



*The Lithuanian Charter is exhibited at the National Library of Lithuania.*

*Photo: Vygaudas Juozaitis / National Library of Lithuania.*

## THE LITHUANIAN CHARTER TURNS SEVENTY

On June 14, 1949 in Augsburg, Germany, Lithuania's Supreme Liberation Committee published a pocket-size book World Community of Lithuanians (Dr. Haas & Cie., KG., Augsburg), also known as the Lithuanian Charter. The document laid the foundations of the Lithuanian World Community, Inc., brought together and provided the new meaning to thousands of Lithuanian war refugees.

The Lithuanian Charter empowered Lithuanians, who after WWII once again found themselves homeless, to continue to fight for Lithuania's independence and to strive to maintain at all costs not only the family and kinship, but also the national connection, so that "each countryman met abroad [would] be like brother."

The publication of the Lithuanian Charter was Committee's response to the rapidly changing situation of Lithuanian war refugees in post-war Germany and the future full of anxiety and uncertainty. At the end of the war, it became clear that Lithuania would not regain its independence yet, therefore many refugees decided to take advantage of the opportunity to immigrate to Canada, Australia, the United States and other countries not affected by war. Prelate Mykolas Krupavičius, the chairman of the Committee, and other members of the organization decided to establish a Lithuanian community in each country and create one united Lithuanian community abroad.

The actual Lithuanian World Community, Inc. was founded in 1951. That year, the LWC Interim Organizing Committee was established. A few years later, in 1958, in New York, the Seimas provided guidelines and structure for the new organization, elected its leadership, and passed the main document— the LWC Constitution, which is still used

### IN THIS ISSUE:

VEMU's 8TH FUNDRAISER

ESTONIANS IN THE AMERICAS

UNO PRII'S WORK IN PHOTOS

LAC EXHIBITION AT THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF LITHUANIA

LATVIAN SYMPOSIUM AT IN TORONTO

WORLD LITHUANIAN WRITERS FORUM AT THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF LITHUANIA

PAINTER KARLIS GRUBE (1902 - 1998)

A PASSIONATE STUDENT OF EUROPEAN HISTORY AND ALL THINGS ESTONIAN

ESTONIAN-THEMED JANE'S WALK AT MT. PLEASANT CEMETERY

COMMUNAL COURTS

Editor-in-Chief: Piret Noorhanni

Editor: Kristina Lupp

Designer: Kristina Lupp

The Baltic Heritage Newsletter is distributed quarterly, on-line. The next deadline for submissions is 15 August 2019. Please send all related enquiries and submissions to Piret Noorhanni: [piretnoorhanni@gmail.com](mailto:piretnoorhanni@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](http://www.balther.net)

ISSN 2228-3390

today without any major changes.

The LWC unites all Lithuanian communities operating in different countries. Any person, who is Lithuanian, can be its member. Krupavičius, who initiated the idea of the LWC and wrote about it in the book *The Road of the Lithuanian World Community*, stated that “[t]he LWC has two goals: fundamental and random. The fundamental goal is to keep Lithuanians and the random goal is to regain freedom for Lithuania.” These goals have been pursued throughout the entire history of the LWC.

Despite historic ups and downs and the internal changes within the Lithuanian communities abroad, the Lithuanian Charter still serves as a moral cause for many Lithuanians living abroad. It’s a trusted advisor and a pillar for old and new Lithuanian communities in the world.

**Dalia Cidzikaitė**

### VEMU’S 8TH FUNDRAISER WAS KIHNU-THEMED



Saturday, April 27, the VEMU (Museum of Estonians Abroad) fundraiser took place for the 8th time. This year the theme was Kihnu. The evening was exciting and offered interesting experiences for all the senses through taste, sound, and visuals. It was especially great that Silvia Soide and Inger Lilles-Nestor had travelled to Toronto from Kihnu

island for this event.

Silvia was born in Vancouver, but her grandmother was from Kihnu and Silvia has now lived there for 10 years. Inger was born on mainland Estonia, but also spends most of her time in Kihnu, where her father’s family is from.

Silvia is a photographer and her colourful photo exhibit “The Patterns of Kihnu Life” was opened at the fundraiser and is available to view at Tartu College until mid-September. Inger, who has a number of interests and hobbies, was in Toronto as a chef; she prepared the fundraiser dinner with the help of Susi Holmberg’s team. There were a number of thrilling flavours, but the most Kihnu-related were the seal meat pies (pirukad). Inger runs the restaurant Kihnu Gurmee. We recommend anyone visiting Kihnu in the summer, to order a memorable meal from Inger.

The third guest who travelled from afar, was the filmmaker Meelis Muhu, the author of the films “Kihnu Wooing” and “Kihnu Wedding.” Meelis and Silvia told everyone about the colourful life in Kihnu. The President of the Estonian Studies Centre, Jaan Meri, and VEMU’s Chief Archivist, Piret Noorhani introduced the fundraiser guests.

Tiina Kiik offered musical entertainment, leading a sing-along with her accordion. The party was a full house and energetic. Laani Heinar decorated the hall with Kihnu-style decorations. Rutt Veskimets thanked the organizers in her closing speech.

The Kihnu-theme continued Sunday afternoon, when Meelis Muhu’s Kihnu films were screened and there was an opportunity to talk with the guests.

The Kihnu guests also performed at Ehatare and T.E.S. Estonian Supplementary Schools. Meelis Muhu was also very busy with HotDocs, where his film with co-filmmaker Minna Hint “To Share or Not to Share” was screened.

### NEW BILINGUAL BOOK

### “EESTLASED AMEERIKATES. ESTONIANS IN THE AMERICAS”



On April 26th, historians Maarja Merivoo-Parro and Sander Jürisson hosted a book launch at the Museum of Occupations and Freedom (Vabamu) in Tallinn for “Eestlased Ameerikates: Estonians in the Americas,” a new photo-rich tome focussing not just on diaspora Estonians in the Americas — but specifically those who arrived and lived there before World War II.

Relying heavily on archival materials, the Estonian Diaspora Academy’s bilingual book “Eestlased Ameerikates: Estonians in the Americas” introduces readers to Estonians who lived in North and South America. What makes it unique, however, is that the focus is not on World War II-era refugees and their descendants this time, but rather the 19th Century through World War II. The tome introduces the stories and history of early Estonians not just in the US and Brazil, but also Canada, Argentina and Uruguay, for example.

“While in our theses we are detailed and try to say as much as possible about very little, this narrative photo album gave us the



freedom to do the exact opposite — to paint with a broad brush, and say a little about a great many things,” Dr Merivoo-Parro said. “Hopefully coming face-to-face with our global compatriots’ past will have a stirring effect, and inspire some to supplement existing understandings about the diaspora Estonian community’s past by means of new research.”

“During the past century and a half, Estonians’ journeys have taken us to all ends of the earth,” Mr Jürisson said. “The journeys and lives of World War II refugees have been better documented, but we know significantly less about earlier Westward migration. With our new book, we offer a quick look at the arrival [of Estonians] in travellers’ favourite destination — the Americas — which should interest both people in Estonia as well as the descendants themselves of these travellers. This is why the book is bilingual in parallel. The tome was translated by our good partner Juta Ristsoo, a diaspora Estonian who has returned home.”

The 360-page publication is dedicated to Estonian archivists worldwide. The authors give special thanks to the workers and volunteers of the National Archives of Estonia and the Estonian Archives in the US, with whose permission all of the photos will reach much broader Estonian- and English-speaking audiences.

Published by the nonprofit Estonian Diaspora Academy, the book was translated by Juta Ristsoo, edited by Kai Nurmik and Derek Saunders, and designed by Kristin Kalamees, with photos digitised by Rasmus Merivoo. Publication of the book was supported by the Compatriots’ Programme of the Ministry of Education and Research.

**ERR, Aili Vahtla**



### UNO PRII'S WORK IN PHOTOS – NEW EXHIBIT AT VEMU

The exhibit about Canadian Estonian architects that was available to view in the fall/winter of 2017 at Tartu College and at the Museum of Estonian Architecture in Tallinn in spring 2018, got its continuation – on March 7th Leala Hewak and William Eakin's photo exhibit on Uno Prii's work was opened at Tartu College.

The exhibit, so-called, walked through the doors of Tartu College on its own. In September, Leala Hewak came to me at Tartu College and told me that along with her colleague William Eakin, they are huge fans of Uno Prii's work and that they are putting together a photo exhibit on the architect's buildings. I didn't have to think long about the offer to display this exhibit at VEMU – it's great when people who have no direct association with Estonia are interested in working with Estonian topics. And bringing Prii's work under the spotlight is in addition to everything else, highlighting Estonia.

Neither Hewak or Eakin have any real association with Estonia. Hewak is a former lawyer, who has for many years now been a professional photographer and has participated in many exhibitions. Hewak's special interest is architecture, but her work doesn't represent typical architectural photography, for which the main goal is to present buildings in a beautiful and presentable fashion.

It has been said that Leala views buildings as living organisms, finding unexpected angles and preserving details or also through the building residents themselves using snapshots.

Even more known than Hewak, is Eakin whose work has been displayed at about 50 personal exhibits and at least as many group exhibits in Canada, the USA, New Zealand, Taiwan, and the Netherlands over the last 40 years. He has taught photography at the University of Manitoba and has received a number of awards for his work. It is often Eakin's goal to rediscover and reemphasize the value of that which has been forgotten or remained unnoticed. “Caring” could be the keyword with which one could characterize his deeply ethical stance as a creator. Craig Rodmore is the third photographer part of this exhibit.

At the exhibit opening on March 7 at 7pm at Tartu College, both photographers were present. We also launched the book “To the New World: Estonian Architects in Toronto,” which was compiled by the curator of the architecture exhibit in 2017, Jarmo Kauge. The book expands on the information presented at the exhibit along with a detailed article on the contributions of Canadian Estonians to architectural history. The books were available to purchase at the event.

**Piret Noorhani**

## COOKING WITH PAUL – VODKA AND MUSHROOMS



Friday, April 12, 2019, an interactive workshop “Cooking with Paul: Vodka and Mushrooms” took place at the Museum of Estonians Abroad, VEMU in Toronto.

Estonia has a long history of producing and enjoying vodka. The first announcement of vodka production on Estonian soil is from as early as 1485. We have various traditions for ways to drink vodka. *Sada ja seened* (100 with mushrooms) refers to the tradition of having a bite of salted mushrooms or mushroom salad with 100g of vodka. This event led by Paul Lillakas and vodka specialist Wes Galloway featured vodka tasting and the opportunity to learn how to make appetizers to go with vodka.

## THE LAC EXHIBITION AT THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF LITHUANIA



*The exhibition at the Library.*

*Photo: Asta Mukienė / National Library of Lithuania*

The travelling exhibition “We Created the Lithuanian State Together: The Lithuanian-

American Community, Inc. 1951-2018” at the National Library of Lithuania highlights the fact that Lithuanian-Americans have always kept close contact with the homeland and have contributed to country’s development.

Lithuanian diaspora is an integral part of Lithuanian history. Despite the geographical distance, the Lithuanian immigrants tirelessly worked on behalf of Lithuania. Various initiatives of many relief organizations, the financial support, active propaganda work, and the establishment and strengthening of political, economic, and cultural relations between the US and Lithuania are undeniable evidence of the united struggle for Lithuanian independence.

Fighting for the independence of Lithuania was one of the main goals of the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. founded in 1951. When Lithuania regained its independence, the LAC, which unites all Lithuanians living in the US, has actively cooperated with the homeland and its institutions, contributed to the development of ties between Lithuanian and the US government and business representatives.

Today, the ultimate goal of the LAC is to preserve Lithuanian culture and traditions and pass it onto the future generations. The organization’s main emphasis is on Lithuanian education, cultural, scientific, social, economic, religious, and sport and other activities in the US. It cooperates with other Lithuanian-American organizations, the US non-governmental organizations, and introduces Americans to Lithuania. Americans of Lithuanian descent and their non-Lithuanian spouses are also welcomed in the LAC.

The exhibition, which runs at the Library until the end of May, testifies to the glorious history of the LAC and introduces to its past and present activities.

## NEW BOOK: NYLON CURTAIN



*Book presentation at the Library.*

*Photo: Vygaudas Juozaitis / National Library of Lithuania*

The two-volume monograph *Nylon Curtain. Lithuanian Music in the Context of International History of Cold War*, by the musicologists, Prof. Rūta Stanevičiūtė, Prof. Danutė Petrauskaitė, and Prof. Vita Gruodytė, was presented at the National Library of Lithuania. The book, published in 2018 by the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theater, consists of two volumes: a collective monograph, entitled *Nylon Curtain. Cold War, International Exchanges and Lithuanian Music* and a collection of correspondence, *Foreign Correspondence of the Lithuanian Musicians, 1945-1990*.

In the collective monograph, the authors using extensive archival documents gathered from the state and private archives, as well as published sources, analyze the channels of the exchange of musical information among the individuals and institutions in Lithuania and foreign countries that took place during the Soviet period. They also looked into the reasons that encouraged promoting personal and transnational relations between the two musical environments



divided by the ideological confrontation of the Cold War, and posed questions, such as: which ideological, economic, and cultural constraints and differences limited such exchange and what impact international exchanges had on the national music scene.

The publication is polyphonic and multidisciplinary. It analyzes the relationship between music and geopolitics: musical exchanges between Lithuanians and Poles during the Cold War and Lithuania's geopolitical situation. The publication also focuses on cultural co-operation, for example, the relations of Lithuanian-Americans with the occupied Lithuania and contacts of the Soviet institutions with the Lithuanian diaspora. In the second volume, letters written by and to Vincas Bacevičius, Antanas Marijošius, Elena Navickaitė-Martinonienė, Vytautas Landsbergis, Juozas Strolys and other representatives of music are published.

The metaphor "Nylon Curtain" was borrowed from the Hungarian historian György Péter, who suggested using it in order to be able rethink the relations of the communist countries with the rest of the world during the Cold War. The authors of the publication note that the metaphor gave them the opportunity to look at people's personal relations.

The two-volume monograph reflects and implements authors' intention to extract the history of Lithuanian music from a closed national and Soviet cultural context and to link Lithuanian music development, life of Lithuanian musicians and their professional career with world-wide political, economic, and cultural processes.

## LATVIAN SYMPOSIUM AT GLENDON COLLEGE IN TORONTO

In the fall of 2018, York University Glendon College students Sidney Mettete and Regina Roque contacted me to ask whether I could help them find speakers for a Latvian symposium taking place in March. The event was being organized for the 24th time within the Glendon College international research program. This was the first time the Baltic region was under discussion; Latvia was chosen as the topic, since it celebrated its 100th birthday last year and as the students said, it is a region that has an exciting controversial history and it interested them.

In addition to the speakers, the exhibit "Sharing Our Stories. Baltic Diaspora at Home in Canada" was recommended to the students. This exhibit was created two years ago as a collaboration between the Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians, and Baltic Germans and tells the story of the Baltic community in Canada. A place was found for the exhibit at the Canadian Language Museum, which is located at Glendon College in an old manor house, where the exhibit was installed a few days before the symposium.

The symposium took place on March 29 and offered a variety of topics from security to history and identity. Ian Roberge and Aymen Karoui, who supervised the students at Glendon College, and the Latvian Ambassador in Canada Karlis Eichenbaums spoke at the opening session.

After this the audience was divided into two. One group headed to the Language Museum, where the Baltic Canadian Imprint working group members Dani Breen (Lithuanian Museum-Archives of Canada), Andris

Kesteris (Latvian National Federation in Canada, Canadian Latvian Archives and Museum), Petra Grantham (Canadian Baltic Immigrant Aid Society), and Piret Noorhane (VEMU) spoke about the four different Baltic communities in Canada and about their work with historical heritage. This discussion was led by Baltic German community representative Susanne Burkhardt. The second group stayed at the main building to participate in the panel that was dedicated to Latvian and NATO relations. Speakers included Steve Macbeth, Dr. Alex Lanoszka, Dr. Stefanie van Hlatky, and Dr. Andres Kasekamp.

Lunch was a joint affair in the manor house. In addition to physical sustenance, there was also something to feed the soul: Peteris Zarins and Juris Kenins performed music by Latvian composers. The session after lunch was dedicated to economic questions that were addressed by Dr. Brent McKenzie, Dr. Frederick Peters, Gints Turlajs, and Irene Cirule. This was followed by two more parallel sessions. At the first session Grant Schamra, Edgar Kirss, and Dr. Edelgard E. Mahant spoke about Latvian history and the development of Latvian nationality. The second panel discussed topics such as the new generation of Latvian diaspora, their dilemmas, choices, and tasks. The speakers were honorary consul Karlis Vasaris, Marcus Kolga, and Eriks Bredovskis. The main speaker for the closing session was Lieutenant Colonel Steve MacBeth, the Head of the NATO Battalion in Latvia. Both the speakers and organizers were thanked.

Although the symposium topic country was Latvia, it offered plenty of food for thought for

Estonian participants – we share a similar history to our southern neighbour and also have similar problems today. The student organized conference went smoothly and was very substantial. The event ended with a reception for the speakers and organizers at the Language Museum, where everyone could also view the collaborative Baltic exhibit. We can only be happy that the young symposium organizers found us – these kinds of events help us reach outside our small Estonian and Baltic communities and introduce our activities to a larger audience.

**Piret Noorhanti**

### PARTICIPANTS OF THE WORLD LITHUANIAN WRITERS FORUM GATHERED AT THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF LITHUANIA



*Writer Virginija Tarnauskaitė of Belarus points to a book at the exhibition.*

*Photo: Asta Mukienė / National Library of Lithuania*

On May 5-7, 2019 the First World Lithuanian Writers Forum took place in Vilnius. It was attended by more than 30 writers, translators and literary critics from fifteen countries. The program of the forum offered a variety of activities—from literary readings to the presentation of the anthology of world Lithuanian authors, *Exodica*, to a book exhibition of the Lithuanian émigré writers organized by the National Library of Lithuania. The organizers of the Forum



*The participants of the Forum took a picture on the steps of the National Library of Lithuania.*

aimed at achieving several goals. The first one was to get to know each other and share different experiences and perceptions of the world. The event also commemorated the Lithuanian Press Restoration, Language and Book Day.

On May 6, the participants of the Forum visited the National Library of Lithuania. Jolanta Budriūnienė, the director of the Documentary Heritage Research Department of the National Library of Lithuania, presented the writers to a wide range of library's activities. She noted that the Library has become a place where more than thousand various cultural events take place every year and the space for the cultural diplomacy. "We cooperate with the embassies of the Republic of Lithuania abroad, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Culture. We have broadened the scope of joint works and projects in the East and West. The library is a unique place, because it traces the signs of cultural diplomacy. It's a place where we systematically collect and house the books of Lithuanian authors published abroad. Today these publications are an important part of the Lithuanian documentary heritage," Budriūnienė said.

The writers who gathered at the National Library of Lithuania presented the director of the Documentary Heritage Research Department with their books and

publications published abroad and in Lithuania. Afterwards, the participants of the Forum were given an extensive tour of the Library.

### "... FROM 'STRENCI' TO THE PACIFIC OCEAN" – PAINTER KĀRLIS GRUBE (1902 - 1998)

In art history research, it should be taken into account that parallel to what is known, there is also an area of information that goes unnoticed and is often underestimated, because an overview of information, documents and knowledge of the personal life of an artist is lacking.

This is exactly what happened during research on the life and works of the painter Kārlis Grube, which was started in 1993.

The life story of the artist illustrates not only the relationship of one person to people, time and art. It shows how the fate of many Latvians was associated with, and dependent on, not only the harsh conditions, susceptibility and endurance of wartime, but also on lucky chance.

From April 3 to April 30, 2019, the Mentzendorff House in Riga is the venue for the second exhibition of works by Kārlis Grube, who was a student of professor Jānis Roberts Tillbergs at the Art Academy of Latvia. His first exhibition was held in March and April 1934 at Kuldīga State Gymnasium.

Kārlis Eduards Grube was born in the merchant family of Kārlis and Kristīna Grube on January 26, 1902, at Ķempēni Manor in the civil parish of Ēvele.

From 1921 to 1930 he studied at the Art Academy of Latvia and graduated from J. R. Tillbergs' figure art masterclass with his diploma painting "Solemn Promise".





*Kārlis Grube. Self-portrait. 1932, canvas, oil, 68 x 45.5 cm*

*From the private collection of Ansis Grube*

*Photographer: Ojārs Jansons*

After 1932, he lived in Kuldīga, a town in the province of Kurzeme, and worked as a teacher at the State Gymnasium and the Trade School. He made many paintings of Kuldīga Old Town and its immediate surroundings as well as portraits and flowers. The artist often made life drawings, in which he spoke about simple everyday work and showed the local society in Kuldīga. The 1934 exhibition showed 80 paintings, as well as

drawings from his time at the Art Academy.

At the end of the summer of 1944, Kārlis Grube, together with his mother and sister Aija's family, became war refugees. The family went to Germany and settled temporarily in the Amberg refugee camp. His younger sister Laima and her family remained in Kuldīga.

During the 1945/46 academic year Kārlis worked at the Amberg Latvian secondary school as a drawing teacher.

In 1948 the artist travels to the United Kingdom, where he starts a rather unusual service and, because he knows six languages, works as an interpreter at the London Brick Co. At Drayton Parslow. Communication with his family is interrupted for 10 years and is renewed only in 1958, shortly before they moved to the United States. Grube wrote to his sister Laimai in Latvia: "Impressions from southern countries – Italy, Andalucia, Greece – are very deep and permanent, and have been expressed in a number of my paintings."



*Kārlis Grube in his room at the retirement home "Riga House", Oregon, USA. 1997*

In 1958 Grube starts working in the personnel section of Fred Meyer's main department store in Portland (Oregon, USA), where he works until retirement. In 1964 he acquires U.S. citizenship. In 1972 he organises his second solo exhibition in the Masonic Temple events hall in Portland and exhibits 125 paintings for two days. During this time, the artist also concludes 'global' world travel, which can be seen in his paintings of cities in Europe, Asia, Australia, Canada, North America, nature and portraits. There are also so-called fantasy paintings, in which the artist depicted women in Latvian folk costumes.

K. Grube lived an ascetic bachelor's life, but with Latvian patriotism in his heart, he donated large sums of money to the Latvian Society of Oregon and to the Latvian church. He spent his old age in the Oregon retirement home

"House of Riga", and died in Portland on December 21, 1998.

The exhibition consisted of works from the private collection of Ansis Grube, paintings from the Local History Museum of Kuldīga, the Latvian National Museum of Art, the Zuzans' collections, the Museum of Literature and Music, a painting from the Cēsis Instructors' School of the National Armed Forces, as well as documents from private archives and the Latvian National Archives.

**Exhibition curator: Guntis Švitiņš, art historian**

**English translation: Inese A. Smith**

**BENEDICT KARL PASAPORTE**  
— A PASSIONATE STUDENT OF  
EUROPEAN HISTORY AND ALL  
THINGS ESTONIAN

Nearly one year ago, Benedict Karl Pasaporte, heard about



the celebration of the 100th anniversary of Estonian independence taking place at Nathan Phillips Square, and being the inquisitive person he is, sought information at Tartu College. And so began his in-depth journey of learning about Estonia.

After graduating in 2016 with a Bachelor's degree in European Studies (with a minor in history) from Ateneo de Manila University, he spent one year working towards his Master's of history at Ateneo de Manila before moving from the Philippines to Toronto. In Toronto, he began to study Museum and Cultural Management at Centennial College. For this program, he considered looking at museums for his placement, specifically ones involving diaspora communities. As Europe is the primary region that interests him, he decided that the Väliseesti Muuseum, VEMU at Tartu College would be a great place to volunteer.

In his interview with Vincent Teetsov for Eesti Elu /Estonian Life, Karl said:

"My main interest is history. Currently I am reading a book by professor Andres Kasekamp about the history of the Baltic states. I want to learn more about the history of these countries, especially prior to the Tsarist Russian occupation, since that period is so hard to keep track of,

because of the shifting borders. I love geography as well. Beyond this, I like reading books, listening to music, film, and playing video games.

I have a two part plan for my future here in Canada. My main plan is to study for a Master's in history, preferably at the University of Toronto. This has been my main goal since I first arrived in Canada. With this in mind, I am working to improve my application.

Following this, I would like to work in the museum field, preferably in collections and archive management. That is the reason for taking the museum studies program that I am in right now, and also why it's ideal to be doing the work at VEMU that I am doing right now!

Whenever I talked about Estonia to people I would say that it's the country where Skype was created, or where Arvo Pärt is from, depending on how much they knew. I would also mention facts, such as how Estonians have a sport called *kiiking* that involves standing on a swing and maintaining the momentum while you go around. Or that Estonia (and the other Baltic states) regained their independence from the Soviet Union through singing and dancing. Or how Estonia is like the Japan of Europe in terms of technological advancement and application of technology into everyday life.

I think that I had good basic knowledge of Estonia and the other Baltic countries prior to working here. I knew the basic framework of the history, as well as facts and key issues concerning Estonian society. I could recognize the language. I was aware of how it relates to other European countries, since

I studied European Studies as my undergraduate major back in the Philippines. I knew that Estonia has a rich tradition of folk singing and folk dancing. In fact, I'm exposed to a bit of Estonian media, mostly movies and TV shows. I am a Eurovision fan, and I recognize how much effort Estonia brings into its entries every year. Being a fan of Eurovision working at VEMU is like being a K-pop (Korean pop) fan working for the Korean consulate, while having knowledge of the country beyond K-pop.

I learned a lot about Estonian expatriates in my work. As I was looking through objects from past ESTO festivals, I learned about how Estonians abroad wanted to express and preserve their culture and heritage free of oppression outside of the Soviet Union, and how the festivals abroad were part of a larger struggle to regain independence from the USSR."

Karl stayed with VEMU for almost five months working diligently with the archival collection of ESTO festivals and assisting at VEMU events. We thank him for his well done work and his great company at lunch time!

### ESTONIAN-THEMED JANE'S WALK AT MT. PLEASANT CEMETERY

The first weekend in May celebrates Jane Jacobs with volunteer-guided walks around Toronto, where people can learn more about specific areas in the city. Estonians in Toronto have been introduced to various examples of architecture by Estonians over the last few years.

This year, about twenty people, primarily Estonians, gathered on May 4 at Mount Pleasant Cemetery for an Estonian-themed Jane's Walk. This was led by Dean Mart Salumäe, the Pastor of the





*Dean Mart Salumäe (left) introduced Jane's Walk participants to the Mt. Pleasant Cemetery and various burial traditions. A large number of Estonians are buried in section #46, where in 1973 the monument on the photo was erected in memory of compatriots who have passed away.*

Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church St. Peter's congregation in Toronto and was organized and coordinated by Piret Noorhani.

First, Dean Salumäe introduced one of Toronto's largest cemeteries, which was designed by architect Henry Engelhardt using the Boston Mount Auburn Cemetery as an example. The area west of Mt. Pleasant Road was opened on November 4, 1876. A crematorium-mausoleum is also located in this area.

In the older part of Mt. Pleasant Cemetery there are a number of historical mausoleums, graves of war veterans, well-known politicians, educational and business figures, athletes, and musicians. Many Estonians have also chosen this large cemetery as their final resting place.

The first refugees who fled Estonia in 1944, arriving in Toronto and their descendants were buried at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery in the mid-1950s. By the end of the next decade, a separate area had developed in the cemetery where many Estonian refugee families bought plots for themselves. Currently, this area is numbered section #46. In 1973, a monument was erected for compatriots who had passed. Every summer cemetery days (surnuaiapäeva) are celebrated

according to Estonian traditions.

Dean Salumäe introduced the cemetery's history to the Jane's Walkers, highlighting those more well-known individuals who found the cemetery to be their final resting place, and spoke in more detail about Estonian burial traditions, how they have changed over time, and compared them to Canadian traditions. Following the walk, participants were invited to St. Peter's Church about 1.5 kilometres away, where there was a delicious coffee table set up by Leena Liivet. All the Jane's Walkers could rest, warm up, and continue their discussions freely.

### Eesti Elu /Estonian Life

### COMMUNAL COURTS

In February 2019, a new crowd-sourcing project by the National Archives of Estonia has been launched. A public crowd-sourcing platform called "Communal Courts" aims to offer an easy access to the court cases of the 19th century's daily life in Estonian villages as well as to publish some new thrilling data for the family researchers. Everyone can contribute to the crowd-sourcing at <http://www.ra.ee/vallakohtud/>.

Archival records of the communal courts cover the period from the 1820s to 1891. Communal courts dealt mostly with approvals

of agreements and solutions of inheritance matters next to the administration of justice. As the communal courts were the courts of first instance, many of the concerns had a direct link to daily lives of peasants – smaller arguments, violations and claims, but also offences and defamations which all give a colourful picture of highly interested manners of the 19th century.

The National Archives of Estonia preserves about 2000 minute books of the communal courts. All the books have been digitized and linked to the web-based crowd-sourcing platform. Crowd-sourcing is used for making those minutes available online by transcribing the digitized records. There are different tips and guidelines as well as sample transcriptions available in order to facilitate and speed up the transcribing process while the language of the minute books can be a bit difficult for contemporary users.

Everyone is welcome to visit the platform online – read the minutes, transcribe the texts, and your contribution stays there over time!

