

## The Ukrainian Museum and Library of Stamford

# THE TREASURES OF OUR UKRAINAIN MUSEUM AND LIBRARY - A BRIEF RETROSPECTION *by Lubow Wolynetz, Curator*



In their efforts to awaken and instill an ongoing interest among the general public in museums, libraries and cultural institutions, both national and international communities are currently choosing specific awareness days, weeks, or months of the year. During these chosen times institutions are busily preparing an array of special programs and exhibits, conducting conferences and workshops, and holding receptions - all in a determined effort to make the community appreciate the existence of particular institutions, to comprehend their value, and generously to support them financially. All nonprofit institutions depend on the benevolence and generosity of their members and on charitable contributions from the community.

Our Museum and Library has chosen the month of October to be our awareness and appeal month. During this month we shall inform the local community about our work and also invite members of the Ukrainian community to support us in our projects. We have already mailed to our members a renewal reminder and to others an invitation to become new members. In these letters we spoke of some of our accomplishments of the past year. Now, however, we want to recount briefly the story of our beginnings, and to tell you who we are and what lies ahead for us.

Important undertakings require a prime mover, a leader with a far reaching vision and an implacable determination. We had such a leader in the person of Metropolitan



Constantine Bohachevsky. After purchasing the property in Stamford in 1933, he took immediate steps to organize a Seminary where the education of priests for the Ukrainian Catholic Church in America could take place; here he also planned a Ukrainian Museum and Library for Ukrainian immigrants in America, and for those in the Ukrainian Diaspora. Thus, the Ukrainian cultural heritage would be carefully and permanently preserved. For all future generations this facility would serve as a center of information, revealing to Ukrainians where they had come from, and helping them to discover and deepen the awareness of their Ukrainian identity. Such was the premise upon which our

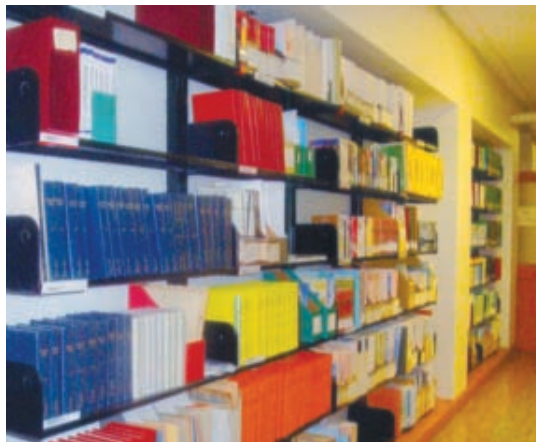


institution has been founded. This is how we originated. Our development has been slow, but steady. From the mid 1980s our Museum and Library rapidly began to grow and has developed into a formidable cultural institution, thanks to the outstanding leadership, resoluteness, and encompassing support of Bishop Basil Losten. Continuing support is also ongoing with our present Bishop, Bishop Paul Chomnycky, OSBM.

Who are we now? From the few hundred artifacts and a few hundred books in our Museum and Library in the 1930s, we have enriched and expanded our holdings a hundred fold. Our Museum collections consist of folk art, fine art, and religious art. We have nearly 10,000 folk art artifacts, about 7,000 paintings and sculptures, and close to 3,000 religious items which include icons, hand crosses, vestments, old printed books (the oldest one having been published in 1491). These collections are constantly being enriched by gifts and purchases. Just recently, we received from Dr. Yuri Rybak and Anna

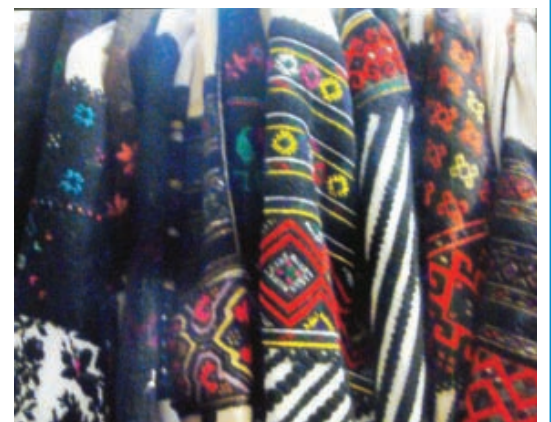
Ortynska an encolpion - a 12th century Kiyevan-Rus bronze pectoral cross; from the estate of Irena and Bohdan Chaikovsky, a collection of paintings which included works by Mykhailo Moroz, Liuboslav Hutsaliuk, Mykhailo Dmytrenko, Yakiv Hnizdovsky and others. Outstanding gifts from previous years include the following: - 22 paintings by Ed-

ward Kozak, from Lidia Bobovnyk; 18th and 19th century icon collection from the Ursula and Ostap Balaban estate; art collection from the Nadia Pastushenko estate, (which among others included 12 paintings by Osyp Bokshai, a renown artist from Zakarpattia), etc. Our Library has over 70,000 books and periodicals, a



holdings make it possible for us to accept copious materials of this nature.

From its very beginning, our Museum and Library has been at first fully supported but later and now only partially supported, by the Eparchy of Stamford. Hence supplements of revenue must come from fund-raising, donations, membership and bequests, all needed for the efficient management of our institution. In today's economic strains donations have a tendency to dwindle. To continue our work successfully and productively, we kindly appeal to you to be mindful of the importance and relevance of museums and libraries in general and of our Museum and Library in particular. Please be generous with your donations. Cultural institutions like ours are essential and vital for the communities which they serve in the present, and God willing, will serve in the future. Our Ukrainian Museum and Library has served the Ukrain-



ian community in America for almost 80 years. Invest in our cultural institution. Become a devoted friend. This will strengthen us, make it possible to expand our activities, and ensure a wise and sturdy direction for the future.

photograph collection of over 25,000, numismatic collection, recordings, and archives. The archive collection which consist of papers and documents of notable individuals and various secular and religious organizations is quite significant and is of immense value for scholars and for research. Lately we have been inundated with books from private libraries of individuals who themselves or their children, for various crucial reasons, needed to dispose of them. If we did not accept these collections, some of them might have come to an unfortunate end. The spacious accommodations which we have for our Museum and Library



**Explore and Experience Our Past**