

Iga's Story of a Daring Escape to Freedom

“Imagine one of the darkest times in recent Polish history. It is 1980. The Soviet invasion is around the corner. The dying communist regime tries to save what can't be saved anymore. Chaos. My husband and I decide to leave before something bad happens.

The Poles are the first to pack their suitcases, so all trains and planes are booked out.

But we got the last two tickets to Vienna or to Freedom! Ironically, it is Friday 13th November – a day considered as bringing bad luck. But not to us....

In highest secrecy we left Warsaw, with our families heartbroken. Nobody else knew about our plans to leave the country. We were just going on holiday to Austria. A mere 45 minutes' flight meant Freedom!

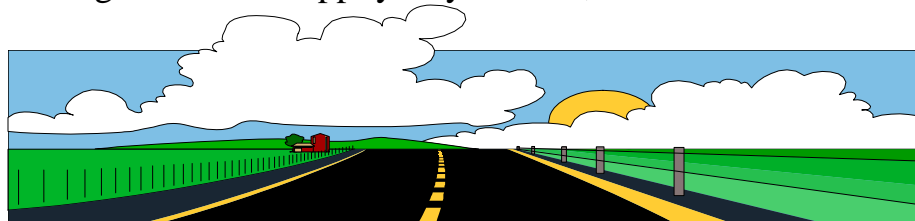
At the Warsaw airport the officials checked the luggage of a person next to us. The official searched thoroughly through his suitcase, pawing through his personal belongings. He found documents which you normally do not take with on holidays: university diplomas, birth certificates, etc. All the documents were confiscated. His freedom was stripped from him!

Then it was our turn. We panicked as we had also taken all our official documents. A really tired official glanced through our suitcases, our hearts jumping... Thank heaven they passed! And on the 13th! In every trouser leg we had hidden our documents required to start a new life somewhere in the big world.

Our decision was well timed, because on the following 13 December a state of emergency was declared, and Poland's doors were shut tight.

In Vienna we went straight to the refugee camp in Traiskirchen. I almost immediately became busy helping the Austrian officials there after they discovered that I could speak German.

Then we were transferred to the Steiermark, a beautiful region in southern Austria, where we befriended the owner of the local castle and wine maker. We had a lot of fun there, as you can imagine! So we happily stayed there, until we left for SA at the end of May 1982”.



Iga Súdya holds an MA in German, Honours in Russian. She was a lecturer, translator and editor in Poland. Since 1985 she has taught German at her own school “The German Connection” She welcomes anybody to attend her classes.

Iga is also interested in starting a Russian/English Group: 011-704 3466 / 082 344 6521



Letter from Young-Sook Koh, one of the first members of The New Horison.

She has kept her great sense of humour, and purposely spelt 'very' as 'velly' just as she used to pronounce it when she was here:

"I am back in Seoul 6 years, but still I miss Lingo Links and how to make new friends. I cannot talk English anymore. We need a Lingo Links in Korea too much.

I velly well remember Lingo Links, because when I came to Johannesburg, I was velly afraid and velly sad. I was afraid of robbers and hijackers. I did not drive, so I stayed home. Then another Korean take me to Lingo Links. After that, whole world changed and I velly happy.

Now I write about Buddha Birthday. I am Christian, but I love to celebrate Buddha Birthday. It is velly beautiful feast. I go with my mother. She is a big Buddhist.

Buddha's Birthday is on Lunar calendar, the 8th day of 4th month. So, like Easter, it change to different date every year. We go to the temple. They velly beautiful because they decorated with many thousands of paper lanterns. I like most the lanterns that are like lotus. Many colours, but most led (*red*). Inside lanterns is really live candles. Especially temple in mountain velly beautiful. In night it looks like heaven is coming to the world

We hang letters on the lanterns. On letters we write messages to dead family. And we write letters with beautiful good wish for people we love. Maybe to make them better, or to pass exam. We hang them on lanterns. Then we go inside temple and play (*pray*). That is why I so much love Buddha Birthday.

Sometimes temple burn down, because lantern burn and temple is made from wood. That is too much sad!

I hope you can understand my English still.

I think I now don't know any more people in 'The New Horison'. That was my Merry Mix. But many time I think of wonderful meetings we had and I miss.

Love from Young-Sook.



The Lotus---Greatest of Buddhist Symbols

Serves as the throne of the Buddha

Symbol of Enlightenment itself

Like the lotus, everyone can rise from being embedded in mud to above the water surface and eventually reach full bloom, beauty and purity.

By making and lighting lotus lanterns on Buddha's Birthday, people are reminded of the spiritual goals they can obtain.

