

# New Colored Video Footage From Stalin's Russia Emerges

March 29, 2017



Among the crowd during a parade on Manezhnaya ploshchad, Moscow. **Martin Manhoff / Douglas Smith**

U.S. Army Major Martin Manhoff, an assistant army attaché in Moscow, extensively documented his travels in the 1950s era Soviet Union. The colored 16mm film footage, now known as the “Manhoff archives,” has been recently discovered and is captivating the world since RFE/RL's release of footage from Stalin's state funeral in 1953 last week.

The videos provide first-hand insight into the USSR's rapidly developing infrastructure in the post-WW2 era. Particularly interesting is the clip showing the construction of Stalinist “Seven Sisters” skyscrapers, adorned with gigantic portraits of Lenin and Stalin – intended as a symbol of the Soviet Union's superpower status.

## Embed:

There are also clips showing the day-to-day choreographed lives of Soviet citizens.

Filming from the balcony of the U.S. Embassy, Manhoff captures the Young Pioneers – a youth movement promoting patriotic and communist values – marching on the street below. In another scene, athletes take part in a relay race during summer.

According to RFE/RL's report, no written records by Manhoff have been found commenting on the footage or his experience in Soviet Russia. His wife Jan, however, wrote many letters to friends back home in the U.S. about arriving in Moscow in May 1952.

Her first reflection on arrival in Stalin's Russia isn't surprising. “It is needless to state that one quickly realizes how well policed this city is,” she wrote. “The whole culture and physical picture is so foreign to anything upon which we can build comparison that it becomes almost impossible. It is like an initiation into a life that is too unique to make sense anywhere else.”

*Check out the [Manhoff Archives at RFE/RL](#).*

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2017/03/29/new-colored-video-footage-from-stalins-russia-emerges-a57531>