

FOLK CAMP

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



CONNECTING WITH TRADITION –
DISCOVERING OUR COMMON ROOTS



FOLK CAMP

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Year in review

Our year in review begins when summer camp comes to a close and we regroup after the massive effort that is camp.

After Summer Camp in August 2022, our team was spent. Our first camp coming out of the pandemic, and a year into full scale war in Ukraine, we've all had our systems overloaded and our capacities significantly altered. At the same time, we came to camp, in some ways, with more ambition than ever! With this combination, our core team was stretched as it struggled to support members & staff to contribute their time and expertise to the running. The challenges were taxing in a way that called for significant changes in how the organisation operates, but we were also reminded of how much we love it all - the music, the food, the handwork and craft... our rich traditions and supportive community. We knew we had to find a way to continue.

As we grow and mature as an organisation and grapple with successions of leadership, there is much to do in terms of setting up systems for long term viability and sustainability. This year was characterised by recouping, taking stock and strategizing, while optimistically and with resolve moving forward, looking to bring more people into the fold.

We worked on fundraising and reintroducing limited programming, while negotiating what our summer program might look like. We finally settled on the offering of a weekend summer camp, a week-long planning retreat for our organisers and artists, as well as a community forum to help steer the organisation's direction .

Looking ahead, we cannot imagine ourselves going forward continuing to do as much as we have done in the past without more people directly involved in leadership and organising roles. As an organisation we have several main domains of activities (camp being only one of them), and we are coming to a term of maturation where we have to grow and expand and send our roots deeper for stability and future viability or we cannot go on;

We need to focus our energies on strengthening and feeding the connections that exist between our many informal partnerships and community members to consolidate our efforts, so that we can have more stability and growth.

We recognize that there are more roles to fill than there are people currently involved (currently we still have several vacant positions on the FCC board, and on the summer camp team), and that

to fill these roles, we need to work together to co-create them and help everyone successfully plug-in where needed.

We have also identified that the scale of current operations calls for a shift from an operational board towards a governance board, creating new paid part-time positions of Executive Director and Administrator and our future work towards funding those positions.

We also endeavour as part of the larger picture, to continue to dedicate time and space to working with you, our dear community members, to clarify our desires as a group, our visions, and future activities. Please reach out, let us know how you want to be involved, and what we can build together!

Yours in community,

Peace,

Bozena Hrycyna
Executive Director



Winter Holiday Pop-up

December 15, 2022

Drom Taberna, home of Eastern European music and food in Toronto, hosted our community event which featured longstanding members and friends of Folk Camp and Kosa Kolektiv, including musicians, singers, and makers. Proceeds from the artisan market and Ukrainian food (made by “Canadian Battalion”) were donated to various defence and relief efforts in Ukraine.



Koliada Season

We kicked off the return to regular in-person programming with our Koliada Singing Workshops in Toronto led by Andrea Kuzmich and Iryna Lozynska. We received lots of interest from new (to us) singers, as well as new to Canada– Ukrainian newcomers displaced by the war.

Our group of koliadnyky swelled, and we had many fractions of the larger group go out on many occasions to perform. It was our busiest season to date. Also– our biggest fundraising achievement to date!



Melanka

For Melanka, we hosted a mask-making workshop led by Sasha Theodora Baczynska over two evenings in Toronto. Costumes were also started for the folk play to be performed at our annual Melanka zabava.

Sasha Theodora, Bozena Hrycyna, Anastasia Fyk, and Elisabeth Shipman spent time at Bozena’s farmhouse to complete the straw costumes, work on crafting the play, and discuss ritual theatre.

Our annual folk New Year’s gathering for Melanka- Rozkoliada took place on January 28 at the Belarusian Orthodox Church of St. Kirilo in Toronto. About 150 people gathered to make merry with traditional homemade foods and customs: carolling, folk theatre, music and dancing. It was a joy to welcome so many families and see the excitement in the children’s eyes.

Many people contributed to an absolutely memorable night, filled with laughter, wonder, and cheer!

Special thanks to: Sasha Theodora, who oversaw much of the set up, orchestrated the folk play, and much more; Bozena, who oversaw cooking the night before (and the overall event), Anastasia Fyk, Oksana Hawrylak, Lizzy Shipman, Dayna Pirso, and all the volunteers! Wonderful dancing into the late hours was possible thanks to our many beloved, talented musicians and crew (Rok, Matti, Jurgita, Imi, Tangi, Hungarian group Csango Unchained and many more). Special thank you to Misha of Drom Taberna for the bar, and the Belarusian community of Toronto and the parish of St. Kirilo, for their generous and unwavering support!



Singing Workshops Series

Traditional Ukrainian Singing workshops and weekly practices resumed after the winter holidays, with a focus on spring calling songs and haivky, and later, Kupalo summer songs. Led by Andrea Kuzmich with support from Iryna Lozynska and Mario Morello.



Sing with Ukraine

Created as a response to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on Feb 24th, 2022, "Sing With Ukraine" is an ad-hoc collective that revives authentic ancient polyphonic Ukrainian songs. The grass roots initiative was started by long-time singers from our community, and has largely been spearheaded by Anastasia Yerofeyeva, former director of our Kosa Koliadnyky, and others from the koliada group.

What began as a gathering of friends processing grief through song, has now become a mission to protect and amplify a uniquely Ukrainian identity, to show the humanity and culture of those affected, and to "wake up" listeners from indifference. Within a year of its existence, "Sing with Ukraine" has performed at over 30 fundraising events, taking part in raising over \$100,000 for Ukraine.

The group continues to be active and is welcoming any singers with traditional singing experience. <https://nastasiay.com/projects/>

Pysanky Workshops

Co-founders Bozena Hrycyna and Oksana Hawrylak continued to offer pysanky workshops across the province, at SVI in Toronto and as far away as the Lincoln Museum in the Niagara region, the Czech Embassy in Ottawa, and the Cordwood Folk School near Perth. Sales from pysanka making supplies continue to be a significant fundraiser for FCC.



Camp Garden Work Bees

Spring & Fall community work bees took place at the camp garden in June and September, respectively.

Garlic, potatoes, and many herbs and vegetables were planted for use at camp and gave folks a chance to learn and connect in the gardens, as well as contribute to the nourishment of our community.



“Meet Me in the Meadow, Again”



2nd Annual Scything & Haymaking gathering, July 21-23, 2023, Topsy Farms, Amherst Island.

Our second annual *Meet Me In The Meadow* was a successful weekend of scything, skillsharing, and community connection. In partnership with Topsy Farms (Rachel & Jake, our hosts) and Jim Jones of Ontario Land Skills Network, with contributions from Folk Camp organisers Bozena Hrycyna, Blair Richards-Koeslag, Johnny Suderman, and Oksana Hawrylak, as well as Sammy Tangir. We saw the return of friends made last year and new participants keen to learn hand mowing, and more about land tending in traditional ways.

We had mowing instruction, peening (hammering the blade) and honing practice, and hay raking in the field. At the farmhouse, we ground homegrown corn for woodfired tortillas and cooked lamb from the farm, worked flax to fibre, plaited rye into harvest tokens, screenprinted our tshirts, and celebrated the season with a feast and music.

Folks travelled from far and wide and contributed so much with their curiosity and desire to learn, willingness to teach and share (food, supplies, skills, stories). Thank you to all the participants, our hosts, and to Bruce and Carrie May Sudds, whose meadow we mowed!

Organisers Retreat & Camp Weekend



We took this year off from hosting Summer Camp as a way of catching our breath and assessing whether we could move forward with the camp as an organisation. This past year, the organisers had been performing double duty as the board of the organisation, *AND* camp organisers, and running camp in addition to everything else seemed impossible.

We decided instead of the usual Summer Camp to gather together with a smaller group of collaborators for an intensive planning retreat for several days, and then offer a community “camp weekend” at the end with a forum and feast.

At our planning retreat, we spent many hours dissecting the structures of Folk Camp. We looked at different aspects of the organization and our position in the wider community, as well as future possibilities. Presentations, conversations and forums were facilitated by the organisers: Bozena Hrycyna, Oksana Hawrylak, Elisabeth Shipman. Natalie Abdou, community member, and a skilled facilitator of the interplay modality, also supported some of the group exploration activities. Arnaud Brassard, graphic designer and community member, worked on presenting the topic of rebranding, (which we didn’t have a chance to go into then, but will continue with a series of conversations with the board).

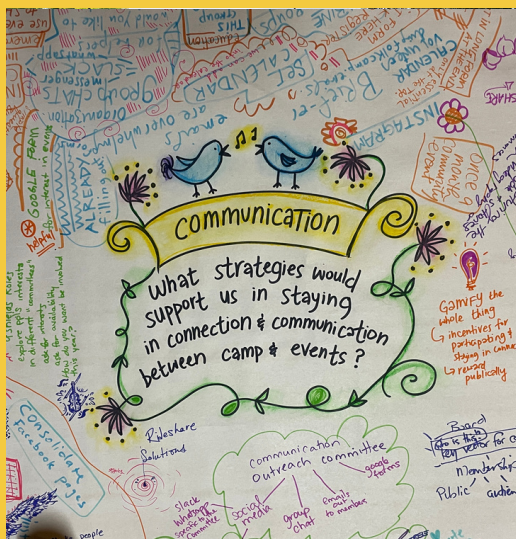
We covered many layers of Folk Camp structures - from programming, communications, to volunteers, and getting at what the camp means to us and the wider community...

We balanced our time with evenings of crafting and singing, instrumental jamming and even dancing! We took turns cooking nourishing, hearty meals for each other. We spent time in the gardens and by the lake.

On Friday night, we invited the larger community to join us for our very first Community Forum. As the board works towards creating changes within the organisation we need ways to be informed and in conversation with our community. Friday night's Community Forum was an effort towards this, as we hosted a very fun World Cafe!

About 40 community members showed up and spent 15 minutes at different stations, focused around the topics: communication, inclusivity & diversity, engagement, and future visions... and afterwards, shared their gleanings with the larger group. This was followed by some social dancing and singing.

The next day, Bozena presented a brief synopsis of the history of the organisation and the vision for the organisation renaming and regrouping, and most importantly, a picture of the scope of the activities involved in running Summer Camp (the map of which was developed earlier that week with our planning retreat). There was opportunity for discussion and for community members to see where they might fit into this picture.



Toronto Ukrainian Festival

Sept 15-17, Bloor West Village, Toronto.

The week leading up to the festival, Nadya Dziubaniwska and Bozena Hrycyna hosted two drop-in community craft sessions to work on painting banners. We participated in the parade along Bloor Street with banners for “Folk Camp”, “Kosa Kolektiv”, “Sing with Ukraine” and the slogan “Nasha Spadshchyna – Nasha Syl’a” (Our Heritage – Our Strength). We were joined by past and present community members, and family and friends singing and representing the beauty and vibrancy of Ukrainian folk culture with a rushnyk and korovai, koliada star, didukh, and woven runners.



Cultivate Festival

Sept 22-24, Haute Goat Farm, Port Hope

Folk Camp partnered with Cultivate Festival to provide programming, including Balfolk dancing (with Moskitto Bar), block printing (with Oksana Hawrylak), flag making (Bozena Hrycyna), a plant walk (Blair Richards-Koeslag), and Ukrainian folktales and songs (Lizzy Shipman) around the fire.



Kosa Choir!

After almost a decade of organising workshops, informal (and formal) singing sessions, and hosting an annual koliada (carolling) group, we decided to formalise the community singing into a choir!

The project dubbed "Kosa Choir " is dedicated to providing a safe and regular space for singers to develop the repertoire and extended vocal technique of traditional Ukrainian singing, known as ridnyj holos. Auditions were held late September, and rehearsals began in October. The choir will have two terms and run until early summer. Andrea Kuzmich is the musical director, and Iryna Lozynska, assistant.

Two big fundraising performances for Ukraine are scheduled for mid-November and early June; and there will be pop-up community singing activities around the usual Winter and Spring carolling opportunities.



Prairie Spring

In April, Bozena visited Anastasia Fyk in Manitoba who has launched two projects- the Chornozem collective in Dauphin, and the Steppe Kolektyv in Winnipeg. The groups had organised for Koliada and Melanka and were preparing for spring rites.

Bozena taught haivky in Dauphin and helped lead some at the Haivky event in Winnipeg organised by Anastasia and Steppe Kolektyv. It was a pleasure to support the initiative and see so many people come together to celebrate the coming of spring in the age-old ways of our ancestors, including: multi-generational diaspora, long established, and newly arrived folks. It was entirely reminiscent of the first Haivky events hosted by Kosa Kolektiv in Toronto many years ago; so heartwarming to see young families and individuals from all walks of life received into a supportive and dynamic community, and the hope and energy of the emerging new collective.



Financial Report

(UNAUDITED)

OCT. 1, 2022 TO SEP. 30, 2023

REVENUE	\$ 43,788.79
GRANT/SPONSORSHIP	\$ 10,800
COMMUNITY SUPPORT	\$ 4,486
MEMBERSHIP	\$ 948.27
FOLK SHOP	\$ 64.76
EVENTS	\$ 27,485.26
OTHER	\$ 4.50
HST COLLECTED	\$ 1,106.36
EXPENSES	\$ 24,540.79
ONLINE SALES FEES	\$ 380.10
HONOURARIUMS	\$ 4,200
LICENSES	\$ 300
PAYROLL EXPENSES	\$ 4,699.51
INSURANCE	\$ 581.04
SUPPLIES	\$ 226.72
FOOD/BEVERAGE	\$ 1,163.50
VENUE RENTAL	\$ 5,855
OFFICE SUPPLIES	\$ 17.08
WORKSHOP MATERIALS	\$ 1,221.95
EQUIPMENT RENTALS	\$ 132.81
MERCHANDISE	\$ 347.33
ONLINE PRESENCE	\$ 499.80
PROFESSIONAL FEES	\$ 4,849.12
OTHER (SHIPPING, BUSINESS, REFUNDS)	\$ 66.83

Financial report prepared
by Johnny Suderman



Board Members

LIZZY SHIPMAN – Chair

BOZENA HRYCYNA – Executive Director

IRYNA LOZYNSKA – Secretary

JOHNNY SUDERMAN – Treasurer

KAROLINA KISIEL – Director

OKSANA HAWRYLAK – Director

CANADA SUMMER JOBS
EMPLOYEE:
Dayna Pirso

WEBSITE: FOLKCAMP.CA

FACEBOOK: [@FOLKCAMP](https://www.facebook.com/FOLKCAMP)

INSTAGRAM: [@FOLKCAMP](https://www.instagram.com/FOLKCAMP)

EMAIL: INFO@FOLKCAMP.CA

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Image on this page: Painting by Lizzy Shipman



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Nadia Pelensky

December 23, 1951 – August 13, 2023

Nadia was born in Toronto on December 23rd, 1951. In her formative years, she was part of many organizations in her local community, and she developed a deep love and appreciation for her native Ukrainian heritage. While at University, Nadia earned an Honours Bachelor of Arts degree in History and Geography. Her curiosity extended into Ukrainian Canadian urban development in Toronto and led her to further studies in Ukrainian Immigration. Despite her interest in this field, her true passion was in teaching. It provided Nadia with an outlet of collaboration and creativity. After getting hired by a local school board, she went on to become a Specialist in Visual Arts and taught students in various divisions - from elementary to high school.

Outside of her career, Nadia was a devoted wife, mother and Baba. Nadia and her late husband Michael loved attending Zabavy to dance and socialize. It is at a friend's wedding where Michael asked her to dance, and she became the love of his life, wife and soulmate. They spent many years together with their children travelling around Canada. No vacation was complete without a stop in Northumberland county, exploring beautiful landscapes, sampling delicious cuisine and checking out the local sites. Her enthusiasm permeated into later years where she would share these rich experiences with her grandchildren.

Aside from attending some of the events or programs, Nadia was never directly involved with the work of Kosa Kolektiv or Folk Camp, however, she was proud of the work this young and dynamic group was doing in the community and spoke highly of their efforts to excite interest in the beautiful art, music, dance and vibrancy of Ukraine. Folk Camp was able to combine so many things she loved -- teaching, Ukrainian culture, creative expression and the beauty and bounty of Northumberland county.

Nadia passed away on Sunday, August 13, 2023.

Вічна пам'ять!
May her memory
be eternal!

Donors & Sponsors

Special thanks to our members,
donors, and sponsors!

Village Members: Myra Lutsenko, Roshell Bisett,
Yulia Yerofeyeva, Christina Reynolds, Johnny
Suderman,

Firekeeper Members: Marichka Galadza, Tanya
Mykytiuk, Jennifer Fedun

Artisan Members: Anastasia Fyk, Sammy Tangir,
Kailey Beckwith, Oksana Hawrylak, Dina Cindric,
Christina anderman, Christina Kells, Nadia
Dziubaniwska, Andrea Kuzmich, Blair Richards-
Koeslag

Friend of Folk Camp Members: Yura Koshulap,
Jurgita Zvinklyte, Sophia Ilyniak, Ethan Anderman,
Jer Campbell, Jessica Talbot

SPONSORS:

Ukrainian Credit Union Ltd.
Shevchenko Foundation

DONORS:

in Memory of Nadia Pelenska