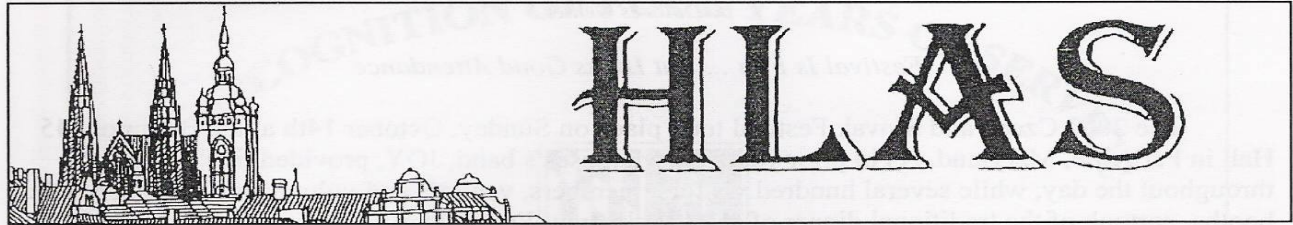


LÉTO 2008

SUMMER 2008



Sdružení Čechů a Slováků pro Uchování Národních Odkazů
Združenie Čechov a Slovákov pre Zachovanie Národných Odkazov

A publication of the Czech and Slovak Heritage Association of Maryland

COMING EVENTS:

Sunday, July 20: Our annual picnic and meeting at 2 pm at Belvedere Christian Church, 1301 Cheverly Road, Towson. The Association provides beer and soda, hamburgers, hot dogs, rolls and condiments. Please bring a salad or dessert item to round out the menu. Directions are on the website: www.czslha.org.

Saturdays beginning September 6: Why not consider learning Czech or Slovak? Or brushing up on what you already know? We have excellent teachers and beginning, intermediate and advanced classes. For complete details, dates and times, check our website: www.czslha.org or call Lois Hybl at 410-428-6012.

Sunday, October 12: Our 22nd annual Czech and Slovak Festival. We are negotiating for a new catering service, some new vendors and a dance group. We will begin at noon and end at 6 pm at our usual location--Baltimore 45 (Tall Cedars') Hall on Putty Hill Avenue. Dancing, singing, *knedlo-vepřo-zelo*, beer, brats, pastries and more. Music by Joy of Maryland. Directions and more information are on the website: www.czslha.org.

Sunday, January 20, 2009: Our quarterly meeting followed by our own "Road Show," an opportunity to show off your Czech or Slovak treasures, new or old, and see what others have been collecting. To reserve your table space, call Margaret at 410-662-6094 after Christmas. See page 6 for more details.

MASARYKTOWN: Florida's Lost Czechoslovak Colony

The year was 1924 when Jozef Jošcak (Joseph Joscak), editor of the *New Yorskey Dennik* (New York Daily), a Czechoslovak daily, wrote about Florida where it was possible to grow as many as three crops a year. After a real estate agent convinced him that Hernando County would be ideal for citrus growing, Joscak formed the Hernando Plantation Co, in September of 1924. Along with 60 Slovaks and one Czech, he bought 10,000 acres there. The idea was to sell shares at \$1,000 each to Czech and Slovak factory workers in New York and Pennsylvania. Three months later 135 shareholders, all of them Slovaks, left for Florida.

In 1925, an additional 25,000 acres were bought and a new town, named Masaryktown after the president of Czechoslovakia, T.G. Masaryk, was laid out. Streets running north and south were named after American presidents, streets running east and west took their names from Czech and Slovak poets, writers, composers and patriots.



Even after being warned that the location was too cold to grow citrus, the settlers proceeded to plant 1,100 acres with orange trees. 3,000 additional acres were sold to individuals for planting. Back to back freezes wiped out the groves in 1929 and bankrupted the company and many individual families. Most left and went back to their old jobs; only about fifty families remained. There were troubles with the mortgage holder who finally relented and released deeds to the 43 families who had bought land. The Great Depression closed the Hernando Plantation Co. taking with it all the savings of shareholders and landowners.

The families remaining in Masaryktown tried to grow onions, sweet potatoes and cucumbers. This effort too failed and only 23 families remained after the depression lifted. Eventually, those who stayed started to raise chickens and sold their poultry in Tampa. Egg production followed. At one point the cooperative was the largest in the Southeast, making Masaryktown the egg capital of Florida. In the 1960's the farmers could no longer compete with the large producers and the town began to decline.

In February of this year we gladly accepted an invitation of our friends, George and Hana Vransky, to visit with them at their lovely Florida home. Because we wanted to know more about this forgotten part of the history of Czech and Slovak immigration, they took us on a day trip to Masaryktown.

So here we were, cruising streets with names like Dvorak, Kollar, Hviezdoslav, Stur, Pribyl and the like. The street grid is there as originally laid out. It is just that most of the lots are without any buildings since the town never grew to its potential. But there is the Masaryktown Community Hall with a nice monument to TGM in front of it. In the door was a poster announcing, in Czech, the Tomáš G. Masaryk Annual Birthday Dinner Dance, all with proper diacritical markings. This is remarkable since today almost all of those who live there are Hispanic. Only a handful of Czechs and Slovaks remain, mostly old folks, a remnant of the nearly 400 counted in 1968.



The historic Masaryktown Restaurant still stands on highway US 41. It was built in 1925 by Anna and John Cimborá. At first it provided shelter for newcomers before they settled in, but it soon became the center of activities for the settlers. In the beginning the menu was easy: just one dish. But over time the number of activities grew to include dances and other celebrations. Actually, during Prohibition it operated a speakeasy under a false floor.

Currently a Hispanic family owns the restaurant, but we did appreciate that memories from the time when the Cimborás owned it are preserved.



There are pictures of the first owners, an explanatory text about the building, a couple of old photographs dating back to when the hotel was new. One shows a bunch of the settlers standing on its roof.

During the long drive back to the Vranský's house we talked about the day's experience, about the hardships immigrants of that era had to go through, and their pioneering spirit. Compared

to those times I suppose we, the generation of 1968, had it quite a bit easier. And perhaps we were a little sad that those folks didn't succeed. It would have been nice to sit in the restaurant surrounded by some descendants of the Cimborás, Miceks, Ruzáks, Ihriskýs and enjoy some knedlíky and Pilsner. And yet, we were thankful the current inhabitants and owners of the town do keep some of the memories alive.

*Michael Krompholz
George Vranský*

About *HLAS* ...

We are making every effort to publish *HLAS* on a quarterly schedule. Because of the high cost of first-class mail, we rely on bulk mail delivery. This means that local postmasters have some discretion about how quickly bulk mail is delivered to customers. If volume is high, items may be held for several days or longer before they leave the local post offices. Quarterly issues of *HLAS* should arrive no later than the 15th of January, April, July, and October. If you know of members who do not receive their copies of *HLAS*, please let them know that they should call the Membership Chairman, Charles Supík, at 410-662-6094.

We are still looking for someone with some good computer skills to become the layout person for *HLAS*. We have many excellent contributors, as evidenced by this issue, but we need someone who can work with graphics and text to put it all together into a nice looking publication.

Blob's Park 1933-2007

Polka enthusiasts no doubt, have many happy memories of Blob's Park and were surely saddened to learn of its closing as of January 1. The Jessup landmark was opened in 1933 as a

bowling alley and snack bar where Max Blob and his fellow German immigrants could gather for relaxation. The place quickly became so popular that it had to be enlarged several times and then opened to the public. *Blob's German Biergarten* boasted of serving more than seventy different brands of beer along with home-style German food. But the biggest draw was the live music for dancing every weekend.



The “German castle” painting at Blob’s Park
Photo: Aleš Vanický

The present building, opened in 1976, featured a 2000 square foot wooden dance floor and, behind the bandstand, a huge painting of a castle given to Max Blob by the German Club of Baltimore. The 10 foot by 20 foot oil painting, with a large statue of a Germanic goddess in the foreground, shows a castle on a hill overlooking a river spanned by an arched bridge decorated with numerous statues along its stone sides. To most people it was “some German castle.” We will never know how many people, like Delores Gentes, saw it and instantly recognized not “some German castle”, but Prague’s Hračany and Charles Bridge.

When the closing of Blob’s Park was announced, the suggestion was made that CSHA look into purchasing the painting. Unfortunately the huge size of the painting with some other issues worked against the project. The painting is quite dark and there are some condition issues: tears in the canvas, missing areas of

paint, and the fact that the statue in the middle divides the panorama drastically. These factors, plus the lack of space to display or store the painting, contributed to the board’s decision not to pursue the purchase of Blob’s “German castle” painting.

Jezuita zvěčnělý květy

Josef Georg Kamel (latinsky Camell) se narodil roku 1661 v jihomoravském Brně jako syn střihače sukna. Vystudoval jezuitskou misijní školu ve Vídni. Šestadvacetiletý odjel na Filipíny.

V Manile vedl misijní lékárnu a léčil domorodce, studoval místní přírodu. Navázal styk s londýnskou *Royal Society*; jeho obrazy i popisy se tak ocitají v publikacích Johna Raye (např. *Historia plantarum* 1704) a přinášejí Kamelovi slávu. Georg Kamel, autor prvního soupisu filipínské flóry, navíc s dokonalými vyobrazeními, zemřel roku 1706. Na jeho počest botanický systematik Karl Linné nazval jeden okrasný keř z čeledi čajovníkovitých druhovým jménem *Camellia japonica*. Jeho květy byly ve viktoriánské době považovány za symbol krásy, zdobila se jimi i Dumasova *Dáma s kaméliemi*. Do rodu *Camellia* patří i jedna z nejužitečnějších plodin na zemi – čajovník čínský (*Camellia sinensis*).



Camell's drawing of the leaf, blossom and fruit of the tea plant.

From www.Jesuitica.be/info/ reprinted with permission

The Jesuit's Immortal Flower

Joseph George Kamel (Camell in Latin) was born in 1661 in the south-Moravian town of Brno. The son of a dress-cutter, he completed his studies at the Jesuit mission school in Vienna. At the age of twenty-six, he departed for the Philippines.

In Manila he served as the mission pharmacist, treated the natives, and studied nature. Kamel established contact with the *Royal Society* in London and achieved scholarly recognition for his pictures and descriptions [of indigenous plant species] cited in publications of John Ray (for example: *Historia plantarum* 1704). George Camell, author of the first compendium of Philippine plant life, which included flawless illustrations, died in 1706. As a tribute to Camell, Karl Linneaus, who developed the system of modern taxonomy, called one ornamental shrub from the domestic tea plant family *Camelia japonica*.



Medallion struck by the Brno Veterinary and Pharmaceutical university (artist Karel Zeman) reprinted with permission.

Camell's flower was, in Victorian times, regarded as a symbol of beauty; as in Dumas's *The Lady of the Camellias*. One of the most widely used crops on earth also belongs to the family *Camelia*–Chinese tea (*Camelia sinensis*).

(Czech text reprinted with permission from *Vitá Vás srdce Evropy*, ročník 15, číslo 1/2008, st. 8.)

English translation Margaret Supik.



Rose Cervin, life member of Sokol Baltimore and a member of CSHA since its inception, passed away on April 26, 2008. She was 95 years of age. Mrs. Cervin is survived by her son, John Cervin, Jr. of Fallston; daughters Rose Marie Krajca of Abingdon and Ann Huber of Fallston; four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Burial was at the Bohemian National Cemetery in Baltimore.

CSHA extends our sympathy to the family. We will all miss Rose's smile and her boundless energy. CSHA extends our sympathy to the family of this lovely lady.

Greg Satorie directs the Czech and Slovak Heritage Singers in concert at St. Wenceslaus Church, Sunday, June 1. Photo: Mirek Oborny

Wedding Congratulations

Language school student Susan Miller and Jim Merfa celebrated their wedding on April 19, 2008. The Merfas, both festival volunteers last year, have moved to Virginia. We hope they will continue to take part in association activities and we wish them every happiness together.

Czech and Slovak Heritage Singers Annual Spring Concert

The annual Spring Concert of the Czech and Slovak Heritage Singers was held on June 1, 2008, at St. Wenceslaus Church in East Baltimore. It featured traditional Czech and Slovak folksongs, classical Czech pieces and a few modern selections, and was followed by a very nice reception in the church rectory and courtyard.



Sisters Alena Gardoš and Dana Petran, with Dana's daughter, Dana Havlik, accompanying on the guitar, sang *Prodavač Peří*. Charles Supik, accompanied on the piano by Greg Satorie, performed Antonin Dvořák's Biblical Psalm number 4. All of the songs were well performed and received enthusiastically by the audience. Unfortunately the audience was very small, but participated vigorously in the sing-along. We were pleased that Mirek Oborny, who because of his work moved to the Philadelphia area, was able to join us for the concert.

We would welcome any suggestions about attracting more attendance and would especially welcome more voices in the Singers. Please let us know of any suggestions you might have. Call Charles Supik at 410-662-6094.

Did you know... ?

Prague landmark *Národní divadlo*, The National Theater, was opened on 11 June, 1881, destroyed by fire on 12 August, rebuilt and opened again on 12 November 1883. The original building, and subsequent rebuilding, was financed by ordinary Czech people who contributed to collections under the auspices of the Committee for the Establishment of a Czech National Theater. The first performance there was the premier of Bedřich Smetana's *Libuše* which was also sung for the opening of the rebuilt theater. From April 1977 to November of 1983, the building was closed for extensive renovations. It reopened with a performance of...*Libuše*.

The President's Corner----- What's "This Road Show"?

It's an idea I came up with while watching the TV show of the same name. Why not, I thought, give our members a chance to display some of the beautiful things that are another dimension of our Czech and Slovak heritage? I know that many of our members have beautiful family heirlooms which their ancestors lovingly packed and carried with them when they came to America and many of us have returned from our travels with lovely mementoes.

For our January, 2009 meeting we will have tables set up in the hall at Belvedere Christian Church. Members who have called me to indicate interest in participating can have a table (8 feet), or half a table, on which to display their items. After a short meeting, we can have a look at and discuss the beautiful things our members have been collecting.

If you want to participate, give me call after Christmas so that we can plan how many tables we will need and work out the details. If our "Road Show" is successful, maybe it can become an annual event.

If you have any other ideas for activities we can incorporate into our meetings, please share them with me or a board member. This is YOUR association, we want to engage you in our activities.

S pozdravem, Margaret

PS. We are doing one last mass mailing to advertise the Festival and ask recipients to let us know if they want to stay on our mailing list. We know there will be some duplication, but this is the best way to clean up our mailing list.

Volunteer Opportunities

We recently received this letter from one of our Philadelphia members:

[Dear Colleagues in Czech-American organizations,](#)

Two young women are in Cesky Tesin this year, working for Slezska Diakonie (SD), learning Czech while being immersed in Czech culture. One was referred by the Houston Czech Center and the other comes from Pennsylvania. I come to you to ask your help in identifying candidates for the coming year. Expenses are paid, and airfare may be negotiable. This a nondenominational program open to all. Volunteers work with youth, Roma, mentally and physically challenged people in various settings. SD is one of the largest human service organizations in the Czech Republic, working throughout Silesia, in Brno, and in Prague. They are our partners in sponsoring international exchanges.

Would you be so kind as to think about possibly interested young people you know and send this email to them or to others in your circles?

Many thanks,

Bill Erat, Member
Czech and Slovak Heritage Society (Philadelphia)

For more information contact Lois Hybl at 410-428-6012.

And a few days later this came in:

Dear Lois,

I am writing to you as I noticed you were the contact person for the language school for the Czech and Slovak Heritage Association. I am hopeful that you may be able to give me information I need in order to recruit translators.

The Holocaust and War Victims Tracing Center of the American Red Cross, located at the Central Maryland Chapter, is in serious need of Czech and Slovak translators to assist with tracing victims who were lost in the holocaust.

Tracing requests are received regularly at our tracing center. As part of the search, volunteers, working from their own homes, translate letters and historical documents from Czech and Slovak to English.

If you know of anyone who might be interested or of a venue where we might advertise for this volunteer position it would be greatly appreciated.

Even though decades have passed since the Holocaust, requests continue to come to the Tracing Center.



For those who have only questions as to the disappearance of a loved one, every answer is a gift.

Thanks for your assistance.

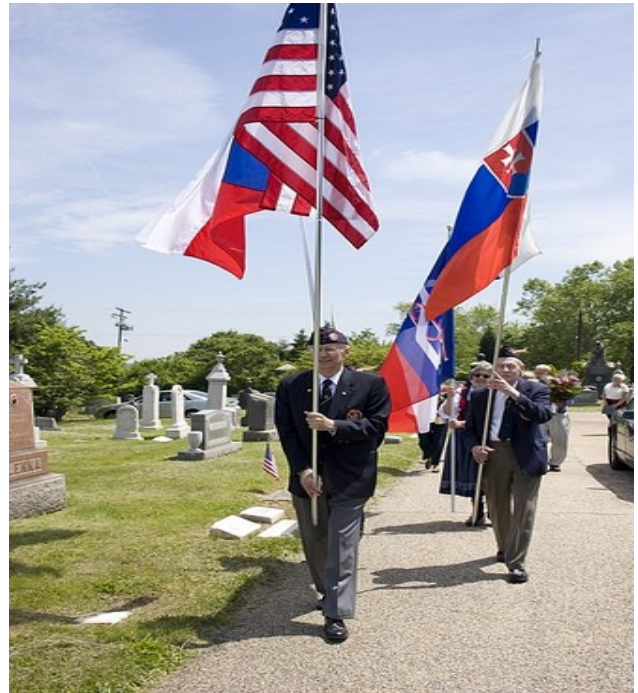
With warmest regards and thanks for your support of the American Red Cross,



*Pam Tice
American Red Cross
Central Maryland Chapter
Chapter Volunteer Coordinator
410-624-2023
Fax - 410-764-4914*

Memorial Day at Český národní hřbitov

Michelle Wiedal, Miss Czech-Slovak USA for 2008 was on hand for this year's annual Memorial Day gathering at the Bohemian National Cemetery in the Armistead Gardens area of Baltimore. She was there, along with members of Sokol Baltimore, CSHA and the Czech and Slovak Heritage Singers, as part of the celebration to honor those interred at the cemetery as well as those very much alive workers who have transformed the once neglected historic resting place of many leading Czech and Slovak citizens of the Baltimore area.



The Honor Guard leads the procession to the grave of Congressional Medal of Honor winner Sgt. William Jeselin

photo: Tara Parekh, CSPA Lodge

Rev. Michael Rokos, president of the cemetery corporation, presided over the memorial service and led the honor guard to the grave of Sgt. William Jeselin, winner of the Congressional Medal of Honor for his service in Korea.

The day also provided an opportunity to see the recent transformation of the sadly overgrown and neglected site. Jeanne Taborsky has led a group of volunteers in a monumental clean up effort which halted a threatened condemnation and takeover of the historic twelve acre property by Baltimore City. Working with the Maryland Historical Society and the City Jeanne and her team, which includes two deacons of the Mormon Church who have volunteered their time and efforts, have cleared brush, repaired fences, and rebuilt the interior of the caretaker's cottage.

Future plans for the cemetery property include a museum and archive center in the caretaker's cottage, a gathering place in the old carriage

house and, possibly, a rebuilt pavilion behind the house.

More information and pictures can be found at: cspslodge.wordpress.com/bohemian-national-cemetery-of-baltimore.

Family Picnic in Philadelphia

Barbora Oborna

On Saturday June 7, 2008, my dad and us kids went to Fort Washington Park to set up for the umpteenth local Philadelphian Czech and Slovak Heritage Association picnic. It being 98 plus degrees that day, we had to nevertheless get out of our home and drive in our poorly air-conditioned car the twenty minutes to the park. The trunk was full of food, folding chairs, and ice (which surprisingly didn't melt in the time it took to arrive).

However, once there, we found a nice, shaded area surrounded by meadows but also shade-providing trees. We took out all the coolers and supplies that we needed to make our picnic bearable for the minimal number of people that would show up. (It was too hot after all.) We set them in the open and baking sun, then ten minutes later, realizing our mistake (the food probably went bad by now), we set the tables, making sure to diligently sweep all the little leaves and specks of dirt from the surfaces on which we would soon be dining.



Photo: Mirek Oborny

Other than the preparation for the picnic, I had to keep an eye glued to Daniel. The little boy kept running around, trying to touch the burning grill. All in all it was a hectic start, but once the expected people started arriving, I got to relax a little and let the grownups do their jobs, namely taking care of small and very curious toddler boys. Listening to the hum of chatter permeating our surroundings, we grilled some meat, hamburgers and hotdogs. I was anxious to go back home, so I wolfed down a hamburger and about 10 glasses of green tea.

Though the picnic continued until after six o'clock, my family and I had to leave early because Daniel, a toddler, could not take the heat for six straight hours. SO, after two hours of picnic fun in the hot sun, my dad, my brother Daniel, and I climbed back into the van and drove to our air-conditioned salvation. But the food was good, I can say that much. And the company was joyful and full of energy, so that matters a great deal as well.

(Barbora Oborna is the 15 year old daughter of Martina Oborna and Mirek Oborny, both active members of our Philadelphia branch. She is in 9th grade at Wissahickon High School where she plays jazz trumpet in several groups. She is thinking of studying mathematics in college, but dad thinks that music will probably always be her first love.)

Language School News

We look forward to returning and new students as the fall semester of Czech and Slovak Language School begins on Saturday, September 6.

You will notice some changes on the registration form. Because the Maryland School for the Blind is charging higher rent, tuition per course has increased \$5, making the cost \$60 for members and \$80 for nonmembers of CSHA.

Another change is that Czech 101 will be using a different book, *Communicative Czech* by Rešková. It comes with a \$32 text and \$15 workbook. Upper levels will continue to use *Czech for Fun* or other materials the teachers have assigned.

But what will not change is the wonderful fellowship of our teachers and students! See you soon.
Lois Hybl

NJ Slovak Festival

The Slovak-American Society of Washington, DC is planning a one-day bus trip to the New Jersey Slovak Festival on Sunday, September 28. They would leave DC around 6 AM and make a brief stop in Baltimore. Festival activities include „good Slovak food, arts and crafts, games for children in the afternoon, and a Slovak outdoor Mass at 11 AM. Estimated cost per person is \$35-40. For more information or to reserve a seat on the bus, email to: dc_Slovaks @yahoo.com or phone Kathryn Tatko at 703-751-1456.

Generous Grant from the Czech Foreign Ministry

Recently we received notification from Dr. Nora Jurkovičová at the the Czech Embassy in Washington that the Foreign Ministry of the Czech Republic has approved a very substantial grant of 70,000 Czech crowns to the Association. The funds are to be used to help with our festival. As of 8 June, that amount equals \$4479, which will help to cover some of our expenditures, such as bringing in a dance troupe to perform for us at the 22nd Annual Czech and Slovak Festival..

The Czech government, in recognition of the efforts of *krajani*, their countrymen abroad, established a policy of contributing to groups all over the world which are dedicated to preserving the Czech language and culture.

CSHA is one of those groups and we are very, very grateful to the Czech government for its continued generous support of our mission to preserve our priceless heritage..

Hora Marhat: Tajomná hora a jej skryté tajomstvo

Hora Marhát leží približne 10 km na východ od Piešťan. Jej nezvyčajné meno má pôvod vo franských záznamoch ktoré takto pomenovali túto oblasť a jej obyvateľov. Historia tohto miesta však siahá až do doby kamennej do 2500 až 27800 pr. K. Vykopávky odhalily sídlisko s tej doby.

V čase Veľkomoravskej Ríše tu bola dedina ktorej obyvateľstvo sa zaoberalo dobývaním a spracovávaním železnej rudy. Vykopávky zo 70-tých rokov odhalily obydlia, hroby, taviace pece a iné výrobky datované do 9 a 10 storočia.

Táto osada mizí na zlome 13 a 14 storočia keď zásoby železnej rudy boli vyčerpané a dedina se presťahovala na úrodnejšiu pôdu.

Na úpätí hory Marhat, hlboko ukrytý v lese je malý kostolík ktorý je jedinečnou architektonickou pamiatkov a jednou z najstarších stavieb na Slovensku. Pôvodne románska rotunda z počiatku 9 storočia a zasvätená sv. Jurajovi bola v priebehu stáročí niekoľkokorazy prestavaná. Kostol stojí na pôvodných základoch a okolo sedem metrov pôvodného muriva je súčasťou stavby.



Aj keď okolitá dedina už zmizela, kostol zostáva. Toto trocha odľahlé miesto je zriedkakedy navštevované čo iba pridáva príležitostnému návštevníkovi na jeho tajomnosti.

Mount Marhat: The mysterious mountain and its hidden secret

Mt. Marhat (2,454 ft) lies about six miles east of Piešťany. Its unusual name dates back to the 9th Century to Frankish records naming this area and its people. The history of this area reaches, however, further back to the Stone Age, about 2500 to 2700 BC. Excavations have uncovered a fortified settlement dated to that time.



A medieval village whose inhabitants specialized in mining and processing iron ore

existed there during time of the Great Moravian Empire. Excavations in the 1970's uncovered dwellings, graves, iron smelters, and other artifacts dating back to the 9th and 10th centuries.

Toward the end of the 13th and the beginning of the 14th Century, the settlement began to wane. The reserves of the iron ore were depleted and the village relocated to more fertile ground.

At the foot of Mt. Marhat, hidden deep in the forest, is a small church which is a unique architectural landmark and one of the oldest structures in Slovakia. Originally a Romansque rotunda from the early 9th Century dedicated to St. George, it has been rebuilt over the centuries several times. The church stands on the original foundations and up to 21 feet of the original walls are part of the structure.

While the settlement surrounding the church vanished, the church remains. This somewhat remote place is seldom visited which only adds some mystery to the occasional visitor. *Based on an internet article by M. Janoška*

Michael Krompholz and George Vraný

JITRO Czech Girls' Choir In DC

Jitro, which means daybreak in Czech, is an organization of 500 girls, in seven ensembles from which the best 25 to 50 are selected for the touring choir. They are based in the east Bohemian city of Hradec Kralove. For the thirty-five years of its existence, this Czech girls's choir has been admired worldwide.



JITRO in concert in the Crypt Chapel of the National Shrine photo Margaret Supik

Why? That was immediately apparent to those lucky enough to have heard them at one of their DC area concerts. Their energy and vitality in combination with their pure tone and intonation make this ensemble one of the best in the world.

During the weekend of June 5, the girls sang at the Kennedy Center, at Leisure World in Silver Spring and at the Basilica of the National Shrine. Their repertoire for the Shrine concert varied widely, from 16th Century polyphonic motets in Latin to contemporary works by Petr Eben and Finland's Pekka Kostiainen. Under the direction of Dr. Jiří Skopal, the girls sang in Finnish, Latin, Czech and English...all from memory. And all with undisguised enthusiasm.

These girls clearly love to sing. And the audience clearly loved them!

Update from the CSHA Philadelphia Group

In the first few months of 2008 there has been a lot to report about from the Philadelphia branch of the CSHA. As we strive to serve our local Czech and Slovak community in South Eastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware, there

are a number of events we want to share with everyone. Mark your calendars, check out the featured web sites, and if any of our venues happen to be on your way, please come and visit us.



Annual Meeting with Gingerbread cookie decorating

photo Mirek Oborny

We held our annual Philadelphia CSHA meeting in February and we want to mention this because of the excellent additional item on the agenda: a demonstration of ginger bread cookie decorating. Thanks to Jarka Mullerova, a special-education teacher visiting the Philadelphia area from Moravia, all the participants had an opportunity to decorate their very own gingerbread cookie with various Spring motifs.



Jarka has devoted major part of her professional and personal life to preserving the traditions of our folklore-rich countries and we thank her for sharing a little of those traditions with us! Also worth mentioning is the venue itself, the Court Diner in Media, PA, where the diner's owner,

Mia Saltis and her staff, prepared an authentic Czech and Slovak cuisine which included the "knedlo vepřo zelo",

pierogy, "guláš", "kapustnica", and home-made desserts. Mia plans to offer "days of Slovak cuisine" on a regular basis. We recommend the Court Diner and will keep you posted.



Easter Egg Decorating *photo Mirek Oborny*

In its third incarnation, the Easter egg decorating workshop has become a favorite opportunity for all age groups from a wide Philadelphia and New Jersey area to join in and try out various egg decorating techniques. Our instructors come from various folklore regions and gladly demonstrate and guide beginners and advanced egg decorators alike. Stay tuned, this event is coming next year again, just a few weeks before Eater 2009.

Beer Nights

A regular monthly event brought to life by one of our own, Vaclav Kolar, the Czech and Slovak Beer Nights have attracted an increasing number of people who just want to meet others of Czech or Slovak descent living in the greater Philadelphia area or simply want to practice their language skills. Contact Vaclav at vaclavko@comcast.net to be included in his "distribution list" or read on for more details.

Philadelphia Branch of CSHA on Meetup.com

We established a Czech and Slovak language *meetup group* for Philadelphia and surrounding areas on Meetup.com, the premier web site where people can connect with others to pursue common interests. Go to the above address and search "Czech", "Slovak" and "Philadelphia," then join us for regular updates on our upcoming activities! There's bound to be a similar group in your area too, or simply start your own!

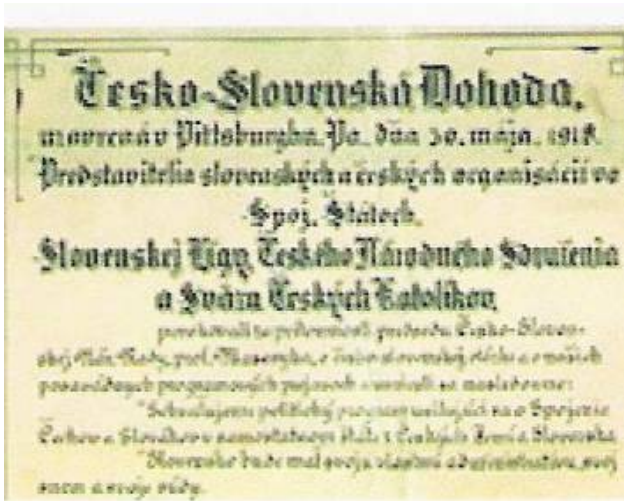
Goooooogle Calendar

We publicize our events on **Google Calendar**: to learn what's coming up, search for our public calendar "CSHA Philadelphia" which contains a complete list of planned activities. For past events you will also find links to photo albums with pictures that you can download. Be sure to bookmark this one!!

Celebrating the 90th Anniversary of ČSR

To commemorate the Founding of the Czechoslovak state and the visit of T.G. Masaryk in Philadelphia, the Consulate General of the Czech Republic, Mr. Peter Rafaeli, has presented a tentative plan for a number of activities to take place in the Philadelphia area. Among the activities planned is a reception at Philadelphia City Hall which will be co-sponsored by CSHA. We will keep you posted.

The Pittsburgh Agreement



Reprinted from

<http://slovakia.usembassy.gov/original-pittsburgh-agreemen-of-1918>

This historic document, signed in Pittsburgh on May 31, 1918 declared the intent of a group of Slovak, Czech and Rusyn political figures in exile to form an independent Czechoslovakia. Among the leaders of the group was the future president of the new state—T. G. Masaryk, who on October 28 of that same year stood on the steps of Independence Hall in Philadelphia to declare the existence of the new state. TGM is also acknowledged to have been one of the principle authors of both the Pittsburgh Agreement and the later constitution for the newly formed country, which was modeled after the American Constitution.

All of the signatories to the Pittsburgh Agreement were exiles and would have been charged with treason had they returned to their native lands, which were then parts of the far-flung, but disintegrating Austro-Hungarian Empire. Many of the exiles returned to Europe to form the “Czech Company” which fought in Russia and the “Nazdar Company” in France as well as other units. The existence of these Czechoslovak units was cited by Masaryk as one of the justifications for the existence of an

independent Czechoslovak state. In the outbreak of World War I Masaryk and the others saw and seized the opportunity to establish a democratic state in the lands of Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia and Slovakia.

The historic signing of the document is said to have been witnessed by about 20,000 people. Pittsburgh was chosen for the location of the meeting because it was, at that time, home to one of the largest concentrations of Slovak immigrants in the United States. The hotel in which the signing took place is no longer standing, but the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission placed a commemorative plaque at the site.

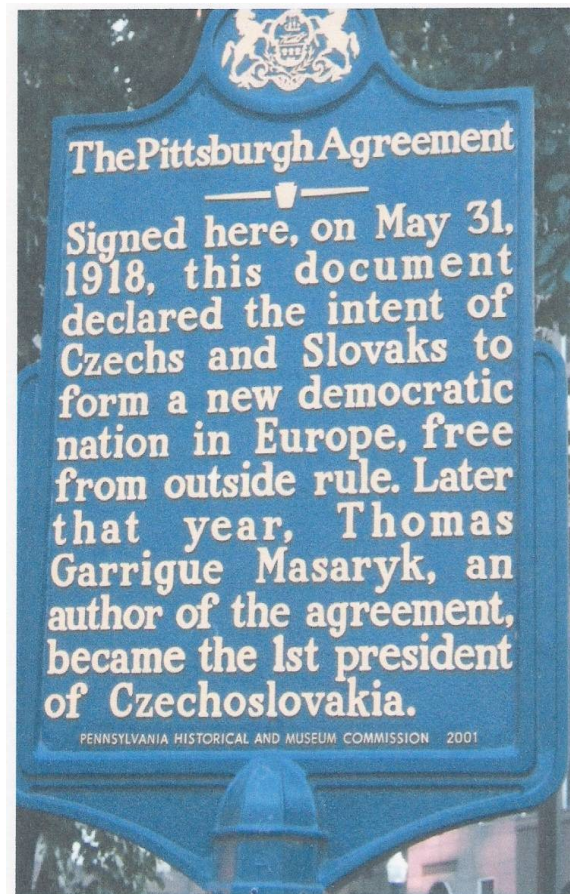


Photo: Margaret Supik

As part of the ninetieth anniversary celebration of the Pittsburgh Agreement, the original document will be on display until September at

the Slovak National Museum in Bratislava as part of an exhibition titled *Ako sme žili?* (How did we live?).

The Czech and Slovak Heritage Association

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