

**Journal
Memories
Photos
Postcards
1967
Russian Language Program
At
Leningrad State University
Michael Alberts
A participant from
Michigan State University**



Introduction

This journal of events associated with the 1967 MSU program at Leningrad State University was retrieved from postcards and letters written home each day during the program. They contained my comments and impressions on a daily basis. In some cases confirming the date of the documents was made difficult after 50 years due to postal workers having stolen stamps and thus removed postmarks.

In my retirement I have found time to write this record.

The official roster of participants and official "Program Itinerary" are attached.

To supplement these records, I collected post cards and collected stock photos and tourist material at most destinations. Photos I took with a Kodak Instamatic camera are included in this document. In a few cases, illustrations have been taken from post cards where photos were not allowed or my simple camera was not adequate to the task. I also brought back textbooks, small tourist guides, a collection of maps, and tourist material.

Throughout this document most places are referred to by the name they had during my visit. St. Petersburg is referred to as Leningrad, the Mariinsky Ballet is referred to as the Kirov, etc. There is no political meaning implied in the use of these names.

Recent politicization of American relations with Russia may make this journal of the Russian Language Program of 1967 seem timed to the current international setting. This is not the case. Retirement and time to reflect made this possible 50 years after my visit and 100 years after the Russian Revolution.

Alcohol consumption recorded in this document is simply a record of what transpired and is not meant to justify or glorify such consumption or abuse. Vodka and other spirits were a fact of life in Russia. The use and abuse of spirits merit documentation.

The trip stands as a significant episode in my life experience. While my academic work on Russia and Eastern Europe ended with my Master's Thesis on Czech Industry, the lessons learned were applied to my life, my family, and my appreciation for multiculturalism.

Acknowledgements

The educators who helped me along the way:

Particularly Professor Ludmilla Koehler (MSU) for her guidance and patience on this adventure.

Professor Marina Lobanov-Rostovsky for guiding me to my interest in Russia.

The Editor

Howard Daniel for editing this manuscript. Howard was in the program's Dartmouth group. A Russian Studies major at Yale, from which he had graduated the year before, in the summer of 1967 he was halfway through the Soviet Area Studies master's program at Harvard. In 1976-78, he returned to Leningrad to serve on the staff of the U.S. consulate-general. Today he is a professional writer-editor and has published several Leningrad tales on his blog (www.Pen4Rent.com).

My Fellow MSU Classmates on this exchange listed below:

Velma Lee Campbell
Deborah Cushing
Francelle Gribblel
loydane Holmes
Wasył Hopalko
David Leichtman
Harvey D. Levine,
David B. Linderman
Carol R. Penny
Michael G. Rickes
Charles K. Roberts
Joel F. Scannel
Michael J. Serapinoff
James Somers
Philip T. Townsend
Richard D. Wanke
George W. Winchell
Jennifer C. Winn.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY – THE INSTITUTION

The University's determination to foster students' understanding of world affairs.

The University's determination to charge students with the importance of public service.

The University's mission as an international institution for the good of mankind.

Kennedy Airport – New York, New York

On June 15, 1967, World Airways charter flight #49 left New York's JFK Airport at 10:00 pm with 22 Michigan State University students and one professor headed for a historic study program in the Soviet Union. The exchange had its birth in the Cold War negotiations of the late 1950s. The MSU students were joined by groups from Georgetown, Kansas, Colorado, Oberlin, Queens, and Dartmouth for a total of 145 students and 12 staff members. The Michigan State group was accompanied by Professor Ludmilla Koehler.

During the immediate post-World War II period, the intense politics of the Cold War put a damper on student travel and exchange "behind the iron curtain." Though agreements were made by the State Department with the Soviets for academic exchange programs, the number of exchange students visiting Soviet institutions was generally limited to postgraduates in specialty classifications, usually totaling fewer than 20 on each side in any given year. We were told that this program was the first and largest exchange in the Cold War era. *[Editor's note: Actually, the program was not literally an "exchange," since there was no counterpart group of Soviet students traveling reciprocally to the U.S. However, this program would have been unlikely if the U.S.-USSR Cultural Exchange Agreement had not been concluded in 1958. Moreover, the program was indeed the first of its kind. To this day, the Summer Russian Language Program, run by the Council on Educational Exchange (www.ciee.org/study-abroad/russia/st-petersburg/russian-area-studies) continues in St. Petersburg and will mark its 50th anniversary in 2017.]*



Professor Ludmilla Koehler & MSU Students at Kennedy Airport NYC

During our long flight to Europe we talked with the cabin crew aboard the World Airways flight. This was a pretty glamorous way to live and we were asking about how they like their jobs. They told us that this was an unusual flight for them, as most of the flights they had were flying armed service members to Southeast Asia. A reminder of the escalating war in Vietnam.

World Airways Flight #49 touched down in Brussels on June 16, 1967. The group stayed that night in a hostel and was briefed by the staff and leaders.

On June 18, just 4 years and 8 months after the Cuban Missile Crisis, all 157 members of the exchange boarded two Ilyushin Il-18 turboprop aircraft, operated by LOT, the Polish national carrier. The departure from Brussels was delayed six hours due to one plane having engine problems. During the delay the crew of that plane worked on the outboard starboard engine but appeared frustrated. The two planes were pulled up wing to wing and two stepladders were brought out as the ground crew and flight crew addressed the problem. Once the flight finally departed we had a scheduled fuel stop in Warsaw, Poland. Flight #2 carrying the MSU delegation arrived in Leningrad in the very early morning hours of June 19.



Michael Alberts

Pulkovo Airport – Аэропорт Пулково. (4,486 miles from Detroit)

Despite the flight's late arrival, our ride into town from the airport was not in the dark as the city was already in the middle of "White Nights." Leningrad (or today St. Petersburg) is just 450 miles south of the Arctic Circle, so for weeks around the summer solstice it is always light, even at midnight, except on nights with heavy cloud cover. As the buses pulled up at the Hotel Druzhba (Friendship) on Charygina Street, bleary-eyed students gradually made their way up five flights of stairs to our rooms where keys were kept by matronly watchpersons – an old Russian custom, which, however, fit nicely into the Soviet government's inclination to keep an eye on people's comings and goings. The hotel was to be our temporary lodging until rooms at the Leningrad State University (LGSU for Leningradskiy Gosudarstvennyy Universitet) dormitory were available for us. The Druzhba normally accommodated visiting students and athletes from Eastern Bloc countries, as there seemed to be an endless stream of Polish athletes running up and down the stairs. The hotel was run by an organization called "Sputnik" (the Russian word for "satellite," clearly designed as a reminder of pioneering Soviet contributions to space exploration), which normally handled visits by foreign youth groups. Sputnik also gave us an orientation and maps that enabled us to navigate the city and find the university.



The University – Leningradskiy gosudarstvennyy universitet (LGU) – Ленинградский государственный университет (ЛГУ), The Dining Room, The Reality of Life in Leningrad

About noon on the 19th, the group was bused to Leningrad State University where we received our official welcome. It was a warm one. We were told how honored they were to receive us ... and much else that was beyond my skills in Russian. I had had three years of Russian language, but it was not my strong suit. Many in the group were native speakers or had parents who spoke another Slavic language at home. I was not that lucky. The native speakers in the group helped where our textbook Russian did not provide true meaning.

We were introduced to our dining hall where we would receive three meals a day for the next six weeks. Our food was plentiful, and on the first day there was sturgeon and caviar on the table. Later in the afternoon, our hosts took us to a room on the ground floor of one of the ancient university buildings that had been set up as a theater. After we took our seats, a loud clatter accompanied the electric motor that closed the drapes with the help of bicycle chains. The room was darkened for a screening of the "Siege of Leningrad." The film struck the reality of where we were sitting – smack dab on the site of one of the greatest catastrophes of World War II. The film was a stark depiction of the starvation, death, and loss that Leningrad suffered less than a generation earlier. It was a raw presentation for us sheltered Americans. It showed infant coffins, mass graves for the dead, coffins on sleds, and shells landing on buildings. We had had no idea of what this city had been through. Despite several years of Russian History classes, I had not grasped the reality of what the city of Leningrad had endured.

At 21 years of age, I was an adult, but not adult enough to fully comprehend the scope of life during WWII in Russia and post-war Leningrad. When the screening ended, I tried to put the film in the back of my mind to protect myself and my inability to comprehend what my hosts had endured. After our "orientation" about the history of Leningrad, we returned to the dining hall for dinner where caviar and sturgeon was again on the table.



The University, founded by Peter the Great in the early 1700s, is located on an island in the delta of the Neva River. It had been the center of higher education in Russia for over 250 years.

In a note that has some relevance today, Vladimir Putin, Russia's president, grew up in Leningrad not far from the university and was a teen attending high school at the time of our visit. Both his parents survived the siege of Leningrad, and he graduated from LGU with a law degree eight years after our visit.

Dinner at the dormitory cafeteria



1967 postcard



First Observations

Other than my day in Brussels, I had never been to Europe. Being from Detroit, my first impressions were highlighted by the ratio of cars to buses and street cars. It was apparent that cars were a luxury. Public transportation was how most all people got around. We had heard about the subway and were stunned by its cleanliness and luxurious stations. I was totally amused by the green "army" trucks with park benches in the truck bed transporting smiling young people. It was explained that these were either farm workers, tourists from farms, Komsomol (Communist Youth League) activities, etc. It was a great way to see the city.



Michael Alberts

To add to the abundant cheap buses, trolleys, and subways, there were boats going everywhere on the Neva River. The modern hydrofoils rose out of the water on wing-like stilts and moved at over 30 miles per hour.



Michael Alberts

Dormitory #6
общежитие

Bridge to Peter
And Paul Fortress

Public Works:

I was stunned to see women working with asphalt paving machines. Not just attending them but working with picks and shovels along the streets.... When I asked Ludmilla Koehler (MSU staff) about why women were doing such heavy work, she quietly explained that the ratio of men to women made it necessary for women to take on such work, because so many men were killed during the war.



Michael Alberts

Even in 1967 scaffolding around buildings off the main streets was still present... the work of reconstruction was still underway. *[Editor's note: In 1976-78, when I returned to Leningrad to serve on the staff of the U.S. consulate-general, there was still scaffolding on many buildings. I am not sure that Mike is correct in concluding that the scaffolding in 1967 was there due to war damage. It might have been. But this was certainly not the case a decade later. Buildings were often clad in scaffolding for routine repair and repainting, a common sight.]* It was also easy to take note of the fact that there was virtually no debris, paper, or trash evident anywhere. This was a very clean city. Finally, it was stunning to see that the major landmarks were in beautiful condition. The Winter Palace, The Admiralty, all Nevskiy Prospekt's main buildings, and the university were in remarkable condition given the huge amount of destruction that had occurred not that long before.



Michael Alberts

First nights on the Town, Komsomol Propaganda, the Malyy Theater

Early in our stay at the university we were picked up by bus following dinner and transported to the Malyy (Small – in contrast to Bolshoy = Big) Theater. In a cafe next to the theater the local Komsomol (Young Communist League) addressed our group and hit us hard with some Vietnam War propaganda. The speakers really did not slow down enough for me to get the extent of the insult ... but the native speakers were a little stressed. That lecture was the only time that I can recall where we as a group (or I as an individual) were politically assailed while in Leningrad.

We were then walked a short distance for a performance at the Malyy Theater. It was apparently a favorite of the Romanovs (the royal family deposed in 1917) and it was spectacular in acoustics and decor. The theater was small and the Royal Box was just a few feet from our seats. Some of our university hosts made modest apologies for our earlier experience. Those of us from Michigan State felt perhaps a little more vulnerable due the Ramparts Magazine "expose" the previous year, "MSU & Madam Nu." Michigan State Agricultural Advisors were early on the scene in Vietnam and had been tagged as government agents. Leningrad was a revolutionary city ... its very beginning in 1703 marked a revolution in thinking in Russia, and it had been the center of the revolution in 1917 ... so a little politics was tolerable. While at Michigan State University I had at least one course taught by Professor Alfred G. Meyer, author of the *Soviet Political System*. His teaching style and flair for the dramatic made an impression. It has been 50 years, but his analogies of the Soviet Bureaucracy to General Motors corporate organization, struck a note for this 21 year old from Detroit that had worked in the corporate structure of Ford Motor Company. During my time in Leningrad we were never able to assess what might have been the forces that kept things going on a day to day basis in Leningrad. We were students flying so close to the ground that the Political Science classes leading up to our trip were but theories and academic observations. We got no insight into what made the "Soviets" tick other than our simple daily routines and living experiences. How government operated was a mystery, and I really did not care as experiencing culture was a full time job.

The evening in the beautiful theater made us forget the political discussion and as usual sleep came easily when we returned to our rooms despite it still being daylight at midnight.



Classes at the University – Pavlov's Dogs & Paranormal Communications – Bunsen Burners

We attended classes at the university with Russian students in nearby classrooms. Our classes were customized for international students, but our time at the university was treated as if we were students in full residence. Our instructors were patient. Classes usually began about 9 am and we were done by early afternoon. Most days I had a good headache by the end of class from trying to process all the Russian that was being thrown at me. There was no English spoken by any of the instructors that I can recall. Between classes, we had breaks when we could talk to local students. We learned some things from them that were impressive:

- 1) The barking that we heard from a building down the street was from dogs that were in the lineage of Pavlov's dogs. See photo below.
- 2) There were loud reverberation sounds that periodically erupted in the university courtyard. The Russian students identified this screeching sound as "amplified brain" research, i.e., long-distance mind-to-mind communication. HUH?! ... with no Wikipedia to confirm anything, this too was filed away and lay dormant. The students were as casual in their mention of this research and the fact that it was "scientific" as they were in talking about anything else. We were told that they were communicating with submerged submarines via brain waves Go figure.

The university teachers were intent on getting us to be able to pronounce Russian sounds perfectly. We were submitted to intense scrutiny as we tried to vocalize sounds not present in English. The most memorable was a cross between Henry Higgins and a Sesame Street show. "Today's letter is the letter L." Yes, the Russian "soft" (palatalized) L is different and unique. After about an hour with the dregs of the program in the lab being pushed to palatalize our L's, we would be placed in front of a Bunsen burner with a bright yellow flame.... Words were thrown at us (all with difficult L's) and we had to say them with our mouths only inches from the flame. When the "L" passed our lips and tongue, the flame had to stand still or we said the word over again until it didn't flicker. If breath was blowing from your lips, you were not saying the "L" correctly.



Settling In – White Nights

Within a few days we moved into Dormitory No. 6 across a canal from the Peter & Paul Fortress and Cathedral on the Neva. Across the Neva itself stood the enormous Winter Palace, the home of the Tsars until 1917 and since then the main building of the Hermitage, one of the world's most impressive museums. Tsars and Tsarinas, princes and princesses lay buried just a couple of hundred yards away from where we were staying. Just off shore from where we lived, Rasputin's body was dumped into the river after he had been shot twice. The setting was stunning, but the housing was marginal. The dorm was over 200 years old. I had had some extensive Russian history courses and could appreciate the fact that Peter the Great had forcibly moved his capital and his leading countrymen from Moscow to the very spot where I was sleeping. The bones that were buried across the canal littered the pages of the history books that I had spent the last two years poring over. We were on hallowed ground by Russian standards and we had the run of it.

With unlimited daylight, as we became more familiar with our surroundings, we were limited only by our energy. Walks in the evening led to a variety of encounters. The ubiquitous *voda* (water) machines caught us by surprise. Carbonated drink dispensers on the street, coin operated, they had a communal glass sometimes attached by a chain. There was a wash feature (without soap) ... but the glass was community property. Thousands of Russians drinking from the same glass and a few brave or stupid Americans too. We quickly learned that we were quasi celebrities just being there. Making "friends" happened quickly and before you knew it, a bottle of Stolichnaya or Moskovskaya appeared ... the *voda* machine had its glass stolen and the party started.

Palace Square & The Alexander Column*

1967 postcard



Meeting the Russians and Moving Around Leningrad

Our first unsupervised encounters were interesting in a couple of respects:

- 1) Our classroom Russian did not come close to allowing us to fully communicate.
- 2) The presence of an American was as good a reason as any for a party.

Michael Alberts



We found out quickly that we were their "allies" ... that the Cold War had not reached into the depths of the souls that we met in Leningrad. The memory of WWII was still fresh and "we" (the Americans) had teamed up with them and the British to defeat the Germans. This alliance 20+ years ago made us closer than the political rhetoric that had transpired since the mid-1940s. We were welcome and the Russians were proud to have anything to do with meeting Americans. Thus began the saga of "running around Leningrad." Over the next week we learned how to get around on the subway and buses. The Winter Palace/Hermitage, being one of the best and largest museums in the world, was just across the river. As soon lunch was over it became a frequent destination. It and so many other historic places became our playground.

Within a week, the entry guards, usually old ladies, got to know who we were and we blew past them with a wave and a grin. They too were interested in seeing American young people, but we had no idea that these "old ladies" had performed heroic service that saved the museum's art treasures during the siege just two decades earlier. These old ladies that we took for grandmothers and housekeepers were in fact experts in the art displayed in the galleries and caretakers of these treasures for the world. The Hermitage (Winter Palace) remained our playground for the next six weeks. I am not sure we ever saw it all, or that we understood the full significance of the rooms that we visited.



Lines – Bread – Vodka – Champagne – Cognac – Books – Dollar Stores

On our daily treks around the city we noticed lines at stores. Several things seemed to be in abundance. Bread was always available. The bakeries were busy but bread appeared to be cheap and available until late afternoon. It was the staple of the Russian diet. Food stores were not as accessible to us, nor were we interested in what appeared to be lines at many of them. Vodka, cognac, and champagne, on the other hand, were readily available and very cheap. There was a “wide” selection of vodka available, Stolichnaya and Moskovskaya. This commodity seemed to be universally available and in most instances could be picked up right next to a loaf of bread. There was no distinction for selling liquor ... it was treated as food. Both brands of vodka were around 1 ruble and seemed identical in taste. What seemed curious to us was that cognac and champagne were also available. The cognac was from Armenia and Georgia, while the champagne was apparently produced locally. Things began to fall into place with what we’d learned in our history books. Peter the Great, founder of St. Petersburg, (Leningrad) had a taste for things “Western.” The architecture was Italian/French modified. It was all in stone or plaster as Leningrad sat on a marsh. The only true evidence of what we thought of as traditional Russian architecture was the Church on the Spilled Blood which was built in the late 19th century on the spot where Tsar Alexander II was assassinated. But the wine, champagne, and cognac brought in by Western influence over the years was apparent and historically significant. We were living in what Peter the Great called Russia's “window on the west.”



House of Books

That brings us to one of our favorite stops: 28 Nevskiy prospekt, a prerevolutionary building designed by a Russian architect for the Singer Sewing machine company. Magnificent in its art deco style, the building during the Soviet era housed a wonderful bookstore, the House of Books (Dom knigi - Дом книги). We quickly learned that books and printed material were not in short supply. The Soviets published maps, textbooks, classics, and sold them very cheaply. Dom knigi was our source for huge, colorful, wonderful maps, many highlighting the October Revolution of 1917, 50 years earlier. I also purchased an example of children's literature "Signal" with an exciting cover typical of Socialist Realism.

. [Editor's note: Books were certainly plentiful, but the contents were strictly controlled. Every book showed censors' approval. Not only were most contemporary titles published in the West unavailable, so were even certain Russian classics. I recall being told by a Soviet émigré friend living in the U.S. that she was astonished to discover, for the first time, Dostoevsky's dark Notes From the Underground only after leaving the USSR. It was not included in the Soviet edition of the author's "Complete Works," since it was apparently regarded as unsuitable for Soviet readers.]

"Signal" – Children's Book
purchased at Дом книги



Дом книги – on the left



Maps

My visits to Дом книги were not limited to the purchase and browsing of books. I have always loved maps. The Soviets had maps for sale that I purchased and carefully packed in my suitcase and still have to this day. The largest is a 6' x 8' (4 piece sectional) wall map of the USSR. My favorite is the map depicting the events of 1917 the Great Socialist Revolution with its colorful arrows and depiction of the "heroic" events.

The author with two MSU students on the down escalator to the Leningrad Subway – Maps in hand.

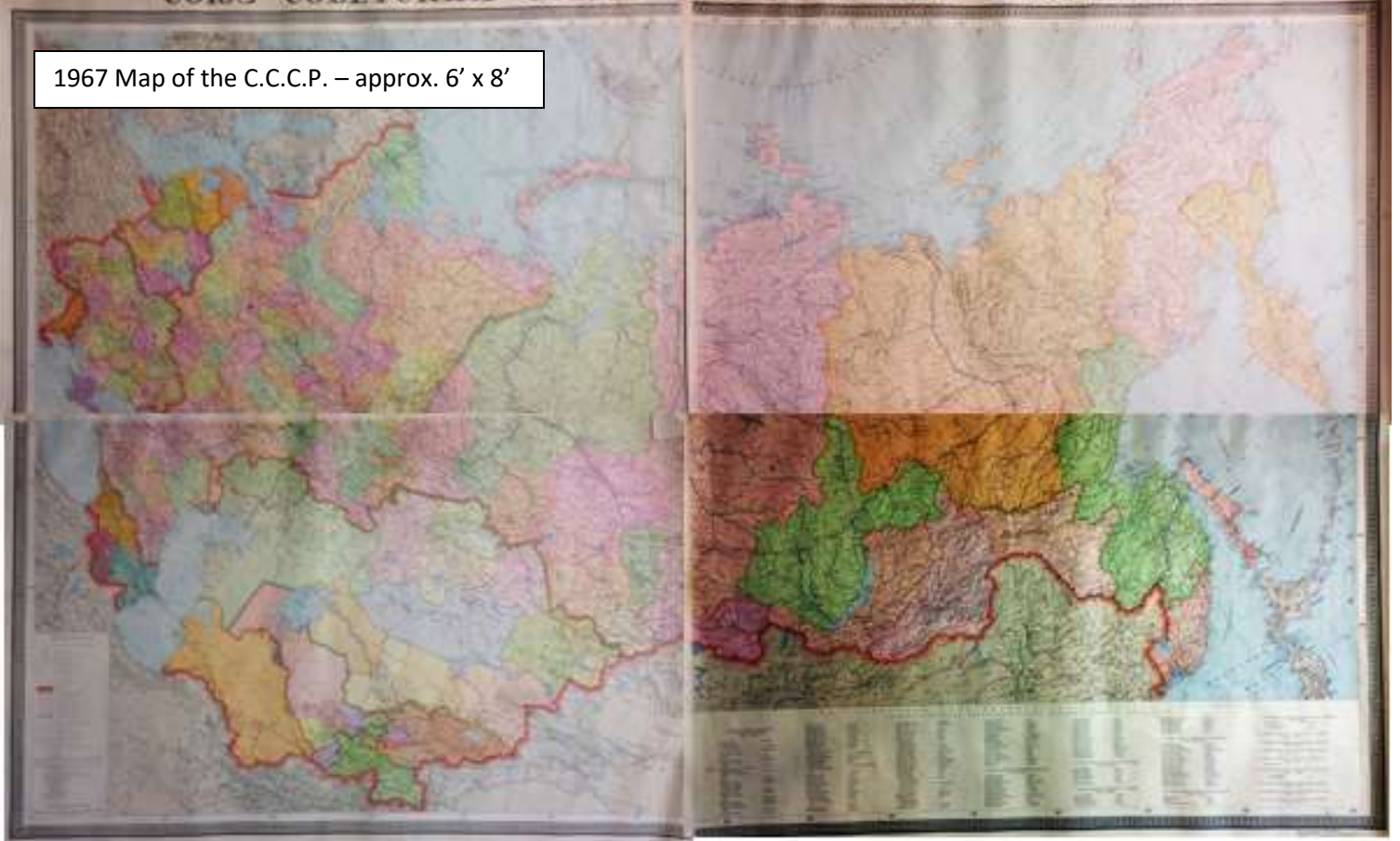


Michael Alberts

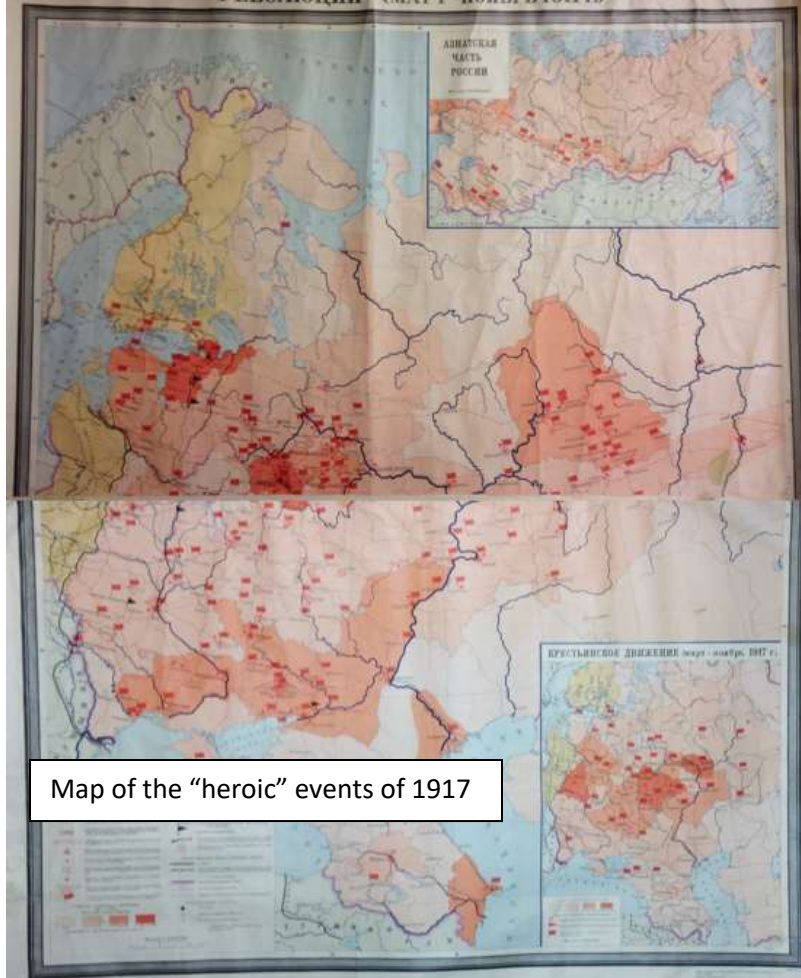


СОЮЗ СОВЕТСКИХ СОЦИАЛИСТИЧЕСКИХ РЕСПУБЛИК

1967 Map of the C.C.S.P. – approx. 6' x 8'



ПОДГОТОВКА ВЕЛИКОЙ ОКТЯБРЬСКОЙ СОЦИАЛИСТИЧЕСКОЙ РЕВОЛЮЦИИ (МАРТ-НОЯБРЬ 1917г.)



Map of the "heroic" events of 1917

Among our treks were the “dollar” stores in a few of the hotels that served foreign guests exclusively. These stores accepted only “hard,” foreign currency and had goods that were not readily available in local stores. I purchased some 5-star Georgian Cognac, 5-star Armenian Cognac, an ermine fur hat, and North Sea amber. Soviet citizens could not legally possess foreign currency and were thus unable to purchase these luxuries. The Soviet government’s logic was to sell such luxury goods only to foreigners to amass a supply of foreign capital.

Little boys and Americans bought ice cream (always available) on the street from pushcart vendors. The best food appeared to be available on sidewalks and in open-air markets, not in the stores. The dress on the street was dated, but people took pride in their appearance.

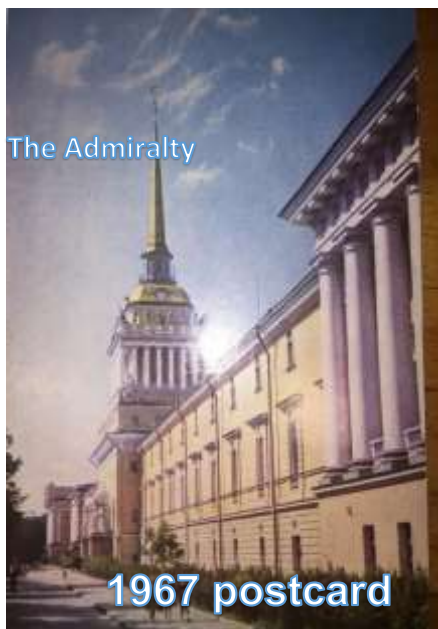




Observations About Family

It was a fact that women significantly outnumbered men, it appeared that men held the best jobs. While it has been 50 years, I would hazard a guess that the economic “Goals” set by the Communist Party required that women join the work force. The students we saw at the University seemed equally divided between men and women. I had heard about daycare centers but never saw one. During the visit, I don’t think I was ever homesick, but I did enjoy seeing families and children. Witness to that aspect of society was most rewarding and reassuring.

There was a significant presence of uniformed naval personnel (men) on the streets, as the striking Admiralty building was still the headquarters of the Russian navy. Men drove taxis, buses, trucks, etc. When something important happened, it seemed there was always a male official in attendance. Most of the service people we had contact with were women – servers in the cafeteria and dormitory, clerks in the stores, clerks in the dormitory and hotels, guards at the museum, etc. What was abundantly clear is that children were well cared for. While we did not see many children on the streets, when we did it was most often with a grandmother. By observation, it most likely took two incomes to support a family, and child care was most likely delegated to a grandmother. We did see groups of children in uniforms moving around the city, a part of scouting organizations (Young Pioneers). On the trip to the Finnish frontier we passed several youth camps.



Russian Literature

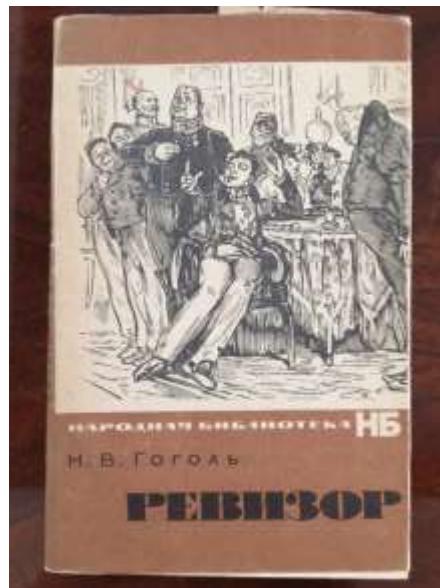
During my studies at Michigan State, in addition to Russian language, I took Russian History, Russian Political Science, Russian Literature and Intellectual History of Russia. Our courses at LGU covered some of the same ground, including Russian literature. It was easy to love Russian literature. We walked the streets where it developed. We visited the apartment where Pushkin wrote two of his most famous works, Eugene Onegin and The Queen of Spades.

During my studies in Leningrad, I worked on three books. It was a real challenge. I always left class with a headache. I had read watered-down literature in Russian at Michigan State. It is fair to say that reading these books filled with colloquial phrases was a difficult task.

Stories by Tolstoy



The Inspector General by Gogol



Hero of our Time by Lermontov



The Academy of Science - Академия наук

Along with its literary history, there was a long history of Science and research in the University area.

There was a stuffed baby Mammoth on display at a museum down the street. This exhibit displayed the poor creature in distress as I recall. It was found buried in the tundra of Siberia.

Another impressive scientific collection housed not far from our classroom was the Leningrad Seedbank. During the Siege of Leningrad, the 250,000 seed samples (then the world's largest collection) that now are housed in the Vavilov Institute of Plant Industry were protected like the artworks of the Hermitage. The guardians of the seeds assembled a cross section of seeds, boxed them, and guarded them in the basement throughout the bombing and shelling. The guardians refused to eat the seeds even though nine of the guardians starved to death. There were hundreds of samples of corn on display in glass cases around the center hall of the building. Most of the corn was small and puny compared to what we know as corn today.

Russian Language Instruction to Improve Conversation and Vocabulary

The university faculty was prepared to deal with international students. There were classes to help develop vocabulary and conversational strength in specific areas. The university had prepared nicely printed pamphlets to cover subjects like theater, sport, film, etc. These little readers were very useful as they contained the very vocabulary and phrases required to linguistically navigate our field trips.



Piskaryovskoye memorialnoye kladbishche (Пискаревское мемориальное кладбище – Piskaryovskoye Memorial Cemetery)

Nothing could prepare us for this day trip. It was somber. The “eternal flame” and the mega statue were symbols of the horrors of war.

Here lie Leningraders

Here are city dwellers – men, women, and children

And next to them, Red Army soldiers.

They defended you, Leningrad,

The cradle of the Revolution

With all their lives.

We cannot list their noble names here,

There are so many of them under the eternal protection of granite.

But know this, those who regard these stones:

No one is forgotten, nothing is forgotten.

(From Wikipedia) The memorial complex designed by Alexander Vasiliev and [Yevgeniy Levinson](#) was opened on May 9, 1960. About 420,000 civilians and 50,000 soldiers of the [Leningrad Front](#) were buried in 186 [mass graves](#). Near the entrance an [eternal flame](#) is located. A marble plate affirms that from September 4, 1941 to January 22, 1944 107,158 air bombs were dropped on the city, 148,478 shells were fired, 16,744 men died, 33,782 were wounded and 641,803 died of starvation.



1967 postcard



Day Trips – Cruise Experience – Tsarskoye Selo (Царское Селó – Tsars’ Village) – Yekaterinskiy dvorets (Екатерининский дворец – Catherine the Great’s "Summer Palace") – Finnish Frontier – Soccer Game – Collective Farm – Circus

MORE FIELD TRIPS

A cruise ship carried the group well out into the Gulf of Finland on an evening trip. We had an elegant dinner aboard that was quite exceptional with caviar and sturgeon. Again, our hosts went well out of their way to make sure that we saw a very civilized and modern society.



On another trip we ventured by water to Peter the Great’s "Summer Palace" (Peterhof – Петродворец), which was a source of confusion to me ... as there was a "Summer Palace" in a park not far from our dorm. Sorting out Peter's Summer Palace from Catherine's Summer Palace seemed a burden ... we were totally inundated with history ... and while we appreciated the walks through the huge palaces ... and the lectures provided by the tour guides, we were young and ready for something a little more exciting. We found that among the fountains at Peter’s Summer Palace were trick fountains, designed by the tsar, a practical joker, to get visitors wet. The magnificent Summer Palace fountains and gardens were punctuated by little gardens with geysers that would squirt up at moment’s notice. Large mushroom-shaped objects that dropped rained at moment’s notice. Someone in the bushes was just waiting to get some poor tourist drenched. It was entertainment for the royals, and it was entertainment for us.

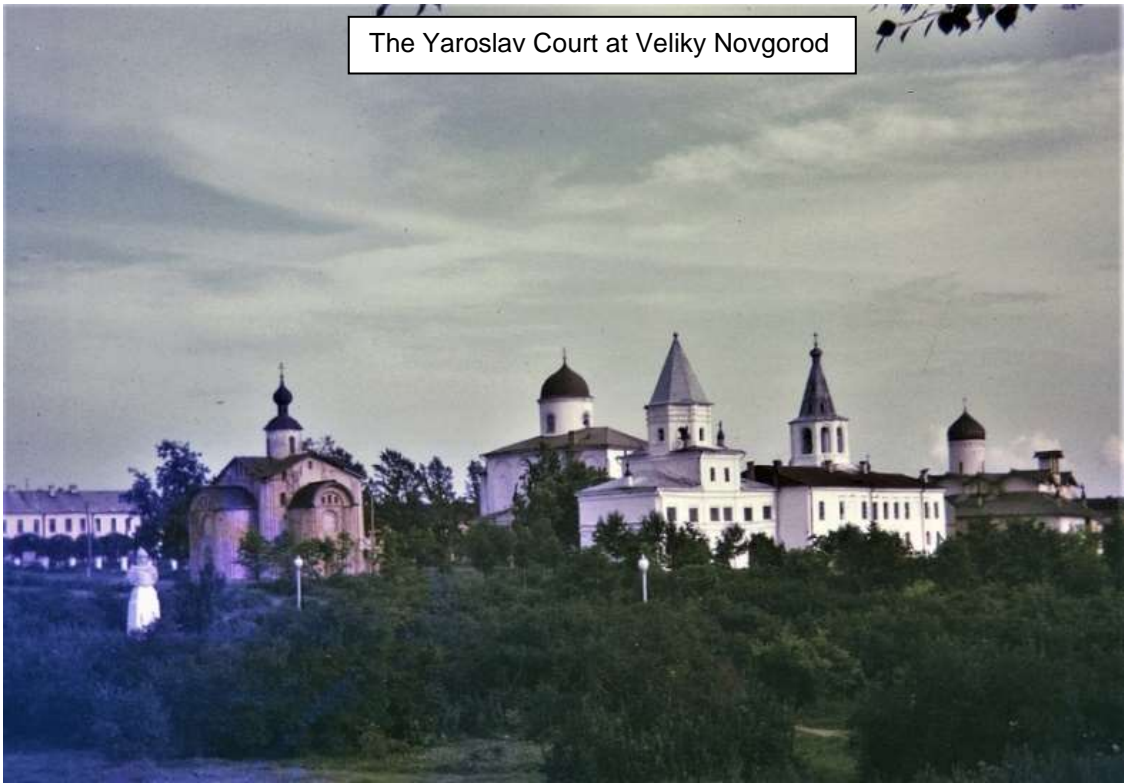


A Day Trip to Pushkin and the Surroundings



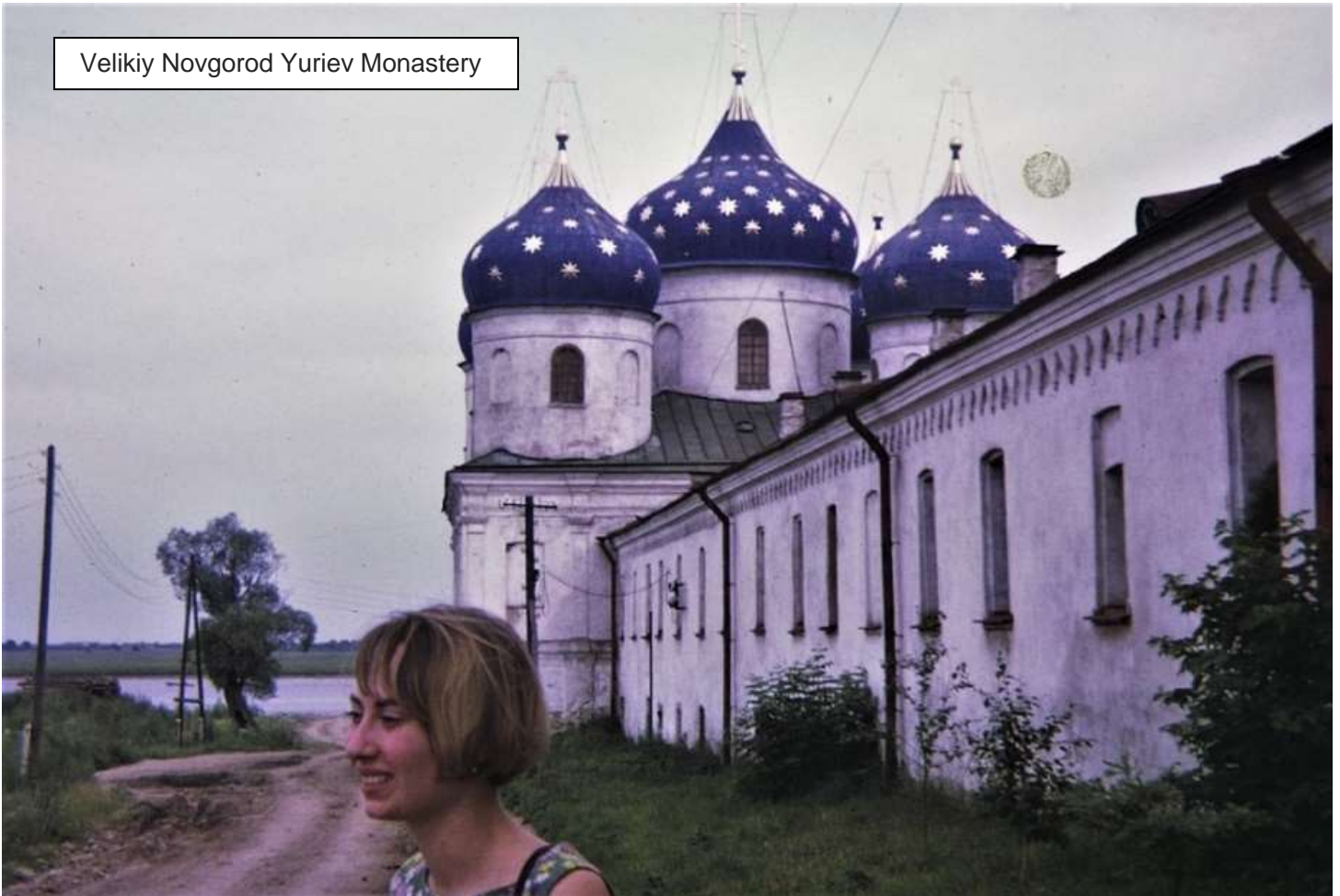


The Yaroslav Court at Veliky Novgorod





The Millennium of Russia built in 1862



Velikiy Novgorod Yuriev Monastery

Closed churches:

We visited a lot of closed churches. Churches that were museums for Atheism and the State. Churches that had been the fiber of the Russian soul for centuries. We sometimes wondered why these places had to suffer such indignities. On our trip to the Velikiy Novgorod and the Yuriev Monastery we stumbled across a spectacular church that was open to the air and used for bottle storage. In one of the many churches at Velikiy Novgorod we witnessed bottles being stored under beautiful wall icons.



Michael Alberts

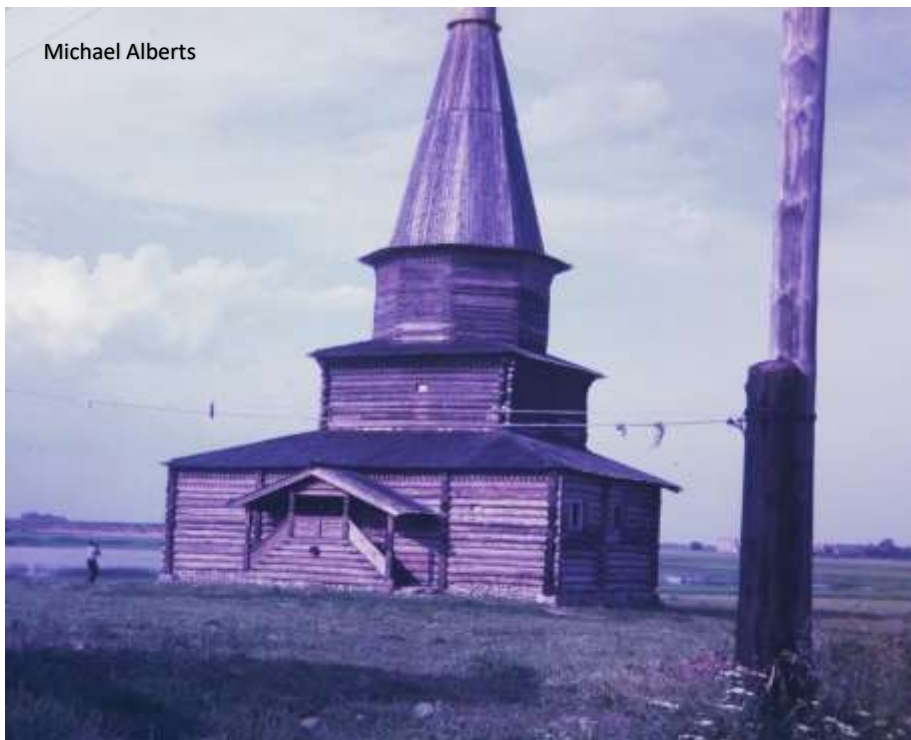
Author & Ludmilla Koehler look at artwork in a church used for bottle storage in Veliliy Novgorod

A bus trip to the Finnish frontier to a dacha that was used by Soviet-era bosses.

It was here that we realized that something was missing in Leningrad proper. The lake that we visited was lush green. There were almost no mature trees in Leningrad. While dining at a fairly modern restaurant located in a beautiful spot on the "frontier," I asked about the trees in Leningrad and was told that what trees existed vanished during the siege – used as fuel for the long winter.



[Editor's note: As I recall, my group, from Dartmouth, was not on this particular excursion. However, when I was posted to the U.S. consulate-general in Leningrad for two years about a decade after this program, I would often travel to Finland for shopping or rest & recreation. I can testify that no unauthorized people would have been allowed anywhere near the actual Soviet-Finnish border, miles inside a closed military zone and heavily protected with multiple and formidable barbed-wire barriers and what appeared to be minefields – all designed not so much to keep invaders out as to keep Soviet citizens from trying to leave.]



Kolkhoz (Колхоз – Collective Farm) – The Modern Russian Peasant

Excursion to a collective farm where cucumbers were grown in greenhouses and big fields of cabbage. The trip to the kolkhoz was particularly interesting. In my last quarter at Michigan State I did some directed research in the Ford Archives. I was working in Ford's Dearborn data center (earning money to pay for my trip) and the archives were almost next door. I was amazed at the role that Henry Ford played in the 1920s by exporting thousands of "Fordson" Tractors to the Soviet Union so that the "factory farms" could meet their goals. Ford sent whole shiploads of blueprints and established a Fordson Tractor plant in Russia. His brand was heroic during Soviet times and he believed that whatever could be done to help a nation toward industrialization was a good thing. There were Ford dealerships in the Soviet Union in the 1920s that displayed the Ford logo. Ford's help in developing heavy industry may have played a crucial role in WWII. There were no Fordson tractors on the farm we visited, but it was clear that we were being shown a successful collective farm.



MSU Student in Greenhouse



1930s poster: "Communist Youth, to tractors! Into the shock troops of the spring harvest!"

[Editor's note: The issue of the collectivization of Soviet agriculture, which got underway in earnest in 1928, is quite complex. Anyone reading this who is interested would be well advised to research this well-documented subject. The overall picture, however, is clear – and tragic. Stalin forced collectivization on the peasants (who had been promised ownership of their land by the Bolsheviks in 1917) in order to (1) seize grain that could be sold for export to finance the import of the heavy machinery needed for industrialization and (2) to solidify Communist Party control over the countryside. The collectivization process itself entailed the forcible seizure of all peasant assets. At machine gun point. Tens, perhaps hundreds, of thousands were executed, millions of “rich” peasants (called kulaks = fists, often defined as those who owned a horse or cow) were exiled to desolate areas of Siberia and Central Asia, where many perished, and millions more were deliberately allowed to starve to death in a man-made famine, as even their seed grain was seized. Beyond these atrocities, the anemic production of collective farms – whose workers cared little for producing bumper crops because they had no stake in success – was responsible for the USSR's need, in its latter years, to import grain from the U.S. It could not feed itself. The Soviet display to visiting foreigners of a “successful” collective farm can best be seen as a “Potemkin Village” propaganda effort.]

Michael Alberts



Our host at the Kolkhoz

Zenit Football Game at Kirov Stadium

This was a huge soccer stadium where футбол (football) was played. I had never seen a soccer game before and we tried to cheer and get into the spirit of things. It was a far cry from what I knew as football at Spartan Stadium, as my last game as a student was the “game of the century” tie vs. Notre Dame. The Zenit (Zenith) team was a favorite of composer Dmitri Shostakovich ... don't know if he attended this game.

Michael Alberts



Alexander Nevsky Monastery – An Active Orthodox Church

On a Sunday evening we boarded an electric trolleybus on Nevskiy prospekt and visited the Nevskiy Monastery. Really a short ride from where we lived. There was a church service in progress. The attendees were mostly women, many of them on in years. We roamed the cemetery, finding graves of Russians we had read about in history books. Outside the church we had a few conversations where locals told us that the “Church” was alive despite the Communist government.

Rimsky-Korsakov's gravestone



Michael Alberts

The Circus

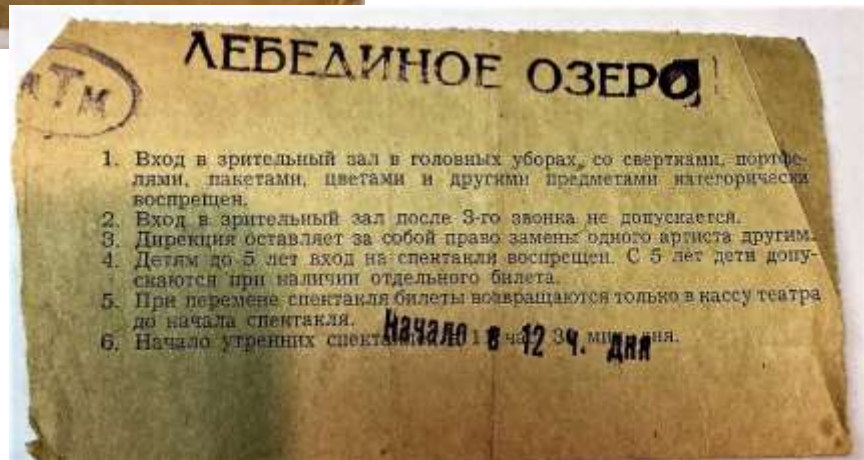
One weekday evening we were treated to a circus company performance that was most exceptional and most Russian. It was a cross between theater and circus, not what we were used to in the American Circus. *[Editor's note: My favorite act was a guy who smoothly juggled heavy steel balls – like the ones used in Olympic shot put competition, only a little larger.]*



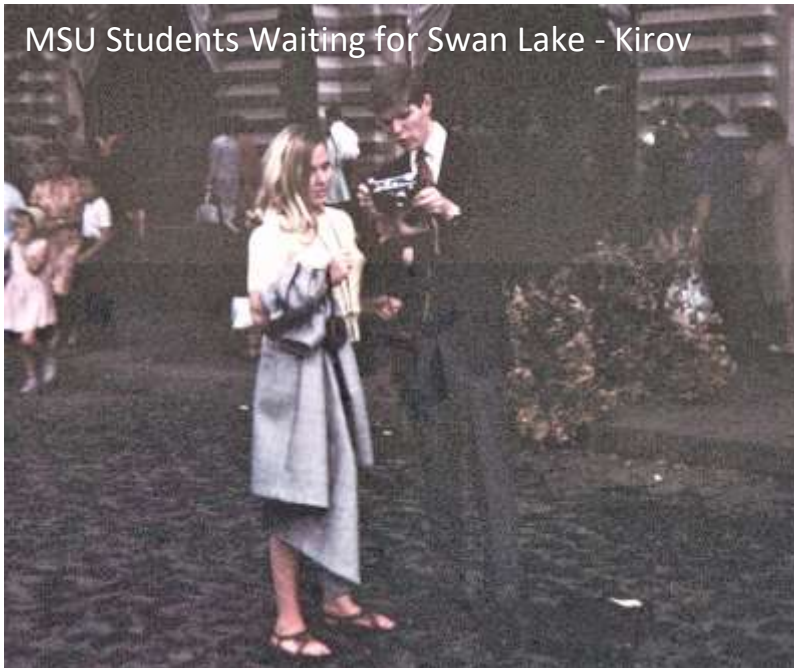
The Kirov Ballet

Nothing quite prepared me for the Kirov. On July 23 we attended Swan Lake (Лебединое озеро – Lebedinoye ozero). I had never seen a ballet and did not know what to expect. It was formal. The theater was spectacular.

The dancers, sets, and music overwhelmed the senses. Perhaps the best theater experience of the entire trip.



MSU Students Waiting for Swan Lake - Kirov



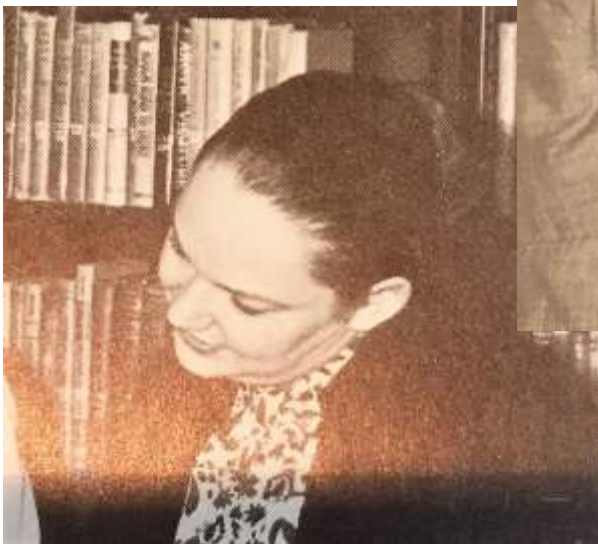
Lobanov-Rostovsky Palace – 12 Admiralteyskiy Avenue (circa. 1817) – White marble [Medici lions](#) by sculptor [Paolo Triscorni](#) on granite pedestals. Now the Four Seasons Hotel – St. Petersburg.

While roaming the city I came upon a palace that brought full circle the very reason why I was on this trip. I had no Slavic roots, no intention of anything other than a degree in the sciences. I was a biology major. In early 1964 while a freshman at Northern Michigan University, I took a Russian language class taught by Marina Lobanov. She was married to Prince Andrei Lobanov Rostovsky, Professor Emeritus of Russian History at the University of Michigan. The prince retired in 1962 and the couple moved to Marquette where she was teaching Russian Language at the university. Her class began my fascination with things Russian. Several times we were invited to the Lobanov home and listened to tales from the prince. We heard stories from Japan, the Revolution and of his escape from Russia following the Revolution. The prince fought in the White Army and escaped to France after its defeat. He worked as a foreign correspondent in Paris and shortly after that began his academic career. Marina was a compassionate woman, much younger than the prince; she was responsible for my interest in studying all things Russian. Finding the palace with his family name emblazoned on the facade was a considerable shock. It was tangible evidence of a connection to this place in my own personal history. I found it pretty cool that we had both attended the same college 50 years apart, as Lobanov The Imperial Law School ... that made us “classmates.” He was drafted into the Imperial Guard and fought in WW I.

Author on steps of Lobanov-Rostovsky Palace



Edgar L. Hardon (MSU President 1977-1979) with the Prince and Marina



The Arrival of the French Delegation

Our exchange and visit were coordinated out of an office in Paris, France. They seemed able to get things done with the Soviets. About two weeks into our visit a delegation of students from Paris arrived and they were there as a part of a warming between Russia and France. The city was inspired by the French, as Peter the Great admired the court at Versailles. While the French were the invaders in 1812, Russia suffered another invasion – by the Germans – just 25 years prior to our visit. We did not understand the significance of the new détente with the French ... but we could read in the faces of the French students on the tour and the Russian hosts that they had even greater freedom and privilege in the USSR than we Americans did.

Michael Alberts



French Student on the Banks of the Neva

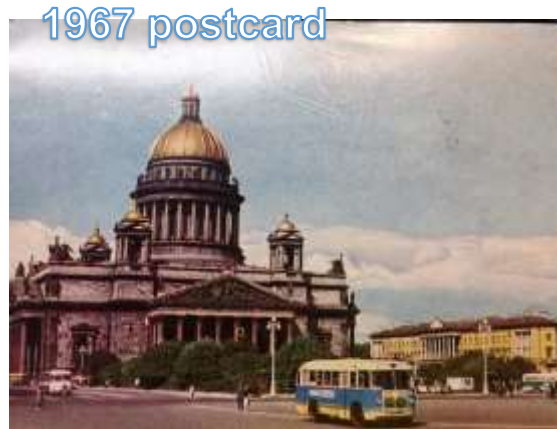


My favorite room in the Winter Palace

The Hall of 1812 War Heros

St. Isaac's Cathedral (Isaakiyevskiy sobor – Исаакиевский собор)

This church was a spectacular building in Leningrad. With a 333-foot-high dome, it dominated the surrounding buildings. The interior featured huge malachite columns and other spectacular stone columns of every color (e.g., lapis lazuli) that had been hauled from the Urals. Also, mosaics of great detail and the spectacular dome. In 1931, a huge dove sculpture was replaced by a Foucault pendulum, a heavy metal ball suspended from the top of the dome. The movement of the pendulum reminded me of the swinging of an Orthodox incense burner ... but it was actually a demonstration of Copernicus' theory of the rotation of the Earth.... The Church was only being returned to the Russian Orthodox Church in 2017.



Kazan Cathedral (Kazanskiy sobor – Казанский собор)

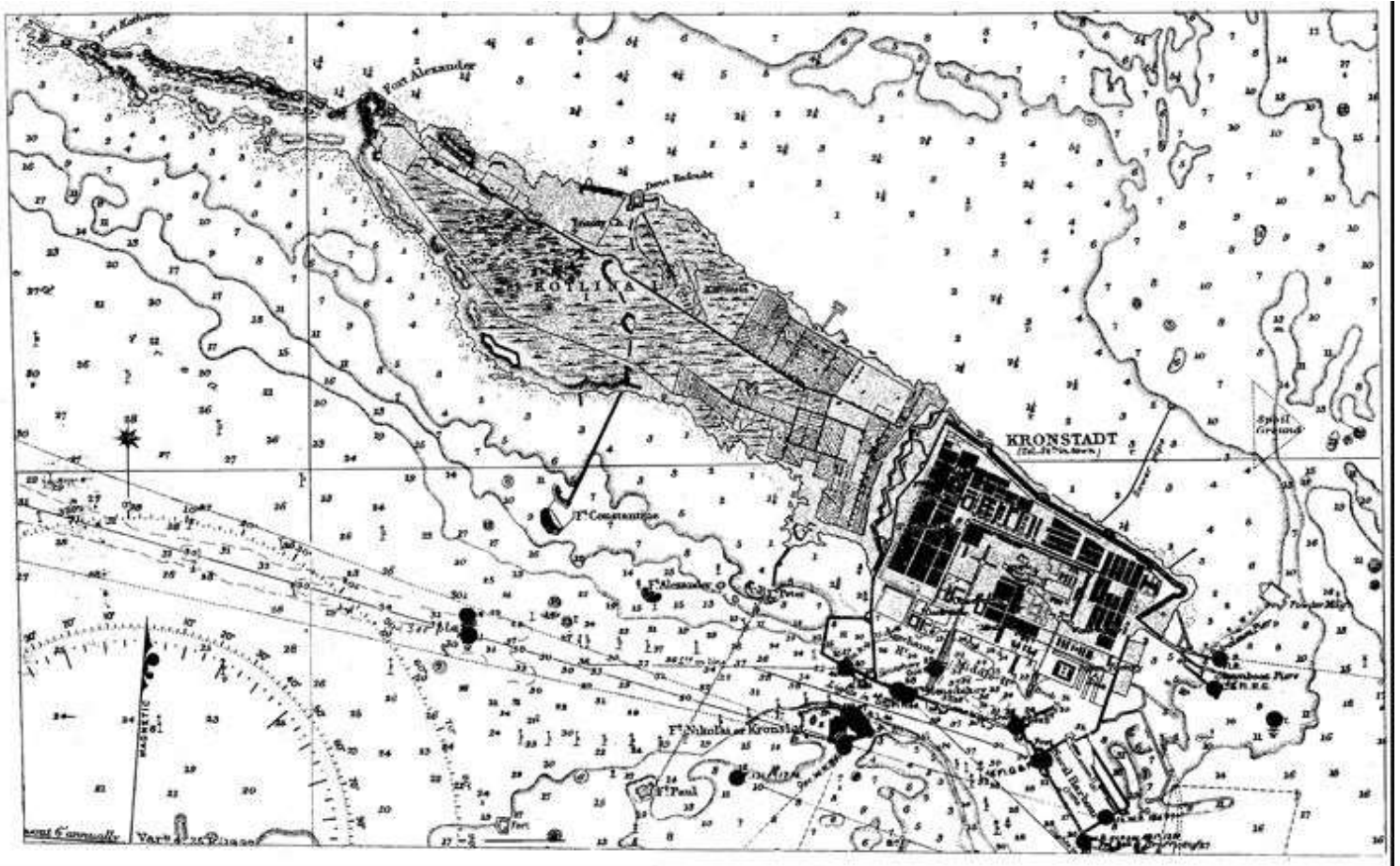
Modeled after St. Peter's in the Vatican, this church had been converted into an extreme anti-religious museum. *[Editor's Note: In Soviet times, it was formally known as the Museum of the History of Religion and Atheism. That museum had for several years been located in St. Isaac's, but was moved to the Kazan Cathedral in 1937.]* Though we had seen churches stripped of their icons and other religious trappings, this one seemed the coldest example of the state taking away religious freedom. Just off Nevskiy prospekt, the museum housed a distasteful display of anti-religious propaganda and posters and "Socialist Realism" art. In so many other places, religious paintings and art had been restored and preserved as history. The Hermitage had hundreds of religious paintings both as part of the architecture and hanging on the walls. Why this church suffered a hideous indignity was a mystery. *[Editor's note: "Militant atheism" was an integral element of Communist Party orthodoxy.]*



Trip to the Kronstadt Naval Base (Кронштадтская военно-морская база)

Toward the end of our stay we became more adventurous. The official events of the weekends and evenings left little time to really explore outside the city. Late one evening, we boarded a hydrofoil for a short trip. The sign at the departure point read, Kronstadt Naval Base via other destinations, including Peter the Great's Summer Palace. We asked the sailors on the fast, beautiful boat if we could get off before Kronstadt and catch the boat again on the return trip. We knew that as Americans we were not allowed near the base. We took it seriously. The memory of WWII and the Cold War made the Russians forbid foreigners to photograph bridges, train depots, subway stations, and other "sensitive" locations. The Kronstadt Submarine Pens certainly fit that list. The crew member that took our tickets was not totally clear about our intended voyage and I was unable to understand his Russian. That we would not be welcome at the Kronstadt Naval Base was a reality, however.

On board and underway, the crew learned that we were Americans, the captain was alerted and there was a lot to talk about this with the crew. As we arrived at the Summer Palace we were advised that there was no need to depart at this intermediate destination. Surprised and a little hesitant, we enjoyed a fantastic ride across the Gulf of Finland, talking to the crew and making friends. As we neared the Naval Base the Captain signaled us to go below deck and remain there. We could look out the porthole and see the base. A few minutes later the boat pulled away from the docks and we were back on deck having a good time with the crew. It ranked as one of the best adventures of the entire trip.



The Draft – призыв на военную службу

It was clear when I left Detroit that our America was at war. I had taken a draft physical at Ft. Wayne in Detroit and was declared eligible. Student draft deferrals were still allowed but there was growing sentiment that the Selective Service was giving preference to those who had the money to attend college by granting student deferrals. There was a movement to end student deferral, and it was beginning to bring pressure to bear on Washington. When I returned home, a graduate with no plans for a master's degree, I would probably face military service. Possibly a stint in Vietnam. (I got my Master's in 1969). The constant news references to the Vietnam situation in the local Russian news outlets made me speculate on my future upon return.

Photo taken at the Leningrad Draft Board



Detroit in Flames

On July 26, I was greeted with the news "Detroit in Flames". There was a large article in the paper about the city looking like a war zone. The Russian press was quick to pick up on the unrest in America. The press described the situation as multiple battles in the city between "Negroes" and the military and police. Whole blocks were aflame and 500 homes had already been burned. It was reported that Governor George Romney had requested that the president send in two Airborne divisions. Other than the Soviet print media there was little or no other information available. We never watched television during our entire visit. The news was anything but comfortable. My family home was in Northwest Detroit, about 6 miles from the downtown area. Calling home involved making an appointment at a telephone station a day in advance. It was expensive and often not successful. I went to the Telephone office and was unsuccessful in making a phone call to my family. I have attached the page from Pravda and some translated analysis to this book.

ДЕТРОЙТ В ОГНЕ

От специального корреспондента «Правды»



1967

Этот снимок только что получен из Детройта, где, как и в ряде других американских городов, регулярные войска США ведут настоящие бои против негритянского населения.

ПОСЛУЖНОЙ СП

ДЕТРОЙТ, 25. (Рейтер). В то время, как парашютист вступил в пылающие пожары улиц Детройта, броневые автомобили открыли пулеметный огонь участника выступлений. Солдат получил приказ «стрелять по всему, что движется»

The Hermitage – Gold Cemetery – Treasure Galleries

On Thursday, July 28, after class, our professor, Ludmilla Koehler, told us we were invited to a special event that not many would be allowed to attend at the Winter Palace. She called it **zolotoye kladbishche** (золотое кладбище or gold cemetery). This was probably our 15th visit to the palace. Upon entrance you were required to put a pair of felt slippers over your shoes to protect the parquet floors. That day we entered the great Winter Palace and some of the "guards" recognized our faces, as it was not uncommon to make daily visits for even a half hour. I believe that some of these women were the guardians that slept in the Winter Palace during the siege with the art in the bomb shelters. These were the brave survivors of starvation and incendiary bombs, the protectors of this great collection for posterity despite the horrific events of the siege. These humble and simple ladies met us as if we were dignitaries. Usually the process of getting to new areas of the museum took quite a while as you had to walk through what I remember as endless halls of urns – some of malachite, some of red marble – and sculpture to reach the destination. But this day we were quickly spirited down some alternative route by two matrons. The destination was a warmly lit room with no windows. There, several *babushkas* (grandmas) showed us small cases of special treasures. Gold, pearls, some special items that belonged to Catherine the Great, Peter the Great, and others. Gifts from royalty around the globe. The amazing thing is that we were allowed to touch some of these items ... hold them in our own hands. One of the matrons had me sit down and carefully handed me a pearl the size of a robin's egg.



1967 tourist literature



Bed Bugs & Classical Music & a Flotilla on the Neva

Nearing the end of our stay at the dormitory I developed what I thought was a rash or hives. It was not long before I discovered that the little red spots were bed bug bites. Having no experience with these flat, little, impossible-to-defend-against insects, I placed a complaint with one of the leaders of the group. That same day, when I returned from classes, the mattress had been switched. However, the new mattress was worse, and that night I was really tormented by the little creatures. The last two nights I slept what little I could on a bench or the floor. The director of the dorm hotly advised the leader that the mattresses had not had these little bugs until the Americans arrived. One pleasant reprieve from this sleep-depriving experience was the echo of the Tchaikovsky violin concerto up through the tiny windows of the dorm's ventilation shaft. Someone was practicing, and he or she was very good ... playing this difficult piece with but an occasional interruption. This sound, this music, Tchaikovsky's violin concerto, fit the surroundings and reduced the pain that facing another sleepless battle with the bedbugs or the floor would bring.

Sleepless, as I wandered outside the dorm on that July morning, I witnessed what appeared to be hundreds of Russian sailors moving upstream in amphibious personnel carriers and small landing craft. It was a date of some significance, 50 years after the "July Days" in 1917 brought about the resignation of Prince Georgiy Lvov as prime minister in the Provisional Government and the establishment of a more progressive government under Alexander Kerensky (which, however, was overthrown by the Bolsheviks in the October Revolution three months later) ... and the current Russian Navy. There was a big party going on down at the Navy Yard.



Party – The French (again) – The Beatles – BYOB

At the end of six weeks I was actually able to communicate with the Russian students. We had some absurd communication regarding Western music, rock and roll, and Motown. These conversations consisted of (in English) Russian student: "I have short wave radio ... you know Simon and Garfunkel?" Me: "Yes, I know Simon and Garfunkel" ... Russian student: "You know the Kinks?" Me: "Yes, I know the Kinks." ... Russian student: "You know the Beatles?" Me: "Yes, I know the Beatles... And on and on and on.... Then it dawned on me.... The French students could get anything. We had been told to leave our music albums behind, not to sell our jeans, and to avoid bringing decadent publications such as Playboy. The Russians were desperate for "Western" items. But the French seemed to be able to get or do anything at a moment's notice. A few of us approached the French, asking that they secure the Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band record album. 48 hours later the cherished album appeared. There was a common room on the second floor of the dorm, there was a record player. The party was on.

Crude pencil signs "Sgt. Pepper's BYOB Party" appeared in the lobby of the dorm and news of the party spread quickly.

One of our Russian hosts asked the nature of "BYOB." I explained that meant guests brought their own drinks. He acted as if this was a novel concept, yet approved. To this day I don't know if he was serious, as a bottle of Stolichnaya would usually appear at the drop of a hat. The party was a success and I am sure that if Shostakovich was listening down the street he would probably have approved of the discordant notes of parts of the soundtrack. I think both the Russians and Americans felt we had achieved significant cultural exchange with this event.

In just a few months the Beatles would release "Back in the U.S.S.R."

In a 1984 interview with [Playboy](#), McCartney said:

I wrote that as a kind of Beach Boys parody. And "Back in the USA" was a Chuck Berry song, so it kinda took off from there. I just liked the idea of Georgia girls and talking about places like the Ukraine as if they were California, you know? It was also hands across the water, which I'm still conscious of. 'Cause they like us out there, even though the bosses in the [Kremlin](#) may not. The kids from there do. And that to me is very important for the future of the race.

So ended my stay in Leningrad... hung over, afraid to go to bed and be eaten by the bed bugs, scared for my family in Detroit after hearing about the '67 riots, hung over, and ready for the next step in this adventure.



Graduation - The formal dinner

On Friday, July 29, 1967, all participants gathered in an ancient formal hall on the university campus. There, with a little pomp and circumstance, we were all presented with a **свидетельство** (certificate) from **Ленинградский ордена Ленина государственный университет (Leningrad Order of Lenin State University)**. The ceremony included the presentation of the "diploma" and a gift to each of the American students. I received a gift book of Russian paintings from the Russian Museum. The graduation was followed by a formal dinner and considerable libation, speeches....



Michael Alberts



Moscow Station (Moskovskiy vokzal – Московский вокзал) – The Red Arrow (Krasnaya strela – Красная стрела)

At midnight on the evening of July 29, the Michigan State University delegation gathered at Moscow Station. Everyone was on time and looked sober. I was sleep-deprived with bed bug bites, worries about the riots at home, and good memories of the parties and events of the last few days. Moscow Station in St. Petersburg (Leningrad) was a bustling, hectic place late at night. We boarded the Red Arrow and were assigned sleeping compartments. The train was clean and comfortable. There was an attendant and the samovar was kept hot for tea all night. Despite being very tired, I can't recall sleeping much... spending most of my time by the samovar watching what there was to see out the window. I noted that the trip was made in seven hours. Seasoned travelers got good train transportation and avoided a night in a hotel by riding the Red Arrow.



Michael Alberts

Moscow – The Hotel – The Kremlin – Lenin's Tomb (4,840 miles from Detroit)

Moscow was different from Leningrad. Traffic was more intense and our hotel was at least 5 km. from the center of the city. There was a greater sense of business, hustle and bustle, and not the friendly paced place we had left. The bus ride to Red Square was about 30 minutes and a little complicated. We learned to get around quickly and by the end of day two had seen many of the mandatory sights.

- The Changing of the Guard at Lenin's Tomb followed by a tour of Lenin's Tomb with a short audience with Lenin himself.



- Walking Red Square trying to take selfies with a Kodak Instamatic



- Touring the Kremlin and the many historic buildings inside the heart of the Soviet capital



- The Tsar Bell (named for its gigantic size)



We made an official visit to Moscow State University (MGU). There were some official comments and students to meet and socialize with. The university was huge and a stark contrast to the historic buildings where we had attended class in Leningrad. It did occur to us that the accomplishments of the educational institutions we were visiting were worth noting. The 1957 launch of Sputnik prompted us to realize that our American educational system might learn something from the Russians.



July 31, 1967 - The U.S. Embassy - Reading Pravda and Listening to the Muscovites on American Values

Looking for news from home we visited the American Embassy. I wanted to know what exactly was happening in Detroit. What little information I got at the Embassy indicated that the reports of the scale of destruction in the Soviet press were true. The embassy employees were not much help and seemed unable to offer anything other than their daily dispatches.

Unlike most of the people we met in Leningrad, it seemed that residents of Moscow were a little more inclined to speak up on what they viewed as American decadence. On more than one occasion when looking at the newspaper with concern about my home city, I was confronted with something like "What did you expect?" My Russian was not good enough to argue or detect the true intent of the comments. Suffice it to say, the Soviet press made the most of the situation in Detroit.



Performing Arts in Moscow – Ballet – Opera – The Restrooms in the Kremlin Palace of Congresses (Кремлевский Дворец съездов)

We had learned that one of the best thing about Moscow was a busy theater season. We had heard about the Bolshoi and wanted to see it first hand. Our first tickets were for Mozart's Don Juan (Дон Жуан). Tickets were a whopping 3 rubles and 20 kopeks. The opera was difficult for me to understand, but the plot was clear. We quickly picked up tickets for Sleeping Beauty at the Palace of the Congress in the Kremlin (Кремлевский Дворец съездов). This was a huge modern theater that held 5,000 and was the venue for the Soviet Communist Party's irregular Congresses. The tickets were cheap; we paid 80 kopeks for a good seat. That night we returned for The Queen of Spades (Пиковая дама) a truly Russian opera that was most amusing – music by Tchaikovsky and libretto based on the *Twilight Zone*-like story by Alexander Pushkin. I found it incredible that we could walk through the gates of the Kremlin and see such great performances. The Bolshoi, the Kremlin Palace, the Kirov, and the Malyy were all spectacular venues that we enjoyed and felt honored to attend. On a trip to the men's lavatory at the Кремлевский Дворец съездов I was amused to see that the urinals were "American Standard," an American product in the building where the Soviet Communist Party would meet.



August 5, Depart Moscow Vnukovo Airport for a visit to three republics.

Our stay until August 5 had been restricted to Russia, but we were visiting the Soviet Union, and Russia was but one of 15 "union republics." Our itinerary would take us to three other republics of the "Union" – Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Ukraine. These visits would tell a story outside what we had experienced while in Russia. The official Soviet position was that there was freedom of religion, and that equality by ethnicity, gender, or race was a right for all citizens.



Baku, Azerbaijan & the Oil Fields

A city on the Caspian Sea, an oil-producing region, ethnic Muslim, ancient, this place was the most tightly controlled of all of our visits. We toured the city and the ancient wall, which was still standing. There was no free time in the city proper and there was clear evidence that we were under the control of our tour guides. I had little or no frame of reference with which to judge this city, its people, or the culture. The mosque with its ancient dome was closed and we were given a lengthy explanation regarding how the religion was dealt with. It was a new chapter with totally different climate and culture. Even if we had been set loose in this city I don't know if we would have been comfortable exploring. A military presence was evident around the city. This, we were told, was due to the strategic significance of the oil fields. Oil was everywhere. It bubbled right out of the ground. Our tour took us to "oil city," endless wooden walkways over the Caspian Sea to provide access to the oil derricks. We were granted access with our tour guide. They stretched for what seemed miles and the stench of crude oil was omnipresent. We had no concept that we were just a short distance from Iran (which was then, however, far outside the media spotlight).

Michael Alberts



Michael Alberts



Michael Alberts



Sputnik youth center in Azerbaijan (6,023 miles from Detroit)

About 40 km. from the city of Baku was our actual destination, a Soviet era "vacation" hotel located on the shore of the Caspian Sea. It was a modern resort with dorm rooms for guests. Each morning the громкоговоритель (loudspeaker) would blast off with the words "Внимание! Внимание!" (Vnimaneye! Vnimaneye! – Attention! Attention!). The announcement was deafening and came around 7 am. It heralded a call to exercise class on the beach. It was not unlike a call to prayer, only it had none of the charm.... It was a gross interruption of sleep time. The walk to the beach was not short. The landlocked Caspian Sea was receding at a record rate, thanks to the diversion – for irrigation – of much of the flow of its major tributary, the Volga River. A minor incident occurred when one of the locals threw a clump of sand at one of our American student colleagues and hit her in the back. The cause: disapproval of her bathing suit style (which may have seemed immodest to Muslim Azeris). She was cool-headed enough to shrug it off and make little of the incident. In the evening we enjoyed the mild climate and breezes and drank champagne and tried to learn to like the local white wine, Rkatsiteli, and another wine that had a distinct taste of pine pitch. There were some serious basketball games and the days seemed to pass quickly. There was virtually no news at this place and my concerns about the Detroit riots continued to bother me.



Michael Alberts



MSU students playing basketball and on the beach

Michael Alberts



Tbilisi, Georgia – (5,795 miles from Detroit – elevation 2,500 ft.)

On August 13, 1967, we departed Baku on a very brief flight to Tbilisi, Georgia (Gruzia). When we arrived, the reception was quite remarkable. At the time, there were no "jetways"; it was the old rolling staircase. When we stepped off our Aeroflot flight we were greeted by about six Georgians who promptly, in no uncertain terms, advised us that we were not in Russia anymore. They told us that Georgia was a different culture. Within 15 minutes we were being asked to tell them what we wanted to see. We asked to see a champagne factory. They said they would see what they could do. We were taken to a very nice, bright hotel. The celebration began. There was a lot of eating and drinking. We were free to roam the streets of this capital city. We visited Stalin's mother's tomb ... one of the only references we ever heard to the Georgia-born dictator who ran the USSR for 30 years. How this place was venerated, while Stalin was a non-person was curious to us but nonetheless not surprising since everything in Georgia seemed countercultural. We were escorted everywhere by Georgians who voiced their independence from and superiority over the Russia that ruled them.



MSU Students and Georgians on the Streets of Tbilisi



Tbilisi – Mtskheta, & the Jarvi Monastery – Sarajishvili Cognac Factory – Then Oblivion

On the second day of our visit we received word that a champagne factory visit was not possible but that they had arranged for a cognac factory tour. This should have come as no surprise to a group that knew their Russian history. The Tsars since Peter the Great were fans of the best of French and European culture. The wine-growing regions of the Caucasus are the oldest in the world. Tsar Nicholas I in the mid-19th century encouraged the development of Armenian and Georgian cognac. A "supplier to the Tsar" caliber cognac (brandy) was developed in Georgia by 1880 and the quality of the product was considered very good.

That day, there was a school bus in front of the hotel and the next thing we knew we were growling up the mountains in low gear. We visited several ancient churches that dated back to the 6th century. This was an ancient agricultural area dotted with vineyards. The churches had not been maintained and some were barricaded while others were open. I mean open to the outside. At one point, we were standing at a monastery where the Christian religion had been practiced for 1,500 years or more.

MSU Student inspects Stalin's Mother's Tomb





Michael Alberts

Author at Ancient Georgian Mtskheta "Holy City"

We then proceeded to what I believe was a major cognac distillery high in the mountains. It was August, so the grapes were still on the vine. The director of the factory led us on a tour through covered storage areas that held thousands of barrels of brandy. The aroma was very strong. At the end of a very interesting tour we entered the tasting room, and that is where the trouble began. It was a modern tasting room with a 25-foot table with one wood-paneled wall where the finest products of the distillery were on display. There was a wall of windows on the other side of the room. We were seated with ceremony.... The tour guide moved to one side, and the **директор** (director) and his assistant made their grand entry. There was some babble about how Georgian drink... the director made a short speech, his assistant made a little speech, Ludmilla Koehler made a little speech.... We were first served the current product of the distillery ... sounded like it was around 8 years old. Bam ... down the hatch. It would have been an insult not to consume the precious spirits that were being placed before us. Professor Koehler pretended to take a sip of her shot and slipped it in front of me ... so did the girl sitting next to me ... so I was doing "three for ones" with our Georgian hosts. The rounds of cognac kept arriving. Round 2 was from grapes just after WWII (according to the speeches), round 3 was from before WWII (so went the speeches), round 4 was from the time of the Revolution and round 5 was "distilled for **Tsar Nikolay (Царь Николай – Nicholas II)** himself" in the very early 1900s. Fifteen shots of cognac later, we left the room and climbed on the bus. The next thing I recall was waking up sick in the hotel room. I was told I had been passed out for about 18 hours but the Georgians checked my breathing every other hour or so to be sure I was alive. I was really sick. So much for Georgia....



A Most Memorable Flight – Tblisi to Kiev

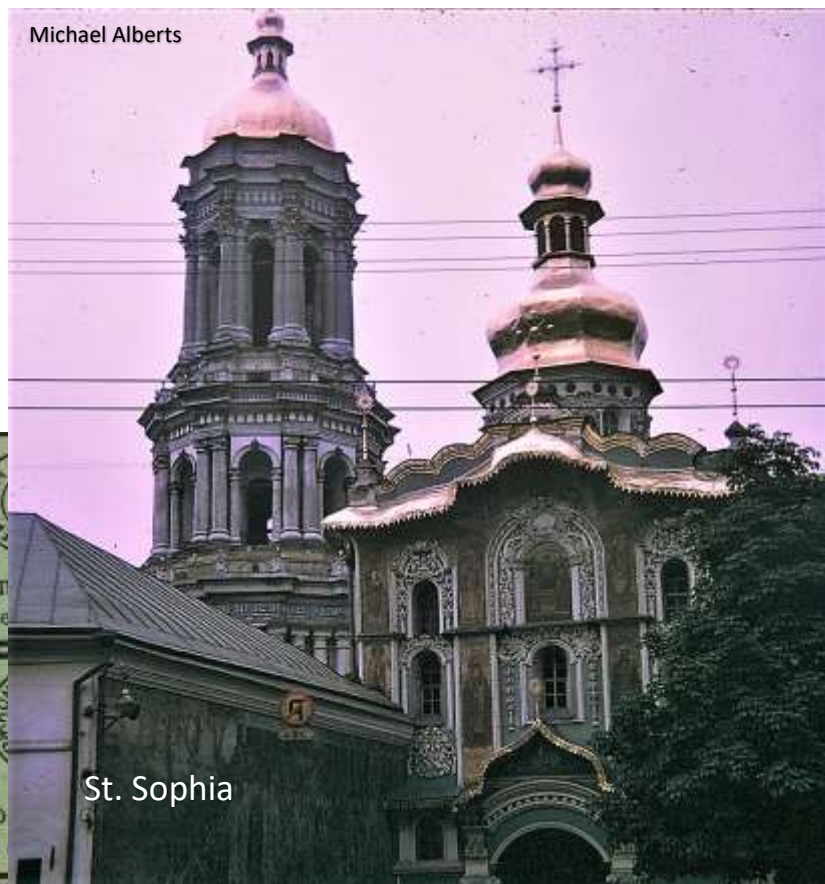
On August 16, hung over but walking, I boarded a Soviet Aeroflot Il-18. Of all of the flights on this trip, this was the most difficult, for a few reasons. 1) I was still in recovery mode from our visit to the Sarajishvili distillery. 2) Other passengers bound for Kiev had excess baggage that was placed in netting over the seats, among which were melons, fruit, and a chicken (live) with legs bound. 3) Once in flight, the aircraft ceiling dripped water on the passengers, condensation from the pressurization system. Now a little water dripping from the aircraft ceiling was not too bad, but the overhead chicken made you speculate about the source of the liquid. To make matters worse, the plane encountered severe turbulence on its approach to Kiev and many of the passengers experienced motion sickness.



Kiev, Ukraine – St. Sophia – Kiev Pechersk Lavra (Києво-Печерська лавра – Monastery of the Caves) – The University

The hung-over Michigan State delegation was greeted at the airport and quickly bused to the university where I believe we were quartered. I recall the main university building had a great architectural similarity to Moscow University. We enjoyed our stay and were treated well. It was nice to be back in an academic setting. We were housed on campus, received a quick orientation to the city, and were off. St. Sophia (Holy Wisdom) was an 11th century church that was supposed to be out of business. I can't recall exactly how it worked, but we toured the church and I clearly recall an Orthodox priest being present. I recall that a number of women in our group grabbed scarves upon entry to the cathedral. This was a truly beautiful and historic place. While touring the area we made reservations for a trip to the catacombs at Kiev Pechersk Lavra. This was a big attraction, and we wandered through caves that had served as both a living and burial place for a thousand years of Orthodox priests. The bodies were mummified and placed in niches carved into the stone walls.

Our time in Kiev was spent with local students who could not get enough of our English and wanted to know everything about America. There in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, this was the third "national" capital in a row that, while in the Soviet Union, was not a center of Russian language. We learned quickly that the Russian we picked up in Leningrad gave us an accent that made us stand out as "Russian." Not Ukrainian. We also discovered that quickly revealing that we were Americans made our welcome much warmer than that accorded a tourist from Russia itself.



Kiev to Brest, Belorussian SSR (today Belarus) connection to Warsaw – A Day of Parties & Sightseeing in Warsaw

On August 21 we departed Kiev late in the evening via rail second class. We stopped in Brest very early in the morning and prepared to depart from the Soviet Union. This was on the Polish border in an area that seemed to have been a part of more countries than I could count over the centuries. Our passports stamped, we crossed the border following breakfast and boarded a steam-driven train for Warsaw. Our train arrived at Gdanska Station and we were greeted by a delegation of Polish students and taken on a tour of the city. Apparently our visit was a big deal to our Polish hosts, who were ready to party. The party went into the morning. Our hosts were very gracious and wanted us to see as much as possible ... and took us sightseeing again in the morning determined that we would see the best of their country.

August 22 – Our train was scheduled to leave for East Berlin around noon from Gdanska Station. Our means of transportation was a school bus, and looked like we were going to miss our train. The driver advised us "no problem" ... but such did not seem to be the case. We raced to the station in a wild ride with the grand finale being a wrong-way drive on a one-way road leading to the train platforms, with the driver yelling to the guard "Americans" ... the guard made way for us as if we were very special. We boarded the train for East Berlin and rolled across Poland and Germany in what seemed an eternal 12-hour ride, arriving in Berlin near midnight.



East Berlin

August 22 – Our late-night arrival at the Hotel Unter den Linden was a pleasant surprise. This InterHotel was new, with modern (1967) amenities, just two blocks from the Brandenburg Gate. The luxurious accommodations were welcome ... we had been traveling pretty hard. Just a few blocks from the Berlin Wall, we had one more day "behind the Iron Curtain." We spent the day touring East Berlin and visiting the sights, a beer hall, and finally a dinner at the hotel.

Departing the Eastern Bloc – Checkpoint Charlie – West Berlin

August 25 – Our bus left the hotel at 9:30 am. Our passports were all in the hands of the group leaders as we prepared to pass through "Checkpoint Charlie." The serpentine entrance to the notorious crossing point through the Berlin Wall was in a heavily guarded military zone. The East German border guards looked stern as they boarded the bus and took our passports. Then we were cleared to leave East Berlin. The passports were stamped by the East Germans to indicate our departure ... the American checkpoint would not stamp the passports for entry into West Berlin so we had to be satisfied with just the East German stamp.... The entrance to West Berlin began our return to the bustling, modern West.

It was clear that the Allied-occupied western sector of the city fully intended to show the difference from the Communist East. Huge neon signs were everywhere near the Wall. We stayed at a guest house in West Berlin on Meiningerstrasse a significant distance from the center of the city.



COUNCIL ON STUDENT TRAVEL

49, rue Pierre Charron
Paris 8e, France
Telephone : 225 66 00.

PROGRAM SERVICES IN EUROPE

Mrs. Stella Davis
Mrs. Françoise Bonnelle
Paris - August 7, 1967

RUSSIAN LANGUAGE PROGRAM 1967

GROUP DISCUSSION LIST : 10:00 to 12:00, September 4, 1967 at Brussels.

(G=Georgetown, M=Michigan, K/C=Kansas/Colorado, O=Oberlin, Q=Queens, D=Dartmouth.)

Groups are indicated by number.

- | | |
|---|--|
| AHERNE, Lillian E. (G) - 1. | CAMPBELL, Velma Lee (M) - 2. |
| ALBERTS, Michael W. (M) - 1. | CAPODILUPO, Lucia L. (K/C) - 2. |
| BAILEY, Jo Ann H. (K.C) - 1. | CARPIN, Lida (G) - 3. |
| BARTOW, John S. (K/C) - Faculty | CARROLL, Patricia (D) - 2. |
| BEVERLY, Mary Ann (O) - 1. | COBB, George W. (D) - 2. |
| BEYER, Richard M. (G) - 1. | COOPER, Henry R. (K/C) - 2. |
| BEYER, Thomas R. (G) - 6 <u>Leader.</u> | CUSHING, Deborah (M) - 2. |
| BLOOM, Judith F. (D) - 1. | DANIEL, Howard E. (D) - 4. |
| BLYTHE, Gerald G. (D) - 1. | DAVIDSON, Priscilla (G) - 3. |
| BODENE, Stephanie (O) - 1 <u>Leader.</u> | de SAINTE PHALLE, Fal (G) - 10. |
| BONNER, Phillip (O) - 1. | DOBSON, Richard B. (K/C) - 2. |
| BOURKE, Michael K. (G) - 2 <u>Leader.</u> | DUBYNIN, Olga (Q) - 1. |
| BOWLEN, Danna L. (G) - 2. | ELLIOTT, James S. (K/C) - 3 <u>Leader.</u> |
| BRONFMAN, Georgette B. (K/C) - 1. | EVANS, Robert J. (D) - 3. |
| BRUCE, Laulette (K/C) - 1. | EYMIL, Leon L. (K/C) - 3. |
| BUBUL, Julie Ann (K/C) - 1. | FEIN, Jill (O) - 3. |
| BUTTS, Nancy S. (G) - 2. | FIMAN, Bruce M. (K/C) - 3. |
| CARCON, Elizabeth (O) - 3. | FLOR, Marlene R. (D) - 10. |

FOND, Diana (O) - 5.
GALLAGHER, Raymond A. (G) - 3 Recorder
GLASSE, Antonia (Q) - Faculty
GLICK, Peter (Q) - 3.
GOLDMAN, Kathryn L. (K/C) - 3.
GOTTLIEB, David (O) - 2.
GREGG, Elise (G) - 4.
GRIBBLE, Francelle (M) - 2.
GRIER, Philip T. (M) - 3.
GRIFFIN, Deborah (D) - 4.
GRIGORIEFF, Dmitry F. (G) - Faculty.
GRIGORIEFF, Galina (G) - Faculty.
GULFER, Martin F. (K/C) - 4.
HALIJ, Marta C. (K/C) - 4.
HANRATTY, Peter F. (G) - 7 Recorder.
HARWELL, Rolly M. (K/C) - 4.
HAYNES, Jared O. (D) - 9 Leader.
HILLER, Michele S. (K/C) - 4.
HINRICHSEN, Donald (G) - 4.
HOFFMAN, Janet L. (G) - 5.
HOLMES, Larry E. (K/C) - 5.
HOLMES, Lloydane (M) - 1 Recorder.
HOPALKO, Wasyl (M) - 3.
HOTCHKISS, Lesley R. (G) - 2 Recorder.
HOWARD, Leland (O) - 2.
HOWELL, Linda Lee (G) - 5.
HULCHER, Karen (Q) - 4.
JEDNAK, Robert (O) - 2.
JOHNSON, Kay D. (K/C) - 5.
KARRIKER, Robert J. (K/C) - 5.
KASS, Norman D. (Q) - 5 Leader.
KEELER, Linda L. (K/C) - 6 Recorder.
KELLEY, Lawrence G. (K/C) - 5
KENNEDY, Theresa (O) - 4.
KNOX, Robert (O) - 4.
KOEHLER, Ludmilla (M) - Faculty
KRETKOWSKI, Halina N. (K/C) - 6.
KRYZTSKI, Galina (O) - Faculty.
KRYZTSKI, Serge (O) - Faculty.
KUZNITZ, Sally R. (K/C) - 6.
LACROIX, Ludmilla (O) - 5.
LAWLER, Ellen M. (K/C) - 7.
LEICHTMAN, David A. (M) - 3.
LEVIN, Barbara (G) - 5.
LEVINE, Harvey D. (M) - 4.
LINDERMAN, David B. (M) - 4.
LISKA, Eileen (D) - 5.
LUSHKA, Lydia M. (Q) - 6.
MCNERNEY, Theresa (O) - 6.
MAHLER, Jack (Q) - 2 Recorder.

MALLIS, Barry (O) - 8 Leader.
MARTYSZ, Stephanida (M) - 5.
MAXWELL, David E. (G) - 6.
MELEWICZ, Frank M. (K/C) - 7.
MICKELSON, Wendy (O) - 6.
MILLER, Donald E. (D) - 5.
MILLER, Edward (K/C) - 7.
MILLS, William D. (D) - 6.
MINTER, Michael W. (K/C) - 7.
MOCK, Martha L. (K/C) - 10.
NEDOSHYKO, Orest B. (Q) - 7.
NENNO, Judith (K/C) - 6.
ORLAND, Carl (O) - 6.
O'SULLIVAN, Robert C. (K/C) - 5.
PANCHAK, Frank (O) - 7.
PELECH, Orest (O) - 10 Leader.
PENNY, Carol R. (M) - 5.
PHIPPS, Michael (O) - 7.
PIECH, Sandra J. (G) - 10.
POLDWAINY, Olga (O) - 7.
REISMAN, Hyman (K/C) - 8.
RICKES, Michael G. (M) - 8.
RIDER, Esther (Q) - 8.
RIES, Daniel R. (G) - 7.
ROBERTS, Charles K. (M) - 4 Recorder.
ROGERS, Mary (O) - 7.
ROMAGUERA, Enrique (D) - 10 Recorder.
ROUNER, William D. (D) - 7.
RYAN, Donnita P. (K/C) - 10.
SAMPSON, Earl D. (K/C) - Faculty
SAMPSON, Elenia (K/C) - Faculty.
SATTINGER, Dianne (O) - 8.
SCANNEL, Joel F. (M) - 6.
SCHAUER, William H. (K/C) - 8.
SCHEUERELL, Jeanne M. (K/C) - 8.
SCHIFF, Irene (O) - 8.
SCHMIDT, Helga K. (K/C) - 8 Recorder.
SCHOONMAKER, Elizabeth A. (D) - 6 Recorder.
SEEMAN, Robert (O) - 8.
SEMANSKY, Nina (O) - 9.
SERAPINOFF, Michael J. (M) - 6.
SHABATURA, Marilyn (O) - 9.
SHELDON, Richard R. (D) - Faculty.
SIPPLE, Karen Lynn (G) - 8.
SIROTKIN, Deborah R. (M) - 7.
SOMERS, James E. (M) - 7 Leader.
SPEERS, Victoria (K/C) - 4 Leader.
SPUDIC, Thomas (O) - 9.
STEEG, Richard (K/C) - 8.
SWEET, Paula E. (D) - 8.
SYSYN, Frank (O) - 10.
THIELEN, Frederick J. (K/C) - 9.

TOLAR, Michael E. (K/C) - 9.
TOWNSEND, Philip T. (M) - 8.
TRELA, Anne W. (Q) - 9.
UDOVICK, Larissa (K/C) - 9.
WALLACE, Anne L. (D) - 9.
WANKE, Richard D. (M) - 9.
WARREN, Sally Ann (G) - 9.
WELCH, Mary (Q) - 10.
WINCHELL, George W. (M) - 10.

WINCKLER, Sari L. (D) - 9.
WINN, Jennifer C. (M) - 1.
WOJCECHOWSKY, Alexandra (K/C) - 9.
WOOLMAN, Richard F. (K/C) - 10.
WRIGHT, Muriel (K/C) - 10.
YANKER, Gerhart (G) - 10.
ZAKROFF, Linda (O) - 10.
ZUBROW, Dianne (O) - 10.

BLANE, Andrew - Faculty.
GILLETTE, Arthur - Faculty.

COUNCIL ON STUDENT TRAVEL

49, rue Pierre Charron
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PROGRAM SERVICES IN EUROPE

Mrs. Stella Davis - Director

Paris - June 7, 1967

RUSSIAN LANGUAGE PROGRAM 1967 - MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

22 students + 1 Director = 23
Sputnik Number 05

PROGRAM & ITINERARY

Friday, June 16

BRUSSELS/ARRIVAL

09:45

Arrival Brussels Airport on World Airways chartered flight No. 4916.
Reception by CST representatives Mrs. Francoise Bonnelle and Miss Carole Dane.
Police and custom formalities.
Porters provided for luggage.
Transfer by chartered bus to :
FRATERNITY HOUSE

37, rue de l'Argonne,
Bruxelles 6, Belgique.
Tel : 38 25 01.

13:00

Lunch at the Fraternity House.
Distribution of pocket money allowance for independent dinners on June 16 and June 17.
Free afternoon for rest.
Independent dinner with pocket money allowance.
Night at the Fraternity House.
(Please return there by midnight.)

Saturday, June 17

BRUSSELS

08:00

Breakfast at the Fraternity House.

10:30

Orientation meeting, conducted by Professor Elane, CST co-ordinator.

13:00

Lunch at the Fraternity House.
Free afternoon for individual visit of city.
Independent dinner with pocket money allowance.
Night at the Fraternity House.
(Please be there by midnight.)

Sunday, June 18

BRUSSELS/WARSAW/LENINGRAD

06:45

Luggage must be ready and brought down to the lobby.

07:00

Breakfast at the Fraternity House.

07:45

Board chartered bus and transfer to the Brussels Airport with CST representative.

.../2..

Sunday, June 18

BRUSSELS/WARSAW/LENINGRAD (cont.)

08:45
09:45

Porters provided for luggage.
Checking in formalities.
Departure of LOT chartered flight No. II
to Warsaw, together with Georgetown Univ-
ersity and Oberlin College groups, escorted
by Arthur Gillette, Assistant CST Co-ordinator.
Breakfast will be served on the plane.

12:20
13:40

Arrival Warsaw.
Depart from Warsaw.
Arrival Leningrad.
Reception by SPUTNIK representatives.

Transfer to : Hotel DRUZBA
Ulitsa Charygina,
Leningrad, USSR.
Tel : D2 84 63.

Dinner and night at the Hotel.

Monday, June 19

to

Saturday, July 29

LANGUAGE COURSE AT LENINGRAD UNIVERSITY

Contact Address in Leningrad

Mr. Yurij RUHLOV
Director - SPUTNIK
Leningradskoje Otdelenie
2 Leningrad p - 138, USSR.

Saturday, July 29

Leave LENINGRAD by night train for MOSCOW

July 30 - Aug. 5

MOSCOW

Contact Address in Moscow

*Don Juan - Bolshoi
Sleeping Beauty - Kremlin
Date with Natasha*

Mr. A. BAZHORA - Director
Bureau for International Youth Tourism
Lebiazhi per 4,
Moscow - GI9.

August 5

Leave MOSCOW by air for BAKU

Aug. 5 - 13

BAKU CAMP

August 13

Leave BAKU by air for TIBLISSI

Aug. 13 - 16

TIBLISSI

August 16

Leave TIBLISSI by air for KIEV

Aug. 16 - 21

KIEV

Contact Address in East Berlin

JUGENDTOURIST
Friedrichstrasse 110 - 112
104 - Berlin, Germany.

| Thursday, Aug. 24

EAST BERLIN

Breakfast at the Hotel.
Free morning for rest.
Lunch at Hotel.
Afternoon guided sightseeing tour of
East Berlin by bus.
Dinner and night at the Hotel.

| Friday, Aug. 25

EAST BERLIN/WEST BERLIN

09:00

Breakfast at the Hotel.
Transfer by chartered bus to West Berlin.
Installation at ARTU GUESTHOUSE SCHOENBERG,
1 Berlin 30,
Mainingerstrasse 10.

09:30

Lunch at a restaurant.
Afternoon guided sightseeing tour of
West Berlin.
Dinner at a restaurant.
Night at the Guesthouse.

Contact Address in West Berlin

Miss N. Rodgaard
ARTU
1 Berlin 12,
Hardenbergstrasse 9-11.

| Saturday, Aug. 26

WEST BERLIN/DUSSELDORF

09:00

Breakfast at the Guesthouse.
Transfer to the station.
Departure of the train to Dusseldorf.
Second class rail tickets and seat
reservations provided by
Packed lunch on the train distributed
by ARTU.

09:30

10:22

19:27

Arrival Dusseldorf.
Reception by representative of German
Student Travel Service.
Transfer to the Hotel.
Dinner and night at the Hotel.

31 Thursday - Street - Central Station

10:00am wait at 11:00am
in front of Station

Contact Address

German Student Travel Service
Kaiserstrasse 71,
Bonn, Germany

Sunday, Aug. 27

DUSSELDORF

Breakfast at the Hotel.
Rooms must be vacated by NOON.
Free time until September 3rd.

Sunday, Sept. 3

BRUSSELS

P.M.

Group to report independently (before 23:00,
but not between 14:00 and 16:00) to:
FRATERNITY HOUSE
37, rue de l'Argonne,
Bruxelles 6, Belgique.
Tel : 38 25 01.
Night at the Fraternity House.

Monday, Sept. 4

BRUSSELS

08:00
10:00

Breakfast at the Fraternity House.
Evaluation Session. (Details to be commu-
nicated by Group Director.)
13:00 Lunch at participants' own expense.
Free afternoon.
Dinner at participants' own expense.
Night at the Fraternity House. (Please
be there by midnight.)

Tuesday, Sept. 5

BRUSSELS/NEW YORK

08:00
10:00
10:30
11:00
12:00
14:00

Breakfast at the Fraternity House.
Luggage must be ready to be picked up
and loaded on to the chartered bus.
Transfer to the Airport with CST
representative.
Porters provided for luggage.
Checking in formalities.
Lunch at Airport restaurant.
Departure to New York on World Airways
chartered flight No. 4804.

BON VOYAGE

Addendum: Soviet New Reaction to Detroit's 1967 Crisis

DETROIT IN FLAMES

Author: B. Strelnikov

VOL. XIX, NO. 30 THE CURRENT DIGEST OF THE SOVIET PRESS PAGE 5

From Pravda's Coverage of Riots in American Cities

DETROIT IN FLAMES. (By Special Correspondent B. Strelnikov. Pravda, July 26, p. 5. Complete text:) New York, July 25 -The latest radio news items here sound like war dispatches. Television reports are reminiscent of broadcasts from the front. Shots rang out today in at least ten American cities. George Romney, the Governor of Michigan, after touring the streets of Detroit in an armored personnel carrier, said: "It looks as though the city had been hit by a saturation bombardment."

Right now, as I write these lines, more than 500 houses are on fire in Detroit, the major center of the American automotive industry. Dozens of blocks are engulfed by a solid sea of flame. Battles are being waged in the city streets between policemen, National Guardsmen and regular army soldiers on one side, and insurgent Negroes on the other. Dozens of people have been killed. More than a thousand have been wounded, and hundreds arrested.

As distinct from Newark, where the fighting and fires were confined to the Negro district, the disorders in Detroit are spreading throughout the city. All urban transportation in Detroit is practically paralyzed. Thousands of workers have failed to report to the automotive plants. Higher educational institutions have been closed. Losses from fire and destruction already amount to \$150,000,000. As a precautionary measure, Canadian authorities have closed off a bridge and a tunnel connecting Detroit with Canadian territory. Detroit is isolated from America as well: Airports and railroad terminals in the city have been closed.

Governor Romney has requested aid from the White House. The President immediately ordered units of two airborne divisions to Detroit. Tanks have been brought into the city. Broadcasts from the U.S. capital say that throughout the day the President, disturbed by the situation in Detroit, repeatedly conferred in the White House with Defense Secretary Mc-Namara and Attorney General Clark. Cyrus Vance, former Under Secretary of Defense, has been sent to Detroit as the President's personal representative.

A radio report has just announced that President Johnson has instructed the Defense Department "to take all measures necessary for the complete restoration of order." Lieut. Gen. Throckmorton, commander of the 18th Airborne Corps, has been assigned to direct the punitive operation against the Negroes. It is reported from Detroit that heavy machine-gun fire and grenade explosions can be heard in various parts of the city.

Tension is growing also in New York's Harlem. An uprising of Puerto Ricans broke out here yesterday. The spark that caused the explosion was the killing by policemen of a young Puerto Rican. Fist fights with the police started up in the streets of so-called "Spanish Harlem," where 40% of the population are of Latin American origin and 40% are Negroes. The "Tactical Patrol Force"-special detachments trained to "quell" riots-were sent into Harlem. According to eyewitness accounts, a police captain ordered his subordinates: "Hit anything that moves." The policemen carried out their chief's order with extreme zeal. An exchange of fire has now started in "Spanish Harlem." There have already been deaths and injuries, and the Puerto Ricans' resistance is growing with each hour. "If they (the police) want war," one Harlemiter told a reporter, "they'll get it. They can kill us, but we'll take some of them with us! "

Negro uprisings are continuing in the city of Rochester, in the northern part of New York State. Three Negroes have been killed there, and several dozen wounded. Disorders have flared up in Minneapolis (Minnesota); Cincinnati and Toledo (Ohio); Tucson (Arizona); and other American cities.

The Negro uprisings have given the American bourgeois a serious scare. The bourgeois newspapers are carrying exhortations to deal summarily with the "insurgents." The Republican Party Coordinating Committee has issued a special statement in which it speaks of a "national crisis" and says that the United States "is rapidly approaching a state of anarchy." Republican leaders demand that the government take the most drastic measures against the Negroes. The magazine U.S. News & World Report mutters balefully: "The country that has undertaken to establish law and order in Asia, Africa and the Near East has proved incapable of maintaining law and order at home." Governor Hughes of New Jersey is demanding that National Guardsmen be specially trained to suppress Negro uprisings. At the

same time, the American press is unable to hide the fact that the riots were caused by social factors: unemployment, dreadful housing conditions, despair. Today one local sociologist called for looking the truth in the eye and acknowledging that the Negroes' struggle is of a class, not a racial, nature. The sociologist Daniel Moynihan stated to a New York Times correspondent that the roots of the uprising must be sought not so much in race relations as in the anger of the most underprivileged class, to which the overwhelming majority of American Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Indians and Mexicans belong.

A report from Detroit by a correspondent of that same newspaper can serve as an illustration of this statement. The reporter relates how a Negro Congressman tried to persuade a crowd of Negroes to disperse and go home. "It's easy for you to talk," came the angry answer from the crowd. "Even if your skin is black, you don't know what hunger is."

America is living through anxious days. America is paying for the torments, tears and blood of its dark-skinned citizens. But it is paying with their tears and their blood, condemning them to still greater torments.

A New York Post reporter saw on a street in "Spanish Harlem" a Puerto Rican woman who, weeping and stretching her arms toward the heavens, exclaimed: "God, send us peace and quiet."

"In this city, on this anxious night, in this hot summer of 1967, she was asking the impossible," the reporter sadly noted. 'Impossible even for God.'

International Affairs, No. 9, Vol.13, 1967, page(s): 85-85thor: O. VASILYEV

Hottest Summer Ever

THIS summer has proved, as the leaders of the Negro liberation movement in the U.S.A. predicted, to be a really "long hot summer" of struggle for the ghetto slaves in U.S. cities. It has been the hottest summer for years. For three weeks in June and July, revolts raged in no fewer than 50 big cities. There were bloody clashes in the streets of **Detroit**, Newark, Milwaukee and even Washington. About 80 persons were killed, hundreds wounded and thousands arrested in countless scuffles between the inhabitants of the Negro districts and the joint forces of police and troops.

The cause of the disturbances is the same everywhere: the Negroes are rising against racial oppression, police violence, lack of rights, poverty and hopeless unemployment. They refuse to be treated as second-rate citizens and forced to live in the crowded black ghettos-the stinking slums where rats attack children and nothing is done about it.

Those are the main causes of the social upheaval which is now rocking the U.S.A. The dirty war in Viet-Nam is doubtlessly another very important factor contributing to embitter the struggle of the most oppressed section of the country's working population and to swell the American Negroes' liberation movement, which is entering a new phase.

The war in Viet-Nam is costing the U.S. Government more than \$2,000 million a month, and, needless to say, the programmes to fight poverty were the first to be affected by the inevitable reduction of non-military expenditures. Hence the Negroes were the first to realise by experience how demagogic these programmes are.

СОВМЕСТНЫЙ ТРУД СОВЕТСКИХ И ПОЛЬСКИХ УЧЕНЫХ

ВАРШАВА, 25. (Соб. корр. «Правды»). Совместные программы труда в производственной области — так называют работу, выполняемую в целях освоения и совершенствования техники и технологии производства, а также в целях обмена опытом, знаниями, навыками, полученными в ходе производственной и научной работы, а также в целях обмена опытом, знаниями, навыками, полученными в ходе производственной и научной работы...

НЕЩАСТНЫЙ СЛУЧАЙ ИЛИ ПРЕСТУПЛЕНИЕ?

Над уже сообщавшим в Африке 21 июля мальчиком из Африки (ЮАР) годовалого возраста в городе Стамбуле совершено преступление. Мальчик был найден в состоянии комы в больнице. Врачи обнаружили у него переломы ребер и повреждения внутренних органов. Следствие установило, что мальчик был брошен с высоты в районе порта. В настоящее время ведется расследование.

Чрезвычайное посещение в Родензи

Чрезвычайное посещение в Родензи. 25 июля в Родензи (ЮАР) совершено преступление. Мальчик был брошен с высоты в районе порта. В настоящее время ведется расследование.

ЧЕТКАЯ И ЯСНАЯ ПОЗИЦИЯ

НЬЮ-Йорк, 25. (ТАСС). Пресс-конференция СССР при ООН в Нью-Йорке в среду 25 июля посвящена работе Комиссии ООН по правам человека. Советский представитель в ООН Н. Т. Федукин заявил, что СССР имеет четкую и ясную позицию по отношению к правам человека. Он подчеркнул, что СССР всегда будет поддерживать справедливость и законность.

САМЫЙ БЛИЗКИЙ ДРУГ

ДЛЯСС, 25. (ТАСС). Советский Союз был и остается самым близким другом арабских народов. Советский Союз всегда будет поддерживать справедливость и законность. Он подчеркнул, что СССР всегда будет поддерживать справедливость и законность.

ВЛЕД ЗА ТЕЛЕГРАММОЙ ДРАКОНОВСКИМИ МЕТОДАМИ

ДЛЯСС, 25. (ТАСС). Советский Союз всегда будет поддерживать справедливость и законность. Он подчеркнул, что СССР всегда будет поддерживать справедливость и законность.

Около двухсот американских оккупантов выведены из строк за два дня

Около двухсот американских оккупантов выведены из строк за два дня. В результате операции в Южном Вьетнаме около 200 американских солдат были выведены из строк за два дня.

250 тысяч австралийских металлургов и машиностроителей

250 тысяч австралийских металлургов и машиностроителей. В Австралии начата забастовка металлургов и машиностроителей.

Чистка в армии

Чистка в армии. В Австралии начата чистка в армии.

Меры военных властей Дняры

Меры военных властей Дняры. В Дняры приняты меры по усилению охраны.

Греческая юница, по-видимому, надеется уехать в Австралию

Греческая юница, по-видимому, надеется уехать в Австралию. Греческая юница надеется уехать в Австралию.

Ю. ПЛУХОВ

Крупные свалки на улицах Детройта продолжают расти

Крупные свалки на улицах Детройта продолжают расти. В Детройте продолжают расти свалки мусора.

ПОСЛУЖНОЙ СПИСОК РАСИЗМА ОТ ЛОНДОНА ДО ДЕТРОЙТА

ПОСЛУЖНОЙ СПИСОК РАСИЗМА ОТ ЛОНДОНА ДО ДЕТРОЙТА. В списке перечислены случаи расизма в Великобритании и США.

ЭТО ПОЗОР АМЕРИКИ

ЭТО ПОЗОР АМЕРИКИ. В статье описаны случаи расизма в США.

Американский военнослужащий убит водителем такси

Американский военнослужащий убит водителем такси. В статье описан случай убийства американского военнослужащего.

ДЕТРОИТ

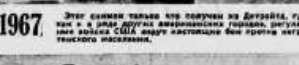
ДЕТРОИТ. От специального корреспондента «Правды».

Великий пожар в Детройте

Великий пожар в Детройте. В Детройте произошел крупный пожар.

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Великий пожар в Детройте. В Детройте произошел крупный пожар.



Этот мальчик попал под суданца на Детройте, годичный и младше. Преступление произошло в районе порта Детройта.



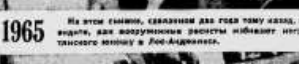
Год назад, сбитый танком расизма, был ранен этот мальчик. Преступление произошло в районе порта Детройта.



В 1966 году, в Детройте, был убит этот мальчик. Преступление произошло в районе порта Детройта.



В 1965 году, в Детройте, был убит этот мальчик. Преступление произошло в районе порта Детройта.



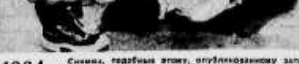
В 1964 году, в Детройте, был убит этот мальчик. Преступление произошло в районе порта Детройта.



В 1963 году, в Детройте, был убит этот мальчик. Преступление произошло в районе порта Детройта.



В 1962 году, в Детройте, был убит этот мальчик. Преступление произошло в районе порта Детройта.



В 1961 году, в Детройте, был убит этот мальчик. Преступление произошло в районе порта Детройта.

КОЛОНКА КОММЕНТАТОРА ПЛАНЫ НА ПЕСКЕ

ПЛАНЫ НА ПЕСКЕ

Планы на песке. В статье описаны планы на будущее.

АРЕСТЫ КОММУНИСТОВ

АРЕСТЫ КОММУНИСТОВ. В статье описаны аресты коммунистов.

Чистка в армии

Чистка в армии. В статье описана чистка в армии.

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Author's Question and Reflection:

I have loved and studied history. I have lived both my childhood years and adult life in Detroit, Michigan, and it is part of Detroit's history that leaves me with a closing question. Leningrad (St. Petersburg) has long been a window on the west, the portal for western ideas into Russian culture.

Was our 1967 extraordinary welcome to the Leningrad a Cold War propaganda stunt?

Or

Was it simply the citizens had learned over the two centuries since Peter the Great to embrace western culture and westerners in general? Or Americans?

I personally would like to believe that there was a sincere desire on the part of the people that we met in Leningrad to show off their treasured city and all of its rich history. I have tried in my little journal to avoid judgement, political philosophy, and simply provide a firsthand record of my travels 50 years ago. The account below would support the latter... the citizens of Leningrad have a proud history and have welcomed westerners in the past.

In 1912, a Detroitier embarked on an adventure that carried him to St. Petersburg, Russia. On July 16, 1912, a 35' motorboat, **Detroit**, left New York to attempt an Atlantic crossing. With a 16 hp engine and 1200 gallons of fuel, the little boat became the smallest motor boat to ever cross the Atlantic. The story becomes relevant as the small boat with a crew of five weary sailors motor up the Gulf of Finland and encounter a Russian gun boat engaged in target practice. After all the perils of the voyage, all the heavy seas, the crew had great fears about their landing at Kronstadt Naval Base on September 12, 1912. With no one on board able to speak Russian, the Captain hired a German pilot to guide them up the Neva. "All along we had been told we would have difficulty with the Russian customs and it was with tremblings I appeared before the group of Russian officials. But instead of troubles and petty annoyance we had a most kindly welcome. They instantly made everything pleasant, smoothed out all the wrinkles and the German drew up all the papers. I signed them and the Detroit was through. 'You can't go yet,' said the broker; 'you must stay until one o'clock. The officers desire you and your crew's company at lunch.' As the little vessel proceeded under the guidance of the German pilot up the Neva, yachts appeared, flags flying, with crews waving and yelling "hurrah". On Sunday, a parade was arranged for the **Detroit** to show herself along the banks of the Neva to the city's citizens. Accompanied by Royal yachts, the bridges and banks were swarmed with 50,000 citizens who came out to celebrate their arrival. A warm and significant welcome for the little **Detroit**.

The owner of the Detroit and the mastermind of the voyage was none other than E. W. Scripps who founded the Scripps-Howard news syndicate, who's family founded the Scripps Oceanographic Institute, the Scripps Motor Company, United Press International, and the Scripps-Booth Broadcasting empire.

