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Volnovakha in the russian-Ukrainian war 2014-2024

I am a first-year student at Grinchenko University. I am studying Law. I will tell you the history of my hometown Volnovakha in the russian-Ukrainian war of 2014 – 2024.



Renovated school No. 5 in Volnovakha before the russian invasion. 2020. Photo: Volnovakha.City. Donetsk Regional State Administration. <https://dn.depo.ua/ukr/dn/yakoyu-bula-volnovakha-do-viyini-rosiyska-armiya-znishchila-misto-za-dva-tizhni-202203131433577> (Revised: 10.07.2024)



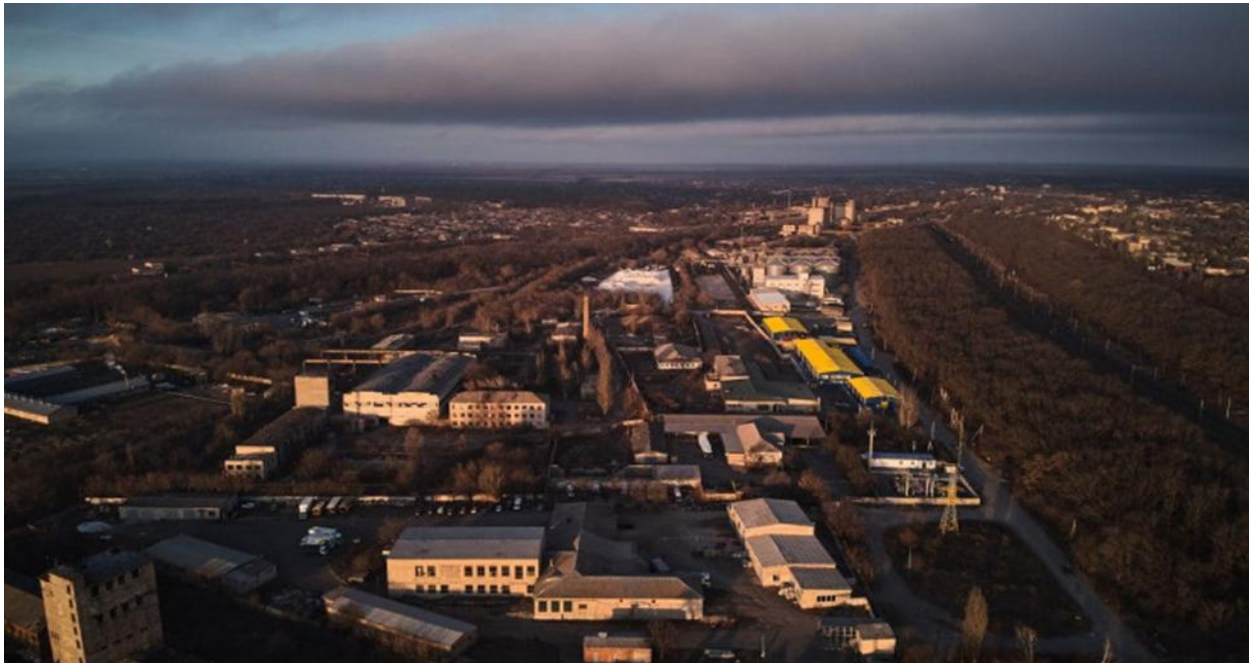
Kindergarten № 8 in Volnovakha before the russian invasion. 2020. Photo: Volnovakha.City. Donetsk Regional State Administration. <https://dn.depo.ua/ukr/dn/yakoyu-bula-volnovakha-do-viyini-rosiyska-armiya-znishchila-misto-za-dva-tizhni-202203131433577> (Revised: 10.07.2024)



Volnovasky District Center of Culture and Leisure before the russian invasion. 2020.

<https://freeradio.com.ua/perspektivi-vs-vijna-jak-volnovaha-namagaietsja-ne-vtratiti-svij-shans-na-decentralizaciju/>

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Volnovakha before the war from a bird's eye view. Photo: Facebook/Dmytro Lubinets.

<https://dn.depo.ua/ukr/dn/yakoyu-bula-volnovakha-do-viyini-rosiyska-armiya-znishchila-misto-za-dva-tizhni-202203131433577>

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Volnovakha is located in the South of the Donetsk region. This is a railway hub on the Mariupol – Donetsk and Mariupol – Zaporizhia lines.

Volnovakha, like many other settlements in Ukraine, became a victim of the russian-Ukrainian war, which led to significant changes in the life of the local population.

Volnovakha was located close to the border with the occupied territories and has become a strategically important point in the war.

However, on May 22, 2014, the battle near Volnovakha became the bloodiest in the history of the modern Ukrainian army. DPR militants tried to capture the city. The terrorists used provocations, blocking roads, and using small arms, grenade launchers, and machine guns.

The powerful explosion caused serious material destruction and forced the townspeople to seek shelter and evacuate due to the threat to their lives. The townspeople lost access to basic services and resources, which greatly complicated the daily life of the residents.

I witnessed the panic, fear, and anxiety among the civilian population. Many residents were evacuated from the town, seeking shelter and safety in other regions and cities not on the front line.

On January 13, 2015, a terrible terrorist attack occurred in Volnovakha during the artillery shelling of the occupying forces of the russian federation. It was aimed at the Ukrainian checkpoint near Volnovakha. During this shelling, the “Zlatoustivka – Donetsk” bus was seriously damaged, resulting in the death of 12 people and the wounding of 18 others. After the tragedy, the “I am Volnovakha” campaign began on social networks, which united people and caused peaceful actions throughout Ukraine. The artillery shelling was classified as a terrorist attack due to the seriousness of the crime, as the attack was directed against civilians.

On February 24, 2022, the fighting began for Volnovakha for control of the town after the start of a full-scale invasion of Ukraine by russian army. I witnessed the beginning of the military conflict and experienced severe trials during the full-scale invasion of the enemy.

On March 6, 2022, Volnovakha was awarded the title “Hero City of Ukraine” by the Decree of the President of Ukraine to commemorate the feat, mass heroism, and resilience of citizens, shown in the defense of their cities during the repulsion of the armed aggression of the russian federation against Ukraine.

Volnovakha has been almost destroyed (90%) because of intense fighting between the Armed Forces of Ukraine and troops of state terrorist russia, since the large-scale invasion of Ukraine by the terrorist aggressor country russia on February 24, 2022.

On March 11, 2022, the town was captured by the aggressor’s troops.

On February 24, 2022, I woke up at 4:00 a.m. to explosions. At 6:00 a.m., my parents informed me that a full-scale war had begun in Ukraine. At that moment, communication and light remained in the town, it was possible to read the news and contact relatives to get more information about this terrible event and understand how to proceed. I could follow the news and events in Ukraine.

On February 24, at 9:30 a.m., my father and I went outside to see the situation in the town. We watched as a large artillery shell flew towards the end of the city.

On February 26, the arrival of enemy shells began to approach our town. We were forced to move into the house because our basement had become uninhabitable due to its poor condition. We moved to another room in the building, where the windows were already barricaded.

On February 26, around 1:00 p.m., a large-scale shelling with hail and artillery began in the town. Lights and communication were turned off, a tank exploded near our house. Feelings of fear and security disappeared completely.



Volnovakha after heavy bombing. February 27, 2022. Author: ADifferentMan.

https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Волноваха#/media/Файл:Volnovakha_shelled.jpg (Revised: 10.07.2024)



Volnovakha after shelling of russian terrorists. March 12, 2022. REUTERS.

<https://www.unian.ua/multimedia/photo/10021963-volnovaha-perestala-sushchestvovat-kak-gorod.html> (Revised: 10.07.2024)



The first city hospital in Volnovakha before russian invasion. 2021. Photo: Volnovakha.City. Donetsk Regional State Administration. <https://dn.depo.ua/ukr/dn/yakoyu-bula-volnovakha-do-viyni-rosiyska-armiya-znishchila-misto-za-dva-tizhni-202203131433577> (Revised: 10.07.2024)



The first city hospital in Volnovakha after shelling by russian terrorists. March 12, 2022. REUTERS. <https://www.unian.ua/multimedia/photo/10021963-volnovaha-perestala-sushchestvovat-kak-gorod.html> (Revised: 10.07.2024)

On February 27, given the impossibility of continuing to live in such conditions, our family decided to evacuate.

On February 28, 2022, at 8:00 a.m. we left the town. Fortunately, we were able to leave before the shelling of civilian targets began.

I would like to note that the local administration and authorities for the entire time since the beginning of the full-scale invasion have not been able to provide citizens with any notification about the start of an air raid, which could warn about the threat and help the civilian population during the conflict.

This lack of information and security systems increased the fear and insecurity of the local population, who were going through difficult times associated with the fighting.

I so love my hometown Volnovakha so much! I want to go back home. After our Victory, we will rebuild Volnovakha. Volnovakha will become an even more beautiful and flourishing town.

Glory to Ukraine!