

## About the “Lietuvos Valsčiai” series

Established in 1994 the Versmė Publishing House, a serial book publisher, is dealing with preparation and publishing of monograph series only under the title of “Lietuvos Valsčiai” devoted for Lithuania’s Millennium celebrated in 2009, and starting from the 15<sup>th</sup> monograph of “Gelvonai” also for the Centenary of the Restoration of the Lithuanian State to be celebrated in 2018. The books published are also dedicated to other anniversaries of events important to the state, its towns, settlements and parishes.

The title of the series is not accidental: the rural districts called *valsčiai* formed in Lithuania in mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and abolished in 1950 were the smallest and rather stable administrative territorial units, which had united the people of the same ethnical culture (e.g., the boundaries of *valsčiai* and parishes, as well as dialect areas coincided).

Based on reminiscences of people, archive data, scientific studies, written sources and material, each serial book is being written by large teams consisting of up to 120 author teams: prominent Lithuanian historians, archaeologists, ethnologists, folklorists, linguists, sociologists, naturalists, local lore investigators et al. Total number of authors is over 1 700 with more than 300 persons holding scientific degrees (see [www.versme.lt](http://www.versme.lt)).

The “Lietuvos Valsčiai” series is a multi-volume edition about Lithuania’s towns, townships, villages, homesteads, landscapes and their history from the olden times to the present days, about independence fights, traditional culture, trades, calendar and family traditions, custom laws, folk wisdom, churches, celebrities, features of dialects and local sub-dialects, folklore, ethnical minorities and their traditions etc.

“Lithuanian Local Researches” as a generalised serial collection of scientific papers is the 21<sup>th</sup> monograph in the “Lietuvos Valsčiai” series (Part I: 2000–2002 scientific work, 1 082 p.).

The following series have appeared before: “Žagarė” (dedicated to the 800<sup>th</sup> jubilee of Žagarė, 912 p. in 1998) that was the first book issued with the official logo of the Lithuanian Millennium Celebration; “Obeliai. Kriaunos” (2<sup>nd</sup>; 480<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Obeliai, 864 p., 1998), “Plateliai” (3<sup>rd</sup>; 550<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Plateliai, 800 p., 1999), “Žiobiškis” (4<sup>th</sup>; 200<sup>th</sup> jubilee of Žiobiškis parish, 1 024 p., 2000), “Širvintos” (5<sup>th</sup>; 525<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Širvintos, 776 p., 2000), “Lygumai. Stačiūnai” (6<sup>th</sup>; 90<sup>th</sup> jubilee of Stačiūnai parish, 896 p., 2001), “Veliuona” (7<sup>th</sup>; 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Magdeburg Law granting to Veliuona, 1 176 p., 2001), “Raguva” (8<sup>th</sup>; 500<sup>th</sup> jubilee of Raguva, 1 128 p., 2001), “Seredžius” (9<sup>th</sup>; 710<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Seredžius, 1 238 p., 2003), “Kvėdarna” (10<sup>th</sup>; 675<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Kvėdarna, 1 160 p., 2004), “Papilė” (11<sup>th</sup>; 665<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Papilė, Part I, 1 082 p., 2004; Parts II and III, 752 p., 2006), “Tauragnai” (12<sup>th</sup>; 750<sup>th</sup> jubilee of Tauragnai, 1 364 p., 2005), “Musninkai. Kernavė. Čiobiškis” (13<sup>th</sup>; 445 years for Musninkai, 725 years for Kernavė, 475 years for Čiobiškis, 1 304 p., 2005), “Laukuva” (14<sup>th</sup>; 750<sup>th</sup> jubilee of Laukuva, Part I, 924 p., 2005; Part II, 950 p., 2008), “Gelvonai” (15<sup>th</sup>; 625<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Gelvonai, 1 384 p., 2009), “Baisogala” (16<sup>th</sup>; 470<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Baisogala, 1 056 p., 2009), “Gruzdžiai” (17<sup>th</sup>; 375<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Gruzdžiai, Part I, 1 000 p., 2009; Part II, 1 304 p., 2010), “Endrie-



*Although the presentation of “Lietuvos Valsčiai” series at the traditional Vilnius Book Fair takes place yearly, the visitors and hubbub at the stand seem to be commonplace. February 19, 2010. Photo by Jonas Kliučius*



*Accompanied by the director general of the LITEXPO Centre for Exhibitions and Congresses Aloyzas Tarvydas (left), the Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania Andrius Kubilius visited the stand of the 100-volume the “Lietuvos Valsčiai” series at the Vilnius Book Fair–2010, where the head of the Versmė Publishers Petras Jonušas (right) read him an inscription in the White Book (still with blank pages) of the “Panemunis” monograph: “It depends only on prompt efforts of all of us that the pages of this book will not remain blank...” The PM’s father, late Vytautas Kubilius, Professor in Lithuanian literary criticism, was not only a native of the Panemunis Valsčius (rural district), but also contributed significantly to the issue of the “Lietuvos Valsčiai” series. February 18, 2010. Photo by Jonas Kliučius*

javas" (18<sup>th</sup>; 230<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Endriejovas, 1 412 p., 2010), "Vepriai" (19<sup>th</sup>; 625<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Vepriai 1 320 p., 2010) and "Žeimelis" (20<sup>th</sup>; 510<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Žeimelis, Part I, 888 p., Part II, 908 p., 2010).

Total number of pages of these monograph books published (26 volumes) together with the maiden soft-cover book issued under the title "Sintautai. Žvirgždaičiai" (430 p., 1996) is 28 358 pages.

The celebration of the Millennium of the first reference to Lithuania in written historical sources is reasonable to relate with more modest jubilees of its towns and townships and give an implication to these anniversaries of their first written reference by a written word—a book.

In pre-war Lithuania there were more than 400 rural districts (*valsčiai*), which were later replaced by neighbourhoods (*seniūnijos*) numbering now about 300. With a hope that our capacities will enable us to publish books about the majority of them, we kindly invite culture institutions, district governments, neighbourhoods, local activists, local lore investigators, state men, culture activists, sponsors and all writers to join, without hesitation, the team preparing and publishing the hundred volumes of the "Lietuvos Valsčiai" series about Lithuanian history and traditional culture. A great work to last several decades is waiting for you.