



# Leaving Home: The Remarkable Life of Peter Jacyk

*John Lawrence Reynolds*

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## **Leaving Home: The Remarkable Life of Peter Jacyk** John Lawrence Reynolds

Petro (Peter) Jacyk survived two of the most horrendous events of the 20th century: the Ukrainian famine of the 1930s, instigated by Stalin and responsible for the deaths of untold millions, and waves of invasion and slaughter from Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany. Fleeing postwar Europe in 1949, he arrived in Canada with seven dollars in his pocket and horrific images in his memory. His adopted country would inspire a deep and lifelong love in Jacyk. Here at last, as he put it, he was “free to live and free to succeed.” Through the Toronto building and land development firm he founded, he established himself as an economic and cultural powerhouse. Exacting in his dealings with others, yet a generous mentor, he sought excellence in all of his pursuits. In time, the man who had begun as a “poor-penny immigrant” became one of the country’s most prominent philanthropists, donating substantial portions of his wealth to projects dedicated to Ukrainian history, language, and culture. Universities such as Harvard, Columbia, and the University of Toronto benefited from his largesse. *Leaving Home* celebrates the life of a remarkable man determined to make a positive impact on an often-hostile world.

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