



No other spot in all the world  
Can touch your heart as home.  
Let fortune bless or fortune curse,  
From hence you shall not roam!

*Mihály Vörösmarty,  
Hungarian poet, author,  
1 December 1800 – 19 November 1855*



**#635<sup>th</sup>\_ANNIVERSARY#**

**EXPLORATION TOUR OF MY HOMELAND -  
MOLODECHNO (1388 - 2023)**



*...Жыве з ім дум маіх сям'я  
І сніць з ім сны нязводныя...  
Завецца ж спадчына мая  
Ўсяго Старонкай Роднаю.*



*Янка Купала,  
беларускі паэт,  
7 ліпеня 1882- 28 чэрвеня 1942*

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## Historical Outline

The first mentioning of Molodechno was made in the Duke Dmitri's letter to Grand Duke Yagalo in 1383.

It was a part of Vilna province since 1413. During XIV-XVIII centuries a castle was built for the defence of the town. During this period of time the castle was owned by the Zaslavskis, the Mstislavskis, the Sangushkas, the Ragozes, the Radzivills, the Oginskis, the Tyshkeviches. At the end of the 17th century the castle became the property of magnate Oginski and turned from a fortified wooden fortress into a palace with a park and a greenhouse, a picture gallery and a library with ancient manuscripts.

During the Middle Ages important events took place in Molodechno. Negotiations between the diplomats of Poland and The Grand Duchy of Lithuania were held here in 1567 and resulted in the creation of The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (Rzecz Pospolita) in 1569. In 1740 Polish king August III granted Molodechno the privilege to hold fairs twice a week and to hold annual fairs in spring and autumn.

As the result of divisions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth Molodechno was joined to Russia.

Napoleon stayed in the residence of Oginski during his retreat from Moscow. Here he wrote his last letter to Paris explaining the reasons of his defeat. Michael Kutuzov, the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army, stayed in the Castle some days after he had won a victory over the French Troops.

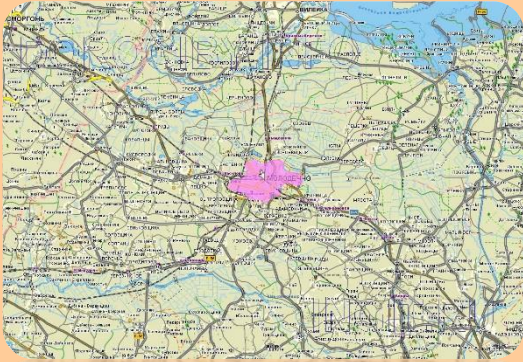
In 1814 the Molodechno castle was owned by Michael Kleofas Oginski - the prominent composer, the author of the famous polonaise "A Farewell to the Homeland'. At the end of the XIX century the castle went completely wild and vanished from the face of earth. One can find only earth mounds on its site, and they are considered to be an architectural monument of the town.

1864 is the year of foundation of the Teacher's Seminary, the first one in The Russian Empire. The building of the former seminary, built in the late baroque style is now one of the major architectural sites of Molodechno.

The former mart of Molodechno now is known as Old Site (Staroye Mesto). Here one can find an architectural monument of the XIX century - the Saint Protection Church (1871).

The town rapidly developed in the 1970s-1980s. Along the major transport artery which is the part of Starovilenski Trakt appeared the street, known as Vyaliki Gastinets lined with significant town buildings.





## Geographical Outlook

The district was formed January 15, 1940. Located in the northwest of Minsk region our district borders on Volozhin, Vileika, Minsk and Smorgon districts. About 75% of the district is located on Minsk Upland. The relief is hilly. The area is 1.39 thousand sq. km. The rivers Usha, Vilia, Berezhina flow through the region. The part of Vileika-Minsk water system is situated here. The district specializes in the production of milk, meat, grains. The cultivation of potatoes, beet and flax is also developed here. There are dozens of agricultural organizations and private farms on the territory of the district. More than 50 enterprises of the major industrial group work in the district.

More than 2300 economic entities and more than 4000 individual entrepreneurs work in the district.

The territory of the district is divided into the town of Molodechno, urban settlement Radoshkovichi and 14 village councils (268 settlements all in all).

The largest settlements in the district are urban settlement Radoshkovichi (population - 6341 people), settlement Chist (population - 6109 people), village Krasnoe (population - 3100 people). The population of the district consists of Belarusians - 90.0%, Russians - 6.8%, Ukrainians - 1.1%, Poles - 0.6% and other nationalities - 2.0%.



## Coat Of Arms Of Molodechno



The first official coat of arms of Molodechno was adopted in 1988. It was fern growing on a hill. Our senior residents still remember it.

The contemporary coat of arms of the town was brought to life in 1999.

The coat of arms of Molodechno: "The Virgin is in gold crown, blue-and-gold clothing and gold mantle with red lining. The Virgin is standing on a silver cloud holding a blue coverlet with three Chevalier Crosses".

The registration number of the coat of arms in The Belarusian Heraldic Register is 39. It was adopted by the Town Council of Deputies on December 21, 1999.



## Named After Them

### Sergei Osipovich Pritytsky

S.O. Pritytsky is a Belarusian statesman and politician. He was one of the organizers of the Komsomol underground and partisan movement in Belarus during the Great Patriotic War. He was a colonel.

Pritytsky was born on January 19, 1913 in the village Garkovichi in Grodno Region into a peasant family.

He was awarded four Orders of Lenin for his partisan struggle in Belarus in 1943 and in Poland in 1945. In 1944 - 1945 he headed the staff of the partisan movement in Poland. In 1949 - 1962 he was the First Secretary of Grodno, Baranovichi, Molodechno and Minsk Regional Councils of the Communist Party of Belarus.



### Fyodor Grigoryevich Markov

Fyodor Markov is the commander of the Minsk regional partisan brigade named after Voroshilov, a colonel. He was born on December 24 th 1913 in the village of Kochanishkis in Vilna province (now it's Lithuania) in the peasant family.

Markov graduated from the Teacher's Seminary in 1934 and later worked as a teacher. During the period of 1936-1939 Markov was imprisoned for his revolutionary activity and in 1939 discharged by the Soviet troops. After this Markov worked as a vice-chairman of the regional executive committee in Vileyka.

When the Great Patriotic War began, Markov joined the Red Army in the company of the Western battlefront. He also took part in the defensive frontier battle in Belarus. In August 1941 Markov was withdrawn from the front line and began to serve on the home front in Vileyka region. There he served as a commander of a partisan unit. In October 1942 they organized an echelon derailment (railway Vilnius - Dvinsk). In April 1942 they carried out the assassination of the high-rank German officer August von Beck and his suit.



### Andrey Ivanovich Volynets

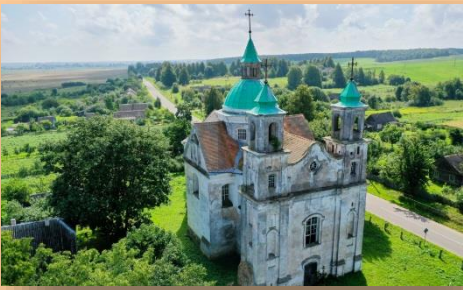
Andrey Ivanovich Volynets was born in January 1904 in the village Zheltki Vileika district, Belarus. He was born in a peasant family and started his career at the age of thirteen. In 1926 he finished the regimental artillery school in Novo - Vileika. In 1934 he became a member of the underground Communist Party of Western Belarus. Later Volynets was arrested by the Polish authorities and sent to prison in Vileika.

During the occupation of Vileika by the Nazi army Volynets organized a patriotic anti-Nazi group.

After the war the former commander of the partisan brigade was in charge of the local economy restoration. First he was appointed Chairman of Vileyka Town Council, then he hold responsible posts in Vileyka and Molodechno District Councils, in Minsk Regional Council.



## Living Witnesses Of The Epoch



The Trinity Roman Catholic Church in Benitsa (founded in 1704) with its picturesque Baroque appearance stands out among the architectural monuments of Molodechno district. Its silhouette is formed by a high dome and exquisite tiered towers at the main facade unified by a decorative gable. It faces the baroque gate and The Pokrovskaya Church (founded in the 19th century ) built of rubble stone.



The monument to Starovilinsky Tract , one of the oldest main roads in the district, was erected in 1979 in the village of Myasota, standing by it. The road was running from Minsk to Vilno through Radoshkovichi, Molodechno, Smorgon and Oshmyany. A huge boulder on the roadside has the outline resembling the map of Belarus. The nearby boulders contain the tablets with the names of famous people who were taking the road.



The settlement of Radoshkovichi was first mentioned in the written chronicles in 1447 due to the foundation of St. Trinity Roman Catholic Church. A new one with the same name was built four centuries later in the classicism style. Yan Lutsevich, subsequently well-known as Yanka Kupala, was christened there in 1882.



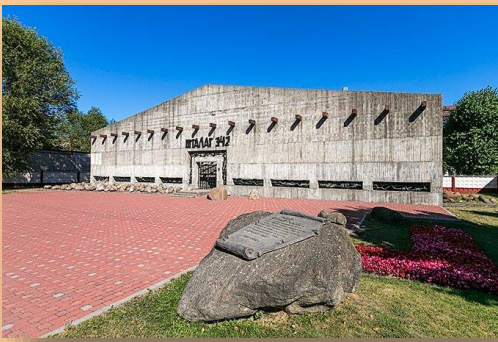
You can behold both a chapel and a church in Lebedevo. Located at the cemetery and built of yellow brick the chapel seems to fly up. This miniature construction of the beginning of the 20 th century indicates a good taste and abides the new gothic style. The Trinity Church (founded in 1869) follows the traditions of the pseudo-Russian style.



The unforgettable scenery of Radoshkovichi is predefined by a picturesque hilly landscape. One of the most spectacular spots of its panorama is Ilyinskaya Church, a nice specimen of folk architecture of the 20 th century.



There is a small village Gruzdovo on the R56 highway connecting Volozhin и Molodechno. Its peculiarity is an old wooden church. Church of the Deposition of the Robe of the Holy Mother of God was built in the village of Gruzdovo in 1871. The church is an architectural monument of folk wooden architecture. The temple is made entirely of wood in classical forms for churches of the late 19th century. The unique miraculous icon of the Mother of God Gruzdovskaya of the beginning of the 15th century is kept in Gruzdovo.



## STALAG 342



"Stalag 342" (a prisoner-of-war camp) was one of nine concentration camps on the territory of Belarus in 1941. "Stalag 342" consolidated of 3 prison camps and its 13 branches in railway stations. The prison camp operated until the Red Army liberated Molodechno in July 1944.

The prison camp was located in the north-east of town. It was housed in barracks with no proper living conditions. About 30,000 people were kept in the concentration camp. Prisoners of wars were held together with civilians of all ages including teenagers and the elderly.

All the prisoners tortured and executed by shooting were dumped in the pits for 150-200 and 300 within a 150-200-metre distance from the prison camp. There were 221 graves in the cemetery. 73 graves had crosses with inscriptions about the number of buried prisoners.

At night exhausted and starving people lay together in groups and covered themselves with anything they could get to keep warm. However, it was of no help as in the morning many prisoners were found dead. 33150 people died during winter time.

The treatment of the prisoners in the death camp was inhumane. The barracks were overcrowded with people. The majority of prisoners of war and civilians were held in the open air for several days. They were fed once a day: 100 g of bread mixed with sawdust and 1 liter of thin soup from products unfit to eat made a ratio per person. Once a day the prisoners were given a loaf of bread and two water tins per seven people. Insanitary conditions of Molodechno death camp led to constant typhoid epidemic and other diseases. Hard work weakened the prisoners. Starvation and diseases, cold and humiliation resulted in death of thousands of Soviet people.

Annually on April 11, the Day of Liberation of Nazi Concentration Camp Inmates, relatives of "Stalag 342" victims get together near the memorial and participate in commemorative events.





## Literary Heritage Of Molodechno District

Molodechno district is famous for the countrymen who greatly contributed to its culture and literature. Historians, for instance, suppose that **Symon Budny** (1530-1593) wrote his book "About God's conception" just in Molodechno district, in the village of Khokhlovo.



**Yadvigin Sh - Anton Ivanovich Levitsky** (1869-1922), one of the national Byelorussian prose founders, lived and worked in the borough of Radoshkovichy. His friends were Yanka Kupala, Maxim Bogdanovich, Zmitrok Byadulya.

In 1923-1931 **Bronislav Tarashkevich** (1822-1938), a public and political figure, a literary critic, the author of the first "Byelorussian Grammar For Schools", lived and worked in Radashkovichy.



**Yanka Kupala** (1882-1942) was born and began his literary activity in Molodechno district too. There are branches of **The Yanka Kupala State Literary Museum in Yakhimovschyna and Vyazyinka** villages, that are in Molodechno district. Kupala lived and worked as a distiller assistant in Yakhimovschyna. Nowadays visitors have a chance to touch the door handle Ivan Lutsevich touched and can imagine a young poet writing secretly "And who is going there?" in the intervals between his routine work.

The amateurs of Byelorussian culture have come to Rakutevschyna in July - August since 1983. It is a village in Molodechno district. At the beginning of the last century **Maxim Bogdanovich** came here on a visit to Lychkovsky country estate. There he wrote some of his poems that were included in the book "Vyanok", created the poem "Veronika". Nowadays there is a museum in the former country estate.

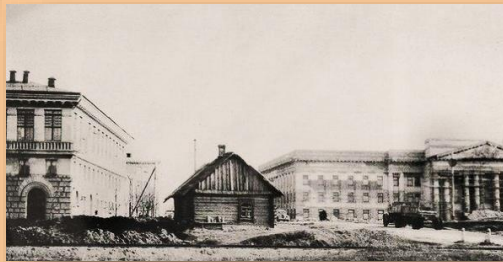


**Ignat Buinitsky** (1861-1917) - Byelorussian actor, director, the creator of the professional Byelorussian theatre spent several years in Molodechno during World War I.



# GUESSING CHALLENGE

Do you recognize the place in Molodechno ?





## Nature and Leisure Travel

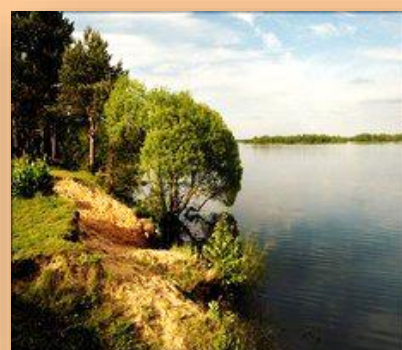
Molodechno district is a land of uniquely magnificent nooks. Getting to the area of this part of Belarus is as if you find yourself in another reality: neat mottled houses, age-old oaks, spruce trees, winding rivers and crystal-clear air. It's no coincidence that the basic background on the coat of arms of Molodechno is blue. It symbolizes the azure of local lakes and rivers, flowering flax, the grandeur and beauty of Belarusian nature.



The district is home to the Bortniki Landscape Reserve, the Weymouth Pine Biological Reserve, the river Vyazyinka Hydrological Reserve, a natural monument Larch in Lebedevo Forestry, hydrological natural monuments Krinitsa in Leshno, Krinitsa Bogdanovicha.

The rivers that flow through the district are the Usha, the Viliya, the Berezina. Part of the Vileyka Minsk water system passes through the area. These water bodies are a popular tourist destination.

The river Usha is one of the most beautiful tributaries of the Eastern Berezina. The water route passes through a sparsely populated area. The river is winding enough to improve one's kayak management skills. During the journey one can encounter a small number of such obstacles as fallen or sunken trees, but this just gives thrills to the trip down this beautiful river.



The biggest artificial fresh water reservoir in Belarus is situated on the river Viliya. Wonderful views of the water surface are open to the visitors from the banks of the Vileyskoye Reservoir. The Vileyskoye Reservoir was constructed at the beginning of the 1970s to increase the water supply to Minsk. Now the reservoir is being used for tourism. Its high pine-covered coast has been appreciated by tourists every year coming here with tents.

One of the most popular tourist destinations is the river Viliya which runs in the north-east of Belarus. The total length of this waterway is 510 km. Today its banks are full of campsites beaches. The Viliya is the main tributary of the Nioman.



# WELCOME

## To Our Heartwarming Home In The Town Centre



Homeland... This word means everything for lots of people, because there is nothing dearer and more beautiful for a human being than his native place. I'm not sure I'll be absolutely objective but man's love for his own home is a kind of weakness that is easy to explain. We can visit the most exotic countries and see the Seven Wonders of the World but still feel homesick and are always happy when we return home because here we can be sure - we're loved and protected. My native town Molodechno is the most fascinating nook for me, the place I like most of all. Here I was born, finished School №6 (now Gymnasium №6). Here I have lived all my life. My friends and my parents live here. My dearest reminiscences are connected with Molodechno, especially with my Gymnasium that has always been a unique place for us, its devoted pupils, students, graduates.

Gymnasium №6 of the town of Molodechno was organized in 2003. It was founded on the basis of School №6 with extensive English learning. It first opened its doors September 1, 1960. In 2003 the School was reorganized into the Gymnasium.

The slogan of our Gymnasium has always been "To Do, To Be, To Become The Best". Our priority is creation and constructive labour. We are focused not on having but on being and becoming and we reach our dreams with commitment. Due to this, we cooperate with The Belarusian Peace Fund and we are members of Belarusian Association of UNESCO clubs. Constant participation in charitable and educational programmes of the named above organisations gives a chance for both students and teachers to get involved in helpful affairs and acts of kindness for the benefit of the people of our country and the people of the world.



**Stepan Timofeevich Demeshko** (1922-2002) stood at the origins of Gymnasium No. 6. He was born in the village of Bushmin, Orsha district, Vitebsk region. During the Great Patriotic War he participated in the partisan movement. In 1944-1959 S.T. Demeshko worked in The Molodechno Regional Committee and The Radoshkovichi District Committee of the Communist Party of BSSR. From 1960 to 1992 he headed Secondary School No. 6 in Molodechno. Stepan Timofeevich was a propagandist, lecturer of the Town Committee of the CPB, Deputy of the Town Council of People's Deputies. He was awarded the Orders of Lenin, The Order of Glory of the 3rd degree, numerous medals. In 1985 Stepan Timofeevich was given the title of Honored Teacher of the BSSR. S.T. Demeshko was also awarded special Badges "Excellence In Public Education" of the USSR and the BSSR.

