

The Ukrainian Museum and Library of Stamford

TREASURES AT THE UKRAINIAN MUSEUM AND LIBRARY OF STAMFORD

by Curator Lubow Wolynetz

Table and Casket

Table and casket— inlaid with straw and colored beads by Ukrainian political prisoners interned in Polish prison camps in the 1920s in Western Ukraine.

The table and casket are made from ebony stained wood. The top of the table and the top and sides of the casket were covered with a paste made by Ukrainian prisoners. The paste was made from their hard prisoner's bread mixed with water; then spread over the top of the table, painted, and inlaid with straw and colored beads.



ion's souvenir store. A committee in Lviv that provided medical care and artificial limbs for disabled veterans (many of whom had been prisoners of war) sent the table and casket to Chicago, hoping to sell the items for \$1000. When a buyer could not be found, the Ukrainian National Woman's League of America raffled off one of the kilims from their collection, raising \$285 for the veterans.

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culture. They built a Ukrainian Pavilion fully funded primarily by Ukrainian people living in the United States and Canada. The grand opening ceremony of the pavilion took place Sunday, June 25, 1933. In the pavilion there were three large exhibitions. There was a general exhibition which in-

formed the viewer about Ukrainian history and culture. Modern art was represented by the works of

the world-famous Ukrainian sculptor Alexander Archipenko, and also a folk art exhibition which consisted of a representative collection of folk artifacts purchased by the Ukrainian National Women's League of America.

Some institutions, organizations, and schools from Western Ukraine sent a variety of products to be sold in the Pavilion's souvenir store.

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In those years the UNWLA did not have permanent headquarters. Their folk art collection and the table in question were packed, stored and moved from place to place. To ensure the preservation of the table and casket, the UNWLA decided to donate the items to the Ukrainian Museum and Library of Stamford, Connecticut – the first and, at that time, the only cultural center for Ukrainian Americans in the United States. On September 5, 1937, the table and casket were delivered to the Museum in Stamford personally by the then president of the UNWLA, Anastasia Wagner. They have been on permanent display at the museum ever since.



How did these items come to be in our Museum?

In 1933 the city of Chicago was preparing for the World's Fair entitled "A Century of Progress". Ukrainian-Americans considered this a good opportunity to familiarize participants of the Fair with Ukrainians and Ukrainian