



News of the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library

Volume 4, No. 3 — Summer 1998

Homelands Begins A New Chapter in the Museum's Development

t is an exciting time at the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library. The opening of Homelands: The Story of the Czech & Slovak People has simultaneously closed one chapter in the museum's development and opened another.

Homelands is the last major element in the institution's building campaign. A permanent exhibit for our main gallery was part of the original concept and was included in the case statement for fund raising. We were fortunate to be able to bring A Thousand Years of Czech Culture to Cedar Rapids in 1997 which delayed Homelands, but also purchased important exhibit elements while allowing us all to

exhibition.

Most importantly,
the opening of
Homelands signals

enjoy a very spe-

cial international

the beginning of an important time at the museum. With the core exhibit in place, educational programming, collecting initiatives (both for the museum & library), collections management, and temporary exhibits become our institutional priorities. These then

Inside this issue...

- ► "ABOUT COLLECTIONS," pg. 2 3
- ► SUMMER READING/TRAVEL, pg. 4
- ► UPCOMING EVENTS, pg. 5
- ► LIST OF DONORS, pg. 6 7
- ► NATIONAL NEWS & EVENTS, pg. 8

need to be supported by ongoing marketing campaigns and fund raising initiatives. Accreditation by the American Association of Museums has long been a goal of the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library. We can now turn our attention toward the many steps

involved in achieving accreditation.
All of these issues and the questions they raise need to be coordinated into a long range, or strategic, plan. Questions such as how quickly can

the museum
grow? Where will
our resources
come from?
What is the
best way to
utilize the different spaces
in our building? How does
the National
Advisory Board
fit into our
future? Which

The Story of the Czeeh & Slovak People fit into our future? Which initiatives take priority over others? As a national museum, how best can we cultivate, provide benefits for, and keep interested a national audience?

These are only a few of the many questions for which the museum now seeks answers. However, these are good questions; questions that signal a future that is bright and full of opportunity. With this in mind the board of directors and staff have scheduled a retreat in which these and other important issues can be discussed.

The long range planning committee of the board will take the information

SPECIAL APPEARANCE



The National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library and the Federation of Czech Groups to bring Czech Boys Choir to Cedar Rapids, July 11

The Internationally renowned boys choir, Boni Pueri, from Hradec Kralove in the Czech Republic will be in Cedar Rapids to perform a July 11 concert at Warde Hall on the campus of Mt. Mercy College. The concert, entitled *The Glory of Czech Singing*, begins at 7:30 p.m. It is co-sponsored by the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library and the Federation of Czech Groups, and is being held in memory of Mr. Edward R. Kuba, Sr.

Tickets can be purchased through the museum, 362-8500. Seating is limited for this rare musical opportunity.

as

Article continued from first page.



Dan Baldwin, Executive Director

from the retreat — and subsequent information which will come from the board's other committees — and develop

a strategic plan which looks ahead for the next three to five years. This is an important function of boards and it is important as well that you, the membership, are aware that the board of directors is working in such a thoughtful way. This is a critical time when it would be easy to become complacent and allow the museum and library to lose its focus and venture into areas not part of its mission or not keep track of its priorities. As we grow and prosper, we will be able to look back on these discussions and recognize how important they were to our success.

- Daniel R. Baldwin, Executive Director

FROM OUR CURATOR & LIBRARIAN

Frequently Asked Questions About Donations to the Artifact and Library Collections

isitors frequently ask us about our donation procedures, what we accept into the artifact and library collections, why a past donation is not on exhibit, and other questions about the artifact and library collections. Ultimately, these individuals are referred to the Curator or Librarian (Carmen Langel and David Muhlena, respectively). These questions are asked frequently enough that we wanted to address some of them in this and future issues of the MOST. We hope you find this information helpful in the event you, a friend or family member is considering making a donation to the collections.

What does the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library collect?

The Museum and Library collects items that enhance the understanding of Czech and Slovak history and culture, especially materials created by, for and about Czechs, Slovaks, Czech-Americans or Slovak-Americans. Several other factors are also taken into consideration when we consider whether to collect items, such as their physical condition and, in the case of large objects, whether there is ample space to store and care for them. Due to space constraints, we also try not to duplicate items already in the collections. This is especially true of the

library, which has thousands of titles and very limited shelf space.

Artifacts that are collected include, but are not limited to:

- · Clothing materials and other textiles;
- Folk and fine art;
- · Household furnishings:
- Products of science and technology;
- Objects representative of the immigrant experience in the United States;
- Objects related to 20th century political/historical events;
- · General material culture.

Library materials that are collected include, but are not limited to:

- · Books and pamphlets;
- Periodicals, newspapers, newsletters, and ephemeral;
- · Manuscripts;
- Graphic materials such as photographs, maps, and posters;
- Personal papers of Czechs, Slovaks, Czech-Americans or Slovak-Americans;
- Sheet music;
- · Musical recordings;
- Films
- · Oral histories.

How do you donate objects or books to the NCSML?

The process of donating objects to the collections is quite simple. The

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Museum has a standard "Certificate of Gift" form that is signed and dated by the donor and a member of the staff, usually the Curator or Librarian. This form transfers legal ownership of the items to the NCSML and is retained as a permanent record of who made the donation. If the prospective donor does not live nearby, these arrangements are easily done via mail or UPS.

In the next issue of the MOST, we will discuss what happens to your donations once they are accepted by the NCSML.

 Carmen Langel, Curator and David Muhlena, Librarian

CZECH HISTORY...

Recent Additions to the Artifact and Library Collections

ne of the most enjoyable aspects of working in the Museum and Library is meeting with donors and learning about their treasures. Often the accompanying stories are as interesting as the objects themselves.

1 Artifacts

One recent example is a Czech-made VZ 24 rifle donated by William and Marie Vavrik of Naperville, Illinois. The VZ 24 was made in Brno based on the action of the Mauser 98. The specific rifle donated by the Vavriks was manufactured in 1937. After the German occupation of 1938, it was modified and reissued to the German army. During the closing years of the war, Czech-American Corporal Charles Sindelar recovered the discarded weapon near Munich, Germany. Thus, this Czech-made rifle (based on German design) ended up in the hands of the Germans during World War II, but eventually came back to an individual of Czech descent.

This VZ 24 joins two others in the Museum collection donated last year by Jim and Olga Pavik (theirs is currently exhibited in *Homelands*) and by C. David Vanicek.

Another recent donation to the collections of the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library is a 19th century printing press made by Chandler & Price Co. Although not Czech-made, the press's significant history and contributions to the Czech community render it a very appropriate donation.

This press was used in the middle to late 19th century through the early 20th century to produce the Slovan Americky, the prominent Czech-language newspaper published in Cedar Rapids. The press and accompanying accessories were all included in a recent donation by the late Josephine and Edward R. Kuba, Sr. of Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Library Materials

A wonderful addition to our growing archives is a Civil War diary and a letter written by Frank Smrcek (1842 – 1870). Smrcek was born in Moravia and was living in Wisconsin when he entered the Union Army during the Civil War.

He died in 1870, leaving his wife expecting their second child, on their farm near Ely, Iowa. The Museum & Library is fortunate to have also received the English translations of each item. An excerpt from the letter, possibly written to a former teacher of Smrcek in Moravia, states "We decided to make our home in Cedar Rapids, which is located on the Red Cedar river. The Czech population in our district is large. It is 25 miles

trict is large. It is 25 miles long and 12 miles wide with a large Czech and Slovak population and, as a

matter of fact, in the past year, many of the Slovaks have settled throughout the district. In the last year the newspapers conducted a count of all the Czech and Slovak immigrants, but it was not very successful and deemed a failure. However, it was estimated that some 80,000 Czechs and Slovaks resided in the state. That our parents, living in America, are becoming citizens in this most free country in the world, they are not forgetting their roots. Proof of this is that wherever several Czechoslovaks live in an area, they will form lodges such as the Slovenska Linden Reading Society, Dramatic Society, Choral Groups, Gymnastic

These items were a joint donation of three sisters: Margaret Keck of Boyertown, Pennsylvania, Beatric LeClere of Cedar Rapids, Iowa and Helen Hemminger of Marion, Iowa. They are the great grandchildren of Smrcek.

Clubs, Fraternal Benefit Society along

with labor lodges."

Among the items donated to the library by Bob Baumruk of Berwyn, Illinois, are two very recent publications, *Prague in Black and Gold* by Peter Demetz (Hill and Wang, New York, 1997) and *The Coasts of Bohemia: A Czech History* by Derek Sayer (Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1998). These new books are fine additions



This 1912 image of the print shop was taken when the shop was located at 126 First Avenue NE. The press donated to the Museum can be seen in the photo on the right side near the back of the room. The editor and publisher of *The Slovan Americky*, John Miroslav Barta Letovsky, is standing in the back of the room. Others include Fred Anthony, Henry Urban, and Letovsky's children John, Emma, and Anna.

VZ 24 rifle donated by Jim and Olga Pavik and exhibited in Homelands. Photo by Jeff Schmatt/Rubicon Photo.

to the growing English-language section of the library. In *Prague in Black and Gold*, the author attempts to look at the history of "magic Prague" in a different light. In the preface, Demetz states "I wish to sketch a few selected chapters of a paradoxical history in which the golden hues of proud power and creative glory, of emperors, artists and scholars, and restive people, are not untouched with the black of suffering and the victim's silence."

Just off the press is The Coasts of Bohemia: A Czech History. The liner notes read "In The Winter's Tale, Shakespeare gave the landlocked country of Bohemia a coastline — a famous and, to Czechs, typical example of foreigner's ignorance of the Czeck homeland. Although the lands that were once the Kingdom of Bohemia lie at the heart of Europe, Czechs are usually encountered only at the margins of other people's stories. In The Coast's of Bohemia, Derek Sayer reverses this perspective. He presents a comprehensive and long-needed history of the Czech people that is also a remarkably original history of modern Europe, told from its uneasy center."

> Carmen Langel, Curator and David Muhlena, Librarian

Káva a Knihy

áva a Knihy reading group members are taking a summer recess.
But that doesn't mean that they won't be doing any reading! The summer reading "assignment" is to locate a copy of and read *The Cunning Little Vixen* by Rudolf Těsnohlidek for the October meeting.

Vixen Sharp-Ears is the heroine of this classic Czech novel which focuses on the fox and the forester and tells a many layered story of tangled human and animal relationships.

In 1919, an editor of the Brno newspaper Lidove Noviny went to Prague to talk the noted painter, Stanislav Lolek into contributing to the newspaper. In a pile of paintings and sketches the editor found a series of drawings of a "furious game warden with angry whiskers" and a hunted vixen. Taking these back to Prague, he asked journalist and staff member of Lidove Noviny, Rudolf Tesnohlidek to write a story to go with the pictures. This serialized story which began as only text beneath pictures evolved into the novel, Liška Bystrouska (Vixen Sharp-Ears).

On the basis of *The Cunning Little Vixen* (the German title given it by Viennese publishers), the famous Czech composer, Leos Janáček wrote an opera.

A regular reader of the newspaper, Janáček decided to use the Vixen Sharp-Ears as his subject. "For the sake of the forest and the sadness of old age...," Janáček wrote the opera between the autumn of 1922 and the winter of 1924 in the peaceful solitude of his cottage in Hukvaldy where, in August 1928, he contracted pneumonia and died. Rudolf Těsnohlidek, who had lived a life filled with personal tragedy, committed suicide that same year.

Today, if you were to visit Hukvaldy, and stroll the paths of the game preserve that Janáček did, you would come upon a clearing. In the middle of the clearing, swept clean and dotted with tributes of fresh flowers, stands a pile of boulders surrounded by a picket fence. On top of the largest boulder sits the Vixen, "winsome and wary, her oddly feminine wildness captured in enduring bronze."

Information from: *The Cunning Little Vixen* by Rudolf Těsnohlidek, Československy spisovatel, Prague, 1980; Leos Janáček, a Biography by Jaroslav Vogel, Artia, Prague, 1981; and Robert Jones, Internet Web Site,

http://www.orc.soton.ac.uk/ngb/vixe n.html,1995

— Patricia Hikiji, Programs Coordinator

Travel to the Historical Lands of the Czech & Slovak Republics

he National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library, in conjunction with Travel Advisors, is happy to announce the organizing of a trip to the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Historical Lands of the Czech & Slovak Republics will depart Cedar Rapids on September 28 and return October 10. Travelers will experience architecture, countryside, history, and contemporary Czech and Slovak culture. All accommodations and meals are first rate.

Highlights of the trip include four days and nights in Prague, Ceske Krumlov, the Unesco protected restored medieval village, an excursion to the High Tatra mountains of Slovakia, and tours through many noted castles and churches such as Kutna Hora, the Castle Hluboka, Prague Castle, and St. Vitus Cathedral. Also included is a visit to the Dvorak museum in Prague and a special performance of Dvorak arias and melodies.

The trip is hosted by Dan Baldwin, executive director of the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library. The tour will benefit the museum and library. For more information, call Vin or Eunice at (319) 362-2500.

Cedar Rapids' Own

Czech Plus Band

Official Band of the Czech Village

1998 Sixth Annual

· · · Summer Concert Series · · ·

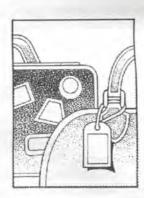
All concerts: Friday at 7 p.m. (except July 4th) in the Czech Village July 4th • 2 p.m.

July 17 • Concert July 24 • Blair Thorn, Guest Artist July 31 • at Sokol Park

August 7 • Request Night August 21 • Concert

September 4 • Czech Heritage Singers

Concerts are in the Czech Village (Kosek) Bandstand except where otherwise noted. In case of inclement weather, concerts may be cancelled with no alternate date.



Programming Schedule through October 1998

July 4 — Czech Plus Band Summer Concert Series

 2:00 p.m. at Garden Stage, National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library Free to the public.

July 11 — Boni Pueri Children's Choir Concert

• 7:30 p.m. at Warde Hall, Mt. Mercy College

General Admission: \$15.00

July 15 - Learn At Lunch: "Dyed in the Wool" by Beverly Mumm

• 12:00 Noon - 1:00 p.m. in WFLA Heritage Hall

Eat your lunch while Beverly "spins." Learn about the history of spinning, the various types of fleeces, how wool is dyed, and how the spun yarn can be woven or knitted into useable items. Free to the public.

July 25 - Stories, Tales, Legends, & Lore (Children's Storytime)

• 10:00 a.m. in Museum Library

August 12 — Learn At Lunch: St. Peter & Paul Historical Foundation by John Rocarek

12:00 Noon – 1:00 p.m. in WFLA Heritage Hall

Bring your lunch and learn the history of the oldest Czech congregation in lowa and what the future holds for the St. Peter & Paul Church building.

August 15 — Dance Performance: "Taneční Mládez" (Dancing Youth) Twin Cities Area Czechoslovak Children's Dance Group

Directed by Louise Wessinger, Sokol Minnesota

• 7:00 p.m. in WFLA Heriage Hall

Ethnic night of dance and story presentations centering around the Czech, Moravian, and Slovak cultures. Fee for admission at the door. August 22 — Stories, Tales, Legends, & Lore (Children's Storytime) • 10:00 a.m. in Museum Library

September 7 — "Káva a Knihy" Reading-Lecture-Discussion Series

• 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. in Museum Library

September 16 — Learn At Lunch: "Weaving Through the Fall" Robin Buckallew, Wheat-weaver

• 12:00 Noon – 1:00 p.m. in WFLA Heritage Hall Bring your lunch and learn about the techniques of using wheat straw to create beautiful, decorative items. Free to the public

September 20 — Slide & Lecture Presentation: "This is Your Heritage: Andera's Crosses" by Dr. Loren N. Horton, Senior Historian State Historical Society of Iowa, retired.

2:00 p.m. in WFLA Heritage Hall. Free to the public.

September 26 — Stories, Tales, Legends, & Lore (Children's Storytime) • 10:00 a.m. in Museum Library

October 5 — "Káva a Knihy" Reading-Lecture-Discussion Series: The Cunning Little Vixen – Rudolf Těsnohlidek

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. in Museum Library

October 14 — Learn At Lunch: to be announced

12:00 Noon – 1:00 p.m. in WFLA Heritage Hall

October 24 - Dožinky (Fall Event)

October 24 — Stories, Tales, Legends, & Lore (Children's Storytime)

• 10:00 a.m. in Museum Library, Free to the public

GIFT STORE

Treasures Under the Stars

he National Czech & Slovak
Museum & Library, Brucemore, and
the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art
introduced over 40 guests to a whole
new shopping experience on Wednesday,
June 10, for *Treasures Under the Stars*, an
exciting evening of fun, shopping,
entertainment and great food and drink!
Escorted by the Cedar Rapids trolley, our
guests were transported to all three gift
stores where they could shop for one-ofa-kind art pieces, crystal, glassware, jewelry, toys, books, Christmas tree ornaments and much more at a 20% discount
off their purchases.

At the first stop, everyone enjoyed the traditional sound of Czech music performed by Elmer Netolicky and Irma Binko in the Grand Hall at the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library, while browsing the gift store and sampling goodies. The second stop was at the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art where more treats and plenty of shopping were available. The final stop of the

evening was at Brucemore for the last round of shopping, then poolside for champagne, desserts, and the gentle sound of strings from ten harpists.

Because of the favorable response to this elegant evening, all three gift stores have decided to make this an annual event. If you missed the fun this year, you will have an opportunity to partake next summer. Mark your calendars for June 9, 1999. Tickets will be available in the gift stores at all three locations. Watch for details in the MOST Spring 1999 issue.

Surrounding the new exhibition, Homelands: The Story of the Czech & Slovak People, are several full color "Mucha Poster Postcards." Also featured are many books on the artist, Alphonse Maria Mucha, to compliment the print that is currently on exhibit in the gallery. Mailing & shipping is available for all gift store purchases.

Shirley Rosencrans, Gift Store

DEVELOPMENT NEWS

Board of Directors sets Corporate Campaign goal of \$25,000!

ncreasing corporate membership was identified by the Museum's development committee of the board as an institutional priority for 1998. Chaired by Allan C. Peremsky, with Mary Quass, President and CEO of Central Star Communications as honorary chair, the campaign has been well received by the business community, producing \$17,550 in gifts and pledges since the March 16 kickoff. This effort will help build a foundation of support for the Museum & Library which is annually renewable. Board members have taken their charge seriously by soliciting over 150 businesses in the Cedar Rapids area. The response has been tremendous, resulting in nearly 30 new business memberships and a number of renewals for the coming year.

- Judy Ostrander, Director of Development

OUR GENEROUS DONORS...

V UPOMINKU
"IN MEMORIUM"
Donations received for
March 24, 1998
through June 19, 1998

For: Lucian Andrle

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For: Ronald Armstrong

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Mildred Ortner WFLA Lodge Cedar Rapids #262 Various Family and Friends

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For: Libbie Packard Marj & Ed Nejdl John A. Kuba

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Don & Barbara Pulkrab

For: Bernard & Rose Smrcek
Darrell & Lois Paulsen

For: Vaclav & Josefa Smrcek
Darrell & Lois Paulsen

For: Louis Sojka, Jr.

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For: Joseph E. Soucek Eleanor Soucek For: Lillian Sykora

For: Lillian Sykora Blanche Murtagh

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Czechs #388

Aldrich Castek For: C.S.A. Lodge Junior American

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Arlene Giblin

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IN HONOR

For:

Emil and Evelyn Lamparek For:

> 60th Anniversary Esther Lippert

C.S.A. Prokop Velký Lodge #137

NEW INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS March 16, 1998 to June 10, 1998

Marjorie Neidl

Dolores Blood

Edward and Elaine Breicha Fred and Mary Cervinka C.S.A. Lodge Queensdale #422

Ron, Wanda and Heather Detert Thomas and Miloslava Dousa

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Ames Children's Choir performed at the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library in April, as part of their 1998 concert tour. The 37-member choir, under the direction of Dr. Sylvia Munsen, Assistant Professor of Music Education at Iowa State University, was hosted by Ostravicka, the children's folk music ensemble in Frýdek-Místek.

"Living Will" makes \$100,000 gift a reality for the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library

Mr. Frank Lorenc recently donated \$100,000 to the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library. The funds, given jointly with his late wife, Josephine, will provide resources which assist ongoing initiatives at the museum, specifically Homelands, a covered walkway connecting the main museum building with the Immigrant Home, and the museum's endowment. Mr. Lorenc, 96, a retired sheet metal worker, is a resident of Hallmark Care Center. The gift provides long-term support for the museum and allows him to help sustain his Czech heritage, of which he is very proud. He enjoys talking over old times with friends and welcomes visits.

NATIONAL NEWS & EVENTS

Czech Center New York Presents: VISION • EXISTENCE • TRUTH

 An exhibition of a selection of prints by Josef Capek (1887-1945) from the period between 1913 and 1920. This exhibition of prints has been prepared for the Czech Center in New York by the Czech Museum of Fine Arts, Prague, and contains works from the Czech Museum's own collection and that of the Capek estate. The exhibition will be on display June 11 through September 3, 1998.

About the artist: Capek, a gifted and influential figure of the Czech Cubist avant-garde generation, was a painter, graphic artist, art critic, writer, publicist and editor. His life, work and tragic death in a German concentration camp are a strong message to 20th-century society, an expression of deep humanist pathos at a time when mankind has developed the capability of complete self-destruction.

Czech and Slovak American Festival at Yack Arena

• Saturday – Sunday, July 18 – 19 Wyandotte, Michigan, sponsored by Sokol Detroit. Ethnic music, foods, refreshments and entertainment. Admission \$6. Hours are Saturday 3 – 11 p.m. and Sunday 2 – 8 p.m. For more information, call Anne at

◆ Czech It Out July 17-19, 1998: Czech Festival in Dwight, Nebraska, with Czech food, fun and music, featuring Little Czech Dancers and a full carnival. Sunday is the Czech Heritage Polka Mass at 10 a.m.; and a Car Show from noon to 4 p.m. and a street parade at 5 p.m., followed by the American Czech Brass Band at 7 p.m. For more information, call (412) 435-6914 or (402) 465-4957.

• New Years 1999 In Prague

 Limited space for a week in Prague for the Millenium New Year. For more information, contact Weber Travel Agency, World Wide Travel Service, 60805 West Cermak Road, Berwyn, IL 60402.

MEMBERS RECEIVE FREE ADMISSION

A reminder to all current members of the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library: Your membership allows you free admission and unlimited visits to all museum exhibits! All you need to do is show your current membership card at the visitors station in the Grand Hall. Encourage your family and friends to become members so they too can enjoy these privileges.

Note: Admission prices for non-members are \$5 for adults, \$4 for seniors, and \$2 for children ages 5 – 16. Children under 5 are admitted free with a paying parent or guardian.



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