



# OST THE BRIDGE

News of the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library



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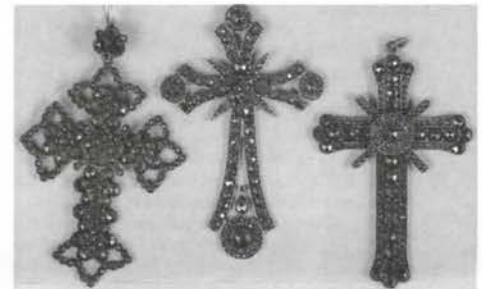
## Exquisite Bohemian Garnets on Display at NCSML

The National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library is proud to present the exclusive American showing of *Bohemian Garnets: Exquisite Artistry from the National Museum in Prague*. Never before seen in the United States, this once-in-a-lifetime exhibition features more than 370 pieces from the world's largest and most comprehensive historical collection at the National Museum of the Czech Republic in Prague. The exhibition, which opened at the NCSML on March 4 and will close on September 25, features Bohemian garnet jewelry, personal

accessories, religious objects, souvenirs and sentimental items, accompanied by period paintings, drawings, prints, statues and costumes.

The most valuable and rare object in the exhibition is on loan from the Archbishop of Prague. A sensational discovery from the vaults of St. Nicholas Church in Prague, it is a Baroque monstrance made around 1722 that is encrusted with 386 garnets, 19 diamonds and 135 rock crystals. Thanks to restoration funded by the NCSML, the monstrance will be on display

to the public for the first time since the National Slavonic Exhibition in Prague in 1895. The curator at the National Museum believes that, at nearly one meter tall, it is likely the largest existing object decorated with Bohemian garnets.



Together with medallions, garnet crosses such as these (1830-c.1910) were among the most popular garnet inlaid ornaments of the latter half of the 18th century and throughout the 19th century.

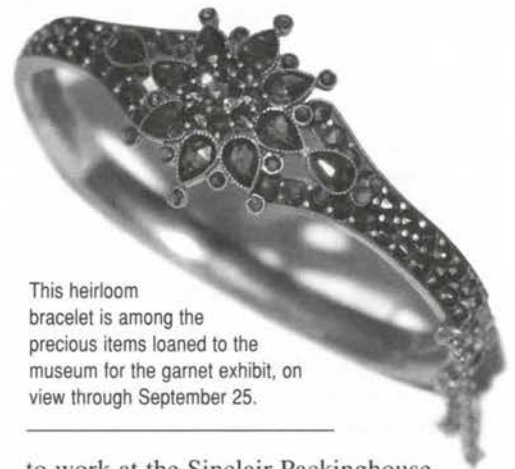
## Heirloom Garnets Add Luster to Exhibit

Many thanks to those volunteers and members who loaned their personal garnets for the exhibit, *Bohemian Garnets: Exquisite Artistry from the National Museum in Prague*. It is a delight to see all of these wonderful examples of garnet jewelry and hear the family stories associated with them. These items are being displayed in the gallery with items from the National Museum, adding a unique element to the exhibition. Here are a few examples:

JoFran Falcon proudly wears a garnet necklace that she remembers her mother, Eva Slapnicka Kouba, wearing. According to Falcon, the heirloom was brought to America by her great-grandmother Katherine Stary. She, her husband Frank, and their four children (including Falcon's grandmother) immigrated to Cedar Rapids in 1864.

Among the most unusual pieces submitted is a garnet pin in the shape of a beetle. The owner, Anne Naibert Buchacek, remembers that her Aunt Viola Naibert Elsenbast wore this "ugly pin" constantly when Anne was a child. As an adult, Anne learned that the pin had been given to Viola in 1909 when she was two years old by her father, Wencel Frank Naibert, who bought the pin in Bohemia. According to Buchacek, little Viola's mother was "furious that he had selected such a gift for a little girl."

Another story is that of a very special garnet necklace smuggled into the United States by Marie Hanefel Mishak. Afraid someone would steal it, she kept it safely hidden in her corset during her 1892 ocean voyage. Marie and her family arrived in Cedar Rapids, where Marie's father went



This heirloom bracelet is among the precious items loaned to the museum for the garnet exhibit, on view through September 25.

to work at the Sinclair Packinghouse. Marie's daughter, Antionette Misak Rozek, had earrings made from the necklace and wore the set on very special occasions and Christmas Day. Referred to by the lender as the "family jewels," the earrings and necklace were passed from mother to daughter. They now belong to Marie's great-granddaughter, Jean Mosel.



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As I write this, anticipation is high for the opening of *Bohemian Garnets: Exquisite Artistry from the National Museum in Prague*. We have been working on this exhibit for more than a year, yet in the final weeks before opening, everything seems to happen at once. Walls are being moved and painted, exhibit cases

are being covered in velvet, and colorful signage and promotional materials are being readied, to name just a few of the countless tasks. Many thanks to all those members who entrusted us with their precious garnets for the exhibit. We have more than 90 heirloom objects to complement the 370-plus coming from the National Museum. Curator Edie Blanchard has been working closely via phone and email with her counterpart, curator Dana Stehlíková. Dana will travel with the garnets door to door, plus a conservator will accompany her to take care of repairs after the objects are unpacked. We hope that *Bohemian Garnets* will rival *A Thousand Years of Czech Culture* for sheer magnificence. Be sure to tell your friends and relatives. This truly is a once-in-a-lifetime exhibit.

I would like to share a few details from the 2004 report that I gave at the Annual Meeting in January. A grand total of 34,010 persons walked through the doors of the NCSML in 2004, slightly up over 2003. This was due to significantly increased attendance at programs – more than 120 of them. For example, the *UpBeat! Concert Series* was a big hit with 1,355 people in attendance. *BrewNost* brought 325 persons and *Cooking in Babi's Kitchen* attracted 130. All three were new events, which reinforces the need to keep things fresh to attract visitors. They will be repeated in 2005, so if you missed out you have another chance to share in the fun.

Once again individual contributions,



In September 2004, the NCSML welcomed visitors from the Slovak Consulate in New York. Pictured are (from left) Andrea Kováčová Siebenmann, president of the Museum Guild and native of Nitra, Slovakia; Jozef Motešický, consulate staff; Gail Naughton, president/CEO, and Ivan Surkoš, Consul General.

memorials, memberships, sponsorships and visitor revenue were critical to successfully balancing the budget. We are grateful for your membership and other donations, which were crucial in meeting the operating expenses. This points out the importance of our new initiative to encourage planned gifts, the Legacy Society. Only through the building of our endowment will the NCSML be able to have a secure future.

In 2005 the board of directors and staff plan to finalize a vision and strategic plan that will be shared with members for your feedback and comments. The vision and plan will give direction to the board and staff for the next five to 10 years. We are planning to start the accreditation process with the American Association of Museums this year. A two-year process, it will culminate in national accreditation and recognition among our peers. This will require a lot of hard work documenting the entire operation and assuring everything is up to accepted museum standards, but we feel we are ready and that this is an important step in our growth as an institution.

The staff and I are always eager to have your feedback on the programming and operations. Please don't hesitate to let us know how we are doing. After all, we are here to fulfill the vision of the members. We hope to see all of you in 2005 for garnets, folk dancing, or just to say hello.

**Gail Naughton, President/CEO**  
gnaughton@NCSML.org



## CNCA Endowment Established

The National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library is pleased to announce the gift of \$57,000 from the Czechoslovak National Council of America (CNCA) to establish the CNCA Freedom Fellowship Fund. The endowment will provide for a Czech or Slovak scholar or artisan to come to the NCSML to engage in artistic, cultural, economic or political study or presentation. The CNCA Fellow will share his or her cultural and academic knowledge with the American people through the NCSML, thereby enhancing and strengthening Czech-American and Slovak-American connections.

In 2004, the Czechoslovak National Council of America voted to dissolve and cease operation. The CNCA came into being during World War I as an organization of Czechoslovak-Americans to unite Czechs and Slovaks and to coordinate their efforts to win independence for their homeland. During the two decades of the

First Republic (1918-1938), the CNCA fostered cultural exchange between the two countries and promoted better understanding and deeper appreciation of the Czech and Slovak languages, history, regional customs, music and folklore. They sponsored and supported schools, lectures and seminars, concerts and annual folk festivals, and numerous periodic publications.

The German occupation during World War II and more than four decades of communist domination of Czechoslovakia prompted the CNCA to shift its emphasis toward socio-economic and political programs. The CNCA helped to alleviate the plight of political dissidents, prisoners and refugees through direct financial assistance, clothes and food package drives, immigration affidavits and job placements. A well-organized information service carried out through office correspondence and monthly bulletins kept American

government officials as well as the general public informed of the latest political and economic developments in Czechoslovakia.

President Ronald Reagan wrote in 1982, "The National Council has been a significant factor in keeping alive and advancing the ethnic heritage of Czechs and Slovaks. You can be proud of the outstanding contributions of your people and their descendants, especially such notables as astronauts James Lovell and Eugene Cernan, to the continuing progress of our nation."

In addition to the endowed fellowship, the NCSML will establish a Web site devoted to the history of the CNCA, maintain the CNCA archives, work with scholars to access those archives and provide one-year NCSML memberships to all members of the CNCA.



Directors of the National Czechoslovak Council of America (from left) Vera Dobrovolna, Libuse Moudry, Olga Kovar, Rozina Nehasil and Jitka Karkos met with President/CEO Gail Naughton in Cicero, Illinois, at the May 22, 2004, meeting of the CNCA.

### **Grand Night Concert Series Introduces Vintage Piano**

She wowed us at the Fall Dinner with her (too) brief Janacek concert. Pianist Ourania Menelaou will return to the NCSML to kick off the 2005 *Grand Night Concert Series* on Tuesday evening, May 24. The concert also will be the official dedication of a fully-restored vintage Weber baby grand piano donated to the NCSML by Virginia Black of Cedar Rapids in honor of her mother May Carman Black. Mrs. Black received the piano as a child over 100 years ago and went on to attend Chicago Musical College. Her daughter Virginia taught music in the Cedar Rapids school system for many years.



## Garnet Tea Party

As our gallery sparkles with the brilliance of the Bohemian garnets, so will our Garnet Tea Party. Wear your finest and enjoy a unique experience at the NCSML on Saturday, June 4. The tea party includes a guided tour of *Bohemian Garnets*, a presentation about garnets by Bob Schaffer of Czech Cottage, and, of course, a delightful and tasty tea. Door prizes and a raffle are included in the fun. Seating is limited, so make your reservations today! Reservations are required by May 27, 2005. The tea party will be in the museum's WFLA Heritage Hall from 1- 4 p.m. Tickets are \$12.00 for NCSML members; \$14.00 for non-members. For groups of 10 or more, tickets are \$12.00 per person. To register or for more information, call (319) 362-8500.

## A Community Learns

"Whatever happened to the pickle factory?" "Slav, Slovak, Slovene – what's the difference?" These and other intriguing questions will be posed – and answered – at the NCSML this spring.

In April, the museum will launch a new community education series. This annual series will make interesting programs available to the community, provide in-service educational opportunities for museum volunteers, and serve as a vehicle for introducing newcomers to the museum, its programs, and the opportunities it offers for personal involvement.

The series will cover a variety of topics and utilize NCSML staff, community members and other resource people. Most of the programs will be presented in two parts with a half-hour social break between the two sessions. Programs will focus on community, history, musicology, immigration, ethnicity, artistry, architecture and more. Through dynamic presentations,

slide shows, hands-on learning and field trips, participants will have a unique experience at every session.

The seven-session series will begin April 7 and conclude on June 16. Six evening programs on Thursdays are planned along with a Saturday all-day field trip. Participants will receive a syllabus and supplemental hand-outs. Volunteers and potential volunteers will also receive docent handbooks and have the opportunity to earn certificates of course completion and official NCSML Volunteer Badges. The programs in this annual series are planned so that the 2006 programs will build upon the 2005 series of presentations.

The series is free and open to the public. Advance registration will be required. For more information contact Patricia Hikiji at (319) 362-8500 or e-mail [phikiji@NCSML.org](mailto:phikiji@NCSML.org)



## WFLA to Sponsor Dance Festival Again

Western Fraternal Life Association has agreed to sponsor the National Bohemian, Moravian and Slovak Folk Dance Festival for the second year in a row. Because of their generous support in 2004, the NCSML was able to expand the festival to a two-day event. It was such a success, we're doing it again this year. On July 16,

Barefoot Becky and the Ivanhoe Dutchmen will play in the Riverside Round House across the street from the museum. Doors open at 5:00 p.m. Dancing is from 6-10 p.m., with food and beverages available. Tickets are \$6.00, \$2.00 for children 5 and under.

On Sunday, July 17, we will present the 4th Annual Bohemian, Moravian and Slovak Folk Dance Festival. Join us as folk dancers from across the United States demonstrate the colorful dances of the Czech and Slovak Republics. New this year will be delicious ethnic food, in addition to authentic folk artisans, music and fun for the whole family. Gates open at 11 a.m., continuous music begins at noon, dancing starts at 1 p.m. Tickets are \$5.00, \$2.00 for children. Combination tickets for dance, gallery and festival will be available. Make your travel plans today – you won't want to miss this! Thank you to WFLA for their outstanding support.



Last year's National Bohemian, Moravian and Slovak Folk Dance Festival included performances by the United Moravian Societies Dancers (above left) and the Veselica Folk Dancers.



## Cooking in Babi's Kitchen

We had so much fun cooking in Babi's kitchen last fall, we've decided to repeat the program and do it twice this year instead of once! On April 16, the Museum Store will host its second *Cooking in Babi's Kitchen*.

Ever wonder how Grandma made those delightful Czech and Slovak comfort foods? Here's your chance to find out. Expert Czech and Slovak cooks will prepare and demonstrate the steps (and tricks) behind some of your favorite ethnic

foods in WFLA Heritage Hall from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The Museum Store will have drawings on the hour, every hour from 10 a.m.- 4 p.m. Test your chances at winning some fabulous Czech-made wares (must be present to win). In-store specials offered all day. And don't miss your chance to meet representatives from Kavalier Company, a Czech company that specializes in glass bakeware. This is a free program, thanks to sponsorship by United Fire Group.



Winter scene of Old Town Square in Prague, pastel, Kamil Kubik

## Impressionist Paintings by Kamil Kubik to Open in Laska Gallery

Kamil Kubik, best known for his impressionist cityscapes and floral still-life, was born in Czechoslovakia and studied in Prague, London, Sydney, San Francisco and New York. An exhibit opening May 16 in the Laska Gallery will feature more than two dozen of his original works picturing both scenes from the Czech Republic and his interpretations of other major cities.

Kubik is widely known as the official

artist who produced cover images for *Reader's Digest*, *Worths Avenue Magazine* and *M.D. Magazine*. In addition to this work, Kubik was the official artist for former President George Bush, President Gerald Ford, Donald Trump, Frank Gifford and many others. Be sure to view this collection in the Laska Gallery through September 18.

## Looking Ahead at the NCSML

As always, this year is packed with exciting, fun programs and events at the NCSML. Consult your *Kalendar* or the NCSML Web site for the latest information regarding the *UpBeat!* and *Grand Night Concert Series*, gallery and neighborhood tours, expert lectures, folk art classes and the changing exhibitions.

Here are a few events to mark on your calendar for this year:

- **May 13-15:** Houby Days, including the Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa Pageant (To participate in the pageant, call (319) 362-8500.)
- **June 4:** Garnet Tea Party
- **July 16-17:** Bohemian, Moravian and Slovak Folk Dance Festival
- **Sept. 25:** *Bohemian Garnets* closes
- **Oct. 7:** *BrewNost!* second-annual beer and wine tasting event and silent auction
- **Nov. 3:** Exhibit preview of *The Tragedy of Slovak Jews* and Fall Dinner
- **Dec. 3:** Svatý Mikuláš Day



Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island, pastel, Kamil Kubik



## Golobic Named Board Chair



Tony Golobic

Tony Golobic was named the 2005 chair of the NCSML Board of Directors at the January meeting. David Kubicek is

first vice-chair, Carey Downs Gibson is second vice-chair, Lu Barta Barron is secretary and Bill Vernon is treasurer. New members are Donald Hattery, Sue Plotz Olson, Mark Mathis, Marvin Smejkal and Bob Vancura. Denver Dvorsky has joined the board as the Czech Heritage Foundation representative.

## Stoffer Receives Award

In November, Jan Stoffer, NCSML Director of Education and Programs, was recognized for her creative programming efforts at the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library. She received the Outstanding New Interpreter Award from the National Association for Interpretation, one of the highest awards given at their annual meeting. The National Association for Interpretation is a professional organization dedicated to advancing the profession of interpretation through education programs at museums, parks, zoos, nature centers, historic sites and aquaria, using communication to forge emotional and intellectual connections between audiences and museum resources.

## Library Enjoys Record Acquisitions



Cataloguer Rebecca Bartlett

In 2004, the library processed 100 library donations, an all-time high (note that each donation may range from a single item to hundreds of items). We fielded 237 in-depth reference questions and had 574 visitors. One interesting accession is a wall-size map of Central and Eastern Europe, circa 1918-1938, from Paul Chalupsky of Cedar Rapids. The map, measuring 60 x 80 inches (5 x 6.5 feet), was most likely used in a classroom setting. The only other known copy similar to it is held by the University of Georgia. The map is in good condition but will need some conservation work to make it suitable for public display.

Cataloger Samantha Schmehl Hines departed in the summer to take a position at the University of Montana. Hired as the library's first cataloger in 2003, Sam was responsible for setting up a cataloging

operation and documenting in-house cataloging procedures. While working only part-time, she cataloged a total of 1,484 items, of which 312 required original catalog records. In 2004, Sam cataloged 1,217 items, resulting in a cumulative total of 4,095 cataloged items available in *Komensky*, the library's online catalog. Sam's pioneering cataloging efforts are much appreciated.

We are pleased to announce our new cataloger, Rebecca Bartlett, who previously worked with Slavic-language materials at the Indiana University Main Library. Rebecca holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in Slavic languages and literature (Russian and Polish in particular) and a Master's Degree in Library Science, all from Indiana University. Rebecca started her employment at the NCSML in December. Her position is funded by a grant from the Czech Heritage Foundation in Cedar Rapids.

The NCSML Web site ([www.NCSML.org](http://www.NCSML.org)) broke usage records for the fourth straight year, with 95,553 visitors and 495,149 hits.

## Museum Friend Passes Away



Frank Novotny

Museum staff and volunteers mourn the loss of Frank Novotny, who passed away on November 27, 2004. Frank was a long-time supporter of the NCSML,

most recently serving on the museum board of directors from 1996 to 2004. His involvement in ethnic activities, fraternal groups, and "anything Czech" in Cedar Rapids and the surrounding communities was legendary. He was the pillar for many of these organizations.

Frank named the NCSML as beneficiary of an annuity contract. The Frank and Mae Novotny Family Endowment Fund will be established by this Legacy Society bequest. Memorials in honor of Frank will be placed in the fund.

## Grants Support NCSML Programs

We are proud to announce that this fall and winter the NCSML received notification about several significant grant awards.

- **Rockwell Collins** awarded \$10,000 for *Bohemian Garnets*;
- **Linn County Supervisors Witwer Trust** awarded \$10,000 for *Bohemian Garnets*;
- **CRST International Inc.** (Donor Advised Fund of the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation) awarded \$9,300 for promotion of *Bohemian Garnets*;
- **Humanities Iowa** (a state-based affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities) awarded \$9,000 for *The 20th Century in Retrospect*;

*Czechoslovakia Behind the Iron Curtain, 1948-1970*;

- **United Fire Group** gave \$5,000 to sponsor Czech and Slovak culture and customs programming;
- **Alliant Energy** awarded \$500 toward development of an interpretive plan and curriculum material for *Homelands*;
- **Wal-Mart** granted \$250 for holiday interpretive materials; and
- **National Association of Interpretation** (Region V) awarded \$150 for education kits.

We are grateful to these funding sources and all of our generous donors who make it possible for the NCSML to continue offering quality programs and exhibitions.

## Wall of Memory Commemorates Loved Ones

The Wall of Memory in the NCSML's Grand Hall continues to be a popular way for individuals and families to remember and honor loved ones. Each of the 41 plaques purchased to date is engraved with a special memorial or tribute.

Examples include:

"In Loving Memory of  
Joseph R and Libby A Vavra  
By their Children"

"In Thanksgiving for 55 Years  
Of Marriage June 25, 1948  
Donald and Esther Vorel"

"Paul and Apollonia Lajcha Sloboda  
Proud Slovaks  
Prouder Americans"

If you would like permanent recognition for a special event or for a loved one, consider the purchase of a plaque on the Wall of Memory at the NCSML for \$500.

Your gift helps ensure that the name of your loved one and the achievements of the museum will live on. For more information about the Wall of Memory or to order a plaque, call Carmen Langel at (319) 362-8500.



## Legacy Society Ceremony Set for May 19

Charter membership in the NCSML Legacy Society has reached 22 persons or couples. New charter members will continue to be enrolled until May 1, in advance of the first Luncheon and Recognition Ceremony on May 19. By now most of our members have received information about the NCSML Legacy Society. The Society was established as a way to recognize, honor and express appreciation to those dedicated individuals who have made provisions for the NCSML in their estate planning. Membership does not require a gift today, but a pledge for the future.

If you have included the NCSML in your estate plans, or if you would like a confidential conversation about the possibilities, please call Gail Naughton or Carmen Langel at (319) 362-8500.

## Sponsors Sought

Exhibit sponsors are being sought for *The Tragedy of Slovak Jews*, which will open November 4, 2005, in the Petrik Gallery. The primary aim of this exhibit, curated by the Museum of the Slovak National Uprising in Banska Bystrica, is to provide visitors with a historic, objective view of the creation and course of the holocaust in Slovakia during the WWII years. The holocaust is presented in relation to the development of Slovak society and the regime of the Slovak war republic in the years 1939-1945.

Sponsorships provide support for construction, shipping, insurance and installation of the exhibit. Sponsors will be recognized in the gallery. Contact Carmen Langel for more information at (319) 362-8500.



## Introducing the 2nd Edition Collector Series Folk Art Egg



Master folk artist Marj NejdI has designed another special egg for our collector's series. A goose egg, it is hand-

painted with a multi-color folk pattern on a dark blue background. Each is signed, dated and numbered. The price is \$55 each, and the member discount does not apply. To order your egg, contact Shirley at (319) 362-8500 or email [giftstore@NCSML.org](mailto:giftstore@NCSML.org).

## New Arrivals for Spring

### Garnets

We have expanded our inventory of garnet jewelry in conjunction with the *Bohemian Garnets* exhibit. Choose from classic and new designs of beautiful earrings, pendants, bracelets and pins – all encased in elegant white leather jewelry boxes.

### Books

Each time we have a History and Culture Conference, Museum Store manager Shirley goes on a sleuthing expedition for books in English related to the topic. Nowhere else will you find such a large selection of hard-to-find books on Czech and Slovak history and culture. Here are a few of the new titles: *The Prague Spring, 1968* by Jaromir Navratil (\$30.95); *Prague Tales* by Jan Neruda (\$17.95); *The Power of the Powerless: Citizens Against the State in Central-Eastern Europe* by Vaclav Havel (\$31.95); *The Czechs and The Lands of the Bohemian Crown* by Hugh

Agnew (\$26.00); *Soviet Intervention in Czechoslovakia, 1968 Anatomy of a Decision* by Jiri Valenta (\$26.00); *The Intellectual Origins of the Prague Spring: The Development of Reformist Ideas in Czechoslovakia 1956-1967* by Vladimir V. Kusin (\$24.99); and *Prague Territories: National Conflict and Cultural Innovation in Franz Kafka's Fin de Siecle* by Scott Spector (\$25.95).

### Eggs, Decorating Books and Supplies

You can get hard-to-find supplies and books for egg decorating in the Museum Store. For the novice or expert, there are design books, decorating kits with dyes and instructions, the all-important one-hole egg blower, and templates for drawing designs. For the less adventuresome, there is a large selection of finished hand-decorated eggs, in a variety of sizes and techniques. Call Shirley or Pat to help you select just the one for your Easter decorating, (319) 362-8500.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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