THE MOSCOW TIMES

KANDALAKSHA, MI gion - With balloons a Norway's Princess Märtl two young sisters opened dren's Village last wee North.

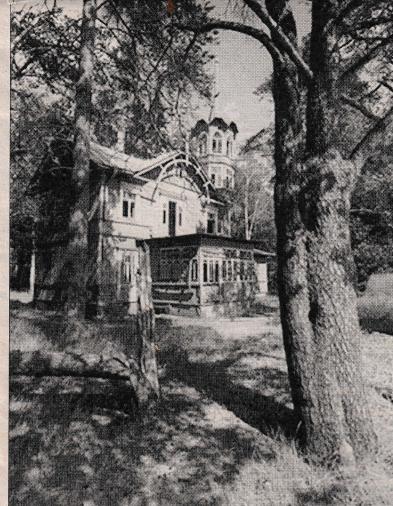
The princess and sist Zhenya, two of the first of of SOS Children's Villa sha, cut three ribbons tet balloon to officially oper the Murmansk region or

"I'm confident tha friendship between oui will continue to prosper and we should keep in m starts with the childre Märtha Louise said.

"If we give our child care, there is a much g that they will become to loving members of soci "This is the long-term SOS Children's Village SOS Russia, the mother dren all the best here in

The children gave : the princess and other the village's family hous

The village is the re nual television appeal gian Broadcasting Cor raised \$17 million in ju SOS Children's Villag The money was used to dren's villages in five co ing one in Kandalaksha give orphaned and dest safe and permanent ho



One of the houses in Karelia believed to have belonged to Karl Gustav Mannerheim.

War-Time Legends Help Sell Real Estate in Karelia

By Sophia Kornienko

ST. PETERSBURG - In their attempts to win the hearts and money of potential customers, out-of-town real estate agencies in Karelia often appeal to the public's affection for tragic legends.

Many cottages in the northwestern republic of Karelia claim to have a connection to Finland's first president and national hero, General Karl Gustav Mannerheim, who had his troops posi-

tioned in Karelia - a former Finnish territory and the front during heavy fighting between the Soviet Union and the Finns during the 1939-40 Winter War.

"This cottage Mannerheim built especially for his daughter, and she really lived here," a local resi-

dent told Delovoi Peterburg earlier this month, referring to a deserted white mansion on Karelia's picturesque Glubokoye Lake. "And several years ago, a 90-year-old man came here and sat on the doorstep for a long time, crying. We don't know why he was crying he spoke only in Finnish.'

However, historians say, it is unlikely that any of the local cottages have any connection to Mannerheim. He never owned property in Karelia, but lived at during the war and in a house the Finnish government rented for him in Helsinki the rest of the time, official reports say.

Many cottages sold as "Mannerheim's summer cottages" are in fact the former houses of Russian aristocrats, Delovoi Peterburg said.

The myth about the numerous Mannerheim cottages originated from propaganda spread among Soviet soldiers after they occupied Karelia.

> Most of the soldiers were seeing Western Europe for the first time and the Soviet authorities wished to hide the fact that the houses they were occupying belonged to ordinary Finns and the Russian intelligentsia. Instead,

the soldiers were led to believe they were taking over the houses of the rich, primarily Baron Mannerheim, historical reports say.

"I know eight 'Mannerheim summer cottages.' Houses connected with such legends are easy to sell," Yury Vorontsov, director of the northern branch of the Bekar Out-of-Town Real Estate agency, told Delovoi Peterburg. "Many people have some sort of nostalgia toward the region's history. That's why they often choose real estate with

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