



Ukrainian Genealogy Group

National Capital Region

The Ukrainian Genealogist

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913 Carling Avenue Ottawa, Ontario K1Y 4E3

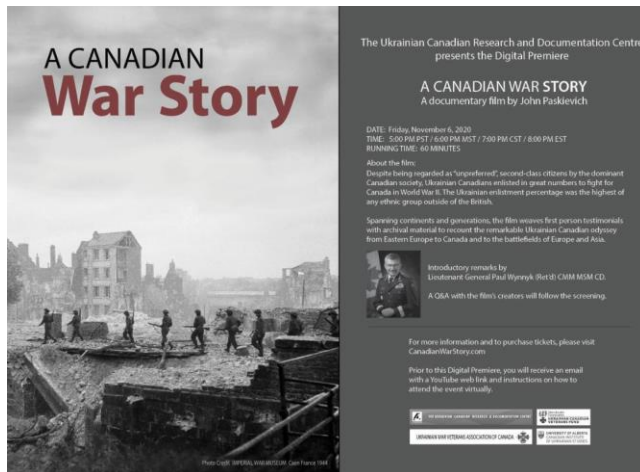
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Nov 22nd UGG-NCR Webinar

A Canadian War Story, a film documentary

The topic of this webinar was the documentary on the Ukrainian Canadian participation in the Canadian Armed Forces during the Second World War. It should be noted that John Paskievich is the director and writer of the documentary film and the Ukrainian Canadian Research and Documentation Centre in Toronto produced the film.



A Canadian War Story, a film documentary

The documentary was introduced by Jerry Fikis who spoke about the enlistment of his father and his two uncles in this war. Borys Gengalo made a general introduction on the Ukrainian Canadian participation in the war. The story is based on previous oral history interviews with veterans who have since passed away. Other sources were archival film footage and photographs.

Despite the difficult first decades after arrival and settlement especially during the Depression of the 1930s, many Ukrainian Canadians enlisted in the Canadian military soon after the war was declared against Nazi Germany in September, 1939. Some enlisted out of Canadian patriotism, others were seeking employment, and there were volunteers who enlisted out of a sense of adventure and wishing to participate in the world crusade against Nazi Germany.

It should be noted that some Ukrainian Canadians were conscripted, served in Canada and did not volunteer for overseas service for various reasons. The volunteers joined the Royal Canadian Navy, the Royal Canadian Air Force and mostly served in the Army units and some also served in the merchant marine. While stationed in England, they established the Ukrainian Canadian Servicemen's Association with a 'club house' in London, England that became as a social centre for soldiers on leave where they could enjoy 'Ukrainian food', meet other Ukrainian Canadians and also Ukrainians serving in the British, Polish and United States military units.

After the war, members who returned to Canada were in the forefront of the movement to establish Ukrainian Canadian branches of the Royal Canadian Legion throughout Canada. Ukrainian Canadians also participated in the Pacific war most notably in the Battle of Hong Kong in December, 1941 where there were heavy casualties and the survivors were taken as prisoners to Japan.

After the invasion of Normandy in June, 1944, Ukrainian Canadian soldiers met the first Ukrainian refugees and Displaced Persons in western Europe and made this information known to the Ukrainian Canadian Committee in Winnipeg. This information began the process of lobbying with the Canadian federal government to allow the Ukrainian Displaced Persons to immigrate and eventually formed the third wave of Ukrainian immigration to Canada.

After the war, Ukrainian Canadian military also met with the survivors of the Ukrainian Division 'Halychyna' in Rimini, Italy and again, this information was forwarded to the Ukrainian Canadian Committee that also lobbied for their immigration to Canada. After internment in England, these Division veterans were allowed to immigrate to Canada and other countries after 1949.

Many Ukrainian Canadian veterans took advantage of federal government programs and benefits to continue their education to the university level and some became professionals and prominent community leaders.

The Second World War is an important part of Ukrainian Canadian history because their contribution to the war effort confirmed their claim as no longer second class citizens and they became full participants in the political and economic life of the country. Their story is preserved in the Ukrainian Canadian Veterans' Association fonds (MG28 V119) at the Library and Archives Canada.

This documentary will allow researchers to become familiar with the general outline of Ukrainian Canadian participation in the Second World War and the role their ancestors may have played in this war. Records on individual soldiers, airmen and sailors are located at the Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa. There are no restrictions concerning access to the individual records of soldiers who were killed or died during the Second World War.

The UGG is grateful for the permission received from the Ukrainian Canadian Research and Documentation Centre to broadcast this video during our November 2022 webinar. Due to copyright restrictions, a recording of this film is not available on our website. Copies of this video are available through your local branch of the Ottawa Public Library. Researchers who wish to purchase a copy may contact the Ukrainian Canadian Research and Documentation Centre ([UCRDC](#)) in Toronto.

Community Events

Tuesday, January 31, time TBA

Annual General Meeting, UNF Ottawa-Gatineau branch.

For [UNF](#) (Ukrainian National Federation Of Canada) members and those who are interested in UNF activities.

For information, contact: UNF Ottawa Branch ottawa@unfcanada.ca

Thursday February 2 7:00 – 11:00 pm

Oleh Skrypka's "Shchedryk" Concert

Where: Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral (1000 Byron Ave, Ottawa)

When: 7:00 – 11:00 pm

Click [here](#) for more information

Saturday March 4 7:30pm

DakhaBrakha Concert

Where: National Arts Centre, 1 Elgin Street, Ottawa

When: 7:30 pm

Click [here](#) for more information