 2002 (now also in paperback) will be available. Venue to be confirmed.

Thursday 6 November **In Wylie's footsteps: working with Russian doctors in St. Petersburg. How the SRF can help - Dr Peter Semple**

Dr. Semple, consultant physician at Inverclyde Royal Hospital, will talk about the work of the St. Petersburg Charity Forum which he set up with a small number of likeminded professionals from both Scotland and Russia, and the inspiration he received from Dr. James Wylie's work in Russia (1790-1854). Venue to be confirmed.

Tuesday 18 November **The Last Secrets of the Silk Road - Alexandra Tolstoy and Shamil**

Four young British women on an expedition on horse and camel along the 5000 mile route of the ancient Silk Road. One of the four, Alexandra Tolstoy (a graduate of Edinburgh University Russian Dept.), has described the journey in a recent book. She will be accompanied in Edinburgh by Shamil, expert horseman and the expedition's guide in Central Asia.

This will be a joint event with Thins bookshop. Copies of *The Last Secrets of the Silk Road*, Profile Books 2003, will be available. Venue to be confirmed.

Films: to be screened monthly: details to be confirmed later

Kruzhok: discussion group held on the 2nd Monday of each month, venues to be confirmed.

Monday 13 October *Impressions of Russians and Russia*, led by John Bowles (in Russian)

Monday 10 November *Chekhov's stories*, led by Neville Long (in English)

Monday 8 December *Contemporary Russian writers*, led by Jenny Carr (in Russian)

Apology

Unfortunately, the July issue of the *Newsletter* began with an error: Geoffrey Harper has pointed out that he is not a professor, and we would like to apologise for having inadvertently promoted him in our report of his talk on Kamchatka in May, and for any embarrassment caused.

Report from the Orphanage in Kitezh

In July, we reported that Robin Thomson, a student at Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh, was setting off to Kitezh by bicycle, to work as a volunteer for a month there. He cycled as far as L'viv in the Ukraine before running out of time, and continuing his journey by train. This is his initial report from Kitezh, and a follow-up will appear in the next newsletter. Robin would be grateful for any offers of sponsorship for his trip (please contact the editor, details at the bottom of the page).

First notes from Kitezh

A long straight road runs north from the regional centre of Baryatino in the Kaluga Oblast, some 150 miles south-west of Moscow. The road runs between lines of vivid white birch, with stretches of forest punctuated by enormous, unfenced and unbounded fields. Passing by a village with no sign to indicate its name, the road turns along a lake and comes to a new sign, carved in wood and brightly painted: KITEZH. Turning into the driveway, another sign reads: 'Peace be on you who visit. This is the territory of Kitezh village, where children are given a home and a family environment.' At once various wooden buildings can be seen dotted about a large meadow: a church with wonderful carvings and a high roof, a new guest house, a school building and various residential houses for the community. Going in further, there are wood stores, a *banya* (bath-house) and *stolovaya* (dining-room). All are designed differently and stand out from the houses of surrounding villages by their newness and lack of decay.

My bedroom is, unusually, in the school house - a small room off one of the three classrooms, a sort of book storeroom that happens to have a bed in it. The room contains many books, of which most seem to be collections of folk tales from around the world and factual information on the local region. I arrive two days before the school term begins, and the place is dusty and has been largely unused for two months. That soon changes, however, and a buzz of activity fills the wooden building (as does smoke on the first day that the stove has been lit all summer). Children of all ages, sorted into years from the fourth class (age around nine) to the eleventh (age sixteen) attend six lessons per day, the first before breakfast, with a Russian state school curriculum that includes Russian, literature, mathematics, the natural sciences, geography, history, English and physical training. English is taught largely by volunteers from English-speaking countries, and this is my main task while here.

Kitezh took its first orphans some ten years ago. It was founded by Dmitri Morozov, a former journalist from Moscow with a wide background of experience. The name is taken from the mythical Russian city of Kitezh that is hidden beneath a lake, that will rise in Russia's hour of need to save and protect its people. It signifies the enduring Russian soul and a strong impulse to recover, heal and grow. The aim of the project has been to provide children from disturbed backgrounds, or from the street, with a family environment in which to grow up, as well as good food, education and an atmosphere of generosity and love. They also quickly gain a large body of friends in the other children, who are mostly very close-knit and look out for each other in a way rarely seen elsewhere. Certainly, at first glance the children seem very healthy and thriving; it is difficult to tell initially who has been here for a long time and who is newly arrived and still raw from some early trauma. Children are assigned to a 'family', with a mother and father figure and other children, all of whom live in one of the houses. On Sundays they eat together as a family, while during the week all eat at the main dining room.

This does not, of course, mean that life becomes rosy and easy for either children or carers. Just tonight the police were here, having caught three 'zaitzy' ('hares'), children who were running away and were found on the road on bicycles as darkness fell. I was not able to understand all that was said, and not everything was said, but I expect that the runaways had not been here long - a

group of new children arrived last weekend. Running away from state-run orphanages is common, and some children retain the impulse once they reach Kitezh.

At the same time as fulfilling its main aim of providing education, plus play therapy and other experiential tools, the activities of Kitezh village are very much affected by the time of year. Much of its financial income comes from a stake in Kitezh Agro, a farming business whose main activity is potato farming. A mile down the road from Kitezh is a vast field of potatoes, perhaps a mile long by a mile across. The potatoes are planted in May and harvested in September, both of which occupy everybody at Kitezh, with the children centre stage. During the summer, pairs of adults take it in turns to go and stand guard in the potato field between 8pm and midnight, as neighbours have been known to turn up with a tractor and trailer (and guns) to pilfer the crop. Then there is the constant demand for firewood, and a stockpiling in late summer for the long winter to come, when each house will consume large quantities of the fast-burning birch and the need for the twice-weekly sauna and steam bath will be still greater. One of the older children wields a chainsaw, while others feed him logs, remove offcuts and form a production line. Then a group of them take axes and split the rounds to the required size.

Friday is market day in the local town, Baryatino. Here fresh fruit and luxury foods can be had, as well as hardware and candles and other useful items that the local shop does not stock

Robin Thomson

To Russia with a French Horn

During July 2003 the Edinburgh Youth Orchestra toured the Baltic States which included, for the final four days, Russia. We performed in both Pskov and St. Petersburg, the latter as part of the city's 300th anniversary celebrations. This was the first time that I had ever been to Russia and the unfamiliarity of the alphabet, the sense of a country still with one foot in the past (unlike Estonia and Lithuania where we had also performed), and an odd hesitation in dealings with some of the people I first met added to the strangeness of the initial experience. This feeling, I am pleased to report, did not last long – partly because of making the adjustment to a new culture and partly through finding the familiar in the middle of the unfamiliar.

A 'Scottish connection' was made when I opened the door of the fridge in my Pskov hotel room in search of something to drink. However, I am not the first to have found this common ground. Earlier this year, as part of his 'World Tour', President Putin gave a speech to the Scottish Parliament in which he talked of 'our great nations' common bond', referring of course to that elixir of life, Irn-Bru. (A sceptical fellow-musician pointed out that as Irn-Bru is reputed to be the world's most effective hangover cure, it might counter-balance Russia's other national drink quite nicely!)

A second familiar note came in the form of a reception held for us in the Pskov town hall by the 'Friends of Perth Association'. Pskov is twinned with Perth and, as I attend a school barely twenty minutes away from the 'Fair City', I began to feel a growing affinity with the city and with Russia in general.

After our concert in the open-air amphitheatre in Pskov, it was on to St. Petersburg by coach. St. Petersburg was far more westernised and geared to tourists than Pskov. Such by now was my cultural 'acclimatisation' to Russia that I began to resent the ubiquitous McDonalds, Coca-Cola and GAP. Fortunately, we visited the Hermitage museum in the centre of the city, something which I found astounding, as every room was stuffed to the gunnels with priceless artefacts belonging to various Russian heads of state, including a replica of a mosaic arched hallway in the Vatican and an amazing mechanical clock plated with 24 carat gold and comprising an owl, a peacock and a dragonfly, all of which help to keep time! There was also a display of living irony at the museum's exit into Palace Square, as there were men selling communist memorabilia and souvenirs. (Lenin would be rolling in his grave: capitalism making money from socialism!)

In St. Petersburg we performed in the Shostakovich Hall to a packed house, and to give some indication of how warm and friendly the audience were, our conductor had to come back for **ten** extra bows after the encore! This was typical of the reception that we received everywhere we went in Russia and by the end of the trip I had been thoroughly won over by the country and the

people. Four days was not enough and I do want to return to carry on the process of familiarisation that began then. From the little Russian I picked up, I know I wanted to say 'До свиданя' rather than 'Good-bye'.

Rory McCleery

Two other members of the Edinburgh Youth Orchestra also wrote about the trip:

Having studied Russian for one year at school I was excited at this opportunity of a lifetime to visit a country which had so fascinated me from afar. Our first stop in Russia was Pskov, near the Latvian border. Pskov has retained its original character and is unaffected by mass tourism. The people were very welcoming and many locals attended our open-air concert, including the Mayor. Language was not a barrier: music is a universal language. From Pskov we travelled to St Petersburg. What struck me most about this fascinating city was its skyline and its grandeur. Everything in St Petersburg appears on a grand and wealthy scale. However, I was told that there is actually a great deal of diversity in the people's living conditions. I enjoyed visiting the famous Hermitage Museum which reflects Russia's pre-revolutionary culture and artistic excellence. Russian cuisine definitely lived up to expectations, and beetroot soup tastes so much better in Russia than in the UK! Recently Russia has become more readily accessible to ordinary travellers, and I very much appreciated how warmly we were received.

Mary Robb

It was the first time I had ever been to Russia and it was a fantastic experience. I was immediately struck by the Russian architecture prevalent in the city centre in the cathedrals. I loved the coloured buildings as well. A highlight for me was visiting the Hermitage museum, I was dazzled by the gold and crystal. It was certainly impressive if a little garish and over the top at times. My favourite paintings were the ones in the Impressionist rooms and the da Vinci 'Madonna and Child' - it is certainly a haven for art lovers. We played a concert in the prestigious Shostakovich Philharmonic Hall which was magnificent and it sent a shiver down the spine to be playing Tchaikovsky in St Petersburg! On our last night we watched the bridges go up over the River Neva and the city looked so beautiful at night. I fell in love with the city and I would love to go back for longer some day - even if I don't I will carry many special memories of it forever.

Vanessa Garden

Russian tiger and leopard day at the Zoo

Saturday 27 September has been designated as 'Russian (Amur) Tiger and Leopard Day' coordinated by the Anglo-Russian conservation charity AMUR, Moscow Zoo and Phoenix (a Russian NGO dedicated to Amur tiger and leopard conservation endeavours). The aim is to create awareness of the desperate situation facing the Russian wild big cats and to recognise the contribution of zoos in Europe to conservation programmes. Events are to be held in cities in the Far East such as Vladivostock, Novopokrovka, Luchegorsk and Khabarovsk and in 30 zoos all over Russia, CIS and Europe: Edinburgh is one of three zoos in the UK to be participating. Edinburgh Zoo has a family of five Amur tigers, as part of a coordinated conservation breeding programme to help save this species from extinction.

The programme of events at Edinburgh Zoo has not yet been announced, but among the events will be competitions and craft activities for children, and talks by the keepers at the tiger enclosure.

Orthodox Community of St Nicholas

Services during the autumn (at Laighill Loan, Dunblane, unless indicated):

Saturday 20 September, 5 pm: *Vigil (Birth of the Mother of God)*

Sunday 21 September, 11 am*: *Liturgy (Birth of the Mother of God and Sunday before the Exaltation of the Cross)* Annual General Meeting.

Friday 3 October, 6 pm: *Vespers (Leavetaking of the Exaltation of the Cross, St Dimitri of Rostov)* at the University of Strathclyde Chaplaincy, Martha Street, Glasgow

Saturday 4 October, 11 am: *Liturgy (Leavetaking of the Exaltation of the Cross, St Dimitri of Rostov)* at the University of Strathclyde Chaplaincy, Martha Street, Glasgow

Sunday 12 October, 11 am: *Liturgy (St Cyriacus the Hermit)*

Saturday 25 October, Coffee morning in Dunblane Cathedral Hall

Saturday 1 November, 11 am*: *Liturgy (Demetrius Saturday, Commemoration of the Dead)*

Sunday 16 November, 11 am: *Liturgy (St Winifred of Holywell)*

Friday 28 November, 6 pm: *Vespers. Nativity Fast: 28/11-6/1 New Style, 15/11-24/12 Old Style. (Apostle Matthew)* at the University of Strathclyde Chaplaincy, Martha Street, Glasgow

Saturday 29 November, 11 am: *Liturgy (Nativity Fast: 28/11-6/1 New Style, 15/11-24/12 Old Style; Apostle Matthew)* at the University of Strathclyde Chaplaincy, Martha Street, Glasgow

Saturday 6 December, 11 am*: *Liturgy (Afterfeast of the Entry of the Mother of God in to the Temple, Repose of St Alexander Nevsky)* Quarterly Meeting

Friday 19 December, 11 am: *Liturgy (St Nicholas of Myra, the Wonderworker)*

Tuesday 6 January 2004, 2 pm: *Vigil. Christmas Eve. Nativity Fast.*

Wednesday 7 January 2004, 11 am*: *Liturgy. Christmas.*

* On these days, there is a communal meal after the Liturgy.

Further information: Russian Orthodox Church in Britain and Ireland (Diocese of Sourozh) - Father Alexander Williams, Arranmhor, Lighthill Loan, Dunblane, FK15 0BJ tel. 01786-822750

Ecumenical Patriarchate (Diocese of Thyateira) - Fr Constantine Papageorghiou, Greek Cathedral of St Luke, 27 Dundonald Road, Glasgow, G12 9LL, Tel. 0141-339 7368

Archimandrite John Maitland Moir, Community of St Andrew, 23a George Square, Edinburgh, EH8 9LD, tel 0131 667 0372

Other events

Classes of Russian music interest. Tutor: Stuart Campbell

The Music of Tchaikovsky – known and unknown: Glasgow University Campus, Tuesdays from 14 October 2003, 7.30-9.30; Edinburgh University, 11 Buccleuch Place, Thursdays from 9 October 2003, 6.30-8.30

Music in Moscow (with the participation of Svetlana Zvereva): Glasgow University Campus, Tuesdays from 13 January 2004, 7.30-9.30; Edinburgh University, 11 Buccleuch Place, Thursdays from 15 January 2004, 2-4pm

Further information: Glasgow: Department of Adult and Continuing Education, University of Glasgow, St Andrew's Building, Eldon Street, Glasgow G3 6NH Tel.: 0141-330 1835 E-mail: enquiry@ace.gla.ac.uk Web: www.gla.ac.uk/adulteducation

Edinburgh, Office of Lifelong Learning, University of Edinburgh, 11 Buccleuch Place, Edinburgh EH8 9LW Tel.: 0131-650 4400 E-mail: OLL@ed.ac.uk Web: www.lifelong.ed.ac.uk

Vladimir Chekmarev

The third exhibition of paintings by the Russian painter and book illustrator, Vladimir Chekmarev, is currently showing at the Café Cassachok in Glasgow. 'His use of light lends vibrant radiance to the colours and simultaneously softens contours of his subjects.'

Tuesday to Saturday from 11am-9pm and Sundays from 4pm-9pm, 10 August - 12 September 2003
Venue: Russian Cafe Cossachok, 10 King Street, Merchant City, Glasgow, G1 5QZ, Tel/Fax: 01415530733 www.cossachok.com

Hover Choir from Yerevan

Concerts of Armenian and Western sacred and classical works, folk songs, and popular music. Sunday 14th September 2003, 3pm Glasgow University Chapel, Monday 15th September 2003, 7.30pm Canongate Kirk, Royal Mile <http://www.hoverchoir.org/>

With Sharmanka from St Petersburg

Tatyana Jakovskaya, co-founder of Sharmanka Kinetic Theatre, co-ordinator of the Millennium Clock at NMS and theatre critic, talks to Pauline McLean, Arts Correspondent, BBC Scotland. Wednesday 15 October 1pm, National Library of Scotland, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh. Admission free but by ticket only. Phone 0131-622 4807 or email events@nls.uk

Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra

Usher Hall 18 October, 7.30pm. Conductor, Emil Tabakov. Programme includes Rachmaninov Piano Concerto no 1, soloist Nikolai Demidenko. Pre-concert talk, 6.45pm.

The Music of Mother Russia

Vera Kralichkina, Elena Domozhirova and Anna Frolova (voice, piano and cello) with 'a unique programme of music varying from the international arena to music seldom heard outside Russia itself'. Queen's Hall 24 October, 7.30pm.

Russian Tavern

Port Royal Hotel at Port Bannatyne, Isle of Bute, "Stella's Island". Performances by a Russian Gypsy band and dancers Gypsy Talisman, Saturday 27 September at 8pm, and a matinee at 3.00pm, Sunday 28 September (so mainlanders can get a ferry back home).

Contact: Dag and Olga stay@butehotel.com www.butehotel.com

Live music @ Cossachok September/October 2003

14 September *Roses in the Snow* First performance of their debut Scottish Tour, *Roses in the Snow* is a Russian Gypsy female trio of astonishing talent, hailing from one of Russia's true showbiz dynasties- the Erdenko Family. Tickets £5/£3

17 September *Merchant City Festival 2003*- Opening performance: *Roses in the Snow* kick off the 2nd annual Merchant City Festival with their fiery brand of Gypsy song and dance. Tickets £5/£3

18 September *Gipsy Fire*. *Roses in the Snow* are joined by Lev Atlas (violin) for a unique Russian Gypsy collaboration. Tickets £5/£3

20 September 3pm *Russian Tea Room* Georgie Gajjic (accordion) performs a selection of Eastern European folk and classical music whilst a special dessert menu will be served during the afternoon.

21 September *Kesha* Closing the festival, Scotland's hottest new world music group will be joined by special guests for an unmissable night of music. Tickets £5/£3

28 September *Roses in the Snow* Last chance to see this superb Gypsy female trio as they finish their Scottish tour with a Cossachok farewell. Tickets £5/£3

Contact: Russian Cafe Cossachok, 10 King Street, Merchant City, Glasgow, G1 5QZ, Tel/Fax: 01415530733 www.cossachok.com

Notices/Advertisements

New Masters Degree/Diploma in Russian Language and Society

From September 2003, a Masters degree in Russian Language and Society (open to students with or without a degree in Russian Studies) is being established by the Universities of Surrey and Bath, in collaboration with the prestigious Moscow State Institute for International Affairs (MGIMO). For additional information and an application form, please contact: Karen Short, MA Programme Administrator (Surrey), Department of Linguistic, Cultural and International Studies, School of Arts, University of Surrey, Guildford GU2 7XH UK Telephone +44 (0)1483- 686240 Fax +44 (0)1483 876201 K.Short@surrey.ac.uk

Surrey University website www.surrey.ac.uk/LIS/Russian/marus.html with a link to the intranet site of the University of Bath (www.bath.ac.uk/esml).

Scots, and Scottish Culture in Russia

The St Andrew's Society of Russia, based in Moscow, invite Forum members visiting Russia even for the shortest visit to contact them as they would be 'more than glad to welcome anyone looking for contacts, to set up, or to provide alleviation from homesickness in the form of a St. Andrew's Ball, Burns Suppers and our summer event the Stramash!' See their website for details of these events (and reports on past ones, as well as their charitable activities: www.st-andrew.ru

The Society is also hoping to start up a series of business lunches to meet on a more regular basis and provide an interesting forum in which to discuss how best to tackle the Russian market from both experienced and new comers points of view. The St. Andrew's Society of Russia can also help students in Russia for a term, providing opportunities to meet business people and the possibility of internships/ work experience.

Contacts: Alan Thompson (Event Coordinator, St. Andrew's Society of Russia) alanthompson@st-andrew.ru
Chieftain David Jenkins davidj@st-andrew.ru

Sussex University Russianists

Message from Natalia Tronenko: 'I'm organising the Last Ever Reunion of Russianists at Sussex. You are very welcome to attend our celebration/the wake of the Russian Department on 19 September 4-10 pm on the University campus, including a performance of "The Cherry Orchard".' email Natalia Tronenko tronenko@bools.demon.co.uk

Student contacts

The Forum has received a letter from a teacher in Murom, east of Moscow, who is organising an English club among 11-15 year old pupils and would like to contact any similar group studying Russian in Scotland. Contact the teacher, Паламар Денис, Ул. Кооперативный проезд дом № 4 кв. № 89, Город Муром 602252, Россия or Palamar_denis@mail.ru