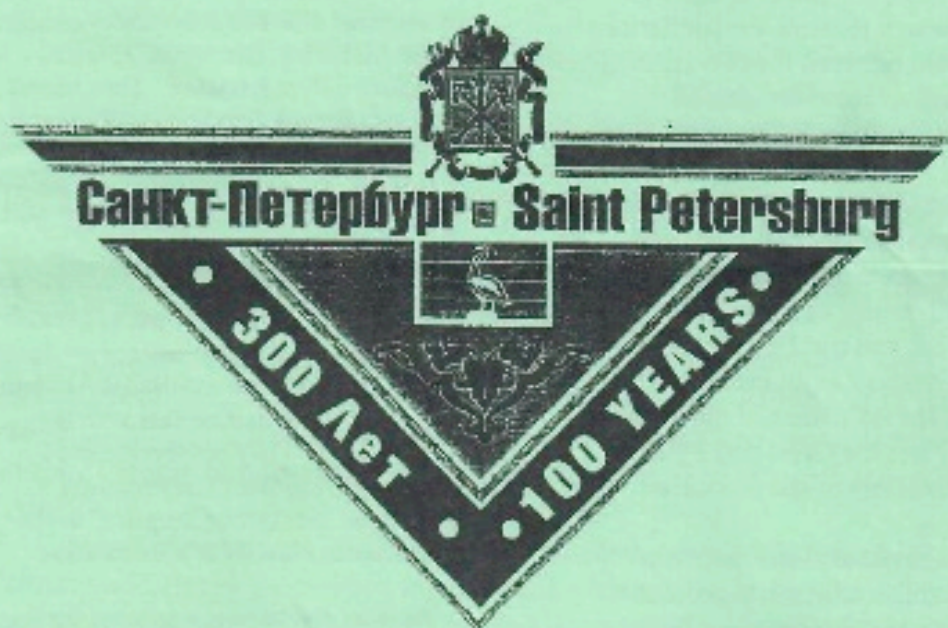


RUSSIAN HERITAGE

Volume VII, Issue 5.

February 2003



300/100 Anniversary Activities
in February and March

RUSSIAN HERITAGE

Namesake Cities: St. Petersburg, Florida Санкт-Петербург, Россия

The official opening of the "Namesake Cities" Exhibit at the St. Petersburg Museum of History will be Saturday, February 15, from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. *Russian Heritage* is a major sponsor of this exhibit which features the similarities and differences between the two cities of St. Petersburg, and also focuses on the contacts between them in the recent past.

"Namesake Cities" is a major focus of joint celebrations of the two cities of St. Petersburg, as the Russian city marks the 300th anniversary of its founding by Peter the Great, and our Florida city marks its 100th anniversary as an incorporated city. One of the six panels of this exhibit will feature Peter the Great and Peter Demens as founders of the two cities.

The six large panels form the main part of this exhibit which is scheduled to be on display until November 2003. It will also travel to certain locations during the year for special events.

Refreshments of wine, cheese, and cookies will be served at the opening on February 15, and you will also be able to meet some of the people who played a part in putting together the exhibit, and some individuals who played a role in bringing together the two St. Petersburgs.

Tampa Bay Symphony Presents Russian and American Classics

Ballet masters **Elena Martison** and **Andrei Ustinov** will perform with the Tampa Bay Symphony selections from Tchaikovsky's "Swan Lake" and his Overture/Fantasy to "Romeo and Juliet" in a special 300/100 anniversary concert at the Mahaffey Theater on Thursday, February 27th at 8:00 p.m. The concert will also feature Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" and Ives's "Variations on America" and will conclude with the Overture to "Ruslan and Ludmilla" by Glinka.

Andrei and Elena are both natives of St. Petersburg, Russia, they are graduates of the famous Vaganova Ballet Academy, and they began their careers with the Kirov Ballet. They now reside in St. Petersburg, Florida. They recently performed the "Dance Surprise" at the Old Russian New Year's celebration.

Russian Heritage is a sponsor for this Concert. Officers and members of the Board have tickets for this concert. The price of tickets is a bargain at \$10, and the open seating means that you can come early for the excellent seats. The same concert will be performed at the Performing Arts Center in Tampa at 5:00 p.m. on February 23, and at Ruth Eckerd Hall at 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 25.

Russian Heritage Ensemble Concert: February 6

String Quartets composed by composers from the two St. Petersburgs will be featured by the Russian Heritage Ensemble at the Palladium Theater at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 6. Performing in this concert will be Eugene Bazhanov and Natasha Bazhanov on the violin; Kenneth Kwo on the viola; and Fred Gratta on the cello. Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased at the door.

They Came, They Saw, They Conquered!

Two young Russian students were sponsored by *Russian Heritage* as Ambassadors for the Russian Language in January 2003. The Ambassadors were Kate Smirnova and Dasha Pakina, both 10th grade students at the Oak Grove School in Obninsk, Russia.

They addressed students at 13 schools during the two weeks they were "on the road" in the Greater Tampa Bay area. They talked to about 3,000 American students, informing them about the 300th anniversary of St. Petersburg, Russia and the 100th anniversary of St. Petersburg, Florida. They also gave the students many good reasons why they should consider taking Russian when they get to college, and how they might study Russian during the summer in their school of Oak Grove near Moscow. Bill Grant describes how the ambassadors "mesmerized" the American students during the presentations. We were lucky with our choice of ambassadors. They were so proficient in English, so poised, so professional. At the end of the presentations and Q&A periods, several teachers asked their students how old they thought our 15-year-old ambassadors were. The answers ranged from 17-20.

Many members and friends of *Russian Heritage* were involved in planning and carrying out this program. Bill Grant is the chair of the committee who arranged the visit. Laura Flesch helped expedite the visas for the girls, and helped with press releases. Bill, Laura, Mort Bonesteel, Lt. Col. Georgia Hall, Victoria Peppard and Linda McPheron helped to arrange visits to the schools.

We are planning to encourage students from local colleges and universities to consider study in Russia, possibly at the Obninsk school this summer. We have authorized three grants of \$500 each to help with the expenses. We have also begun preparations to bring one or two students from St. Petersburg, Russia to our area in the fall of 2003. If you have suggestions, or want to participate in this program, please contact Bill Grant for more information. (grantwb@tampabay.rr.com)



SYMPOSIUM
The Two St. Petersburgs: 1703-2003
March 2-4, 2003

A public event sponsored by Eckerd College, University of South Florida, and *Russian Heritage* commemorating the centennial of the incorporation of the City of St. Petersburg, Florida, and the tricentennial of the founding of St. Petersburg, Russia.

Sunday, March 2 Dendy McNair Auditorium, Eckerd Campus

The Eighteenth Century

7:00 "Tocobagan Florida: the Final Years."

Ray Arsenault, USF

7:45 "St. Petersburg, Russia: The Early Years"

James Cracraft, University of Illinois at Chicago

Monday, March 3. USF/FMRI Auditorium, USF Campus

The Nineteenth Century

12:00 "Florida in the Napoleonic Age"

Jane Landers, Vanderbilt University

12:45 "Tchaikovsky & Tolstoy Interpret the Napoleonic Age in Russia"

Bill Parsons, Eckerd College

Afternoon: Downtown Walking Tour. Visit to the St. Petersburg Museum of History: "Namesake Cities: The Two St. Petersburgs"

The Twentieth Century

7:00 "The 'City' by the Bay: St. Petersburg, Florida in the Early XX Century"

Ray Arsenault, USF

Tuesday, March 4. Dendy McNair Auditorium, Eckerd Campus

12:00 Symposium Luncheon (at Eckerd) Open to public. \$15. (call 864-8235)

1:30 "Last Glory Days: St. Petersburg in the Silver Age, 1896-1914"

Suzanne Massie, Lecturer & Author. Land of the Firebird. Pavlovsk.

3:30 "The Nine Hundred Days: Film and Discussion"

The Twenty First Century

7:30 Panel: "2003: The Two St. Petersburgs"

Mayor Rick Baker, Representative of St. Petersburg, Russia,
Ray Arsenault, Bill Parsons, Suzanne Massie.

An Old Russian New Year's Celebration 2003 Style

Several people said they were looking forward to this year's celebration, because they enjoyed last year's party so much. They did not think it could match last year's success. But 2003 turned out to be even more elaborate and exciting. Our thanks to master of ceremonies France Frankian and his planning committee (which consisted basically of the Board of Directors), and to Margo Catsimatidis and Tania Vondersaar for the exquisite decorations and raffle prizes.

People were enthusiastic in their praise of the borshch, the Chicken Kiev, and the Salmon Kulebyaka. Our compliments to the chef! The "Dance Surprise" by Elena Martinson and Andrei Ustinov electrified those in attendance, and the two poems by Peter Meinke celebrating anniversaries of the two St. Petersburgs highlighted the program. And who can forget Mayor Rick Baker as "Peter the Great" in his Imperial Guards' uniform? We thank Carl Kuttler for bringing his guests from St. Petersburg, Russia and helping to reunite board member Nadia Yevstigneyeva with her family from the other St. Petersburg. Her cousin Tatiana Bobrovskaja has offered to help us identify some potential students from St. Petersburg for our Ambassador exchange.

The "Dazzlers" provided lively dance music. The dance floor was the focal point for the night. The musicians played a special tango for Arda Unjian who was celebrating his 90th birthday with a large group of his family and friends. Altogether, more than 250 party-goers enjoyed our special 2003 celebration of the Old Russian New Year in this exciting year when we commemorate the anniversaries of the two St. Petersburgs!

The photographs on the opposite page show recent *Russian Heritage* activities, especially the Old Russian New Year's Celebration:

1. Peggy Newton and her special Samoyed dogs, Noah and Angel. They were featured at our November 10th meeting of *Russian Heritage*, at Russian Day on January 10th at Eckerd College, and they will appear at SPIFFS Folk Festival in March.
2. Mayor Rick Baker, as a "resurrected Peter the Great" dressed in a Guards' Regiment uniform with President Carl Kuttler of St. Petersburg College.
3. Master of Ceremonies France Frankian and Coordinator of Decorations Margo Catsimatidis.
4. Bill Parsons, Margo Catsimatidis, Tania Vondersaar, and Mayor Rick Baker.
5. Board members of *Russian Heritage* in 300/100 attire: back row, from left – Andrei Ustinov, Zina Downen, Elena Novikov, France Frankian, Bill Grant, Tania Vondersaar, Bernie Orlando; front row, from left – Elena Martinson, Victor Peppard, Olga Fincher.
6. Kate Smimova, on left, and Dasha Pakina, our two Ambassadors of Russian culture and language from Russia (see story on page 3).
7. Raffle rousers: Donald Freiday, Gary DeBrockert, Jim LaBudde, and Sam DiPietro.
8. Poet Peter Meinke, author of two anniversary poems.

* *

Do you want to learn more about Peter Demens?

Eckerd Senior College is offering a non-credit course called "Peter Demens: Russian Adventurer in America" taught by Professor Bill Parsons on Tuesdays, Feb. 11, 18, and 25 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. The final session will include visits to places associated with Demens in St. Petersburg, including Demens Landing, the History Museum, the Detroit Hotel, and lunch at the Garden Restaurant. Cost for members of *Russian Heritage* (including excursion and lunch) \$75. Call 864-7600.



SPIFFS SALUTES TWO ST. PETERSBURGS

This year SPIFFS Folk Fair will have its main tent featuring Russia and the celebration of the two St. Petersburgs. *Russian Heritage* will participate in this tent along with others to promote this celebration, and we need volunteers to help explain the exhibits and the Russian culture presented. Volunteers usually work for shifts of 3-4 hours, and receive certain privileges such as free admission and free parking. To be an official volunteer, please send the following information to:

Name _____

Phone _____

Days and hours I can volunteer:

Russian Heritage

PO BOX 14552

St. Petersburg, FL 33733

Wednesday, March 19, 2003 – 9AM-3PM

Thursday, March 20, 2003 – 9AM-3PM

Friday, March 21, 2003 – 9AM-9PM

Saturday, March 22, 2003 – 10AM-9PM

Sunday, March 23, 2003 – 11AM-6PM

