

House of Lithuania

House of Pacific Relations, International Cottages, Inc., Balboa Park, San Diego, California

October 11, 2008 – Spalis 11, 2008

Newsletter – Žinios

Volume 6, Issue 10

MEMOIRS

VYTAS COMES TO AMERICA

by Vytas Dukas

I was born in the center of Europe, which is also the center of Lithuania (you can verify the authenticity of that in the National Geographic). My youth was closely connected with the railroads of Lithuania, and later with the German Reichseisenbahn. I enjoyed writing and was our weekly high school newspaper editor. However, because of the influence of my brother-in-law, who owned a paper factory, when I was nineteen I enrolled in Lithuania's only business university, planning a future managing a paper company.

But there were two fellows: Joseph V. Dzhugashvili and "Herr" A. Schicklgruber, who changed my life completely. When on March 29, 1940, Vyachislav Molotov (Nee Skryabin) announced that "satisfactory" treaties of mutual assistance with the Baltic states (Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia) Kremlin had been concluded. Alea jacta est - The die was cast. Later, the satraps of Stalin and Hitler, namely Molotov and Ribbentrop, signed a treaty: Germany and the Soviet Union agreed that, among other things, the Baltic States should stay within the Soviet zone. On August 3rd, 1940, the Supreme Soviet decided to "admit" Lithuania into the USSR. The communist "apparatchiki" brought forward an "appropriate constitution" which equaled basic Soviet law.

And so it was that the great past of the Lithuanian Empire, which reached from the Baltic to the Black Sea, became a food store for Moscow's shoppers, thanks to the Nazi-Soviet pact. As a result of these changes, I had to live under the constant eyes of party members, comsomol and NKVD, later KGB, and even some communist sympathizers among my own school mates. It took lots of luck and quick thinking to survive this oppressive nightmare. In 1941, after one year of the German Sitzkrieg, the German Blitzkrieg occurred, and Lithuania was occupied by the Germans. Our occupiers' uniforms changed, and instead of the NKVD, we now had the Gestapo.

What a "break"! --To be continued

EARLY HOUSE OF LITHUANIA MEMBER PASSES AWAY

Helen Anne Shaffer of Chula Vista, a founding member of the House of Lithuania has passed away. She moved to San Diego from Ohio in 1963 and was active in House activities until a few years ago.

She was born December 10, 1911, and passed away on September 1, 2008. Mother of two, John W. (Jesse) Shaffer and Jo Ann Graves, , she leaves behind eight grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren, four step- great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren. She was an avid bowler and card player.

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House of Lithuania **MONTHLY MEETING** & **LITHUANIAN POTLUCK**

Saturday, October 11, 2008

1 P.M. – Allied Gardens Recreation Center

GARDENS ROOM

5155 Greenbriar Ave., San Diego

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For directions call

**Julie-Meilute Benedict 619-507-7156, or
Francesca Williams 858-395-5168**

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Membership Information

For information about the House of Lithuania, please contact Francesca Williams, 858-395-5168 <http://www.house-of-lithuania.org> or visit the House of Pacific Relations site: <http://www/sdhpr.org>