

# My Hero City Rostov-on-Don



by Kirilyuk Lera

*The pain we can't  
ignore*

*We are in eternal debt*

*We remember what  
they fell for*

**Rostov-on-Don was conferred the status of “City of Military Glory” on May 5, 2008, for “courage, endurance and mass heroism, exhibited by defenders of the city in the struggle for the freedom and independence of the Motherland”**

On June 22, 1941 the USSR was attacked by Nazi Germany. From the first day to the last the Russian people fought heroically against the enemies. People from many republics and countries took part in the battles of Moscow, Leningrad, Stalingrad, Volgograd, Kursk, the Caucasus, the Ukraine, the Crimea and the Baltic republics. About 27 million soviet people died during the war. 3.3 million of soldiers were killed or died of injuries, 555 thousand people died of illnesses, 4.5 million people were captured and were missing. Over 15 million civilians died of hunger and diseases.





# Chronicles of Rostov-on-Don



**Temporary bridge across the river Don,  
1942, March**

**Almost destroyed Gorky Theatre,  
1942, July**



**Budennovskiy Street, ruined buildings,  
1942, August**



My city was also one of the cities defenders.

Rostov-on-Don is included in the heroic chronicles of the Great Patriotic War as the city where the Russian Red Army stopped the occupation and started to hold the line. In the plans of the Nazi commanders, Rostov-on-Don was a strategic goal because it was the Gate to the Caucasus.

My citizens had to protect the city in order to prevent the fascists get to the sea. That would mean defeat and nobody knows what might happen if Rostov inhabitants did not stop the Nazi.

German troops first approached Rostov November 17, 1941. Though, the citizens heroically defended their native land, the Germans managed to get into the city. Sixty thousand volunteers were ready to fight for the city.

There were formed several combat-engineer units, anti-craft regiments, 440 Artillery Regiment, and 339 Rifle Division. All these people were just ordinary citizens who wanted to stop the enemy.

Tens of thousands of the inhabitants dug trenches and special places for hiding military equipment. They also got 10 million cubic meters of soil to build strengthening fortification round the city. Despite tiredness and hunger, people continued working.



# The saddest story of Zmievszkaya Balka...

This is a horrible story of Zmievszkaya Balka.

These doings were inhuman and violent.

This beam was made by the Nazi to carry out the massive execution of innocent people. In 1942, during the second occupation of Rostov, the Germans killed and buried more than 30 thousand people there, including about 27 thousand Jews-women, children and elderly people.

It is difficult to imagine those days, when you look at this peaceful green valley, but the truth is shocking.

August 11, young and old, healthy and sick, hundreds of Jewish families walked through the streets of the city. Other people were put into vans where they had to breathe with the exhaust. This was a cruel plan of killing of weakened people. The rest of the people surrounded by guards with dogs were taken to the beam. Then the Nazi opened fire.

There were so many people killed that the shots were heard all day and night long.

Later, this place became a death beam for captives, people suffering from mental illnesses and other Soviet civilians.





# Rostov today...

We still remember of the victims of the war. Our city is full of commemorative tablets and monuments which remind us of the horrible days of the Great Patriotic War. There are lots of flowers by the monuments all year round. We remember the heroic deeds of our ancestors...



I remember, I am proud...

