

# NAŠE ČESKÉ DĚDICTVÍ

OUR CZECH HERITAGE



Czech Heritage Foundation Czech Fine Arts Foundation  
Vol.2. No.2. PO Box 761, Cedar Rapids, Ia.52406 8/1977

## DEDICATION of BANDSTAND on the MALL



The new Bandstand in the Czech Village was dedicated on the 4th of June. Taking part in the ribbon cutting ceremony was Mayor Canney and the Members of the City Council. Mr. Raim, President of Czech Heritage Foundation spoke on the significance of Czech music in Cedar Rapids. The Village Polka Band played at the event the familiar MUZIKY, MUZIKY March.

An event of interest was the Czech Costume contest which was held in front of the Bandstand. During the day the merchants conducted a sidewalk sale.

Prior to the dedication, the Czech Village Association hosted members of the City Council and invited guests at a Czech dinner at the Olde Town Inn.

Funds for the construction of the Bandstand were from the Linn County Bicentennial Committee and from the Kosek Families.

During the day music was provided by Phase VI Rock Group, Boddicker Accordion Aires, Marmony Hacks Barbershop Chorus, and a Blue Grass Band.

*Meet us at the Bandstand on Sept. 9, 10.*

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*  
This newsletter is sent to members paid up as of August 1st. Members whose dues for 1977 have expired will, upon payment of \$3.00 (mail to Czech Heritage Edn., PO Box 761, Cedar Rapids, Ia.52406) receive a copy of this issue and the December newsletter. Annual dues are from January 1 to December 31. . . . .  
\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

## ANNUAL FESTIVAL

CZECH DAYS, Sept. 9-10

The merchants on 16th Ave. SW. will have their Annual Czech Festival Days, Sept. 9-10. .

It will be a CIRCUS of FUN, GAMES, SHOPPING, VISITING, DANCING! But no need to worry about a parade of the elephants! No outriders ahead of the animals calling out, "Hold Your Horses! The Elephants are Coming." How many of you remember that ?



Come hear the bands: Boddicker Accordions, the Czech Heritage Band, and the Jolly Bohemians. You will want to dance to the tunes. These groups appear on different days & hours at the Bandstand on the Mall.

Sidewalk sales, Flea Market stands, Puppet Shows, Sokol Gymnasts, Czech Dancers, Bingo, Food Tents, Carp Fishing Contest, Glass Blower, and other special events.

Drawings for Lucky Numbers and Prizes and Awards.

KIDDIE PARADE on Saturday morning. Some suggested themes : Patriotic, Story Book, Czech Heritage, School Days or your own ideas.

ADDITIONAL FEATURES are under consideration.

continued on page 2.

CZECH HERITAGE PRODUCES THE GOODS :

a history book  
views of Olde Cedar Rapids  
and a stein to cheer you !

THE HISTORY OF CZECHS IN CEDAR RAPIDS  
1842-1942 now published, 96 pages,  
red cover, paperback, \$ 3.00. . . .

The original text was written by Miss Martha Griffith, long time teacher in old Van Buren and Wilson Junior High Schools. The HISTORY first appeared in April and July ,1944 ,issues of The Iowa Journal of History and Politics.

The Foundation was fortunate to be able to arrange with Peter T.Harstad, Director, Iowa State Historical Department at Iowa City for the printing of this valuable account.

Miss Ruth Griffith,sister of Martha, wrote the Introduction to this new edition. She tells about Martha's years of teaching and how she happened to write this history.

Mr.Harstad and we agree that the story should be brought up-to-date: 1943-1978. Who will undertake this task to capture what is known now?



POSTAL CARDS



A series of 8 views recaptures some of the scenes and events of OLDE CEDAR RAPIDS over the years 1889 to 1912. These treasures were possible because the owners of these views graciously loaned them to us. The finish on the cards is sepia, an aged look but on fresh paper! Many of you will recall the scenes and people and enjoy nostalgic memories of the "days that were". \$1.00 the set.

and a GLASS STEIN ? yes ! decorated with the red lion,our trademark,and the words "CZECH VILLAGE,  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa"

Add one to your collection or just to hold a draft that you enjoy anytime friends get together. \$ 3.00 each

and the popular MY CZECH WORD BOOK,  
for \$1.00 ABC's

ALL OF THE ABOVE ITEMS CAN BE PUR-  
CHASED AT SOME STORES ON 16th AVE.

108 YEARS YOUNG

The Czech Summer School marked its 108th years of classes. Three teachers met pupils ages 7 - 14 for the 5 weeks session held at Hayes School. At the closing event Julie Drahos of Cedar Rapids and Harold Eichkorn of Ely were graduated and received diplomas.

OUR BOOTH at the ALL IOWA FAIR

Not many folks ventured to the Fair as in other years - - then the heat in the buidling was on the very warm side,too! HOWEVER, the Czech Heritage and Fine Arts Foundations did have a bright and inviting booth and display. On sale were the History books, the ABC's, steins,and postal cards in packets.

Many stopped by to visit and look at the display. Literature about us was handed out to folks.

Much of the planning and following through on operations and obtaining the merchandise were the work of Mrs.Ted Hruska( Sharon of the Dear Genie Column in the Gazette) and Denver Dvorsky. Both were so knowledgable about how to do this and that and where to find them!

ANNUAL FESTIVAL - CZECH DAYS

Come see the new storefronts and changes! Get the feel of the Czech atmosphere. . NEW SHOPS ..

Ample parking at ROUNDHOUSE, City Parking Lots:north of west end of 16th Ave.,bridge; and west of "C" Street off 17th Ave. SW..

DETAILS OF TIMES, PLACES,EVENTS and ADDITIONAL NEWS will appear in August 31st PENNY SAVER, and on POSTERS and NEWS MEDIA.

If you are interested in space for the Flea Market,call Elsie Jelinek after 3:30 PM.

All three organizations: Czech VILLAGE Association, Czech FINE ARTS, and Czech HERITAGE FOUNDATIONS are cooperating to make this Festival the best yet. . .

SALUTING SILVER JUBILEE HONOREES

In June, two members of the Heritage Foundation were honored for their devoted and untiring volunteer services at the Veteran's Administration Hospital at Iowa City. We are happy to SALUTE Mrs. Charles Jasa (Berta Hasek) and Mrs. Edward Kuba (Josephine Letovsky). Both are also members of the local Chapter of the American Legion Auxiliary.

CZECH HONORED BY CHURCH

Bishop John Nepomuk Neumann was elevated to the rank of Bishop of Philadelphia in 1852. In mid-July, 1977, Pope Paul VI issued the proclamation announcing the elevation of Neumann to Sainthood.

Bishop Neumann was born in 1811 in the Province of Bohemia which was a part of Austria . At age 25 he came to the United States and within a month was ordained. (There were too many priests in Bohemia at the time so he would have had no parish). He worked among German immigrants. He served in parishes in Buffalo, Pittsburgh, Baltimore and elsewhere.

Two other American Saints are: Mother Elizabeth Bailey Seaton of Baltimore, and Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini who served in both Chicago and NYCity.

A large delegation from the States attended the services at the Vatican.

Czech Fine Arts

DELEGATES ATTEND NATIONAL MEETING

Rollie Raim and Marie Trachta were delegates to a Seminar on the IMMIGRANT ETHNIC MUSEUM sponsored by the government under the National Conference of groups concerned with preserving ethnic heritages. The Seminar opened at the American - Swedish Institute in Minneapolis and concluded at the Old World Wisconsin Development.

Various ethnic presentations in the upper Midwest were visited, such as:  
Norwegian-American Museum , Prairie Methodist Church, Czech settlement

at Spillville, Pandanuss restoration, Mineral Point, Swiss Historical Village, and Little Norway.

A slide showing of these ethnic attractions was created and any group of persons interested in how the Czech Heritage Development is related to other ethnic developments in our own area should contact Mr. Raim for a talk and presentation. All of the developments are within a few hours drive of Cedar Rapids.

The Seminar consisted of presentations and discussions about many of the problems and developments involving ethnic heritages. Our delegates came back with many ideas and suggestions which were presented to our own Fine Arts Foundation Board of Directors. ( R.R.)

WHO is PABLO NERUDA ?

PABLO NERUDA ( 1904-1973 ) a native of Chile, South America, did not care for the family name. His father was Jesus del Carmen, conductor on the railroad, who did not like poets or poetry. So HOW Pablo happened to choose the name NERUDA makes for interesting speculation.

Pablo Neruda is famous in his native country, was the recipient of Nobel Prize in Literature in 1971. This Spanish NERUDA'S main interest was writing about common people, nature, and the joys and sorrows of people. He became active in politics but his ideas were too Marxist to make him popular so he dropped out of the political arena. He was devoted to words and MORE WORDS to find the exact and special words to say what were his innermost thoughts. . . .

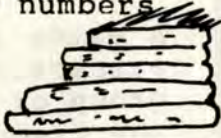
JAN NERUDA ( 1834-1891 ) was a leading Czech poet, essayist, dramatist, and writer of letters. The Library at Western Fraternal Life Association has several volumes of Neruda's works. And we have one or two volumes in our growing MUSEUM-LIBRARY collection.



LIBRARY COLLECTION  
EXPANDING

Our book collection now numbers more than 400 volumes.

In April we received 139 books from Coe College Library.



Because so little use has been made of these books in the Czech Language in the last 45 years, they are now added to our Czech Heritage Library-Museum collection, and they will be available to students and general readers.

We are most appreciative of this collection. Among the volumes are some special treasures which will be kept in the "archives" and not on open shelves when our Library becomes a reality.

CZECH ORGANIZATIONS: Past - Present

An earlier issue of our newsletter called POHÁDKY started the first in a series of brief reports on the FINE ARTS. The topic was bands and music. The series continues....

The KARLA MASARYK CHORUS altho not too active these days was for years a special feature at community programs and events. The members wore national Czech dress, many of them elaborately embroidered. The women sang songs and hymns in Czech. They meet now and then to enjoy a sing-a-long and visit. The group are also members of the lodge, Karla Masaryk.

ČTENÁŘSKÝ SPOLEK, the Reading Society, started Nov. 8, 1868 with 41 charter members. Their goal was to "encourage reading, promote lectures, present dramatic performances" that were educational and entertaining. The next year 52 new members joined. A Reading Society Hall was erected at 1st Street and 5th Avenue, S.E. at a cost of \$1,000.00.

The group encouraged gymnastic classes. Their library counted more than 500 volumes. A choir was formed.

In 1870 the major event was the observance of Jan Hus Day. On July 6 a program of music and speeches filled the afternoon hours. In the evening,

a play about Jan Hus.

As time passed, other groups set up societies. When Matice Skolska (Bohemian School) opened in 1901, the Reading Society met there.

Up to 1938 it was a men's club and then women were admitted! The membership began to drop... 50... and finally fewer and fewer attended events. The group disbanded for lack of interest of the younger generation.

The volumes were moved to the CSPS Building and later to former ZCBJ Reading Room. Altho many select volumes had been distributed (for example, some to Univ. of Chicago) some 2200 volumes were stored in the basement as late as 1975.

Two members from the Board of the Czech Heritage Fdn. examined some of the books and recommended that they not be purchased because they were not the kinds of volumes the Library-Museum project would seek. It became a rather sad end to what had once been the major literary collection in the Czech Community.

In addition to the musical activities of the Čtenářský Spolek, a Lyra Club (1873), a Česka Beseda Society, and the Hlahol Society (1905 - 1918) were active.

ČESKA LIPA (Czech Linden) promoted interest in drama and served as an outlet for amateur actors. 1892.

MINERVA SOCIETY. Fourteen 1901 young women met to form a literary club. One half of the programs were in English and other half in Czech. By 1940, all programs were English.

DRAMATICKÝ KROUŽEK (Dramatic Circle) came into being in 1932.

CZECH FINE ARTS ASSOCIATION (1930)

was a response to a resurgence of interest in Czech heritage. The group enjoyed wide support and enthusiastic participants. Music, the Beseda dances, discussions on books and Czech culture attracted attention of many who were not of Czech ancestry!

CZECH ALLIANCE, 1935, was a federation of 32 cultural, fraternal, religious, and civic groups. Today the Federation of Czech Groups is somewhat similar but with fewer groups.

Then came World War II and many of the organizations faded away by 1950. As also did FEATHER STRIPPING. It was a neighborhood gathering Those soft down coverlets are found rarely today. This activity has become a lost art among young folks.

\* \* \* \* \*

SOKOLS in 1868 were a gymnastic club, in 1873 a full-fledged organization. Two Sokol groups consolidated in 1888 and in 1909 the "new" Sokol Hall at 417 Third Street, SE. was dedicated. There are classes for children, young adults, and even grown ups of both sexes.

Altho gymnastic was the top interest, a well balanced social program was developed. SIBRINKY, a masquerade social dance, was the big event just prior to the Easter Lenten season. Today the Sibrinky continues.

The interest in calisthenetics and apparatus work declined. Lately these activities have become an accepted part of the athletic programs in schools and colleges. There seems to be some possibilities of including these skills as a part of future OLYMPIC events.

**To Come:**

- Religious Groups
- Fraternal Organizations
- others

KOMENSKY SOCIETY

was founded at Coe College in 1912 and continues its activities by an alumni group. When Dr. Anna Heyberger taught Czech and German the club was very active. By 1930 there were so few students interested in the original aims that it turned toward international relations and peace.


Scholarship grants : \$250.00 to high school graduates. Eight such awards were made in 1977 as follows: Jefferson (1), Kennedy (3), Washington (1), Marion (2), and Center Point (1).

Students may apply for these scholarships. Awards are based on academic record, personality, financial aid, Czech ancestry. Personal interviews help the committee to decide on the ones to receive the aid.


You need not to have been a Coe College student to belong to Komensky Alumni.

You may ask WHO was KOMENSKY? Jan Amos Komensky (1592-1670) was one of the intellectual giants of his era. He was a theologian and educator. He hoped that some day there would be a universal language, universal schools, universal books and colleges.

LOOKING AHEAD

*Don* FUNDS will always be needed to maintain and expand collections in the Museum and Library  \$\$\$\$\$\$

FUNDS are needed to get projects visible and into reality - off the ground as well as foundations into the ground \$\$\$\$

Do YOU have some items that are are MUSEUM quality - things you want preserved and cared for in the years ahead? Think favorably about presenting them to the Museum-Library. 

Do you belong to organizations whose members could consider making donations to our goals? Consider setting up legal ways to assure that the wishes of the group will be carried out in the nature of BEQUESTS, GIFTS or monies and/or items. . Please encourage these ideas among your friends and those interested in Czech heritage. \$\$\$

HAVE YOU INCLUDED A BEQUEST OF \$\$\$\$ and ITEMS IN YOUR WILL? Some folks have done so. Think about the idea.

Page 6 was compiled as a part of the give-away copies of the newsletter at our booth at the All Iowa Fair, Hawkeye Downs . . . . .

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Fire Wagons and Horses . Mrs. Robert Elkington (Eleanor Pohorsky Fencil) of St. Petersburg, Fla. wrote some recollections of early days about the Cedar Rapids Fire Fighters. "When a horse was to be retired from fire duty, it was best sold to someone in a small town or on a farm. If a city person bought the horse, there was sure to be runaways. The horses were taught to react at once to the fire gong. Father once said that he believed the horses would break thru the stall if there was not almost immediate release. The horses knew just where to step under the harness. When a former fire horse heard a gong, he would start running and there was no stopping him. The fire at the Delevan Hotel was on a very cold night and the clothes froze on the men.. At the Quaker Oats fire (1905) we did not see father for two days as the firemen stayed on the job."

An Early Mounted Band

Mrs. Alma Kucera Stanek relates this incident: Her Grandfather Benesh lived near Swisher. The men in the community organized a band. Then on Sundays they practiced with their instruments as they sat on their horses - not the parade breed - but the heavy workers in the fields. Then at the dedication of the CSPS Hall around 1890 the Benesh Band played! At the time, it was said to be the only mounted band in the community.

A LOAD OF STRAW - A BOX OF MATCHES

Mrs. Martha Vondracek Kralik tells of Grandfather Korab whose farm adjoined what is now College Community School grounds. Grandfather took a load of straw to sell at the market place nearby the Sinclair Plant - now Wilson & Co. - on the southeast side. There was no bridge so the hayrack forded the river near the former Douglas Starch Works - now the Penick-Ford. The sale brought him enough money to buy a box of "strike-anywhere" matches which were needed by Grandmother.

Editor: M.M. Svec.

REMINISCENCES

The Indians Came to Call

In her childhood, my mother lived on a farm south of the present airport across the road from the former Jarko Farm where a tall grey barn still stands. Back in the 1870-1880's, the Mesquakies left the Tama Settlement at times and roamed the countryside. Altho the Indians were peaceful, when the children saw them approaching the farm, the children would run and hide under the featherbeds. When the Indians knocked at the door, they'd ask Grandmother for: CUKR (sugar), KAVA (coffee), MOUKA (flour), MASLO (butter). The curious part of this is that the Indians used Czech words! As you may know, there are many Czechs in vicinities of Tama, Chelsea, Vining, Elberon, Belle Plaine. (My mother was Bessie (Wolrab) Svec.)

Runaways and Before Ambulances

Emily Matousek was a very young girl at the turn of the century. One day she sat on the long steps which were in front of the store where her mother sold dry goods and notions. She heard and then saw a runaway team coming from the north. She jumped to her feet and ran into the building. In a moment the team came crashing on the very steps where she had been sitting.

She also reported that when anyone was injured at the Sinclair Plant, the victim was placed in the rear of whatever conveyance was at hand. An umbrella was opened and held over the "patient" to keep off the sun on the way to the hospital.

One Founder of Matice Školska

Bill Matyka's parents had a drygoods store (1891) at the corner of 3rd St. 11th Ave., SE. His mother was active in fund raising projects to build Matice Školska. Ice cream socials, THE Bazaar of the year, children's plays were money making projects. A sewing class was started at the school. Bill sold the store, 1948..

President of Czech Heritage Fdn.  
Mr. Roland Raim.