

NAŠE ČESKÉ DĚDICTVÍ

OUR CZECH HERITAGE

Vol.5. No.2. Czech Heritage and Fine Arts Foundations
June 1980 P.O.Box 761, Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52406.



COMING EVENTS OF INTEREST

- July 18 Traer Czech Days
Aug, 2-3 Wilber, Nebraska Festival
Aug. 21 ANNUAL PICNIC, Czech Heritage
and Fine Arts Fdns.
Sept. 6 Czech Village Festival, Cedar
7-8 Rapids, 16th Ave. SW
Jan. 19 Annual Meeting of the two
1981 Foundations
Jan. 27 PRODANA NEVĚSTA (The Bartered
28 Bride), Paramount Theater of
the Performing Arts, C.R..
May 9 FIRKUSNY, Czech Pianist, with
10 C.R.Symphony Orchestra

REPORTING PAST EVENTS

In March, the film "JAN HUS" was viewed by more than one hundred members and friends. The courtesies extended to us by the Committee and Dr. McDill at the Hus Memorial Presbyterian Church are truly appreciated. The film had a most favorable response from the viewers.

The St. Pat's Parade and Houby Days events are found in Czech Village News in this issue.

In April, Gene and Zdenka Deitch told of their projects and exciting experiences in the production of animated films. It takes a sequence of some 28 frames per second to depict one movement of a person, animal, or object to give the appearance of a motion picture. It takes weeks AND weeks, even months to complete the thousands of individual drawings needed to complete even a short film. The talk was illustrated with one of their productions. A social hour at the Sokol Hall provided an opportunity to visit with the Deitches.

The SOKOL AKADEMIE at LaSalle gym entertained and thrilled an audience that overflowed available space.

** ANNUAL PICNIC - - COME ! ! **

** August 21, Thursday, late afternoon
** at ZCBJ Park. Bring your own table-
** ware and silver. The POT-LUCK will
** feature YOUR CONTRIBUTION of your
** FAVORITE GOODIE. Please bring e-
** nough for 10 servings. Hot dogs &
** hamburgers and beverages supplied
** by the Social Committee.
** Music for your listening and for
** dancing. COME ONE! COME ALL!
** Come visit anytime after 5 p/m/
** EAT TIME IS 6p/m/ Members - -
** why not bring a new member or a
** guest to-be-member? We'll see you
** all on August 21st.

For those newcomers and members who have not yet been to the Park, take C St.S.W., southward to the Power Station; turn left, go thru underpass, turn right, cross small culvert and turn left on first road you see. Continue east for some 2 miles. On Left side of road, see a gate with ZCBJ letters. Continue down the lane to ample parking spaces and the large pavilion.

SALUTE TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA

We are very privileged to share this tribute to Czechoslovakia with our membership. The article was written by Dr. John P. Wakefield for an exhibit at the American Embassy in Prague, Cechy. The contents of this report will bring back many memories to those of you who were in the Services of our country during the WW II period and to those of you who might have been living in Cechy at the time.

(continued page 2)

"As a senior at Iowa State College , Ames, on Pearl Harbor Day, I was called to active duty as a Reserve Officer(ROTC) in the Field Artillery and assigned to the 38th F.A.Bn. 2nd Infantry Division, Camp McCoy, Wisconsin. After ten months of training, we were convoyed to County Armagh, North Ireland. In May 1944, we shipped out to Cardiff, Wales, from where we set sail across the Channel on May 5th, 1944, for the D-Day assault on Omaha Beach at St. Laurent sur mer, France.

There seemed to be no doubt in our naive minds that we were soldiers of liberation and freedom. Most all of the European Nations were victims and suffering from the tyranny and torture of the Nazi Regime under Adolph Hitler, so we believed. But, much to our dismay such did not quite appear to be the case with people we had seen as yet.

To us, European acceptance left much to be desired. The British, our long time and best ally, treated us something like an undesired in-law and Hollywood outlaws. They seemed at best to be caustic, acrimonious, sarcastic, and to some degree resentful of our presence. We were, they said, "overpaid, overfed, oversexed and overhere. "

Surely, we felt the French would be more receptive to us in our cause for liberation. But again, such did not appear to be the case. They seemed to be sulking and emotionally crushed with some degree of subtle vindication. So, we couldn't wait for D-Day to arrive, now, perhaps we should go back, as I shall never forget the first Frenchman I saw on Omaha Beach. He did not seem oppressed, but looked at me as though to say, " Go back, let us alone." Or as one put it, " You Americans, you come over here, win a military victory, but NOT the War." As the war went on, many often wished they had taken the advice and desire of this man.

As we fought through Germany, the populace seemed reluctant, devious, and skeptical with some degree of fear of our morals and motivations. I am

not sure to this day (that) there is complete trust in us and the feeling is mutual, I am sure. After the battle at Leipsig had been won, we were told to halt, we would meet the Russians. Before this happened, we were ordered to travel under the darkness to another country - unknown to but a few in the Division Headquarters. When we halted, we were in a position to fire in the southern outskirts of Plzen, Czechoslovakia. Little did we realize that this was to be our final gun position on the European Continent for World War II.

Most of us scarcely heard of this small land-locked country. A nation of 16,000,000 industrious, efficient, intelligent and trustful people with their own language and an American culture not unlike our own. As we convoyed in 2½ ton trucks from the Czechoslovak border to Plzen, we knew we were among friends, with respect and love, with mutual admiration for each other, not only as soldiers of liberation but for just being plain Americans. There was something magnetic about the faces of these happy wonderful people who seemed to not only appreciate our presence in their country but something even deeper, our culture and philosophy of regard for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Surely, all along our combat trail, we would have our day and this was it! Nothing could have been more appropriate and climactic for a Division who had fought from Omaha Beach, Normandy, Brest, the Battle of the Bulge, Germany and finally Czechoslovakia with nothing more than a mere paucity of publicity and a pittance of recognition both here and at home in the U.S.A.

V-E Day celebrations with our Czech Comrades was more than spirited beverage, it was the spirit of brotherhood and democracy. Few of us spoke Czech but more of them spoke English... But we knew that the real trust and regard were mutual for we could SEE IT IN THEIR EYES. These feeling became (continued on page 4)

Czech Fine Arts Foundation, Inc.

MUSEUM INTEREST GROWS--AND GROWS

Since the last issue of the newsletter, an estimated 800 visitors have been at our Museum. During the two HOUBY DAYS in May almost 350 signed our guest book. Often when larger groups attend, many of the people do not sign the register.

During the last three months, we have enjoyed meeting visitors from New Zealand and Czechy as well as from 15 states. Of course, Iowa leads the list. Other visitors have come from Mo., Minn., Mich., Ill., Pa., Ohio, N.Y., Vt., Md., Fla., Ark., Tex., Colo., Calif.

Visitors include clubs, school children, college students, youth groups, lodges, convention guests in the city, business associates, and bus tour groups. It is indeed, heartening to hear the praise of people when they see the exhibits and hear our "lecture" talks as we serve as guides at the Museum.

MUSEUM EXHIBITS HAVE A NEW LOOK

A springtime renovation has taken place in the Museum. A changed arrangement of the manikins, groups them so their costumes are from the same region or district in each of the three rooms: Czechy, Moravia, and Slovakia.

The change in the location of some of the furniture makes for more ease in moving about and to better view the displays.

We look forward to our enlarged and open spaces in the renovation of the Dowie Building as our next "home".

Monthly meetings of the Fine Arts Fdn. BOARD OF DIRECTORS has been changed to the 4th MONDAY of the month. The next meeting will be July 28th, at 7:30 p.m.

1870-1980: 110 years of Czech Summer School is Cedar Rapids !

REPORT ON THE MUSEUM "HOME-TO-BE"

The former Dowie Building is by now fairly well cleaned of unwanted materials. Some cleaning on of the ground area around the outside has been done.

Herman Thompson has been retained as design and remodeling consultant. Drawings and specifications are to be presented to the Building Committee for consideration. After the plans and cost estimates are approved, the next step is the awarding of the contract for the actual work.

Dowie Advertising and Fine Arts Fdn. have made an arrangement to use a signboard atop the building for one year to carry the message: "Future Home of Czech Museum and Library."
L.L.D.

THRESHING, STRAW PILES, COLD PACK, INCUBATORS, AND PORTIERS

Mrs. Mary Dobrovsky Konecny will be 93 on her birthday in December. She was the bride of Frank Volesky just 70 years ago the day in June we had our visit about early times in Linn County.

Breaking virgin prairie sod was hard and heavy work for young lads using an ordinary plow. The fields were in the vicinity of the crossroads of US 218 and the airport highway. The lads had a cabin for shelter on the field and searched for prairie chicken eggs for their meal.

Yields per care on the family farm of 80 acres improved when the disc (or disk) made for better cultivation than the use of cultivator and harrow. The early reaper-binder cut the oats, bundle and then drop them one at a time. As a child she and others would drag those heavy bundles to a spot where they

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more apparent as they opened their hearts and homes to us.

We had finally found our true American Brothers and Sisters in this remote and unfortunately isolated country geographically to the United States of America. They not only gave their hearts but their beds, and food, and homes to share with them. We enjoyed together parades, celebrations, dances and girl friends that could hardly have been provided by any other people.

Truly the one bright spot in our European Theater Combat trail was Czechoslovakia.

As the Second Infantry Division was ordered to return to the U.S.A., it was with mixed emotions and tears in many eyes. But our hearts shall always remain in Czechoslovakia til the day we die for the great American friends of Democracy they had enjoyed for the years between World War I and World War II under their Republic Constitution and President Eduard Benes.

Having traveled thru and around the world, I am certain of one thing - that of all the peoples of this world, paradoxically, the one that respects, regards, and loves us the greatest, is the one we have done the LEAST for - Czechoslovakia. "

The Wakefields live in Des Moines. Her parents, the Pechmans, came from near Plzen. She is a member of our Heritage Foundation. (mms)

SIDEWALK READINGS

You will not only discover former and some present names of people and their occupations or professions but also you will have a "lesson" in reading some Czech words. Where? the sidewalks on 3rd Street S.E. in front of the CSPS Hall (1890) at 11th Ave., SE. & the former ZCBJ Hall(1908) at 12th Ave

At the time 3rd Street was paved, some sidewalk was cut off, so some "units" are incomplete. The large brass letters are in the CSPS walk. At the ZCBJ walk the letters are small cube colored tiles.

Forty-four "advertisements" appear on the 66 cement walk slabs at the CSPS site. Some "ads" take two slabs but T.M. Sinclair has six! As one approaches from the north, crossing 11th Avenue, one begins "sidewalk reading" of the first 8 slabs. The remainder of the "ads" are read from the south approach.

Not only are the names of interest but also the kinds of business as: musical instruments (Slapnicka); hardware (Kubias); plumbing-heating; contractors; saloons; monuments (Krebs); jeweler (Suchy); banks; dry good (Matyk); GAZETTE; groceries; real estate (Hedges); theater; wall paper (Klinger); livery stable (Pugh); pharmacy (Machacek); many beers; meat packing (Sinclair); lawyers; furniture; fuel suppliers; undertaker; photo (Kilborn).

At the ZCBJ are 48 slabs carrying 38 "ads" some using 2 to 4 slabs. Like the CSPS walk, 16 can be read from the north approach at 12th Ave., and 22 read from the south approach. The tiles are red, white, and blue. Letters may be all of the same color, or combinations of the three colors.

Listed are: klempir (tinsmith. J.N. Kucera); lekarnik (pharmacist); bank; doutnikar (cigar maker); livery; dentists - Vane, Naibert, Zeithammel; obuv (shoes); contractors; barber shop; stone work; pekar (baker); fuel; coal; jeweler; architect; and two newspapers - Cedar Rapidske Listy and Vestnik Iowasky.

There is more to read than what is reported above. A chart of the walks will appear later in the Museum.

One of our members suggested that something be written about those those sidewalk slabs, so here it is! (mms)

Kdo lže, ten krade.
He who lies (also) steals.

Raní ptáčel, Dal doskoče.
Early birds get farther.

The **THIRD ANNUAL HOUBY DAYS** in mid-May was another success. Despite the rainy weekend, 1200 breakfasts were served on the 2 days. Houby entries came from 3 states. Thousands of happy visitors thronged The Avenue.



GARDEN WALK sponsored by the Cedar Rapids Board of Realtors was on Sunday, June 22nd. Proceeds donated to Tree Planting in Czech Village. Did you enjoy the walk in the many gardens on the route? We did!

CZECH FESTIVAL, SEPTEMBER 5, 6, 7

PAT MARTIN, Village Coordinator, has met with more than 1000 visitors since March 10, 1980. She has given programs about Czech Village and our heritage at conventions, service clubs, and other groups, numbering from 15 to 110 with a total of more than 500! The other 500 have been tour groups from schools, college, 4H., Cubs, club and lodge groups from many towns and cities coming to the Museum. At Westdale Mall promotion for Houby Days, the displays caught the attention of hundreds AND hundreds of people.

CZECH VILLAGE FESTIVAL, Sept. 5, 6, 7

Completion of the sidewalk-scape in Czech Village is targeted for August 30, 1980. Rising construction costs have cut items from the budget. Here are some ways individuals, families, groups, might consider helping with donations to beautify the Village: park bench @ \$500 each; wooden planters @ \$325 each; trash containers @ \$190 each; 42 trees @ approx. \$75. each; clock tower island @ \$5300; 2 kiosks @ \$6900.

CZECH VILLAGE FESTIVAL; many popular attractions and events; bake-off, carp fishing, music, parade, food, flea market, pony rides, refreshments, river raft races, entertainment.
Program available mid-July



Czech Village Association, Inc.

CZECH HERITAGE

by Pat Martin

From coast to coast in the United States today there is a dynamic drive to restore the best of our American past, and this drive has given new life to our present day. Restoration and preservation projects such as the one being conducted in CZECH VILLAGE in Cedar Rapids are truly accomplishments in preserving historical sections in growing, fast-moving cities where land is at a premium for redevelopment. Such restoration projects preserve irreplaceable historic structures, not with a stuffed animal treatment, but as a part of the fabric of present day life and work.

For many years before this time, people asked, "Why save an old area in the city?" and they didn't. Instead they tore down the old to make way for the new. The focus was on concrete and bigness.

The "melting pot" concept of people had value in its day in this country, but today in this world of vastness and sameness, there is a focus upon the uniqueness of individuals. The City Fathers in Cedar Rapids are helping the Czech people to save the Czech Village area because we all love the past. The past and its preservation say, "This is our basis, our Beginning." Today we save a part of the past because of our need to learn from the past, to remember our ancestors, and to be proud of our heritage.

The Czechoslovakian people have been the dominant ethnic influence in the Cedar Rapids area for more than 100 years. Now we are beginning to realize just how greatly Czech builders, craftsmen, accountants, and bankers must have influenced the Cedar Rapids area in which they settled, and how

the area might have been altered had it not been for this ethnic influence.

Woven into the Czech Village is a wealth of information on Old World backgrounds and Czech influences, decorative details, and personal histories that will be interesting, delightful, to visitors to our area. Visitors to Czech Village may see examples of the artistry and culture of the Czech people in their work as they look at Czech specialties such as meat products, baked goods, saddle and leather products, Czechoslovakia glassware, gifts, artistry, and antiques and peasant-look clothing.

The annual Czech festivals in Czech Village dramatize a dominant characteristic of the Czech people - their joy in living, their love of food, drink and gayety

In May, HOUBY DAYS are celebrated. Co-sponsored by Czech Village Association and Czech Fine Arts Foundation, this event features the fine folk arts, customs, the music and dancing, the heritage of the Czech people. Houby hunt or hunting for mushrooms, is one such custom enjoyed.

The weekend following Labor Day, in September, the Czech Village Festival is scheduled annually. Czech Village Association members view this affair, complete with rides, music and dancing, contests and lot of old-fashioned fun, as their annual party in which they include the public!

The Czech people are an ancient people, descendants of a Slavic tribe history records in the fifth century. The first university in Central Europe was established in Prague more than 100 years before Columbus discovered America. The Czech people left behind them a land which knew a grand history and culture, and throughout generations of war and oppression in Europe, they maintained their heritage and brought that heritage, their music, arts, and customs to this new country, this new state.

And here, in our Czech community and on our Czech Village, this heritage will be kept alive, to reinvigorate today and give us confidence for tomorrow.

made a "shock" of 6 bundles and topped it off with another bundle placed to shed rain and protect the drying grain heads. It was heavy work and arms were scratched by sharp straws and ends of the oat hulls.

On some farms the shocks were hauled to the threshing area and stacked into bee-hived shaped cones with the grain heads to the center and cut ends exposed to the weather. On other farms crews with hayracks and teams pitched the bundles on the wagon and hauled the load to the threshing rig. Here the men pitched the bundles directly into the hungry mouth of the machine. At threshing time, the fly wheel of the steam engine was harnessed with long and wide leather belt to the threshing machine. Wagons would line up to catch the grain as it spewed out of the spout of the rig. The grain was then hauled for storage to the granary. All shoveling was by hand before the elevator was invented.

The straw pile was often horse-shoe shaped because the duct that threw out the straw moved back and forth in an arc to distribute the straw. Usually two men were on the pile to arrange the straw, too.

Threshing and hauling crews worked from half a day to 2 days, depending upon weather and crop yields. Lunch of kolaches and rohlky at 9 a.m. and at 3 p.m. was served along with a jug for a "swig". The jug was passed from man to man!

Dinner at noon had a variety of 2 or 3 meats, cake, pie, potatoes, such garden vegetables as were available, tea or coffee. It took 5 or 6 cooks busy over a hot wood-burning stove to prepare the meals.

Mrs. Konecny told of the cold-pack method of canning meats, especially chicken. One method was to put the raw chicken into fruit jars and cook it for some 3 hours. She preferred her method: bake chicken until almost tender, pack into jars, cover to $\frac{1}{4}$ with liquid from the pan, then cold pack for about 45 min.

(continued on page 8)

DR. NORBERT CAPEK was a minister in the Unitarian Church in Prague when President Masaryk was in office. Capek was said to have had a most fascinating and powerful personality. Before W. War I., he was forced out of the Austrian Province of Bohemia by the government because of his pacifist writings.

He came to the United States but returned when there was a Czechoslovakia after 1918. He was a liberal and a humanist.

During W.W. II under German Occupation his youngest daughter was accused of treason. Dr. Capek was "starved, beaten and finally killed in Dachau Concentration Camp in 1943. "

Komu není rady ,Tomu není pomoc.
He who does not accept advice,
For him there is no help.

Kdo za dveřma poslouchá
Sám o sobě zvydá.
He who listens behind doors
(He)learns about himself.

PIONEERS IN HYBRID SEED CORN

Late in April, Mrs. Roswell Garst of Coon Rapids was back in her old home area. She was born Elizabeth Henak in 1896 near Solon. Her grandmother came from Kosestice, her grandfather from near Plzen. The grandparents came to America in 1952.

The couple farmed 900 acres of Jones County land. They were the parents of several children, one of whom was Mary Shimerda Henak, mother of Elizabeth, Blanche, and Fred. After the family retired from the farm they lived in Oxford Junction. Some of the Shimerdas moved to Wilber, Neb. and the Dakotas.

It is interesting to note that Willa Cather's story, MY ANTONIA, is set in Nebraska and she used the name of Shimerda for the family characters in her book.

Elizabeth Henak (Mrs, Garst) went to school in Wyoming for the 9th grade and graduated from high school. She was then sixteen.

Elizabeth attended Lenox Collage in Hopkinton. She said it was more of a "finishing school" than a college. (Lenox was founded in 1848 and later was absorbed by the Buena Vista College, Storm Lake.)

She wanted to be a teacher so went to Cedar Falls and was certified after two years. She went to the University of Iowa ,1918-19, and graduated .

Over the years she taught at Oxford Jct., Sioux Rapids, Waterloo, and the School at Dennison sponsored by the Cedar Falls Teachers College.

Elizabeth Henak met Roswell Garst who had attended college at Ames. They married and had two sons and three daughters. Mr. Garst died in 1977. She lives on the farmstead at Coon Rapids. Sons David and Steven manage the Garst Farms.

The Garst Farms had attracted visitors from all over the world. Mr. Garst became interested in Henry Wallace's Pioneer hybrid corn which he had been developing from 1915 to 1927. In 1927, Mr. Garst obtained ONE BUSHEL of seed. By 1930 there was a business in Coon Rapids , Garst and J. Thomas Hyrid Seed Corn Company.

In 1955, Mr. Garst was invited to Russia. Some experimentation had been going on there with small seed samples. Thus started the Iowa-USSR hybrid seed planting. In our visit, Mrs. Garst said that much of the corn was used for fodder since much of Russia has too short a season for corn to mature. (In fact, all of European Russia is farther north than the southern boundary of our North Dakota.)

In 1956, the Garsts were invited by the Russian government to come as guests. They consulted with the State Department to learn if seed corn and equipment could be sold in Russia.

When over there, the Garsts were given the "grand tour": operas, circuses, museums, factories, and cities. They felt at ease during their visit.

Later some Soviets came to visit the Garst Farms and see their methods and crops. In 1959, Mr. Garst visited Romania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia.

In 1959 when Krushchev visited the United States, he and his entourage were guests at the Garst Farms. It was on this same visit to Iowa, that the Russian Party toured one of the meat packing plants which was in Des Moines.

-- INCUBATORS, PORTIERS

The taste was really locked in and the meat so tender.

During those farm years, Mrs. Konecny raised 1500 white Wyndotte chickens. She used 3 incubators holding 300, 250, and 100 eggs along with 22 setting hens. All were to hatch eggs about the same time! Every 12 hours the eggs had to be turned, by hand, so that the chicks would develop properly. (Feathered creatures have

sense enough to do this on their own!) Pullets were culled and along with some roosters were sold to a produce shop on 16th Ave., SW. The poultry was cleaned, cut up, and sold to restaurants and Montrose Hotel. During WW I, eggs sold for 69¢/dozen. Anyone remember?

Some of you may never have heard of portiers of "drapes" to separate the parlor and living room or dining room. An ingenious and home-made type was to soak red, white, yellow corn kernels until soft - string them up on heavy thread and attach the "ropes" of corn over the wide doorway or onto a fancy wooden framework in the door frame. Then the "ropes" would be tied just below the middle and tied back to form a drapery.

Would you like to re-live those "good old days"? Some of you readers did have these experiences.

CZECH HERITAGE FDN.

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