

# 'Marriage' of chimney takes place in Strochitsy

The Belarusian State Museum of Folk Architecture and Everyday Life, near the village of Strochitsy, recently gathered guests for its *Autumn Fest*

By Svetlana Krylova

For more than 20 years, three ethnographic regions of the country have been represented: Central Belarus, the lake area and the Dnieper River area. Each has its own architecture and style of interior, which are fascinating to explore.

As well as the autumn holidays of 'Bogach' (a rich man) and 'Pokrova' (the protecting veil), guests were invited to partake in a traditional wedding ceremony 'Karavai', join a nobleman for a game of 'Pan Bykowski' and dance to the music by *Slavyansky Nastroi* folk group.

Perhaps the most inter-



Festival guests take part in restoration of 'Marriage of the Luchnik' ritual — and in traditional autumn holidays of 'Bogach' and 'Pokrova'

esting event was the restoration of the old 'Luchnik's Marriage' rite — based on the cult of fire, domestic spirits and Perun. More than a dozen recordings are

known to us today — mainly from Polesie in the 19th and early 20th century. The rite was traditionally held twice a year: in the autumn for Symon (September 1st),

when the days shorten, and in the spring, for St. Thomas's week (after Easter). The 'luchnik' (the chimney) is decorated with flowers, ribbons and embroidered

napkins, while vodka, pieces of bacon, corn, nuts and other treats are thrown into the fire in supplication. Participants express their wishes for wealth and health for

the family and the rite ends with the womenfolk singing a wedding song to the 'groom' (which makes clear that the newly-weds are Chimney and Work).

## Story finds its further development

Art gallery opens at Potemkin's Palace in Krichev, devoted to former owners

By Olga Kislyakova

The ancient city of Krichev is now celebrating its 876th anniversary, with the Palace of Potemkin launching an art gallery dedicated to the Golynski family. The mansion was built from 1778-1787 by famous architect Starov (who designed the Tauride Palace in St. Petersburg). It was first owned by Prince Grigory Potemkin who, in January 1776, gained his authority from Catherine the Second. Yan Golynski bought the palace and Krichev's lands from Catherine's favourite in 1787; his grandson, Stephen Golynski, took over in 1849, updating the residence in the fashionable Gothic Revival style of the time.

In the late 1980s, restoration of the mansion in Krichev began, in 18th century style. Its exquisite interiors were recreated from old drawings and funds were taken from regional and national budgets. In 2003, the Prince's Palace joined the State List of Historical and Cultural Treasures and, in 2008, it

opened to visitors. It includes the regional museum of local history and a registry office, as well as an art gallery dedicated to the Golynski family.

Museum Director Vadim

dating from 1719-1905 — all from the Golynski family archive. The oldest is from March 17th, 1719, in which Onufry Menzhinsky writes: 'a cart of

nolnitsky, recently wrote about these letters and the revival of Potemkin's Palace in Krichev in his book *The Golynski Family's Bad Luck*. After the opening ceremony of the art gallery in Krichev, he noted,

time, remembered her stories. She told me much about our famous ancestors, who moved to Russia from France on the eve of the revolution. On growing up, I began to study historical archives in Minsk and St. Petersburg, looking through a great deal of literature on Polish genealogy. I used the library at the Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg and that in Vilnius. The material I gathered described the Golynski family's history from the 18th century to the present day.

In Krichev, I learnt a lot of interesting things about my ancestors, thanks to the staff of the district museum and the former director, Natalia Morozova. It's vital to preserve our knowledge of history and share it with children. I'm very grateful to Belarus, as its people respect their heritage and historical and cultural values. Both the palace and museum in Krichev are beautiful, as are the portraits of the Golynski family. I'm sure that I'll return more than once."



Potemkin's Palace in Krichev

Ryskov recalls, "The Golynski family once had a very rich archive, including rare documents such as a royal manifesto of privileges, bearing the personal signatures of monarchs. From 1959-1960, workers replacing the palace's wooden floors found a clay pot holding 49 letters, requests and lists,

oats came to Cazimirovo Farm from Mogilev but Voight said that the oats lack milky ripeness and are mixed with plain oats.' In his letter, Menzhinsky asks for help from, probably, Kazimierz Golynski."

A descendant of the noble family, currently living in St. Petersburg, Alexander Kras-

## Significant event for literature

Unique materials about Yakub Kolas to be published in Minsk

The issue is timed to coincide with the 130th anniversary of the Belarusian literary classic, including works never before published and those which have been published in the periodical press. The volume presents previously unknown essays, diaries and autobiographical materials, alongside critiques by experts.

The publishing of the 20th volume of collected works of Yakub Kolas is a significant event in the national-cultural life of Belarus. The international scientific-practical conference *The Artistic Heritage of Yanka Kupala and Yakub Kolas in the System of Civil-Cultural and Spiritual-Aesthetic Priorities of the 21st Century* was held in Minsk, gathering about 60 speakers, including representatives of Poland and Ukraine.