

The M-Times

A Yearly Magazine by Mikhalsky, known as *Eugene*
№4, December, 2010

Introduction

Dear friends, here we describe some key events of 2010. This year was generally successive, especially in financial point of view although that could not have been expected from the country's economy. Alla was hired to manage and rule the institute's archives accumulated for 65 years, for a very reasonable fee. Myself have a few papers published, one of them with "Precambrian Research". However, I failed to get a grant from the Academy of Science, and had to cut off many interesting projects.

Winter fun

Wintertime brought piles of snow (both 2009/10 and 2010/11) and frost, making the town real beauty and wonder.



The Palace of Alexei Alexandrovich, a Zar's Brother, – next door to our Institute.

Using the chance the climate provided, we dugged out of stores our things to ski and skate for the first time maybe for 30 years. The exercises (one our skiing) were successful, meaning nobody got sick. Inspired, we kept on practice nearly every weekend. Alla prefers skating, but is too hard for me, so I found a cup

of coffee and cognac healthy enough when it is -10 C.



Sunday morning skiing just outside the courtyard.



A skate practice (see next page for the outcome).

Finland – more winter fun

In January we traveled by a hired minibus to Jyväskylä in central Finland and stayed a few days in a cozy hotel located on a lake shore (which is not surprising here). It was -20-25°C, and nevertheless Alla undertook a planned skate exercise (the bloody skates had been takes with us on this purpose). I had to scrape off some

snow piles to polish the skating path the Finnish use to make along the lakes shores.



The outcome.



Skating in Jyväskylä frozen lake (early morning).

That saved me lots of efforts. Return (or retrieve) into the worm hotel lounge was the most exciting episode.



In front of the hotel (you see the breath).

Other adventures included visits to some nice museums (free on Fridays, and it was Friday), some shopping, and a visit to an AquaPark. I must admit the Finnish do know how to heat up a sauna to real stove. I could not stay there much for medical reasons, but the Turkish bath was good for me. Unfortunately, no photos allowed, and that was a pity as women attend the same cabin (separate entries).



In the Falk museum.



A painting by Raimo Rainikainen.

Later on in April we undertook an ice-hockey fan trip to Helsinki to watch a play with the Suomi national team. We traveled four – together with Genny and his girl-friend. Eventually they showed us a couple of nice places in Helsinki, where we would never have dropped in, if alone.



The Hartwaal arena in Helsinki outside,



The domestic orchids.



Inside.

Summer curiosities

The year 2010 was a quite success in terms of in-door flowers which Alla grew up. We visited a special exhibition and a lecture on orchids just to learn she did total wrong way with them, but nevertheless she had pretty flowers in the blossom for about 6 months.



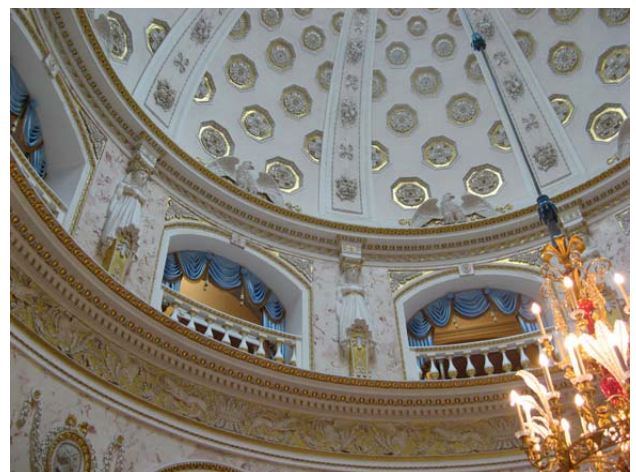
A very big hibiscus gave a bloom for the first time.

The city

We undertook a number of city and museum tours in the town itself and the suburbs. Watched things never seen before, like sculptures in the Konstantinovski Palace (the President's residence) done by M. Shemiakin.



Mikhail Shemiakin's *hemacht* in the "welcome place" on the shore



A Zar's Palace in Pavlovsk.



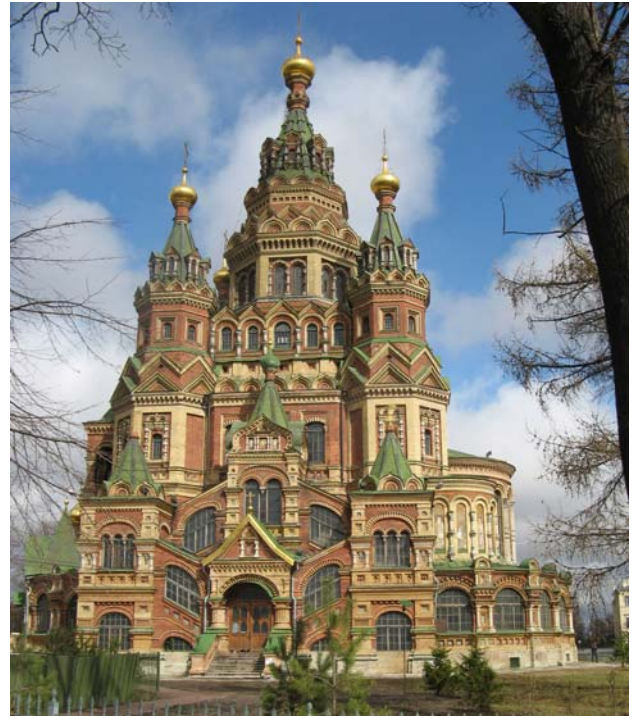
Had lot of fun on the City's Day watching nice carnival which of cause can not compare with the world known events, but at least *it was not raining*. In fact finally shower started, but that was so usual and expected, and nobody took it uneasy. An elephant looked happy.



Brass bands use to give performances this day.



On the 9-th of May my parents joined the veterans manifestation (4.5-km walk), and met a lot of hearty greetings from unknown people.



A church in Peterhoff is my favorite place our guests to take to.



My parents' dacha (a summer hut and some forest around) kept us physically active.



Italy

It was Alla's old dream to visit Italy. I have been in Siena in 1995 and in Florence in 2004 attending at geological conferences for just a few days. Maybe because they were just short and busy trips, I did not find these places really worth expenses. Rather foolish conclusion, I am now happy Alla did not believe me. We booked everything through the Internet, and spent 10 wonderful days in this lovely country (Florence, Siena, and Rome, with a day trip to Venice). Mid-September was a very pleasant time.



Florence is really a city where a human being must come sometime, if he only can.



During an evening walking Alla discovered herons (relatively large white birds) in the opposite site of the river. We crossed a bridge and observed them a lot, and made photos, but they are too dark to display this finding. My second visit to Florence was of course much more productive: full course of paint galleries (they had a large Caravaggio exhibition), historical places, and beautiful scenery.



Siena was our second major target. A *Contrada* had its monthly celebration just below the hotel's window when we were arriving. It was really noisy and funny!



We met again Franco Talarico, with whom I was in the Antarctic once upon a time, and visited a very nice Antarctic museum.



Alla had to penetrate a polar tent. I used to sleep and spend leisure time in similar tents for weeks and months down there on the ice. Lovely time.



Siena is indeed a fantastic town. Hundreds of years of undestroyed steady life stream! Words are useless. And new stuff perfectly fits the very old environment.



Venice welcomed us with some flood. We spent there only one day, enjoyed everything all around, learnt some of history and culture, met some colleagues from our institute, lost our way on the back walk, and found it was the best trip.



Finally we came to Rome for 3 days.

We worked hard as tourists. Visited that many museums, galleries, churches, and other places of interest, so I bet it was a world record for a 3-day stay.



In San Giovanni in Laterano.



In the footsteps of Galileo.



“OK, guys, pass by, nothing of interest”.

Scientific/business/social affairs

As I said, this year was relatively successful. I have a paper published with Precambrian Research for the first time, and also couple other papers with the Russian journals. Alla started additional job as the chief of our Institution's archives which have been accumulated chaotically for over 60 years. To manage achieves in a proper way she joined tuition by correspondence with a University in Moscow. It takes considerable efforts to complete the study. Besides, I also was a student for a week learning a GIS program. Eugene-the-junior continued his work with a book trading company, now as a manager for new chain shops.

So we did well in the year 2010, and *wish everybody*



A Happy New Year
2011 !