

Czech Heritage Foundation, Inc.
P.O. Box 761, Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52406

NAŠE ČESKÉ DĚDICTVÍ

OUR

CZECH

HERITAGE

CORNERSTONE LAYING CEREMONY AT THE NATIONAL CZECH & SLOVAK MUSEUM & LIBRARY



(See Story on Page 8)

Volume 21 - Number 1 - March 1996



Czech Heritage Foundation, Inc.
P.O. Box 761, Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52406

NAŠE ČESKÉ DĚICTVÍ

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NAŠE ČESKÉ DĚICTVÍ

Subscriptions for the newsletter are not sold. Members of the Czech Heritage Fd'n. who pay their annual dues of \$3.00 per person per year receive Naše České Děictví free. Dues are renewable on January 1 of each year and expire December 31. The newsletter which is mailed quarterly, serves to inform its members of its activities, people, and places. (Dues received in September apply to the following year for new members.)

Deadline for receiving articles for the June issue is April 29, 1996.

THANK YOU

Volunteers who helped with the December newsletter were: Edwin Benish, Lisa Volesky, Frank Novotny and my husband, John. We appreciate the people who volunteer to help and give us a day to get the job done. Many thank you's.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

What an exciting year 1995 has been. It may be a long time before we top 1995 and perhaps we can never host three presidents again in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

1996 will be a special year. Iowa is celebrating its Sesquicentennial. It is 150 years since Iowa's statehood. Iowa will be featured at the 1996 Smithsonian Folklife's Festival in the heart of Washington, D.C., June 26-31, July 3-7. Iowa is the 18th state to be honored since the Festival began in 1967. Folklife is an outdoor living museum program that showcases a state's culture through music, foods, crafts, and traditions. Certainly the large Czech communities in Iowa had a strong influence, especially in the arts. Antonin Dvorak's stay in Spillville is of historic significance.

After the Festival ends in the nation's capitol, the activities will be restaged in Iowa. The theme of many of Iowa's celebrations will have a Sesquicentennial flavor to them.

Cedar Rapids is also preparing for the Olympic Torch. It is the only city in Iowa where the torch bearers will spend the night. The event will be held in May.

Sounds like a fun packed year in store for us.

Adeline Volesky
Editor

ANNUAL BOARD MEETING

The annual meeting of the Czech Heritage Fd'n. and the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library boards held a combined meeting at the museum on Monday January 15th. Both groups agreed 1995 was an exciting year and much has been accomplished, but many goals still need to be met. The meeting was well attended. The board members who will serve in 1996 on the Czech Heritage Fd'n. board are as follows:

President	David Faltis
Vice President	Russell Novotny
Secretary	Carol Danek
Treasurer	Dennis Hrabak
Financial Secretary	Lovell Dvorak

Dale Buresh, Florence Dvorak, Denver Dvorsky, Barbara Edmunds, Frank Edmunds, Rodney Jiruska, Diane Krejci, Charles Krejci, Esther Lippert, Kacy Novak, Quinn Novak, Frank Novotny, Sherlee Peterson, Leonard Pfeifer, John Rocarek, Sylvia Rohlena, Dorothy Simanek, Elsie Sova, Emil Velky, Adeline Volesky, and Joe Vondracek.

Honorary board members are: Melvina Svec, Bob Kouba (deceased), Charles Vyskovil, Mae Novotny (deceased).

PRESIDENT HAVEL WELCOMES BOSNIAN PEACE AGREEMENT

Czech President Vaclav Havel welcomed the peace agreement on Bosnia reached in Dayton, Ohio. He expressed hope that the new accords would signify a breakthrough solution to what he described as the worst tragedy that has befallen to Europe since World War Two. Although the agreement was far from ideal, it was the best that could be achieved at the moment. The Czech President praised the role of the United States. The Dayton agreement proved just how pivotal its commitments to Europe are.

(From Czech the News)

CZECH PARTICIPATION IN BOSNIA

On December 8, 1995, the Parliament of the Czech Republic approved participation of Czech troops in the NATO led operation in Bosnia,

Under the NATO plan, the Czech Republic is to send a mechanized combat battalion to the British sector as a part of the Canadian brigade. The Defense Ministry announced that approximately 850 Czech troops who are to join the I-FOX in Bosnia. They would consist mostly of the Rapid Deployment Brigade troops and veterans with experience in the U.N. peace-keeping mission in former Yugoslavia. The units will be composed of career soldiers (25%) and volunteers (75%). By December 12th the Ministry had already registered more than 1,000 volunteers.

The first reconnaissance units arrived in Bosnia December 18, and the deployment should be complete by the end of February.

(from the Jan. issue of CZECH THE NEWS)

PEN PAL WANTED

I am 21 years old, married, mother of a 10 month old child. I would like to write to someone in the U.S.A. in English. My interests are: modern music, nature, family and gardening.

Sincerely,
Vladka Slana

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor

I am a former Czech resident of Cedar Rapids. I saw this very historic collection at Evergreen College.

I was so impressed by how it depicted Slovakia I thought you'd like to see the enclosed clipping.

I've seen your museum and village and like it very much.

Teresa Johnson,

(see story on page 9)

Jan. 23, 1996

Dear Editor,

Ever since I donated a kroj to your Czech museum several year ago, I have followed your efforts to build a new museum with great deal of interest. You all, the residents and the City of Cedar Rapids, deserve congratulations on your accomplishment.

As a naturalized American born and raised in Pilsen, Czechoslovakia, I read with a great deal of interest the account of the young Czech boy (December 1995 Issue) who was part of the Czech population during the liberation of Pilsen on May 6, 1945.

As a sixteen-year old student at one of Pilsen's gymnasiums, I was in the crowd of people on the square when the Germans opened fire from the church belltower. Pulled into safety behind a tank by a couple of GI's, I spent the next fifteen minutes experiencing "liberation" first hand. I never found out the names of my two gallant rescuers, but in the months that followed I and thousands of the city's residents said thank you many times and made friends with the GI's stationed in and around the city.

The Communist era rewrote the historical facts, but never could wipe out the memory of the handsome boys in American uniforms from the minds of the people who were witness to history!

Sincerely,
Jarmila McMullen (maiden name Hlavsa)

EGGS FOR THE PRESIDENTS

By Marj Nejd



THREE PRESIDENTS - ONE CITY - WHAT A WEEKEND!

You've read the expression many times over. You would think it would get old, but the memory it conjures still brings excitement and thoughts we'll never forget.

There were so many details and hours of work to be planned so that all would be finished for the dedication week. My family was involved with a lot of week's activities, our heads were spinning, then on October 17. I was commissioned to paint an egg for each of the presidents. WHAT? That gave me only three days to ponder, design and finish the task! They had to be finished and delivered by Friday morning so they could be inspected by the secret service. O.K.—Get to work! Ostrich eggs?—no, I had two ostrich eggs on hand and not much time. All right, sift through the goose eggs, choose about three the same size and paint the background color. The front of the egg had the drawing of the museum, dedication date, and the president's name. The back of the egg had the colorful logo with the full name NATIONAL CZECH & SLOVAK MUSEUM & LIBRARY—CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA. It doesn't sound like a lot, but the egg was proportionally filled. WHEE! The job was finished and delivered in the morning on Friday, October 20th.

My family decided that I should be the one to present the eggs to the presidents. WELL! That was fine and dandy for my family to come to that conclusion, but to convince the committee and secret service was another story. After much nagging and cajoling and juggling time schedules, I was privileged to present President Havel with his egg. Another sweet memory to tuck away.

To conclude this article which was supposed to be a few words describing the design of the eggs as asked for by the editor, I just want to express my gratitude for the once in a lifetime opportunity.

Unfortunately, the pictures we took were out of focus, so one of these days, I'm going to paint each of my sons a duplicate.

(Editor—In the Sept. 1995 issue of NASE RODINA, a newsletter published by the Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International, Marj had an interesting article published about her family, interests and eggs. Here are some excerpts.)

KRASLICE — CZECH EGG DECORATING

The tradition of decorating eggs dates back over 2,000 years. Usually the women and children did the dying, making dyes from vegetable and mineral matter. The different colors and motifs varied from village to village.

There are several methods used for egg decorating: painting, plain dye, scratching, raised wax) and batik. I've added the "lace cut" to the list. First draw the design on the egg. With an air drill, take the background out leaving the design with a lace effect. My favorite is the "Old World" batik method. It is most interesting and is part of my heritage, as I learned to do this as a child.

I was raised in a household where a wealth of Czech culture prevailed. My father was born in Nove Dvory. My mother was born in Cedar Rapids but was raised in Czechoslovakia. She returned to Cedar Rapids before her 18th birthday. Both parents encouraged me to be interested in my heritage.

My aunt and uncle lived next door and it was my uncle that prepared the dyes and wax each Easter. We worked together perpetuating our own ideas and designs while enjoying the comradery.

After high school, I attended a commercial art school in Chicago.

In 1972, when it became popular to perpetuate your heritage, I was asked to demonstrate the "Old World" batik egg decorating. I became very active in many areas. My family is very supportive and encourages me with my works.

SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF MARJ'S CAREER

- 1979 - Painted an egg for Archduke of Austria, heir to the Hapsburg throne.
 - 1985 - One of 200 folk artists throughout the U.S. nominated for Nat'l Endowment of Arts.
 - 1988 - Painted an egg for First Lady Mrs. Bush (then 2nd lady)
 - 1988-1989 - Two eggs in Smithsonian Institute, one under Pres. Reagan's collection and one under Pres. Bush's collection.
 - 1990 - Ostrich egg for Pres. Havel - delivered by late actor Don DeFore.
 - 1992 - Rhea egg to Rita Klimova, Czech Ambassador.
 - 1992 - Listed with the Iowa Arts Council as Master Czech Folk Artist.
 - 1993 - Rhea egg for Gov. Brandstad given by Czech Heritage F'd'n.
 - 1993 - 3rd place (out of 125 artists) at Coral Gables International Art Festival
- Congratulations Marj for your fine work and outstanding contributions to the Czech community.

FEATHERBEDS AND PILLOWS

In the early winter of by-gone days, long before sporting events and bowling tournaments, important gatherings and parties were held. They were feather stripping bees.

Most Czech families raised geese for holiday feasting and feathers. If there was a forthcoming wedding, the bride's mother wanted to provide the new bride and groom with a down featherbed and pillows. A featherbed is a huge pillow-like cover over the entire bed. It provided a warm and cozy bed when most folks slept in unfinished and unheated upstairs bedrooms.

If you are of the younger generation, you may not be familiar with feather stripping. It is the process of removing the center core or quill and saving the soft fluffy part of the feather. Stripping bees were a way of getting a job done in an affordable way and having a fun get-together. The rural country folks for miles around were invited. Guests came in groups on a bob sled from every direction just like car pooling today.

Kitchens were the center of activities because farm kitchens were usually large and had a long table. The table was covered with an oilcloth.

The ladies would sit around the long table. On each end sat a mixing bowl or a dishpan upside down. As the feathers were stripped, the down was placed under the bowls until they became full. The hostess would come around with a large flour bag into which the stripped feathers were placed.

Most of the women wore dusting caps to keep the fine downy feathers out of their hair.

These stripping bees gave the farm wives a chance to give their opinion about current events or local gossip. Sometimes tears were shed because someone was lonely for remaining family members who remained across the ocean in the old country. Sometimes recipes were exchanged or some advice for a home remedy. When a joke was told, ladies had to be careful and turn their face away from the feathers, else a cloud of feathers would rise. One had to avoid a cough or sneeze.

Children sat on the kitchen floor midst the quills while the men sat in an adjoining room drinking home brew and talked about farming and politics.

After the task was completed around midnight, the hostess would serve a large lunch and coffee to everyone who came.

All in all, everyone had a good time, and

before they departed, another date was set for yet another stripping bee.

It wasn't easy to get all the stray feathers from the kitchen floor with a broom or dust cloth, but it was a task well done.

Stripping bees were important social gatherings in the early nineteen hundreds. They gave rural folks an outlet for helping one another and for friendly communication. Radio had not yet reached the rural areas, so it was entertainment as well.

Because of TV most of our communications have been replaced. Too many families even lose communications among themselves, neighbors too, have lost the closeness. Because of modern technology, they are not as dependent on each other as they once were in the pioneer days.

Featherbeds are still used in the Czech Republic today. If you travel in the early morning, they can be seen on the balconies of the high rise apartments. They, too, have a more modern look. They are much flatter and stitched in squares to prevent the feathers from shifting.

OSTRAVA CHOIR VISITS CEDAR RAPIDS

On Friday, December 1, 1995 the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library hosted the Ostrava Choir in the WFLA Hall of the museum.

The choir was organized in 1976 with singers who were interested in choral singing. They came from the region of Moravia and Silisian Ostrava in the Czech Republic

Over the past years, the choir performed in Italy, Germany, France, Poland and other European countries. The greatest success was the performance at the festival in Reims, France in 1992 where the core choir, together with international attendance, sang the famous Dvorak's Mass O-Dur.

The tour to the United States was its first overseas artistic event. The hard work of the choir members and conductor, Mr. Joseph Kubenka resulted in choosing this particular choir to represent the Czech culture to the American audience

Before departing, choir members were generously treated to a potluck supper by their host families and the Czech community at the Czech Museum. It was an evening of food, fun and singing ending the five day visit in Cedar Rapids for the choir.

BIOGRAPHY



Rose Polehna was born February 17, 1905 to Vincent and Mary Svoboda Bartunek in Hamry, in the county of Chrudim in Bohemia. Rose was the youngest child. All her brothers and sisters are deceased: Joseph, Frances Dusek, Vince,

Charles and Mary Jun.

Rose does not remember her father, She was 1-1/2 years old when he died. He was a tailor that had a drinking problem. Rose's mother had to borrow money for his burial. Rose's mother wanted to take the children to America for a better life, but she had to stay and repay the debts incurred by their father. Their house was small and consisted of one bedroom. They had a stall where a goat was kept to provide the family with milk.

When Rose's mother went for supplies, the proprietor reminded her of the debt owed her for liqueur. She asked Rose's mother for the goat as partial payment for the debt. Rose's mother knew the goat was the family's life line and refused to give up the goat and rejected the deal. In order to pay of the remaining debts, the children had to help their brother who was a weaver. One day the children did not have school. That particular day the children tied over a thousand knots. They tied human hair that was made into hair nets and sold for income. Often their mother would cut her hair for the nets and even sold her hair. The square knots took a special skill. Finally the debt was paid off.

In 1912, the family moved in with an uncle. The aunt had died and they had no children. It was the custom for the eldest son to inherit the homestead.

There was military unrest in Austria in 1913. Rose's oldest brother Joseph was asked to serve his country. Rose's mother asked for clemency because he was a family provider. He was granted a year's deferment. Instead, he came to America in 1913.

In America, Joseph heard about the impending unrest in Europe. Joseph wrote to his mother to disperse her possessions except the featherbeds and come quickly to America because the two younger boys would soon reach military age.

Rose's mother quickly planned to come to America. The family packed and went to Prague. The ticket agent informed the mother that a decree was issued from Vienna that no males 14 years of age and older were allowed to leave the

country. Rose' brothers were 14 and 15.

In order to save money and expedite the emigration, Rose's mother had to go back to the county seat to get permission for the two boys to leave the country. She left the children in the custody of a cetnik (Custom house officer). The children stayed in the upper story of a horse barn and slept on the hay while they waited for their mother to return.

Back at Chrudim, the agent gave the mother a tongue lashing. He suggested she cable Joseph in America and that he return to defend his homeland. Needless to say he refused permission for Vince 14 and Charles 15 to leave.

Rose's mother returned to Prague to the waiting children. Rather than a mother leave her sons behind, she decided to take her chances. Good fortune was with the family, The ticket agent was also the passport inspector and allowed the family to pass and sent God's blessings on them.

When the family was waiting in Dresden at a railroad station, a dignified and little known man asked "Mother, where are you going with your children?" He later identified himself as Professor Masaryk. Later Masaryk became the first president of Czechoslovakia.

From Dresden they traveled to Rotterdam where they set sail. The voyage lasted eight days. Most of the passengers were German except one Czech Mr. Sedivy. Their accommodations were in the steerage section. In order to keep intruders out of their room, they pushed the trunks against the door. As they neared Ellis Island, the boat slowed and disembarkment was delayed because Ellis Island was closed for the Fourth of July holiday. They landed July 5th.

They traveled by rail to Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The children went to St. Wenceslaus to school and later to Hays School.

Rose worked for many years at the dry goods store of Denecke's and Creamers. She married in her 40's to Albert Kaysilka, who was a displaced person (One who avoids communism). He died three years later of cancer.

From 1922 to 1956 Rose played in many Czech dividla (Plays) including the leading role in an operetta. The plays were held in ZCBJ and CSPS Halls and directed by Mr. Hromatka.

After being a widow for a number of years, she married a widower Andrew Polehna, a well known butcher on 16th Avenue. He died in 1978.

In spite of her 90 years, she is active in her church and Czech community.

Rose has two step children, Milton Polehna and Mrs. Stanley (Dorothy) Ditch and seven grandchildren.

CZECH SAVORS & FLAVORS

The Czechs are well known for their cooking. It is no secret that Czech recipes call for various herbs and spices to enhance the flavor and tease the taste buds. The potato and cabbage dishes are bland but herbs and spices add zest to the dish. Much of the meat is used in stewing, therefore adding onions, garlic, and spices flavors and marinates the tough cuts as they boil.

When the young ladies immigrated into the United States in the late 1800s and early 1900s, to the larger cities, they were quickly sought after and hired as maids and cooks in the elegant homes of the affluent families.

Caraway seed is an herb of the parsley family. It is known for its spicy seeds. It grows in the United States, Asia and Europe. It grows in any kind of soil, Wild caraway seed in the United States grows in the roadside ditches. It has white blossoming heads that look similar to Queen Anne's Lace. The heads are cut off in mid-July. The heads are dried and the seeds removed. A strong breeze can blow out the impurities and the dry caraway seeds stored in a dry place.

Czechs must have caraway on their rye bread, cheese, chicken, pork, and sauerkraut. It is also used in making a sweet liquor.

Poppy is a common name of a genus flower. There are many varieties and colors of poppies. In the Orient, poppies are raised for its opium but the Czech poppies are raised for their seed. It is hard to sow the poppyseed because the seed is so tiny and the plants usually have to be thinned out to four or five inches apart. The seed is sown very early in the spring and takes a long time to germinate. Poppyseeds are found in the pods after the petals fall from the blossom. The pods are dried until they are brittle and are easily cracked. Winnowing in the wind usually removes the pod fragments and dust. It takes a lot of plants to make a sizeable harvest.

The poppyseed is commonly used in making filling for kolaches and "Babovka." Before it is used for filling, it is run through a poppyseed grinder. The seed is also used for sprinkling on rolls and in poppyseed cakes.

Rosemary is an herb that is commonly used. The Czech name is "Rozmarinka." Rosemary is an evergreen shrub that belongs to the mint family. It grows 4 to 8 feet tall and has dark green leaves. Rosemary has an oil used in perfume and its aro-

matic leaves are used in corsages. In cooking, rosemary is used in meat, poultry, sauces, greens and stuffing. Some prefer it to garlic in a roast.

Fresh sage is more satisfying when dried. The gray pointed leaves should be used sparingly. Although traditionally used in stuffing for turkey, herb authorities claim it is too strong for poultry. A blend of savory, thyme, and sweet basil is more pleasing and a more subtle flavor.

Marjoram — There are two kinds of marjorams, sweet and wild marjoram. It is more often called by the Spanish name oregano. It is used in sausages, brats, and meat dishes.

The Czechs are known for the use of herbs and spices for medicinal purposes. One old recipe that was used as a remedy for all ailments was "oukrop" or garlic soup. The simple ingredients call for: 1 clove garlic mashed, croutons made from rye bread, water and salt to taste. Boil the water, garlic, and salt. Pour over the croutons and let stand until the bread is soaked well. A dash of thick cream added some flavor and nutritional value. It was a common cold remedy.

WARMER TEMPERATURES TURN THOUGHTS TO HOUBY DAYS

With spring weather just around the corner, the Czech Village prepares for its annual Houby Days celebration on May 18 and 19. The weekend event is highlighted by a parade, "(houby) mushroom" hunt, mushroom contests, Czech polka bands, kolache eating contest, carnival rides and much more.

All of the Czech Village merchants combine efforts for this traditional celebration of spring. Here's a fair warning to you all, however — be prepared to eat! The alluring aroma of bratwurst, kolaches, gyros, cotton candy . . . well, you get the idea . . . is enough to break even the staunchest dieter's willpower. But, rest assured, there is more than enough to go around!

The parade boasted the most participants ever last year and this year's parade is certain to make or break that record. Make sure to budget your time to allow viewing of the parade, which marches down 16th Avenue S.W. and ends at the City Roundhouse.

NEWS THAT TRAVELED AROUND THE WORLD

By Esther Lippert

(Shortly after the dedication of the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library with President Clinton, Vaclav Havel of the Czech Republic and President Kováč of Slovakia, I received a clipping about the dedication from my husband's cousin from the Czech Republic. Here are excerpts.)

The clipping mentioned that Edward Kuba's auto in the motorcade to meet President Havel is one that is otherwise used to carry *pozustalé* (remains). Also that Edward Kuba spoke the Czech language very well because of his ancestors.

"What a celebration, now if President Havel would drop in for a beer" said the proprietor of Zindrick's Restaurant which is said to be the largest on 16th Avenue according to the clipping.

"Welcome Presidents" read a large sign posted on the Saddle & Leather Shop owned by George Barta. He is the oldest in his generation and the only one to speak Czech.

Cedar Rapids and the state of Iowa are in the heart of the United States. It is the only place you can find 100 Novaks, 25 Kuceras, and 14 Krejcis in the phone book.

Susanne Teleckova, now living in Chicago, came for the dedication. She said "After all we are all Americans first but have not forgotten our Czech Heritage." One fellow on the street said "Ja jsem Czech" (I am Czech). In 1907 President Masaryk reminded the people "to be good Americans" on his visit to Cedar Rapids.

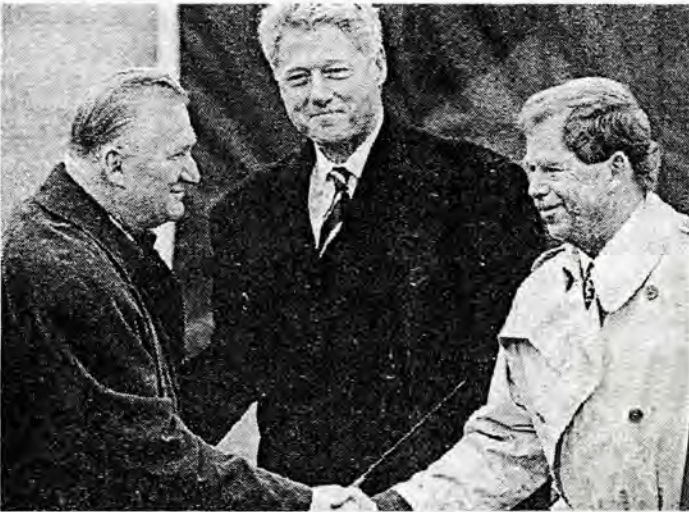
It was also noted when the national anthem was played, everyone sang the loudest, but when the Czech and Slovak anthems were played, many did not sing as loud. (Perhaps they did not know the words.)

During the three presidents visit to Cedar Rapids, they met in the museum to conduct discussions and negotiations.

The Des Moines Register was cited as the largest paper in Iowa and referred the celebration as the biggest event in the history of Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

In conclusion, the article stated that Sykora's bakery had "Ceske hamburgery" which were splendidly served and sold briskly.

(The newspaper item was written by Viliam Buchert, Czech Republic.)



Caption—This is the way it looked Saturday in Cedar Rapids. A heartfelt handshake by Vaclav Havel and Michal Kováč—looking on is Bill Clinton.



This is the setting where the presidents met for private talks during their visit to Cedar Rapids for the dedication of the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library on Saturday October 17, 1995.

They sat on black leather recliners from the Ethan Allen Galleries .

The floral centerpiece was created by the Stejskal's Floral, a long time Czech owned and operated family business in S.W. Cedar Rapids. The centerpiece included red, white and blue fresh flowers with a miniature Iowa scene of corn pigs and pumpkins tucked in. The three peace plants added a tranquil and impressive setting for the meetings.

This setting is a permanent display in the library room of the museum.

CORNERSTONE LAYING CEREMONY



The cornerstone laying ceremony was held on the front steps of the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library. It was originally planned to be part of the October 21, 1995 dedication. Due to the filled schedule by the three visiting presidents, the date was delayed to Saturday, November 17, 1995.

The ceremony was conducted by the Grand Lodge of Iowa A.F.& A.M. Paul Wieck, member of the lodge, was Master of Ceremonies and delivered a speech to the crowd explaining the meaning of the ceremony.

The mid-morning ceremony included a welcome spoken in Czech by Ed Kuba as well as recognition and introductions of many people who helped fulfill the goal of completing the beautiful museum.

A capsule was included in the cornerstone containing 38 items. They included documents, Czech handiwork, artifacts, photos, pamphlets and brochures.

In keeping with tradition, eggs were added to the mortar to hold the cornerstone in place, guaranteeing that the museum will serve the public as long and as proudly as the Charles Bridge in Prague.

After the ceremony kolaches were served.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Inundated and overwhelmed! We were pleased with the donations that were enclosed with the dues for new membership and renewals. In December alone we received 171 renewals and 26 new memberships. There was only a small difference between the donations and dues received. In spite of numerous increases in paper and postage, your generosity will enable us to maintain our membership dues at \$3.00 per year per member which was established in 1974.

Donations received in October with renewals were from: Mildred Koenigsmark and Joseph L. Shimek. From new member: George Novotny.

Donations received in November with renewals were from: Marcella Anderson, Richard & Tammy Beranek, Louis Jedlicka, David Jiruska, Emily V. Lins, Virginia Muir, Robert Novotny, Bob & Ella Samek, Evelyn Vecerka, and Julie Wadden. Donations with new memberships were received from: Adeline R. Shreeves and Robert Stolba. Cash donations were received from Leonard & Charlotte Chadima and Sharon Hruska.

Donations for December with renewals were from: Harold Adams, Arlene Anderle, Helen L. Barta, Gerald Caslavka, Anne R. Dalecky, Joe R. Doupnik, Wynona Dreussl, Gladys Fajman, Victoria Fisher, Anna Gillings, R. E. Hejkal, Douglas A. Hladek, Eldon F. Hosek, David Janicek, George & Louise Kalous, Ida K. Kansky, Leo Kansky, George Klumpar, Anthony Konvalinka, Paul V. Kosek, Arthur Kozlik, Diane M. Krejci, Alton Krikava, E. J. Kubicek, Joseph L. Kubicek, Milos Kukal, Joseph & Mardella Kurka, Edna Lenicek, Albert J. Losenicky, Betsy J. McCalley, Mildreth McIlrath, Victor & Georgianna Marek, Louis L. Melsha, Erma J. Meskimen, Lillian H. Miller, Mary V. Minard, Musil Family, Sylvia Neitderhisar, Clifford & Lucille Netolicky, Norma Novak, Paul & Mary Ann Pisarik, Francis E. Pluhar, David & Malinda Poduska, Frank Podzimek, Frank Port, Elizabeth Priban, Florence Ramsay, Irma J. Rozek, Marvin L. Sedlacek, Ellen Skripsky, Phyllis Jean Smetana, Bruno Smid, Helen Stevens, Mary M. Tichy, Darlene Trachta, Robert E. & Irma Vanourny, Robert J. Vanourny, Marie Vanous, Marie K. Vileta, John F. Vondra, Jody Feldtman Wright, Jack & Elinore Zaruba and Anna Lou Zielinsky. Donations from new members: Florence E. Dose, Donna Merkle, Jody Nolte, and Charles Opatrny. Cash donation: Frances J. Vilim.

SLOVAKIA IN PICTURES

For almost 1,000 years the Slovak people lived on a piece of Central European land that for 70 years had been part of Czechoslovakia. Then in 1993, Czechoslovakia split into two independent countries including the Slovak Republic.

What better way to introduce a little-known country and culture than through a photographic exhibit. Jan Botik and Marta Botikova, a Slovakian couple, brought 150 black and white pictures of Slovakia to the Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington. The photos which were on display during January were taken by well known Slovak photographers: Pavol Socnan, Karol Plicka and Martin Martinec. Photos from the past 100 years paint a historical picture of Slovakia.

Sochan, who died in 1941, took photographs in the late 1800s and 1900s documented architecture, folk art as well as common dress. In the exhibit, shots of Slovak intricate embroidered vest, shirt, and blouse stand out.

Plicka loved to document beauty in costumes, architecture and people. Plicka was born in 1894 and continued shooting until 1961. He idealized the peasant culture, and wanted to depict the best of it.

Martinec concentrated on pictures from his native Liptov region. Martinec, now in his 80s, took pictures of the Slovak people and set out to tell the story of the old, disabled, and destitute and a civilization undergoing a natural decline.

Batik, a research fellow at the Slovak National Museum in Bratislava, coordinated the exhibit. Marta Batikova, a professor from Comenius University in Bratislava, is teaching in Evergreen State University in Olympia, Washington.

(from the Olympian)

This photo exhibit is scheduled to be shown at the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library March 9 through April, Tues.-Sat. 9:30-4:00 p.m.



Martin Martinec

THE LITTLE POLKA BAND THAT COULD

By Chuck Dlask



Front Row L to R: Patty Cejka, Lynn Mann, Gina Perri-Ferden, Olga Drahozal. 2nd Row - Chuck Dlask, Tim King, Deb Neuzil, Randy Pospisil, Pete Drahozal and Steve Hadish. Back Row - Steve Schulte, Jim Vanourny, Walt Drahozal, Wes Drahozal and Art Drahozal. Not pictured: Pat Flaherty, Bob Miller and Tom Krivanek.

Everyone knows about President Clinton's visit to Cedar Rapids to celebrate the city's National Czech and Slovak Museum. Some of us even attended the event. I happened to help provide the live music. I've played trumpet in the Czech-Plus Band for about five years. It's a very unique group. The nucleus of the band is the Drahozal family. They organized and manage the band, three of the boys currently play, arrange, and even write original pieces for the band. We perform for ethnic events, dances, parades, concerts, and even church services. The players wear uniforms patterned, I'm told, after those worn by brass bands in Southern Bohemia. I suppose you could say that our uniforms are loud and our music is colorful. The usual instrumentation of the band is three trumpets, two trombones, two baritone horns, two clarinets, a saxophone, accordion, drums, and last, but certainly not least, a tuba.

The day of the big event dawned chilly and windy. We were told to be at the museum at 6 a.m. We would have to leave our instruments in the building for a security check, Secret Service Agents with bomb sniffing German Shepards. We would have to leave the building and re-enter the secured area later with the general public. Several metal detectors were stationed at the entrance in the middle of Sixteenth Avenue.

Around 9 a.m. the musicians were allowed back into the museum to get their horns, but had to leave the cases inside. We then set up the band in-between the seating area and a roped off area

for the rest of the crowd. This at least provided a bit of a windbreak for us, as weather conditions were deteriorating. To keep the crowd entertained, we played traditional Czech marches, polkas, and waltzes until the Dignitaries arrived. I must say, the crowd kept the band's spirits up too, with their encouragement. Playing in the cold can be very tough. The worst part for the musicians is knowing it would sound better if it was warmer.

The three Presidents arrived around 10:30 a.m. By this time I was border-line hypothermia and anxious whether I could blow a note at all. We played the three national anthems and many in the crowd sang along. It was a great moment. President Kovac of Slovakia, who is an economist by profession, gave a speech which was practical and business-like in nature. President Havel, of the Czech Republic, mentioned the composer Anton Dvorak, who visited Iowa a century ago. Havel is an artist himself; a play-write who was imprisoned by the Communists.

Then President Clinton began to speak. He said that the weather proved to him that those of us present that day must be "A Hardy Lot" and then asked the crowd to give thanks to the Czech-Plus Band for playing. Wow! The crowd cheered and band members gave thumbs-up and a "V" for victory signs. I felt a lot warmer.

After the speeches concluded, the men began shaking hands with the public while we played a fanfare and then a medley of patriotic tunes originally written for the Sokols which is a Czechoslovak Gymnastic and Fraternal Society that had been banished under Communism. He who laughs last laughs best.

The Czech-Plus Band played for five separate occasions during the week of the museum dedication. Twice at the museum itself for the Presidents, at the Five Seasons Center, and at Collins Plaza.

Surprisingly, there happens to be a Cargill tie into this matter. It involves how the three heads of state made their way to Cedar Rapids. President Clinton arrived on Air Force One, of course. President Havel of the Czech Republic arrived on his government jet. But President Kovac of the newly formed Slovak Republic flew commercial from Europe to New York City. But how do you suppose he got from there to the Cedar Rapids Municipal Airport? He arrived First Class. His transport was in the form of two Cargill Corporate jets, at no expense.

The events surrounding the dedication of the National Czech and Slovak Museum have to be considered a WIN-WIN-WIN situation for all of us. It was an occasion to celebrate good-will among all people. I was proud of my city, my employer, and my polka band for being a part of it.

NAPOLEON IN MORAVIA

A few miles east of Brno, Czechoslovakia, amid rolling farmland and little hills, there is a hill with two trees on it. If you would go there on a cold and snowy day, when the land lies bleak and the trees are bare and there is a morning mist and a red sun, you would see a battlefield of Austerlitz as Napoleon saw it on December 2, 1805.

That particular spot known to Moravians as Slavkov, was called Austerlitz during the time of the Hapsburg reign and was the scene of one of Napoleon's greatest victories. The battle that was waged here is known as "the battle of three emperors," because it involved the armies of Alexander I of Russia, Francis I of Austria and Napoleon I of France.

When the sun rose on December 2, 1805, two great armies faced each other, Napoleon's Grande Army and the combined armies of Austria and Russia—a total of 158,000 men and 400 cannons. When the sun set, 11,000 Russians, 2,000 Austrians and 1,300 French lay dead on the cold earth. The Russian Tzar was preparing to retreat toward Russia and the Austrian emperor hastily agreed to a truce.

Historians have wondered for years how Napoleon managed so many victories (60). Napoleon used modern, concise and precise methods and also that he was a gifted mathematician. Every battle was fresh. He always sought to concentrate his forces and once that was done, he would sit back and wait for the enemy to make a mistake. Austerlitz was a classic example. The Russians weakened their center line to attack his flank; he saw the weakness and made his counter attack.

What is perhaps most interesting to us Czechophiles is the scattering of French surnames still to be found in Moravia. It appears these names were left by numbers of French soldiers who were either wounded and left behind or defected from Napoleon's army unwilling to fight on. They married Moravian maidens and began humble dynasties of blacksmiths and farmers.



Peace Tomb is visited on the anniversary of the battle where thousands fell.

LEGENDS & REALITY OF THE CHOD REGION

The Domazlice district is situated along the frontiers with the Federal Republic of Germany. Its inhabitants, the Chods, were for centuries guarding their security and acting as guides to travellers. They obtained a number of privileges for their difficult service. Their struggle for maintaining these waged in the late 17th century and led by Jan Sladky-Kozina entered history. Traditional Chod folklore has been preserved in the district, including embroidery, Easter egg decoration, songs and dances. Chod can be admired at the Festival held annually.

Due to the exceptional preservation of the medieval homes, Domazlice was once declared a National Preserve after World War II. Chodsko is also a recognized world center for bagpipes and hosts an annual Ethnographic Public Festival and Bagpipe Festival.



Street Scene from Domazlice.

MY HOMESTAY EXPERIENCE

By Amy Novotny

This past summer I was able to take part in the Homestay Program, in which I was given a wonderful trip full of fond memories to the Czech Republic. The month-long time frame of the trip scared me a bit because I had never been away for quite that long before, but by the time that month ended, I couldn't believe it was already over!

My family lived in a small town 20 km outside of Prague called Hostivice. We took the bus into Prague almost every day to meet the three other ambassadors and their host siblings for sightseeing, touring, and even shopping. I think that we were all lucky because all of our host siblings were good friends and that enabled us to be all together most of the time we were there. I am happy that we were able to do this because we not only made new friends in the Czech Republic, but new friends to bring home with us.

My father worked at a hotel in Prague and had very long hours which limited the time I had to be with him during my stay. My mother was just marvelous! She owns her own rattan furniture shop which was downstairs on one end of our house, and so she was always home and prided herself on cooking for me all day long! When I was a little homesick at the beginning, even though she didn't speak more than one word of English, she always managed to cheer me up with a warm smile. (That one word of English was "Amy"!) I had two sisters there, Tereza (18) and Barbora (16). I was the only ambassador that had two siblings that hung around with us all the time, so I considered myself to be very lucky! I got along extremely well with both of them, and in a way they reminded me of my real sister, Sarah, and I. The home we lived in was very large and very modernly equipped. My mother had every modern cooking machine that I'd ever seen, even in the U.S., and they owned a home entertainment system very comparable to mine here in Iowa. That shocked me and made me feel comfortable. We did have many traditionally Czech things about our house, and I was given, most graciously, the most fabulous traditional and non-traditional Czech foods.

We were able to take a few side trips away from the hustle and bustle of Prague to Karlovy Vary, Karlstein Castle, Stare Splavy and Trebon. All of us girls took a trip by train to my host family's cottage up north in the Czech Republic and

got to see my host grandparents. My host, Babi, fed us 1,000 meals a day and a snack to tide us over in between meals! They, too reminded me so much of my wonderful Babi and Deda Novotny. Everyone, in fact, was extra kind and loving to all of us, and they will always hold a special place in my heart.

I encourage anyone eligible for the Homestay Program to apply, and I guarantee that you will never regret it. The trip I took was very special, not only because I was fortunate enough to travel overseas to the gorgeous city of Prague, but because the minute I heard my host sister translate for my host mother to tell me that she thought of me as one of their own daughters, I realized what I had really gained in taking the trip. I now have a second family (that happens to live 17,000 km away) and I have culturally and emotionally enriched my life forever. I would like to thank my Babi and Deda Frank and Mae Novotny, as well as the rest of the Homestay committee, for giving someone like me the opportunity to travel to the Czech Republic.

N.E. BOHEMIAN EMIGRANT INFO WANTED

A new research project to chronicle the emigrants from northeast Bohemia bounded by the major cities of Lanskroun, Ceska Trebova, Litomysl, Vysoke Myto, Chocen, Vamberk and the Polish and Moravian borders, We will data base family surnames, villages, emigration patterns, U.S. residencies, personal histories, etc. The researchers in America will be working with Czech village historians to add depth to the study. This will develop a resource for research and a list of contacts for both people in the U.S. and in the Czech Republic.

Write for more details. You can send your family history data. This is a not-for-profit clearinghouse of information. Be sure your submission is complete as you have, understandable, readable and ready to be entered. If you want to be notified of possible connections and periodical up-dates, please include a supply of SASEs. (self addressed and stamped envelopes) Please write Jim Kleinschmidt,

Call _____, or Kathryn Betlach
Dandowski,

or call _____

By Kathryn Betlach Dankowski

NEW AMBASSADORS

The Homestay committee wants you to meet the new 1996 ambassadors who will be spending a month in the Czech Republic this summer. They are: Brad Dvorak, James Horak, Jennifer Novak, Cathy Schroeder and Holly Upah.

The Homestay committee is made up of the following: Diane Krejci, Sherlee Peterson and Jeanne Tompkins.



My name is Brad Dvorak and I am a junior at Mt. Vernon High School. I live in Mt. Vernon with my parents Robert and Beula. I have a brother Brian, who is currently a sophomore at Luther College.

I enjoy golfing, playing the trumpet in band, camping, snow and water skiing, hunting, and fishing. I am also a NASCAR auto racing fan, and a big Mustang and Ford enthusiast.

This year I am president of my 4-H club, a representative on the Linn County 4-H Youth Council. I have been active in 4-H for eight years. Last summer I spent a month in Norway through the 4-H Norske Exchange Program. I also attend youth group of Community Bible Church in Mt. Vernon.

I am looking forward to spending a month in Czech Republic and would like to thank everyone for this wonderful opportunity to learn more about my Czech heritage.



My name is James Horak, the son of Don and Barb Horak. I am 16 and a Junior at Cedar Rapids Prairie High School. I play trumpet in the marching band, concert band, jazz band, wind ensemble, and The Ambassadors show choir back-up band. I also take part in various other activities, including speech, drama, and choir.

My hobbies include playing acoustic and electric guitar, performing music with my friends, reading, painting, and working on our computer.

My family and I attend the First Presbyterian Church near Ely, where I am a member of the youth group.

I would like to thank the Czech Heritage Foundation for making possible what I am sure will be a great experience. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Foundation for allowing me to serve as the Czech Prince last year. The opening of the museum and the three presidents' visit were both landmark occasions. I am proud to have served during these monumental events.



My name is Jennifer Lynn Novak. I am a junior at Clear Creek Amana High School in Tiffin. I live outside of Oxford on a farm with my parents Bill and Marcia, my sister Kelly, and my brother Billy.

I'm class treasurer, secretary of my school environmental club, and I play in the school band. Also, I'm involved in 4-H and am a member of the 4-H Youth Council of Johnson County. On weekends I work at the Amana Meat Shop in Main Amana.

I'm looking forward to visiting the Czech Republic and possibly visiting the village my ancestors came from. I thank the Czech Heritage Foundation for this incredible opportunity, and I hope to be a great student ambassador.



My name is Cathy Schroeder and I am currently 16 years old. At Washington High, I am involved in Concert Choir, SADD, and an officer of the French Club. I also have been part of the girls cross country and track teams for the past three years. In my spare time, I like to join in on

church youth group activities, and also spend time with my friends and family.

I am very excited that I have the opportunity to visit the Czech Republic, and I sincerely thank those who made this possible.



My name is Holly Upah. I am sixteen years old and a junior at Jefferson High School. I live in Cedar Rapids with my parents Jeff and Denise Upah, and my 12 year old brother Jesse.

In school I am involved with Marching Band, Wind Symphony, Symphony Orchestra, Concert Choir, and the show choirs, Westside Delegation and Ovation. In band I play French Horn, accompany Westside Delegation on piano, and sing and dance in Ovation.

Outside of school I enjoy water and snow skiing, and hiking. I also teach piano lessons, CCD at my church. I always enjoy spending time with my friends and family.

On weekends I am employed by Sykora's Bakery, and Payless Cashways.

I am looking forward to visiting the Czech Republic, and meeting new people. I am also curious and excited about seeing the places my great grandparents grew up and lived in. I would like to thank the Czech Heritage Foundation for giving me this opportunity.

FRANK JINOCH SHOE REPAIR SHOP



Do you remember the shoe repair shop just north of Penick and Ford (Penford) in Cedar Rapids? I enjoy asking that because of the warm memories I have of that shop. It belonged to Frank Jinoch, my Děda.

Each time I pass on First Street S.W. I once again hear the rhythmic sound of the large belts driving the repair machines, the sewing machine, and the tapping of his hammer. Aromas of rubber cement, new leather and corn cob pipe smoke flood my head.

It was always a treat to visit Děda in his shop and enjoy the sights and sounds of his shop, often filled with conversation of friends dropping by. If Děda was ahead on his work (and often not ahead), he would pick up his accordion and play tunes from the old country.

He could always amuse and amaze youngsters with his smile and always ready wit.

Děda was born in Luze, Czechoslovakia and came to the U.S. in 1913. His wife Antonie and daughters Mary and Emilie were brought over in 1914. After working several years at the old Douglas Starch Works, he opened his shop in 1917 at 715 First Street S.W. He operated it until his retirement and passed away May 26, 1976 at 92 years of age.

The house and shop are no longer there because of "progress" and the new Diagonal Drive, but the memories are refreshed each time I drive by.

Frank R. Edmunds



VASE PRESENTED TO MUSEUM BY PRESIDENT HAVEL



On Saturday, October 21, 1995, President Vaclav Havel of the Czech Republic, presented this vase to the National Czech and Slovak Museum & Library. It was exclusively hand crafted in the Czech Republic for the museum. It is lead crystal that is three quarters inch thick and stands 16 inches tall.

OLGA HAVEL

News from Prague, Czech Republic, announce the untimely death of Olga Havel. She died Saturday, January 17, at her home in Prague. She was a human rights activist and the wife of President Vaclav Havel. She died at the age of 62 after suffering from cancer for several months.

President Havel and Olga were married in 1964. They had no children.

THREE FROZEN KINGS

Nurserymen in our area tell us not to plant geraniums and tender crops until after May 15th.

The Czech legend is over 500 years old. There were three frozen saints, Pancrac, the 12th of May; Cervac 13th of May and Bonifac the 14th of May. Another saint named Zophie, May 15th found the saints and poured warm water on them to thaw them out.

It may be legend, but BEWARE! It holds true in our area and worth remembering.

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Name(s) Ms., Mr., Mrs. _____

Address _____ Zip + 4 _____ - _____

Make check payable and mail to :

Czech Heritage Foundation., P.O. Box 761, Cedar Rapids, IA 52406

Membership dues \$_____ Donation \$_____ Gift Membership \$_____

Why not consider a gift membership for someone special? Your dues and generous donations help to fund several worthwhile endeavors such as Czech Prince and Princess sponsorship, financial support for the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library, adult Czech language classes, the Homestay Program, along with publishing the quarterly Naše České Dědictví, and other numerous publications. The list of Czech Heritage projects goes on and on.

We appreciate your continued support. With your help we can carry on with projects, activities, and goals to preserve our heritage and culture. **THANK YOU! Na shledanou!**

Please renew today! A Bargain at \$3.00 per year



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| March 2 | Czech Summer School Chili Supper 4:00 to 7:00 p.m.
Kuba Annex, 2nd St. S.E. |
| March 10 | Czech Heritage Fd'n. Fund Raising Dance 2:00 to 6:00 p.m.
P3 Hall at 116 - 14th Ave. S.E. |
| March 19 | St. Joseph's Day |
| March 23 | St. Joseph's Day Parade 1:00 p.m.
Czech Village |
| April 27 | Sokol Pork & Dumpling Supper 4:30 to 7:00 p.m.
Sokol Hall, 417 3rd St. S.E. |
| May 18 & 19 | Houby Days,
Czech Village, 16th Ave. S.W. |
| May 25 & 26 | Ethnic Fest, Sat., 4:00-10:00 p.m., Sun., 12:00-8:00 p.m.
Riverside Roundhouse, 1550 A St. S.W. |
| May 27 | Czech National Cemetery Service |
| May 30 | Olympic Torch 9:00 to 9:30 a.m. reaches Czech Village
on its way to May's Island |



TOURS

♥ **Castles & Folklore of Bohemia, Moravia & Slovakia - Aug. 11 to 23, \$2,199**

Castles & historic towns, folk wedding, Piestany Spa, Moravian mini-fest, folk artists; lovely Bohemia - Telc, C. Krumlov, C. Budejovice & Golden Prague.

♥ **Treasures of Slovakia & Detva**

Folk Festival - July 8 to 21, \$2,199

Castles, quaint villages, majestic scenery, folk wedding, raft ride in High Tatras, Pieniny Nat'l Park, historic towns, Piestany Spa, incomparable Detva Folk Festival & more.

Contact **Helene Cincebeaux,**
[redacted], or call / fax
[redacted]



PEN PAL

Needs pen pal to improve her English. She was in Cedar Rapids for a short trip 3 years ago. She is 22 years old. Write to:

Miss Lucie Dolezalova,
[redacted]

MOM'S APRON

How dear to my heart was Mom's old-fashioned apron,

Its uses were myriad and ample in size

For drying of tears, and wiping off noses,

For lifting hot pans from the oven, hot pies;

Convenient for bringing in eggs from the hen house,

For carrying kindling or corn cobs as well

Wave at Dad in the field, it said, "Comen to dinner" —

Just as plainly as did our old dinner bell.

It kept her hands warm when departing friends lingered

And the child standing by could hide beneath its folds,

There's something nostalgic about an apron

With memories of Mom and our home that it holds.

How I pity the children whose new fashion mothers

Wear practical aprons of plastic so neat.

Though they serve the same purpose — protection from soil —

With Mother's old aprons, they'll never compete.

Author unknown