

## Prezident Nausėda Visited ALKA



Prezident Nausėda and ALKA president Dr. Girniuvienė review the old books kept at ALKA.  
(photo by G. Šermukšnis)

On September 23 the President of Lithuania, Gitanas Nausėda, visited the American Lithuanian Cultural Archive in Putnam, CT.

Thanks to his initiative, ALKA signed an Agreement of Cooperation with the Lithuanian Museum Association (LMA).



**Dr. Aleksas Gedmintas and Onutė Traitor, ALKA Bboard members, signing the Agreement of Cooperation. Standing are President Nausėda, LMA Board member Eva Stonkevičienė, ALKA Treasurer dr. Žara Girniūtė, M. Girniuvienė. (photo by R. Dačkus)**

As the first stage of this cooperative venture, special attention will be focused on old books published before 1911. They will be sent to various museums in Lithuania (of which there are over 100), where they will be restored and displayed to the public.

This project, initiated by President Nausėda, is significant in two ways.

First, these books are important in that they reflect the love for Lithuania felt by American Lithuanians.

The history of American Lithuanians is a part of the history of Lithuania itself. It is the story of people who loved their country, but could not live there.

Lithuanians who moved to the USA before 1911 were part of the first wave of immigrants from Lithuania. Usually they were children of farmers coming to the USA to earn money they could share with the folks back home in Lithuania. Usually they were poor – their families had to sell an animal (a pig or cow) to afford to pay for the ticket on the ship bound for America.

While living in the USA they did not just remember their homeland, but they also lived for her. They read Lithuanian books and periodicals which they received from Lithuania. They themselves wrote books in Lithuanian and translated books from other languages (Polish, English, Russian) into Lithuanian. They established publishing houses for Lithuanian books.

ALKA wants this love of Lithuania and this history to be presented to compatriots in Lithuania in a very concrete manner. Books, exhibited in a professional manner, with researched descriptions of background history, can achieve the desired results. ALKA is pleased that these books will be exhibited in rural regions, the very places from which these immigrants came, the immigrants who could show their love of Lithuania only from afar.

Secondly, old books usually need a professional's attention. Frequently they need to be restored because their pages are crumbling, their spines are separated from the books, their covers are damaged. ALKA has kept these books on display for over 60 years, but we do not have the wherewithal to restore them. We are happy that they will be in professional hands in Lithuania.



**President Nausėda, ALKA Board members, ALKA volunteers and guests from Lithuania. (photo by R. Dačkus)**

ALKA has more than 45,000 books. About 300 of them will be travelling to Lithuania to perform a significant educational assignment. For this we are very pleased and quite grateful to President Nausėda and his own love for Lithuanian culture, history and perhaps most of all, for her books.

*Dr. Mirga Girniuvienė  
LKMA / ALKA President*