



ANU KORB RECEIVED THE 2018 ANNUAL ESTONIAN FOLKLORE AWARD!

Since 2011, the Academic Folklore Society in cooperation with the Estonian Cultural Endowment Folk Culture Foundation have given out the Annual Estonian Folklore Award. This year there were three candidates: Anu Korb, Merili Metsvahi, and Piret Voolaid. The accomplishments of all the nominees in their respective research organizations were highlighted along with the popularity of their research results.

Congratulations, Anu!

IN MEMORIAM PROFESSOR DR. JONAS ANTANAS RACKAUSKAS

On March 19, 2018, Jonas Antanas Račkauskas, a long-time director of the Lithuanian Research and Studies Center (Chicago, IL), an honorary doctor of Lithuanian University of Educational Studies and Šiauliai University, educator and active member of Lithuanian diaspora, died.

Jonas Antanas Račkauskas was born in Švėkšna, Lithuania. After WWII he ended up living in the US. After graduating from high school in Chicago, in 1960 he started his studies in DePaul University. In 1964, Račkauskas graduated from the university earning his BA degree in Pedagogy and Psychology, and in 1968, his MA in School Administration. In the same year, he also graduated from the Pedagogical Institute of Lithuanian Studies.

In 1977, Račkauskas received his Ph.D. in Education from the University of Ottawa (Canada). The dissertation "The Educational Reform in the 18 Century Poland and Lithuania" was published in Chicago. In 1963-1967, Račkauskas worked at DePaul University.

Starting in 1968, he taught at the Chicago State University. In 1981, he became a professor and taught there for 32 years. In 1966-1986, Račkauskas served in the US Army. He received a few US Army Awards, the highest being the Meritorious Service Medal (1986).



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The Baltic Heritage Newsletter is distributed quarterly, on-line. The next deadline for submissions is 15 September 2018. Please send all related enquiries and submissions to Piret Noorhani: piretnoorhani@gmail.com

The Non-Profit Association Baltic Heritage Network was founded in Tartu on January 11, 2008. NPA BaltHerNet was established to foster cooperation between national and private archives, museums, libraries, and institutions of research, public associations and organizations collecting and studying the cultural heritage of the Baltic diaspora. It aims to facilitate the preservation and research of the historically valuable cultural property of the Baltic diaspora, as well as to ensure accessibility of these materials to the public.

NPA BaltHerNet is also committed to the organising of conferences, seminars and workshops, and to developing and administrating the electronic information website Baltic Heritage Network, a multilingual electronic gateway for information on the cultural heritage of the Baltic diaspora.

www.balther.net

ISSN 2228-3390



Jonas Račkauskas meets Pope Saint John Paul II.

Photo credit: National Library of Lithuania.

Račkauskas was an active member of American Lithuanian community, contributing in various ways to the life of Lithuanian diaspora. He was the editor of the journal *Lituanus* (1971-1978), the founder and chairman of the Lithuanian Research and Studies Center in Chicago (1981-2008). He participated in many other Lithuanian organizations, foundations, councils and held various positions: vice-chairman of the Association of Lithuanian Historians (since 1971), chairman of the Historians' Section of the Institute of Lithuanian Studies (since 1978), rector of the Pedagogical Institute of Lithuanian Studies (since 1979), chairman of the Board of the Youth Center (1979- 1988) and chairman of the American Lithuanian Council (1996-2000), and etc.

Under his directorship, the Lithuanian Research and Studies Center did a lot to strengthen Lithuanian-American relations with Lithuania. He especially supported universities and libraries by inviting students and lecturers from Lithuania to do internships at the Center.

Grand Duke Gediminas. He also received awards from Lithuanian universities. In 1995, he was became an honorary doctorate of Lithuanian University of Educational Studies, and in 2004, Šiauliai University.

TO BE BANNED: BALTIC BOOKS 1918-1940

On March 9, 2018 the prime minister of the Republic of Lithuania, Saulius Skvernelis, the prime minister of Latvian government, Māris Kučinskis and Estonian prime minister, Jüri Ratas opened the international exhibition "To Be Banned: Baltic Books 1918-1940" at the Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania.

Račkauskas organized the distribution of books published in diaspora to Lithuania, and etc.

In 1996, for active involvement and merits to Lithuania the professor was awarded the Officer's Cross of the Order of the Lithuanian

The 100th anniversary of the independence of all three Baltic States united the three national libraries of the countries for this joint project. During the opening, Andris Vilks, the director of the National Library of Latvia and the main instigator of the exhibition, shared his life story. It all started in 1968, when among a few old books, Vilks discovered "Latvian history for secondary schools" by Zalytis. One thing led to another. Later in his grandmother sister's apartment, he found a pile of banned books. While in the house of his wife's family, Vilks discovered an entire collection of books labeled as special collection. "I believe that similar stories exist in Estonia and Lithuania. The paths of books in our countries were so similar, their features so recognizable, and the people who took part in it were so familiar," the director on the National Library of Latvia noted. The exhibition is the evidence of it.

The travelling exhibition prepared by the Latvian, Estonian and Lithuanian national libraries offers



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to be
banned
BALTIC BOOKS
1918-1940





All three prime ministers of the Baltic States were present at the opening.

Photo: National Library of Lithuania.

visitors an unprecedented insight into the writing and publishing that took place between the two world wars with the opportunity to see the wide variety of publications printed between 1920-1930 in the three Baltic countries, including literature in the original and in translation, scientific publications, popular science, reference books, and children's literature. Special attention is paid to personalities that had a significant impact on the publishing and book design in the Baltic countries. The exhibition highlights the novelty of this period and its importance for national publishing traditions.

The exhibition in the National Library of Lithuania will be open until May 14. Afterwards it will travel to Estonia and Latvia.

A FILM DIRECTOR'S VISIT AT THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF LITHUANIA

On January 17, Arvydas Reneckis, the director and producer of the American Lithuanian TV that ran in Chicago for 13 years, visited the National Library of Lithuania. Currently he works on a multi-part full-length documentary about Lithuanians and their history in the US. The guest was interested in the publications and manuscripts of American Lithuanians housed in the Library. During his visit, Reneckis filmed a few interviews for his new documentary. He

interviewed Jolanta Budriūnienė, the head of the Documentary Heritage Research Department of the National Library of Lithuania, Prof. Alfonsas Eidintas, the ambassador of the Republic of Lithuania, Dr. Giedrė Milerytė-Japertienė, the head of the Lithuanian Studies Department, and Dr. Dalia Cidzikaitė, senior researcher at the Lithuanian Department.



An interview with Dr. Giedrė Milerytė-Japertienė Photo: National Library of Lithuania Lithuania.

FOR FREEDOM. LITHUANIAN AMERICAN SUPPORT FOR LITHUANIA'S INDEPENDENCE AND RECOGNITION

In celebration of the 100th Anniversary of Lithuania's Independence, the Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture opened a new historical exhibit "For Freedom: Lithuanian American Support for Lithuania's Independence and Recognition." The exhibit explores Lithuanian Americans' passionate and energetic support for the cause of Lithuania's independence one hundred years ago. Using photographs, documents, publications, and other historical artifacts, the exhibition gives an overview of Lithuania's fate at the dawn of the twentieth century as a subjugated part of the Russian Empire; briefly portrays the Lithuanian American



Photo: The Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture

communities in America; and summarizes their significant cultural, political, and financial achievements.

The exhibition's central focus is the vital role played by Lithuanian Americans as their native land seized a unique and complex opportunity to end its 125-year Russian subjugation. It demonstrates that Lithuanian Americans' support for freedom in their native land did not end with the declared independence in 1918 nor with its recognition by the United States in 1922. In fact, as the exhibition shows, Lithuanian Americans supported their native land's recurrent struggles to achieve freedom and independence for most of the twentieth century.

Drawing on materials in the Balzekas Museum as well as public and private national and regional archives and collections, the exhibition centralizes the presence of historical documents to prove that this century-long struggle for freedom was powered by ideas and ideals expressed in words and actions.

VEMU HAD HELPERS FROM THE ESTONIAN NATIONAL ARCHIVE THIS SPRING

This spring VEMU was very lucky to have two guests arrive from the Estonian National Archive to help with archival work. Tiit Kravtsev

and Sven Lepa spent three weeks working with the materials at the Estonian Central Archive in Canada to prepare them for their move to the VEMU archives. Thank you to the Compatriots Program and the Estonian National Archive for making Tiit and Sven's visit possible!



*Archivists Tiit Kravtsev and Sven Lepa at the VEMU archives in Toronto.
Photo: Piret Noorhani*

VEMU CELEBRATED THE YEAR OF EUROPEAN CULTURAL HERITAGE

To celebrate the Year of European Cultural Heritage, VEMU invited a special guest from Estonia to join us for the annual fundraising dinner. Folklorist Marju Kõivupuu from Tallinn University gave two lectures while she was here; one on the topic of "Estonian Traditions and Identity in Changing Times" and the other at the 7th VEMU Fundraiser titled "100-Year-Old Estonia During the Year of European Cultural Heritage 2018." Marju offered interesting insight on how to preserve Estonian heritage in the changing world and why it is so important. Thank you Marju for helping us host another successful VEMU Fundraiser!

SPRING EVENTS AT VEMU 2018

This past spring has been quite busy for VEMU. In March, University of Toronto professor Anne Agur gave a lecture on the topic of "Management of Joint



*Folklorist Marju Kõivupuu.
Photo: Peeter Põldre*

Pain Using Ultrasound Guided Nerve Blocks and Ablations." Anne thoroughly introduced this new method of pain therapy that is used in physical therapy treatment programs. At the end of the month, Johanna Helin gave a lecture on "An Estonian Village in Africa" about Estonia's involvement in development cooperation. The intriguing lecture was followed by a documentary film titled "An Estonian Village in Ghana" and the opportunity to purchase beautiful items crafted by women in Africa involved in projects associated with Estonian development cooperation.

Following the theme of handicrafts, Helle Arro and Maaja Matsoo led a very popular Estonian wrist warmer knitting workshop at the end of March. The attendees learned patterns and

were guided through the process of making wrist warmers. Another creative event from the popular "Cooking with Susi" series took place in early April focusing on the topic of "Homemade Bread is the Sweetest." Susi took the audience through the process of making bread from start to finish, as well as how to make some desserts using bread. All participants were given some delicious samples after the presentation.

Two more lectures closed off the season. Andres Kasekamp, the new Chair of Estonian Studies at the University of Toronto, spoke on the topic of "What is Happening in Estonian Politics?" Many interested listeners came to hear the latest about the political landscape in Estonia. In May, VEMU had guests from the Estonian National Archives visiting for three weeks. One of the guests, Sven Lepa gave an informative lecture on the topic "How to Research Your Roots With a Computer on Your Sofa." His presentation gave an overview of how to use the Estonian National Archives database from home.

Although this season was quite packed with events, we are already looking forward to next season



featuring more exciting speakers and events!

NEW EXHIBITS AT VEMU

At the end of February 2018 a joint photo exhibit “Two Edges of a Lifespan” opened at Tartu College. The first half of the exhibit by Canadian-Estonian photographer Kristen Dobbin featured photos of children celebrating the Estonian summer camp Jõekäärü’s 50th anniversary. The other half of the exhibit by Estonian photographer Toomas Volkmann featured Estonians living in Canada whose year of birth is around the same year that Estonia achieved independence in 1918. The exhibit was on display until May 2018 and was part of the official program for the Scotiabank Contact Photography Festival.

During Estonian Music Week at the end of May 2018, two new exhibits were opened at Tartu College. Both exhibits feature Arvo Pärt: Tõnu Tormis’ photo exhibit titled “On Pärt” and the Estonian Theatre and Music



Estonian Voices at Estonian Music Week in Toronto. Photo: Peeter Põldre

Museum in collaboration with the Arvo Pärt Centre’s exhibit titled “Arvo Pärt – Renowned and Unknown.” The latter exhibit was also on display at Koerner Hall in Toronto on May 26, 2018 during the Vox Clamantis and Maarja Nuut & HH concert, which was part of both Estonian Music Week and the Royal Conservatory of Music’s 21C Festival. The exhibits will be on display throughout the summer until September 2018.

THE FIRST ESTONIAN MUSIC WEEK IN

TORONTO WAS A GREAT SUCCESS!

From May 24-29, 2018 the first ever Estonian Music Week (EMW) took place in Toronto to celebrate Estonia’s 100th anniversary of independence. All six days of the festival featured top notch musicians from both Canada and Estonia,

with over 40 musicians traveling from Estonia to participate in the event. In addition to six concerts, a seminar titled “EE Meets CA: Building Bridges in Music” and a jazz singing workshop with Estonian musician Kadri Voorand took place. The Estonian Prime Minister Jüri Ratas also joined us with his delegation and the Estonian Ambassador to Canada Gita Kalmet for the EMW gala evening on May 26, 2018 at Koerner Hall. After such a well-attended and successful event with high class music, the organizers hope for many more festivals in the future. The EMW team would especially like to thank the primary sponsors among many others, the Estonian Studies Centre and the Estonian Government/EV100. To see photos from the week, visit www.estonianmusicweek.ca. Estonian Music Week is here to stay!

