

# RUSSIAN HERITAGE

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AUGUST - SEPTEMBER 2005

## Fall Program Begins September 11 at Eckerd College: Student Ambassadors and Russian Judges

The first meeting of the fall season will be a general meeting for all members and friends of Russian Heritage at Eckerd College on Sunday, September 11, at 4:00 pm. The meeting includes a program presented by our student ambassadors who went to Russia this summer, partly sponsored by Russian Heritage. They all visited St. Petersburg and Moscow, and one also went to Novgorod, Suzdal, and Vladimir. We will also preview the events being planned for this year, including the Old Russian New Year, our emphasis on the Russian Language, and Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin* (see inside), and the possibility of arranging a cruise, as a fund raiser and an exciting get away.

One special feature of this September meeting is the chance to have dinner with seven judges from St. Petersburg, Russia. The meal will be served in the same room where we will have our program. The judges deal with problems of youthful offenders, district courts, and family and business law. The cost of the meal is \$15, and reservations for the meal need to be made by September 7 by calling (727) 867-9148. It is possible to come for just the program at 4:00, but I think you will want to meet the judges. The meeting is in the Pelican Room of the CEC (Continuing Education Center), just to the left of the entrance, after you pass the traffic circle at Eckerd College.

### "Russian Heritage" T-Shirts

We are encouraging you to wear your Russian Heritage T-shirts on 9/11 to the meeting. Most of you received the shirts at last year's New Year's Ball. If you want to buy a T-shirt, they will be available at the meeting. The price for members is \$10; for non-members \$12.

### NUTSA in CONCERT

*(Nino Djemalovna Shanshiashvili)*  
jazz and pop singer

For the first time  
in Central and Northern Florida!

August 28, 2005  
see back page for details.

"The Lover of Love"

## ЕВГЕНИЙ ОНЕГИН

Александр Сергеевич Пушкин

## Eugene Onegin

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

Alexander Pushkin is considered to be the greatest Russian writer of all time, and he has been praised by his contemporaries, and by educators and simple people in Tsarist, Soviet, and present-day Russia as the greatest master of the Russian language and Russian literature. The year 2006 will mark the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the completion of Pushkin's greatest work, a novel in verse called "Eugene Onegin". The Board of Directors has set as a goal to feature this work in 2006, and to encourage all members and friends of Russian Heritage to read (or re-read) this masterpiece, and to come together in 2006 to discuss the work, to read parts of it aloud, to compare the Pushkin version to the Tchaikovsky opera based on the same theme, and to view and discuss the film starring Ralph Fiennes as Onegin.

One problem that Americans have in reading "Eugene Onegin" is that it is extremely difficult to translate the Russian poetry into English. We will discuss the problems and compare various translations as part of our spring program. In this newsletter we are giving you a chance to read the first four stanzas in various translations. We encourage you to choose one, and to find the work in your local library, bookstore, or on line, so that you can read the entire novel in verse for yourself. The consensus of most scholars is that the Falen translation is the best poetic translation, but not all agree. You will notice that the novel is made up of a series of 366 stanzas (each a fourteen-line sonnet) divided into 8 chapters. The novel is both a moving narrative (Tchaikovsky's opera follows this plot line), but Pushkin also has many digressions on Russian culture, literature, seasons, dancers, feet, etc. that add many dimensions to the story. We hope that you will accept the challenge to get to know this masterpiece of world literature and world culture during the coming year.

\* \* \* \* \*

THE YEAR 2005 HAS BEEN DESIGNATED THE "YEAR OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES" IN THE UNITED STATES. WATCH FOR INFORMATION IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLORE MORE FULLY THE *RUSSIAN LANGUAGE*.

## A. EUGENE ONEGIN

### I. 1

"Now that he is in grave condition,  
My uncle, decorous old prune,<sup>2</sup>  
Has earned himself my recognition;  
What could have been more opportune?  
May his idea inspire others;  
But what a bore, I ask you, brothers,  
To tend a patient night and day  
And venture not a step away:  
Is there hypocrisy more glaring  
Than to amuse one all but dead,  
Shake up the pillow for his head,  
Dose him with melancholy bearing,  
And think behind a stifled cough,  
'When will the Devil haul you off?'"

### I. 2

Thus a young good-for-nothing muses,  
As in the dust his coach wheels spin,  
By a decree of sovereign Zeus's  
The extant heir to all his kin.  
Friends of Ruslan and of Lyudmila!<sup>3</sup>  
Allow me, with no cautious feeler  
Or foreword, to present at once  
The hero of my new romance:  
Onegin, a dear friend of mine,  
Born where Nevá flows, and where you,  
I daresay, gentle reader, too  
Were born, or once were wont to shine;  
There I myself once used to be:  
The North, though, disagrees with me.<sup>4</sup>

### I. 3

Fresh from a blameless state career,  
His father lived on IOU's,  
He used to give three balls a year,  
Until he had no more to lose,  
Fate treated young Onegin gently:  
*Madame* first watched him competently,  
From her *Monsieur* received the child;  
The boy was likable, though wild.  
*Monsieur*, a poor *abbé* from Paris,  
To spare the youngster undue strain,  
Would teach him in a playful vein,  
With moral strictures rarely harass,  
Reprove him mildly for each lark,  
And walk him in the Summer Park.

### I. 4

But when young manhood's stormy morrow  
Broke in due course for young Eugene,  
The age of hope and tender sorrow,  
*Monsieur* was driven from the scene.  
This left Eugene in free possession;  
Clad in a London dandy's fashion,  
With hair style of the latest cast,  
He joined Society at last.  
In writing and in conversation  
His French was perfect, all allowed;  
He danced Mazurkas well and bowed  
Without constraint or affectation.  
Enough! Society's verdict ran:  
A bright and very nice young man.

Translated by Walter Arndt, 1963, revised 1981.

## B. EUGENE ONEGIN

### CHAPTER ONE

1

"My uncle's acted very wisely,  
to seek his bed when he's so sick;  
his family's reacted nicely  
and he's most happy with his trick.  
He's set the world a good example,  
which others really ought to sample,  
but it's a bore, when night and day  
the sick man forces you to stay!  
To keep him sweet, as if he's dying,  
give him his daily medicine  
and make quite sure that it goes in,  
adjust the pillows while one's sighing:  
'Don't even *think* of getting well,  
the devil take you, go to hell!'"

2

Thus thought a ne'er-do-well and dandy  
whom Zeus had made his uncle's heir:  
to him the money'd come in handy,  
so coach and horses rushed him there.  
For those who love my comic thriller  
of Ruslan and his dear Ludmilla,  
I'll introduce without ado,  
the hero of my tale to you:  
Onegin, whom I've long befriended,  
had grown up on the Neva's shore,  
perhaps like you, dear reader, for  
St. Petersburg is truly splendid  
where once we wandered back and forth,  
though now I really hate the North.

3

Completing service long and faithful,  
his father ended his career  
and left his son debts by the plateful  
from having given balls each year.  
And yet my friend was saved from Hades  
by his Madame, a Gallic lady;  
and then Monsieur took on the lad,  
a lively child but never bad.  
Monsieur l'abbé, who hated quarrels,  
thought learning ought to be a joy,  
tried not to overwhelm the boy.  
He didn't bother him with morals,  
and if annoyed, he didn't bark,  
but took Eugene to Letny Park.

4

When Eugene grew and first felt passion,  
was plagued by love and hope and doubt,  
they did what's always been the fashion  
and threw the wretched abbé out.  
My friend was free from every pressure,  
could live and act as was his pleasure,  
so he was always finely dressed  
in what was surely London's best.  
He spoke and wrote French to perfection,  
bowed constantly, his hair well curled,  
and when he danced he turned and twirled,  
his light Mazurka no exception.  
He didn't have too long to wait  
before the world thought he was great.

Translated by Tom Beck, 2004.

## C. EUGENE ONEGIN

### CHAPTER ONE

"My uncle's a man of most honourable principles; since he fell ill in earnest, he's made people respect him – he couldn't have thought of a better way. His example's a lesson to us all...."

"But, God! – what a bore it is to sit by a sick man day and night, never moving one step away! What low dishonesty to try to amuse someone who's only half-alive, straighten his pillows, solemnly bring him his medicine, sigh – and be thinking to oneself 'Will the Devil never carry you off?'"

<sup>2</sup>These were the reflections of a young good-for-nothing as he galloped along post-haste in a cloud of dust, heir-apparent by God's sovereign will to all his family's wealth.

Friends of my Ruslán and Ludmíla\*, may I introduce to you straight away, without preamble, the hero of my novel: Eugene Onegin, a good friend of mine. He was born in St. Petersburg on the banks of the Neva, where maybe you were born too, reader, or made your name. I was out and about there myself once – but the North disagrees with me!\*

<sup>3</sup>Eugene's father, after an 'honourable and distinguished' career in the public service, lived on credit, held three balls a year, and finally ruined himself. Fate preserved Eugene. At first a French governess looked after him; then a '*monsieur*' replaced '*madame*'. The boy was mischievous, but sweet. The French *monsieur* (a down-and-out cleric), so as not to bore him, joked his way through every lesson, spared him strict moral teaching, scolded him but mildly for his pranks, and took him for walks in the Summer Gardens.

<sup>4</sup>When the age of rebellious adolescence came – age of hopes and gentle moodiness – *monsieur* was sent packing. Eugene was free! He had his hair cut in the latest fashion; dressed like a London 'dandy'; and at last took a look at society. He spoke and wrote in perfect French; he danced the mazaruka with grace; and he bowed without stiffness. What more could you want? Society decided he was clever, and awfully nice.

Translated by Roger Clarke, 1999.

## EUGENE ONEGIN

I

"My uncle has most honest principles:  
when he was taken gravely ill,  
he forced one to respect him  
and nothing better could invent.  
To others his example is a lesson;  
but, good God, what a bore to sit  
by a sick person day and night, not stirring  
a step away!  
What base perfidiousness  
to entertain one half-alive,  
adjust for him his pillows,  
sadly serve him his medicine,  
sigh--and think inwardly  
when *will* the devil take you?"

II

Thus a young scapegrace thought  
as with post horses in the dust he flew,  
by the most lofty will of Zeus  
the heir of all his kin.  
Friends of Lyudmila and Ruslan!  
The hero of my novel,  
without preambles, forthwith,  
I'd like to have you meet:  
Onegin, a good pal of mine,  
was born upon the Neva's banks,  
where maybe you were born,  
or used to shine, my reader!  
There formerly I too promenaded—  
but harmful is the North to me.<sup>1</sup>

III

Having served excellently, nobly,  
his father lived by means of debts;  
gave three balls yearly  
and squandered everything at last.  
Fate guarded Eugene:  
at first, Madame looked after him;  
later, Monsieur replaced her.  
The child was boisterous but charming.  
Monsieur l'Abbé, a poor wretch of a Frenchman,  
not to wear out the infant,  
taught him all things in play,  
bothered him not with stern moralization,  
scolded him slightly for his pranks,  
and to the Letniy Sad took him for walks.

IV

Then, when the season of tumultuous youth  
for Eugene came,  
season of hopes and tender melancholy,  
Monsieur was ousted from the place.  
Now my Onegin is at large:  
hair cut after the latest fashion,  
dressed like a London Dandy—<sup>2</sup>  
and finally he saw the World.  
In French impeccably  
he could express himself and write,  
danced the mazurka lightly, and  
bowed unconstrainedly—  
what would you more? The World decided  
that he was clever and most charming.

Translated by Vladimir Nabokov, 1964

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## ЕВГЕНИЙ ОНЕГИН

### I

«Мой дядя самых честных правил,  
Когда не в шутку занемог,  
Он уважать себя заставил  
И лучше выдумать не мог.  
Его пример другим наука;  
Но, боже мой, какая скука  
С больным сидеть и день и ночь,  
Не отходя ни шагу прочь!  
Какое низкое коварство  
Полуживого забавлять,  
Ему подушки поправлять,  
Печально подносить лекарство,  
Вздыхать и думать про себя:  
Когда же черт возьмёт тебя?»

### III

Служив отлично-благородно <sup>4</sup>,  
Долгами жил его отец,  
Давал три бала ежегодно  
И промотался <sup>5</sup> наконец.  
Судьба Евгения хранила:  
Сперва *Madame* за ним ходила,  
Потом *Monsieur* <sup>6</sup> её сменил.  
Ребёнок был резов, но мил.  
*Monsieur l'Abbé*, француз убогий,  
Чтоб не измучилось дитя,  
Учил его всему шутя,  
Не докучал моралью строгой,  
Слегка за шалости бранил  
И в Лётный сад гулять водил.

### II

Так думал молодой повеса <sup>1</sup>,  
Летя в пыли на почтовых <sup>2</sup>,  
Всевышней волею Зевеса  
Наследник всех своих родных.  
Друзья Людмилы и Руслана!  
С гербом моего романа  
Без предисловий, сей же час  
Позвольте познакомить вас.  
Онегин, добрый мой приятель,  
Родился на берегах Невы,  
Где, может быть, родились вы  
Или блистали, мой читатель;  
Там некогда гулял и я:  
Но вреден север для меня <sup>(1)</sup> <sup>3</sup>.

### IV

Когда же юности мятежной  
Пришла Евгению пора,  
Пора надежд и грусти нежной,  
*Monsieur* прогнали со двора.  
Вот мой Онегин на свободе;  
Острижен по последней моде;  
Как *dandy* <sup>(2)</sup> лондонский одет —  
И наконец увидел свет.  
Он по-французски совершенно  
Мог изъясняться и писал;  
Легко мазурку танцевал  
И кланялся непринуждённо;  
Чего ж вам больше? Свет решил,  
Что он умён и очень мил.

АЛЕКСАНДР СЕРГЕЕВИЧ ПУШКИН (1823-1831)

## D. EUGENE ONEGIN

"My uncle's shown his good intentions  
By falling desperately ill;  
His worth is proved; of all inventions  
Where will you find one better still?  
He's an example, I'm averring;  
But, God, what boredom—there, unsirring,  
By day, by night, thus to be bid  
To sit beside an invalid!  
Low cunning must assist devotion  
To one who is but half-alive:  
You puff his pillow and contrive  
Amusement while you mix his potion;  
You sigh, and think with furrowed brow—  
'Why can't the devil take you now?'"

### II

'Tis thus the gay dog's thoughts are freighted,  
As through the dust his horses fare,  
Who by the high gods' will is fated  
To be his relative's sole heir.  
You knew Ruslan and fair Ludmila;  
For this new hero prithee feel a  
Like fellowship, as I regale  
You, readers, with another tale:  
Onegin, meet him, born and nourished  
Where old Neva's gray waters flow,  
Where you were born, or, as a beau,  
It may be, in your glory flourished.  
I moved there also for a while,  
But find the North is not my style.

### III

A man of rank, his worthy father  
Would always give three balls a year;  
He lived in debt, and did not bother  
To keep his hopeless ledgers clear.  
Fate guarded Eugene, our young waster;  
While in due time *Monsieur* replaced her,  
At first *Madame* controlled the child;  
The charming lad was rather wild.  
*Monsieur l'Abbé*, a Frenchman, seedy,  
Thought sermons fashioned to annoy;  
He spared the rod to spoil the boy,  
And in a voice polite but reedy  
Would chide him, would forgive him soon,  
And walk him in the afternoon.

### IV

When Eugene reached the restless season  
Of seething hopes and giddy play,  
And melancholy minus reason,  
*Monsieur* was sent upon his way.  
Now my Onegin, keen as brandy,  
Went forth, in dress—a London dandy,  
His hair cut in the latest mode;  
He dined, he danced, he fenced, he rode.  
In French he could converse politely,  
As well as write; and how he bowed!  
In the mazurka, 'twas allowed,  
No partner ever was so sprightly.  
What more is asked? The world is warm  
In praise of so much wit and charm.

Translated by Babette Deutsch, 1936, revised 1964.



## E. EVGENY ONEGIN

i

'When Uncle, in good earnest, sickened  
(His principles were always high),  
My own respect for him was quickened;  
This was his happiest thought,' said I.  
He was a pattern edifying;  
—Yet, heavens! how boring, and how trying,  
To tend a patient night and day  
And never move a step away!  
And then—how low the craft and gross is!—  
I must amuse a man half-dead,  
Arrange the pillows for his head,  
And bring, with a long face, the doses  
And sigh, and wonder inwardly,  
'When will the Devil come for thee?'

ii

Such were a young scamp's meditations,  
Posting through dusty roads; for he  
Was left sole heir to his relations  
By Jupiter's supreme decree.  
Without more words—my tale this minute  
Begins, and has a hero in it.  
Friends of Lyudmila and Ruslan,  
Let me acquaint you with the man:—  
Now, my good friend Onegin started  
His life on Neva's shores, where you,  
Perchance, my reader, were born too,  
A shining light. In days departed  
I also there would ramble free;  
But baneful is the North to me . . .<sup>1</sup>

iii

His sire had done good service, living,  
Like any gentleman, on debt;  
And so, three balls per annum giving,  
By ruin was at last beset.  
By fate Evgeny was befriended:  
First by a Madame he was tended;  
Next came a Monsieur. But the child,  
Though nice, was gay and rather wild;  
And therefore, not to overwork him,  
Monsieur l'abbé, a needy Gaul,  
With pleasant jesting, taught him all,  
Nor would with moral strictures irk him,  
But to the Summer Garden took  
The tricky lad, with mild rebuke.

iv

But when Evgeny was attaining  
The age of youth and turbulence,  
The age of hope and soft complaining,  
They packed the Monsieur off; and hence  
Onegin was no more imprisoned,  
But like a London dandy dizen'd,  
And cropt most fashionably, too;  
And so, at last the world he knew.  
He could express himself completely  
In French, and write it, and could prance  
So light in the mazurka-dance;  
Could bow so easily and neatly.  
Enough; the world decides at once  
He is a dear, and not a dunce.

Translated by Oliver Elton, 1937.

## F. EUGENE ONEGIN

1

'My uncle, man of firm convictions\* . . .  
By falling gravely ill, he's won  
A due respect for his afflictions—  
The only clever thing he's done.  
May his example profit others;  
But God, what deadly boredom, brothers,  
To tend a sick man night and day,  
Not daring once to steal away!  
And, oh, how base to pamper grossly  
And entertain the nearly dead,  
To fluff the pillows for his head,  
And pass him medicines morosely—  
While thinking under every sigh:  
The devil take you, Uncle. Die!'

2

Just so a youthful rake reflected,  
As through the dust by post he flew,  
By mighty Zeus's will elected  
Sole heir to all the kin he knew.  
Ludmila's and Ruslán's adherents!\*  
Without a foreword's interference,  
May I present, as we set sail,  
The hero of my current tale:  
Onégin, my good friend and brother,  
Was born beside the Neva's span,  
Where maybe, reader, you began,  
Or sparkled in one way or other.  
I too there used to saunter forth,  
But found it noxious in the north.\*

3

An honest man who'd served sincerely,  
His father ran up debts galore;  
He gave a ball some three times yearly,  
Until he had no means for more.  
Fate watched Eugene in his dependence;  
At first *Madame* was in attendance;  
And then *Monsieur* took on the child,  
A charming lad, though somewhat wild.  
*Monsieur l'Abbé*, a needy fellow,  
To spare his charge excessive pain,  
Kept lessons light and rather plain;  
His views on morals ever mellow,  
He seldom punished any lark,  
And walked the boy in Letny Park.\*

4

But when the age of restless turnings  
Became in time our young man's fate,  
The age of hopes and tender yearnings,  
*Monsieur l'Abbé* was shown the gate.  
And here's Onegin—liberated,  
To fad and fashion newly mated:  
A London *dandy*, hair all curled,  
At last he's ready for the world!  
In French he could and did acutely  
Express himself and even write;  
In dancing too his step was light,  
And bows he'd mastered absolutely.  
Who'd ask for more? The world could tell  
That he had wit and charm as well.

Translated by James E. Falen, 1990.

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## G. EUGENE ONEGIN

### I

"My uncle — high ideals inspire him;  
but when past joking he fell sick,  
he really forced one to admire him —  
and never played a shrewder trick.  
Let others learn from his example!  
But God, how deadly dull to sample  
sickroom attendance night and day  
and never stir a foot away!  
And the sly baseness, fit to throttle,  
of entertaining the half-dead:  
one smooths the pillows down in bed,  
and glumly serves the medicine bottle,  
and sighs, and asks oneself all through:  
"When will the devil come for you?""

### II

Such were a young rake's meditations —  
by will of Zeus, the high and just,  
the legatee of his relations —  
as horses whirled him through the dust.  
Friends of my Ruslan and Lyudmila,  
without preliminary feeler  
let me acquaint you on the nail  
with this the hero of my tale:  
Onegin, my good friend, was littered  
and bred upon the Neva's brink,  
where you were born as well, I think,  
reader, or where you've shone and glittered!  
There once I too strolled back and forth:  
but I'm allergic to the North. . .<sup>1</sup>

### III

After a fine career, his father  
had only debts on which to live.  
He gave three balls a year, and rather  
promptly had nothing left to give.  
Fate saved Evgeny from perdition:  
at first Madame gave him tuition,  
from her Monsieur took on the child.  
He was sweet-natured, and yet wild.  
Monsieur l'Abbé, the mediocre,  
reluctant to exhaust the boy,  
treated his lessons as a ploy.  
No moralising from this joker;  
a mild rebuke was his worst mark,  
and then a stroll in Letny Park.

### IV

But when the hour of youthful passion  
struck for Evgeny, with its play  
of hope and gloom, romantic-fashion,  
it was goodbye, Monsieur l'Abbé.  
Eugene was free, and as a dresser  
made London's *dandy* his professor.  
His hair was fashionably curled,  
and now at last he saw the World.  
In French Onegin had perfected  
proficiency to speak and write,  
in the mazurka he was light,  
his bow was wholly unaffected.  
The World found this enough to treat  
Eugene as clever, and quite sweet.

Translated by Charles Johnston, 1977, revised 1978.

## Nutsa—

famous jazz and pop singer, painter, and actress, was proclaimed by the New York's Russian media as the most stylish and brightest performer of the contemporary Russian show-business.

Friday, August 26<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 pm  
Largo Cultural Center  
(105 Central Park Drive, Largo, FL 33771)  
Tickets may be purchased at:  
Largo Cultural Center Box Office  
\*(727) 587-6793 or from  
\*Ilona (727) 644-4839

## The solo-show "The Lover of Love"

is a 2,5 hours staged performance featuring decorations created by Nutsa herself. Along with her own and well-known Russian romance songs, Nutsa performs greatest hits from the repertoire of Frank Sinatra, Edit Piaf, Robertino Loretti, and Vladimir Visotskiy. During the course of the show, Nutsa sings in nine languages, including English, Russian, Hebrew, French, and Georgian.

## RUSSIAN HERITAGE

### Membership Dues for 2006

All who are interested in Russian culture are welcome to join Russian Heritage by simply paying the yearly dues. Members receive newsletters and discounts on certain events such as the Old Russian New Year Celebration.

On your newsletter label, the last year for which you have paid is written. We hope that you plan to pay your 2006 dues before the end of the year. Dues are the same as last year. Please mail your dues

WITH THIS FORM COMPLETELY FILLED OUT to:

Russian Heritage  
PO Box 14552  
St Petersburg, FL 33733

Please check one:

Student \$ 0

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