



Ukrainian Genealogy Group

National Capital Region

The Ukrainian Genealogist

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913 Carling Avenue Ottawa, Ontario K1Y 4E3

Website: www.UkrainianGenealogyGroup-NCR.org

eMail: uggncr1@gmail.com

Contact: Myron Momryk (613) 731-1870

Editor: Mike Dowhan (613) 606-9176

May 25th 2021 Meeting

The presentation by William Pidzamecky at this meeting was entitled, *Thoughts of Home: A study of Rus' contacts with Scandinavia during the Viking Age*. William had made an earlier presentation on September 22, 2020 to the Ukrainian Genealogy Group, *Introduction to the Rus' and Archeology, Archeological Investigation of Scandinavian Rus' Settlement Sites*. These presentations are based on his PhD thesis that is an interdisciplinary study of Viking Age settlement in England, Ireland, Russia, and Ukraine.



William Pidzamecky - our May speaker

William began his presentation with a discussion of the concept of identity and the role and use of memory. As the medieval Scandinavians expanded into Eastern Europe, they came into contact with the local cultures and over time, they developed local roots and their identity evolved from Scandinavians and Varangians and eventually as the local Rus'. Citing various historical sources, William

discussed the connection between the Rus' and Scandinavia through the use of family connections, personal names and titles. In his analysis, William cites the Annals of St. Bertin, Heimsbringla and the Primary Chronicle as sources. During the early years, personal names were of Scandinavian or pagan origin and even after the adoption of Christianity in 988, largely remained as both Scandinavian and pagan names. With time and the development of a Rus' identity, these names evolved as Rus' names.

The Rus' lands received several 'waves' of Scandinavians from the 9th to the late 12th centuries that contributed to maintain some connections with the 'homeland' based on the same culture and as friends and allies. But, at the same time, differences and divisions developed that were partly based on geography – cities developed different identities in the north and south of Kievan (Kyivan) Rus' lands. And also, differences developed based on political and military issues since Varangians were employed as mercenaries in Kievan lands and in the Byzantine Empire and they were more interested in being paid for their military services than for any 'homeland' connections that faded from memory over the centuries and became parts of local legends and myths. Over time, these rivalries and divisions evolved into 'enemies' that led to armed conflicts among the various cities and towns that came to dominate the history of eastern Europe into the modern period. Some of these early Scandinavian names have survived the test of time and are now an integral part of Ukrainian tradition of personal names – Yaroslaw, Olha, Volodymyr, Oleh.

Myron Momryk gave an example of the connections between Scandinavia and Kievan Rus' through the story of King Harald III of Norway. As a young man, he fled dynastic conflicts in Norway and lived in exile in Kyiv. He became a military leader and served in the wars of Yaroslav the Wise. He also served in Constantinople in the Varangian Guard and became involved in local dynastic politics. Harald was able to accumulate a fortune through his military activities and he returned to Kyiv where he married Elizaveta Yaroslavna of Kyiv, the daughter of Yaroslav the Wise. Harald used his fortune to become the King of Norway and Elizaveta became the Queen of Norway. But after a few decades, Harald became a rival for the throne of England and lost his life in battle in England that led to William the Conqueror winning the English throne at the battle of Hastings in 1066.

UGG-NCR Board of Directors

As many of you know, for many years our UGG-NCR organization has been run by a dedicated Board of Directors consisting of Myron Momryk, Mike Dowhan, and Jerry Fikis. It has been an honour and privilege to serve our members in this capacity and to have had dealings with so many talented people in the Genealogy and Ukrainian communities.

Although Myron, Mike & Jerry have no desire to step down anytime soon, organizations always benefit from the addition of new blood. As such, we encourage anyone with a desire to assist in the running of the UGG organization in any capacity, to contact us at uggncr1@gmail.com. Roles can also be customized based on the interests and background of any interested candidate.

At our Oct 26 monthly meeting (webinar), we will bring motions to our members regarding the nomination and ratification of Board members for the 2021-2022 season

Ancestry.com at the Ottawa Public Library

Submitted by Gail Proschuk

The "library edition" of Ancestry.com normally available at any branch of the Ottawa Public Library, can be accessed during the pandemic from home. All that is required is a valid Library membership.

At this time, home access has been extended to December 31, 2021.

UGG-NCR Memberships and Donations

Last year we instituted an e-transfer capability to allow our members to forward us their voluntary annual membership fees (*suggested amount of \$20 per person/couple*) or donations from the comfort of home. We are a not-for-profit organization and use this revenue to defray our operating costs.

The e-transfer procedure is as follows:

- Log onto to your Bank or Credit Union's online or mobile banking app and select the account your dues/donation are to be paid "from".
- Choose or Add the **UGG Treasurer** and the email address: **uggncr1@gmail.com**
- Enter the amount (\$20.00 for annual memberships dues or any amount for donation). Note: This is an Autodeposit eTransfer!
- Click "Send". An email acknowledgement will be sent to you.

If you still wish to pay/donate by cheque or other means, please send us an email at uggncr1@gmail.com .