

Lithuanian Papers

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The flags of Australia and the Australian Lithuanian Community (ALB) were flying at the Vilnius Presidential Palace on 1 July 2018, to mark the official opening of the Song and Dance Festival.

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Lithuanian Papers

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Lithuania 2018: 100 years since the Declaration of the Restoration of Independence

Žydrė PEMBER

At least seventeen members of the Canberra Lithuanian Community (CLC) travelled to Lithuania to enjoy and participate in the Centenary Song Festival. We all travelled at different times, via different routes and the durations of stay varied from a few days before the commencement of the festival to a day or two after it closed.



Centenary Song Festival in Vilnius, Lithuania.

From mid-June to mid-July, only two members of the CLC committee (Barbara Silinis and Ron Cameron) remained in Canberra. They brilliantly organised the book launch by Senator Eric Abetz at Parliament House of *Only Eleven Came Back* by Stasys Jameikis and translated into English by Regina Share.

Meanwhile, in Lithuania we were enduring wet, cold, windy weather with occasional bursts of sunshine, but as is usual in Europe the show went on regardless of the vagaries of the weather.

Quite a few of us had accommodation in the heart of old Vilnius allowing easy pedestrian access not only to restaurants, coffee, souvenir and specialty shops, but also to all the venues for the week of the Festival. Yet Vilnius is a small city where it isn't unusual to bump into friends or acquaintances visiting this lovely city. Audronė and Romas Miniotas, former CLC members, but currently resident in Queensland, were renting an apartment in the same street as us. I bumped into a fellow student from my 2016 Lithuanian Language Course at Vilnius University and to my delight we conversed in Lithuanian rather than in English, which is our other common language.

Vida and Geoff Howe, while walking down Gedimino Prospektas, were spotted and recognised by

Diana Mickevičienė, who visited Canberra with the Foreign Affairs Vice-Ministerial Delegation in February of this year. Diana invited as many Canberra Lithuanians as we could muster to coffee and also arranged that we meet with Darius Skusevicius, the Vice-Minister, in his office for a chat.

The restaurants on Pilies Gatvė had a very interesting and to me quite strange attitude to table bookings for a meal. They wouldn't accept bookings during the week of the festival because they were too busy, which was exactly the reason we wanted to book a table. However, restaurants a mere 100-200 metres away on a side road quite happily took bookings.

Something else we found very strange: The municipality of Kaunas was ripping up segments of Laisvės alėja. Quite why, we never learnt, as our relatives were rather vague as to what was going to be achieved, but it was an indescribable mess. I would have thought that they would have completed the works in time for the centenary, or else waited until all was over.

The week of 1-7 July had a variety of events each day, some free, others ticketed, and it proved quite exhausting trying to participate in all that was on offer.

July 1: At Daukanto Square, precisely at mid-day, Dalia Grybauskaitė, the President of the Republic of Lithuania, presided at the opening of the week-long festivities. It was quite a thrill to see the flags of Australia and the Australian Lithuanian Bendruomenė (ALB) raised on high above the assembled crowd.



The President of Lithuania Dalia Grybauskaitė addressing the crowd at Tent City.

Then it was off to Tent City, known officially as “World Lithuanians and Lithuania’s Minorities’

Day: 100 Faces of Lithuania – Let Us Unite Lithuania” in Vilnius Town Hall Square. This was a unique event where 23 overseas Lithuanian communities had stalls to show-case their communities’ existence, achievements and continued attachment to their Lithuanian heritage. Who even knew

that there are Lithuanian communities in Turkey, Israel, the Netherlands and even Russia? In addition, Lithuanians from 30 different countries visited Lithuania for the centenary celebrations.



The Australian-Lithuanian stall at Tent City.

A variety of performers displayed their talents. The Lithuanian President honoured this event with a visit, giving a rousing speech which was much appreciated by the assembled crowd.

Time and time again local Lithuanians confessed they had relatives living in Australia and asked whether we by chance knew them. The other question frequently asked, which really surprised me, was the reason for our visit from such a faraway country as Australia, the assumption being that we were there to see relatives. That we were in Lithuania primarily to celebrate the centenary were met with exclamations of : “oh yes, of course”.

July 2: There were two free afternoon events – A Children’s Craft Town at the Palace of the Grand Dukes and a Folk Arts Exhibition at the Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Consolation, which I didn’t attend. However, I did hear that both events had been well worth a visit.

Not mentioned on any official programme was the fact that there was a book launch of Gražina Pranauskienės *Lietuvybė Down Under: Maintaining Lithuanian National and Cultural Identity in Australia* at the National Martyno Mažvydo Library. Gražina had asked Andrius Vaitiekūnas, Federal Executive President of the ALCA and Dennis Gaylard, Secretary of the ALCA and myself to serve on a discussion panel at the launch. Gražina informed the assembly that her book arose

Australian Lithuanians were represented under the banner of the ALB and volunteers from our different Lithuanian communities were on hand at the stall to answer questions about their communities and Australia. Australian flags, koalas and kangaroos were particularly popular freebies, especially with the children. Lithuanians were introduced to vegemite and cheese on squares of bread; however, Tim Tam biscuits won the taste test.

All day the rain poured down, however it didn’t deter the crowds in the least. A huge stage had been set up where a



Monica Mack with her offering of Vegemite on bread.

from two academic papers which she had submitted for her B. A. (Hons) and M. A. degrees. I found the book very interesting and it is well worth reading. Following Gražina's talk the members of the panel gave their views on "Lietuvybė" and how it has been maintained in Australia.

3 July: Folklore Day in the Bernardino Gardens. Stalls had been set up (actually the previous day) with working displays of arts and crafts. Musicians played while choirs sang, and costumed dancers displayed their folk dancing prowess. There were so many home-made delicacies to purchase: traditional cold meats and sausages, various cheeses, apple cheeses and hot traditional foods.

Of particular interest to many was the *raguolis* ("spike") or *šakotis* ("branch") stall where, in addition to selling small versions of this cake, a demonstration of the cooking process was taking place. Baking a *raguolis* is not recommended for a faint-hearted cook like myself.

The Kanklės' Concert that evening at the St. Johns' Church (12 Švento Jono St.) was packed to overflowing. We managed to squeeze in somehow and were delighted with the performance.

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4-6 July: On each of these three evenings, we had purchased tickets to: 1) Ensembles' Evening in Kalnai Park, 2) Dance Day at the Stadium of the Lithuanian Football Federation and 3) Song Day at Vingis Park Amphitheatre.

In March, when tickets became available via the Lithuanian ticketing website, we had great difficulty trying to purchase tickets for our group using an Australian credit card. We never received a clear answer as to why Australian credit cards were refused even though Lithuanian restaurants and shops accept them. We even asked Lithuanian Foreign Affairs to intervene on our behalf. They did act on our request, but the ticketing office continued to enforce the ban on Aussie credit cards. We jumped through hoops to purchase our tickets, which were emailed to us, but even with the tickets, I still felt a bit nervous that they wouldn't be accepted. I needn't have worried because they were legitimate.

All three concert venues were within walking distance of the centre of old Vilnius, but knee problems among some of our number made walking to and from each venue rather difficult. Taking a car was out of the question as there was no parking close to the venues. Taxis were difficult to get and, in some cases, couldn't get close to the venue anyway because the roads and pavements were clogged by pedestrians and performers on their way to the event. This problem of lack of special public transport to the venues could have been alleviated somewhat by the provision of buses.

Prior to the closing event (Song Day), a procession of festival participants from the various Lithuanian regions and overseas Lithuanian communities walked from Cathedral Square to Vingis Park behind their banners. Some of the Canberra Lithuanians (those who didn't have knee problems) took part under the Australian Lithuanian banner. The number of marchers was so great that the tail-end of the column arrived just after the concert began.

The performances at all three ticketed events were well organised and presented. The many free and varied events were also a delight to visit. What great spectacles we witnessed. I felt so privileged and grateful that we could be in Lithuania for this Centenary Celebrations as I know that I won't be here nor there for the next one.

Žydrė Pember is President of the Lithuanian Community in Canberra.

Vanagas: Buried with Honour

Regina KRUTULYTĖ - SHARE

I was on holiday in Lithuania recently when I heard that the remains of one of Lithuania's partisan leaders had been located in an unknown place of burial. The remains were now to be re-buried in a place of honour, as befitted his role in the early resistance against Soviet occupation.

A State funeral was planned and widely broadcast. The sense of joy, and sadness, was palpable. I was determined to attend; in fact, nothing would have kept me away. The occasion was solemn and moving; and Commander

Vanagas was finally honoured, even though so many years had passed since his tragic death. I thought that my friends back in Australia would never have witnessed such an event. So, I sat down and wrote about it to them. Their responses were, without exception, positive and regretful. This is what I sent them:

Hello all! I have many things to tell you, but at this very time, my heart is full of one particular thing, and I feel impelled to share with you what happened yesterday in Vilnius.

My son-in-law was once moved to stand respectfully and salute before a section of a graveyard full of small white, anonymous crosses marking those partisans shot near my mother's town, here in Lithuania. He, more than almost all of you, will know about the fate of these brave men. He certainly connected.

Which is what most of Lithuania did yesterday, 6 October 2018. First, a little of the back story.



Little Vanagas, photographed with (from left) his father Liudvikas Ramanauskas, mother Elena Jovaišytė-Ramanuskienė, cousin Aldona Valenčiūtė, aunt Onutė Jovaišytė-Valenčiuvienė and aunt's husband Andrius Valenčius.



In the autumn of 1945, Adolfas Ramanauskas–Vanagas married Birutė Mažeikaitė (above), a graduate of Alytus Teachers' Training College. Both fought together, in the uneven war. Their daughter Auksutė was born in 1948 (about 5 in this photo).

By mid-1950's partisan activities started to wane in Lithuania. On 12 October 1956, Vanagas and his wife Birutė were betrayed by KGB agent Antanas Urbonas-Žinomas. Both were arrested, extensively tortured and finally killed.

offer the rest of his life to the defence of his country) was one of the last to be captured. He was betrayed, under duress, by a fellow partisan in 1955 and was brought to the KGB headquarters in Vilnius where he was held for a year and tortured appallingly. He divulged nothing and was eventually executed. It was not the Soviet habit to mark the graves

When the Soviets finally re-established themselves in Lithuania (in mid-1944) and began to set about what we now identify as genocide, many men formed themselves into groups of resistance and took to the dense forests until help came – as they mistakenly expected it would come (from the US? Europe? Anywhere?) It did not take long for them to develop a network with a hierarchy of command which worked extremely well and caused them to become more than a headache for the new occupiers. I am told, my own father almost decided to join them, but was newly married and, for one reason or another, held off. (*AČIŪ, Tête*). They were well organised and communicated using a system of codenames of which *Vanagas* (Lithuanian for *Eagle*) was given to one of the commanders.

They had a system of underground quarters which allowed them to emerge, harass the enemy and retreat. They were ruthlessly pursued, many were killed, but as time went on, the help they hoped for did not come. Thus, they battled on from the early 1945's, losing ever more men, despite the secret support they enjoyed from the local people.

Vanagas (who left his job as a teacher to

of such prisoners. So, until very recently, it was not known what had happened to this man's remains.

"Archaeological digs have yielded his bones. They reveal that Vanagas was stabbed in one eye socket but lived on through many other vile assaults before he was shot in the face. All other Soviet prisoners were always shot in the back of the head.

"He was buried in a state funeral yesterday –

the like of which I have not seen since they brought all those Lithuanian coffins back from Siberia in the early 1990s. His flag-draped coffin lay in state. Then, it was taken to the Cathedral for a funeral mass, while thousands stood outside in the huge square and waited to walk behind the catafalque bearing the coffin all the way to a place of honour in Antakalnis cemetery – to be interred next to past presidents as well as to the ordinary civilians who were killed by Russian tanks in the TV tower offensive in 1991.

"The streets were closed, all the pollies, cardinals, bishops and priests Lithuania could muster, all walked in attendance. People line the streets and joined in, the bells of the city rang out – and I can tell you, there are a lot of churches in Vilnius! The only people who were taken by car, were the last few surviving partisans, now very old but, but breathtakingly, decked out in their army uniforms, Vanagas's elderly daughter and Lithuania's lady President Grybauskaitė – oh, and perhaps some of the visiting dignitaries and leaders of other faiths.

I was mesmerized by the solemnity and weight of it, but I wept at the sight of people, young and old, who were giving honour to a man whose dedication and bravery will not be allowed to be diminished by either the passing years or by the absurd and faintly ridiculous denunciations of him



Partisan leaders of the Southern Lithuania region (Nemunas) on 14th November 1950. From the left: Adolfas Ramanauskas-Vanagas, Benediktas Trumpys-Rytis, Juozas Lukša-Mykolaitis and Sergijus Staniškis-Litas.

which spewed out of Moscow. Mr Putin's equivalent of a press secretary pronounced Vanagas (whose real name, incidentally, was Adolfas Ramanauskas) a fascist and murderer, a common criminal. That news grab was replayed often on Lithuanian TV and became almost like a comment itself.



Vanagas (front, centre) with his “forest brothers”.

I daresay that added a few more thousand to the people who came out on a beautiful sunny day to be part of it all yesterday. There was a palpable determination for the turnout to be a big enough finger to show Russia what we thought of that! Is anyone keeping score of Russia's blank and obstinate denials of anything it doesn't like said about it?

The cemetery was packed. It is a very beautiful spot, in a sort of amphitheatre shape.

Those of us in Australia who know only a good untrammelled life will perhaps have a glimmer of how many dangers can assail people in parts of the world not as fortunately placed as our country is.

Regina KRUTULYTĖ - SHARE, B.A., Dip.Ed. (Tas) taught English for almost a decade at the Čiurlionis College in Vilnius; and is currently teaching Advanced Lithuanian for the Lithuanian Studies Society in Tasmania.

Lithuanian Voice in Singapore

An interview with Andy LIM

Mr Andy Lim is the Founder and Chairman of private equity firm Tembusu Partners and the Chairman and controlling shareholder of a publicly listed company Viking Offshore & Marine Limited. He is also the Executive Director of Associated Leisure International, a family holding company and Chairman of Money World Group of Companies.

His other Board appointments include Chairman of the Overseas Experts Council (Singapore Branch) of Peking University's China Centre for Strategic Studies, President of the Enterprise 50 Association, a leading association of the top 50 privately held companies in Singapore. Read the interview and get to know more about business relations between Lithuania and Singapore! You will find out which business opportunities are of the most interest in Singapore, what are the greatest values in Southeast Asia and as well as find some pieces of advice if you are going to start business in Singapore.



Andy Lim, Honorary Consul of Lithuania in Singapore.

When did you first get to know about Lithuania? What were your impressions?

Mr Lim: I have been serving as Honorary Consul of Lithuania in Singapore since 2004. Lithuania is a land of history, architecture, and unspoiled natural beauty. From admiring the beautiful architecture throughout the historic old town, to strolling along the banks of the Neris River, there is almost too much beauty to take in all at once. And it doesn't hurt that Lithuania has an excellent and unique beer culture. If I could, I would describe Lithuania as "the best kept secret in Europe"!

How big is the Lithuanian community in Singapore? What kind of meetings do you usually organise? Do you have any traditions?

Mr Lim: We have over 250 members on our Facebook page, *Lietuviai Singapūre* (Lithuanians in Singapore). As Honorary Consul, I organize quarterly gatherings in an informal setting for the Lithuanian community in Singapore to mark local holiday events and special occasions such as the Lithuanian Independence Day. In addition, the Honorary Consulate also provides guidance to Lithuanian citizens who require consular assistance and visa advice.

More recently, the Honorary Consulate has been host to [Lithuania's] Vice-Minister of Economy Marius Skarupskas and Ambassador Egidijus Meiliūnas' delegation visit to Singapore, and has also assisted with the coordination of high-level meetings between the delegation and several Singaporean government agencies, research institutions, and chambers of commerce that are based and operate in Singapore.

In your opinion, which business opportunities available in the Baltics could be of the most interest in Singapore?

Mr Lim: The areas of most interest would be:

Technology start-ups; pre-school education and tourism. With Singapore's push to become a Smart Nation, the government and private sector have moved aggressively to incorporate technology, innovation, and an entrepreneurial mindset into all aspects of urban living and the wider economy. More information here: <http://www.smartnation.sg/>

Singapore is also placing greater emphasis on pre-school education to prepare future generations of Singapore students for an evolving education and employment landscape. Currently, most pre-school education providers are effectively bilingual, but in the near future, students may choose an additional third language, such as French or German, to be included to give themselves an edge up over their peers in Asia.

As Singapore is a small nation on a tropical island, the vast majority of Singaporeans leave the country for their vacations and a sizeable amount of overseas travel is to colder climates for winter activities such as skiing and snowboarding, enjoying winter hot springs and spas, and watching the Northern Lights.

In your opinion, what values should guide the business in order to be successful in Southeast Asia?

Mr Lim: In Asia, there is greater emphasis on family values and harmonious cooperation.

Many large conglomerates in Asia started as a small and humble family business, then grew into an industrial empire through the stewardship of the patriarch/matriarch and is now managed by scions of the family. While not a maxim, Asian businesses would prefer to cooperate and share the spoils, rather than compete viciously, and ruin the entire marketplace and business landscape.

What could you advise to the businessmen entering the market of Southeast Asia?

Mr Lim: I would describe it as two individuals just beginning a friendship, strangers but growing in closeness at the same time. While distance is a factor, I think that increasing exchange and communication between Lithuania and Singapore will help both countries better understand and appreciate each other.

Originally posted on August 25, 2016.

SOCIAL-NAVIGATION.TWELVE.ROW

The Baltic-Singapore Chamber of Commerce

Lithuanian book in Australian Parliament

Peter KABAILA

Canberra. On Monday 25 of June 2018, an impressive book was launched by Senator Eric Abetz at the Australian Parliament House in Canberra. The book was a survivor's account of transportation and life in one of the Soviet Union's "re-education" camps. It was the book, "Only Eleven Came Back", published in Tasmania, Australia's smallest State and translated by Regina Krutulytė-Share, in 2016-17.

The account follows one group of 1505 people on a death march to the notorious Archangelsk labour camps, between Russia and the North Pole. Eleven of those people survived, hence the title of the book "Only eleven came back."

Fellow Tasmanian Al Taškūnas, whose father was in the same group of prisoners, told the story to assembled members of the Canberra Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian communities.

People attending included Ginta Viliunas, the Lithuania's Honorary Consul in Sydney, and delegates of Canberra's Latvian and Estonian communities.

Also, there were members of Canberra's Lithuanian community, such as Barbara Silinis (functions organiser), Ron Cameron, Tony Daukus, Al Kabaila, Rom and Grazina Katauskas.



Senator Eric Abetz (2nd from left), holding the English translation of Jameikis's book after its launch in the Australian Parliament. Photographed with the Senator are some of the second and third generation survivors of the Stasys Taškūnas family: (from left) Anne, Al and Simon Taškūnas. Stasys was one of the victims mentioned in the book.



Some of the participants at the Canberra book launch. Photo: Ron Cameron.

Here is an edited excerpt of Al Taskunas' talk:

At 11 I lost my father. Men in uniforms came one night and took him away, never to come back. My mother, alone with 3 children, went to work in the local hospital. But an outbreak of typhus took her away. I needed my Dad now, more than ever. I tried hard to find him. I wrote letters and read missing person's lists. But there was no trace of my father. One Sunday I spotted my father in church. He was standing near the front, with his back turned to me. I ran down the aisle and grabbed his hand. I felt it. And dropped it again. No. This wasn't my Dad, after all. Thirteen years passed. And then I received my long-awaited letter. The envelope was scruffy and had a bad smell. The message read: "Your father is dead. He died 11 years ago on 22nd July 1942 in Ertsevo re-education camp." An official stamp and somebody's illegible signature completed the notification. I wrote back immediately by registered post. There was no answer. Another 59 years passed. An Israeli researcher helped me find the location of Ertsevo, a death camp on the way to the North Pole. In 1976 I considered going to Ertsevo to look for my father's grave. But before I could go, I discovered there were no cemeteries at Ertsevo and no individual graves. Then in 2014 I got a phone call from a publisher in Lithuania. We are about to reprint a documentary book about the Baltic deportations, he said, "It is a direct witness account by Stasys Jameikis, a former prisoner. He mentions your father in his book. Are you interested?" I ordered 6 copies straight away and waited. The book seemed a long time coming. The suddenly word came through from Lithuania that the same publisher was killed in a suspicious car accident, just a few kilometres from his home. Despite this

the book was eventually published but was withdrawn from every bookshop in Lithuania. Finally, I did receive the book and it read like my Dad's personal diary. This book was about one group of 1,505 prisoners who were kept together, arrested on the same day and transported on the same train. Then forced to march, or jog, 612 kilometres over 12 days and nights. They witnessed their number fall from 1,505 to just 11. These mass deportations to Soviet concentration camps were not punishment for some crime. The deportees were ordinary civilians. This was an essential part of a larger aggression plan to depopulate ethnic minorities and resettle their lands. Some war crimes at this camp have remained hidden to the present day. Like making prisoners die of thirst. Or shooting Jewish prisoners after falsely accusing them of trying to escape to the Germans.



Stasys Jameikis, author of the book, *Only Eleven Came Back*: photographed before his arrest in June 1941 (left), and after release from his last concentration camp in 1954 (right).

Yet some of the finest human qualities were displayed by these innocent 1,505 people against this background of violence and oppression. Such as the starving man giving his last slice of bread to his mate, who was even more desperate. And the imprisoned bishop who spent his remaining life comforting the sick and dying.

We, the Baltic communities, did not escape the deportations and occupation of our countries, to seek a better life in Australia. We came to seek freedom.

Dr. Peter Kabaila

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Book Review: Only Eleven Came Back

Eric ABETZ

Let us imagine: You wake up one morning in an entirely different environment. Slowly coming around, familiarising yourself with your frozen surroundings, you realise that you are on a heap of frozen bodies – human bodies left for dead, in a makeshift morgue...

This is just part of Stasys Jameikis' gripping first-hand account of the many depravities that he suffered (like so many other Lithuanians, Jews, Poles and indeed a Russian war hero) at the hands of the brutal Communist Russian regime. In his book *Only Eleven Came Back*, our author's narrative of his life's experiences tells us of the 1505 fellow Lithuanians with whom he was forcefully removed from his beloved homeland in 1941. Torn from his bride of only eight months, a good job and family, he had to face the hell of Arctic Russia for only one reason – being Lithuanian.

Stasys' relocation was only to be "temporary": this was claimed as his sobbing wife fell to the floor clasping the legs of the "comrades" pleading that she be taken as well. Thankfully they didn't accede to her distressed pleas.

The human toll was massive. The brutality and depravity unthinkable and yet Stasys and 10 others inexplicably survived to return home after 13 unbearably long years as slave labourers in the icy Arkhangelsk Region of the Russian Arctic, all in the name of the Marxist Workers' Revolution.

Death shadowed their every step. By 1948 only 24 were still living. As early as the first year in exile, "30 to 40 bodies were removed from the barracks each morning". No, not bodies, but skeletons. They would be carried out completely naked and stacked like firewood on carts... Then for good measure as they passed through the gates their skulls were smashed with axe handles". This is but one of the many stark descriptions left for us by Stasys Jameikis.

Since 1990, those few determined survivors and their descendants again breathed the air of freedom and liberty in Lithuania after 50 long years of oppression, including three under Nazi Germany.

And it is thanks to the few like Stasys Jameikis that kept the fires of hope, freedom and liberty alive when to have given up would have been so much easier. It was their tenacity and the strength of some Western leaders that finally saw the collapse of the evil Communist Empire – an empire which was sadly supported by many academics whilst I was at university. Their excuses and fake explanations seeking to either justify or explain away the sheer evil of Marxism now lie fully exposed as a huge disservice to a generation of students. Yet Marxism is still peddled at our universities by the likes of Roz Ward of the so-called "Safe Schools Program". We even had to endure academics and other allegedly well-educated people eulogising Fidel Castro's reign of

communist terror in Cuba, despite similarly well documented evidence which was studiously avoided by these same university elites.

Totalitarianism by its very nature always subjugates the individual and his rights to the “common good” –the “common good” as determined by the totalitarian elite. In other words that which is good for the elite.

Stasys’s story not only needs to be on the record, it needs to be told and spread to remind us all that our freedoms should never be taken for granted. Many have suffered immeasurably and willingly died for our freedoms.

The fact we have this stark first-hand narrative available in English is a story in itself. The translator Regina Share (of Tasmania/Australia) was driving in Lithuania listening to the car radio while Stasys’s story was being told, thinking it deserved to be told in English as well. A few months after returning to Australia, the translator received an unsolicited request to undertake a translation. On enquiring what it might be and the author's name, our translator immediately agreed given that she had been so deeply moved on hearing his story on the car radio. The task was sponsored by the Tasmanian University Union Lithuanian Studies Society and the Australian Lithuanian Foundation.

The Tasmanian connection is also very real with the local Taškūnas family who had their father/grandfather taken on that same fateful 14th June 1941 at 3am by the Communists, never to be heard of again. After 18 years the Soviet authorities finally acknowledged he had barely survived a year – dying on the 22nd July 1942. The family heard nothing further until Jameikis made mention of Stasys Taškūnas, the father of Al who served at the University of Tasmania for many years and the grandfather of Vince who served as the Premier’s Deputy Chief of Staff.

But back to Stasys’ reflections on his life. His experiences and observations are expressed graphically and forcefully remind us that “there are still many Stalinists on our planet and not just here in Lithuania. Ah! May they walk the same path through the hell we suffered, the path that their beloved and still revered masterminds forced us to walk”.

Despite the harshness, the incomprehensible deprivations and torture that Stasys suffered, he completes his account in a manner that would uplift anyone’s spirit and ask ‘would I have survived and, if so returned as balanced’ to observe “Perhaps it was His will that at least one man out of that 1500 be allowed to witness a Christian rebirth in Lithuania”? Poignantly he concludes with this injunction “He who does not defend his freedom is not worthy of it. AMEN”.

This is, whilst confronting, an easy to read account and can be obtained from the TUU Lithuanian Studies Society, PO Box 777, Sandy Bay, Tas. 7006 (Australia), or aptas1929@outlook.com, for only \$20.

Senator Eric Abetz BA, LLB is a lawyer and long-standing Tasmanian Senator and former Leader of the Government in the Senate.

Letter to the Editor

Zekri PALUSHI

Your book "Only Eleven Came Back", by Stasys Jameikis- was given to me, by my son -in- law, Liberal senator Jonathon Duniam.

What a remarkable story, translated brilliantly by Regina Share. Though it gave me goosebumps allway through, I read it in one breath. I am very familiar with the life under communism, as I was brought up under this inhuman and vilest regime in Albania, and some of mine and my wife's family members, along with thousands and thousands of others went through its purgatory. Consequently, the rest of our families had to endure the Class War until 1991.

Unfortunately, lots of people around the world are showing to have short memories about what communism did (and is doing) to its own citizens. They like to believe that the Siamese twins-communism and socialism, are two different things. That obviously seems to be the case seen in the recent Galaxy opinion poll, where 6 out of 10 Australian Millennials believe in that, socialism is a good thing. What an insult and a big humiliation to Stassys Jameikis and his 1,505 Lithuanian friends, to those others in Lithuania, and millions and millions of others, all around the world, who were barbarically humiliated and killed, and those who struggled to survive under the most awful conditions one cannot even imagine- "courtesy " of this "preferred" Socialism.

That's why you should do whatever it takes to publish chapter by chapter this story in daily newspapers, in order to educate those brainwashed people- otherwise Stasys Jameikis' horrific story, along with millions of other stories, will be soon repeated.

We should make sure that people are educated in the same way that were educated about Nazism and Fascism, - I genuinely believe that Communism/Socialism, is much more worse, and I can't believe that the socialist agitation and propaganda against freedom, democracy and a life with dignity, isn't yet outlawed.

I am more than happy to give my modest contribution to this cause.

My deepest respect and sympathy to those legendary Lithuanians and a big thank you to Regina Share- who brought this story to the public.

Dr Zekri Palushi (MD)

Former chief adviser to the Albanian PM



Dr Zekri Palushi.



call for papers

aabs Australasian chapter 19th conference 100th anniversary of Baltic independence

Deakin university – Geelong waterfront campus
Saturday 13 October – Sunday 14 October 2018

keynote speaker: Prof. Sheila Fitzpatrick FAHA, The University of Sydney
author of *Mischka's War: A European Odyssey of the 1940s*

The Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies (AABS) invites submissions for the upcoming 19th biannual conference on Baltic Studies in Australasia on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the independence of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania and the 50th anniversary of the founding of the AABS.

We welcome papers related to the Baltic region, its countries, and its populations both within those countries and their diasporas.

Contributions are encouraged from disciplines including: anthropology, architecture, business, communication and media, cultural studies, demography, economics, education, environment, ethnic relations, film studies, fine arts, gender studies, geography, history, international relations, law, linguistics, literature, memory, political science, psychology, public health, religion, sociology, and advancing Baltic studies. Interdisciplinary and comparative work is particularly welcome.

aabs website: <http://aabs-balticstudies.org/>

Please send proposals (250 words) by **1 July** to Dr. Delaney Skerrett, Chapter President and Conference Convenor at delaney.skerrett@uqconnect.edu.au



Latvia 100 

Restored
Lithuania 100 

Hosted by



Lithuanian National Anthem

Tautos Himnas

Lithuania, my homeland, land of heroes!
Let your sons draw strength from the past.
Let your children follow only the paths of virtue,
working for the good of their native land and for all mankind.

Let the sun banish all darkness from Lithuania,
with light and truth always guiding our steps.
Let the love of Lithuania burn in our hearts
and for the sake of our country let unity blossom.

Submitted by Jūratė Grigonis.

Oi Kas Sodai (Lithuanian Folk Song)

Irena GRANT – KOCH

The song is about ORCHARDS. "Sometimes they bloom, and sometimes they don't.
Young men, sometimes they love, and sometimes they don't"

Oi kas sodai da sodeliai
kada zydi, kada ne.
Oi kas bernai do berneliai
kada myli, kada ne.

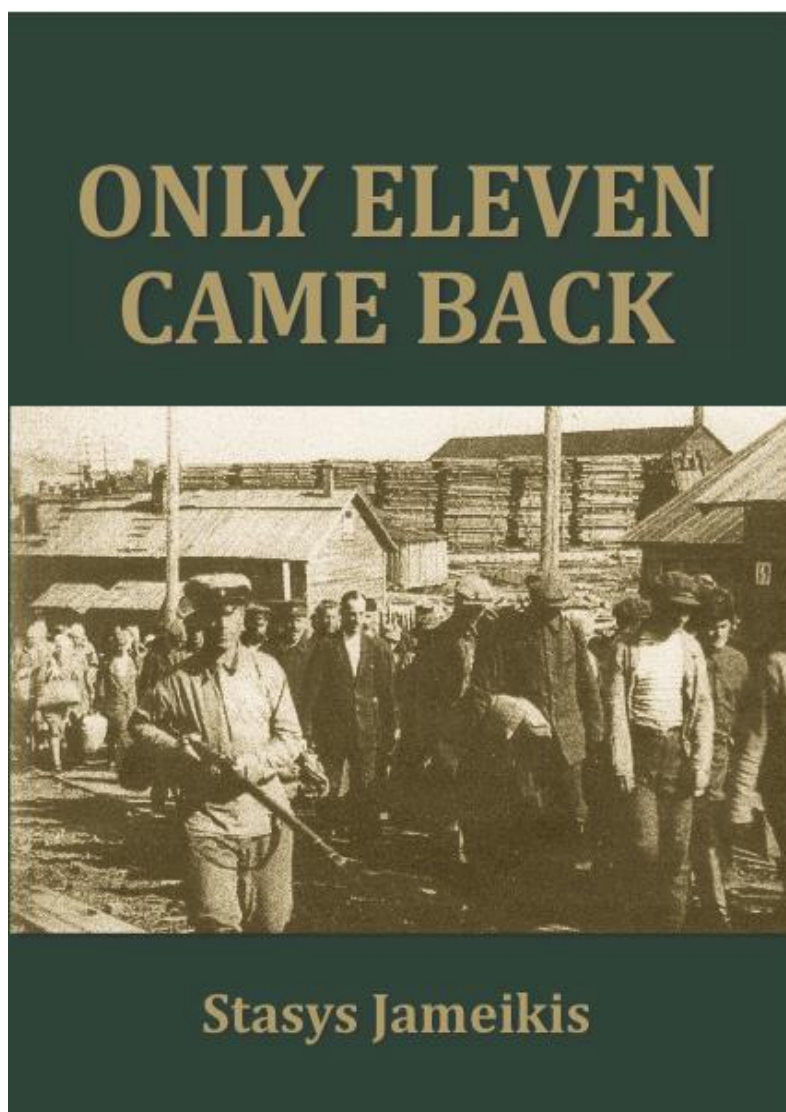


Arrangement and guitars - Gareth Koch.

Dobro - Pete Cornelius.

Vocal - Irena Grant-Koch.

Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tO3UgTSSPqU>



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