

## Mike Bedwell – December 2016

Here's a money-making idea for Kyivites looking after Tourists this summer (when Ukraine was co-hosting the European Football Cup) -

- 1) Buy them a period ('season') ticket for the Metro, charging them a modest 500% mark-up on the cost price.
- 2) Send them off on a 'treasure hunt', armed with questions such as:
  - a) Taras Schevshenko station is so named to
    - see if you can transliterate from the Cyrillic
    - give you a chance of getting his name right in your own language
    - commemorate a hero who stood up to the Tsars, and whose cottage was spared by Hitler and re-roofed by Stalin.
    - give the friendly Metro militar the chance to practise her/his English by instructing you how to get from the station to said cottage.
  - b) Volksana sounds like a woman's name. Reasons for this are:
    - The Metro runs with greater reliability than the conventional trains which go from Volksal station, which sounds like a man's.
    - This reflects the Ukrainian culture, where the women are even more responsible than men, and run strictly to time.
    - The received wisdom is that the name comes from Vauxhall in London
    - If that wisdom is correct, the burghers of Vauxhauil should be flattered by the comparison.
  - c) Teatralna station is noteworthy for its bas-reliefs. There are various stories about their meanings and best translations of the accompanying slogans:
    - Lenin declaiming "workers of Kyiv Unite, you have nothing to lose but your trains"
    - As above, but "brains"
    - Lenin again, but boasting of his skill as dance-band leader for the unsophisticated, gold-toothed pensioners who gather in the foyer above on Sunday evenings, and who seem happier than the citizenry in general.
    - The tombstone of an American diplomat heard rejoicing 'Gee, I didn't know I could get a McDonald's in Russia ! '

Well, you get the general idea. And for prizes?

First A bowl of grandma's borsch, with smetana.

Second Two bowls of of borsch with Svetlana (who IS my grandmother).