

Heritage Happenings

Newsletter of Friends of Bohemian National Cemetery

What's new with Friends of BNC

"I have an envelope here from the IRS", said BNC Business Manager Beth Raleigh.

It was the long-awaited notice that Friends WAS a 501c3 not for profit organization! Completing the paperwork for this designation has become very difficult, and thanks to our pro-bono attorney, Rhonda Jensen, and our board, the two-year wait was over. We can accept donations directly and assure our donors of full tax-deductibility to the extent of the law. Writing grants should also be easier with

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this status since most grantors require it to even consider an application!

Although we will be happily celebrating the 130th anniversary and the cemetery's

recent listing on the National Register of Historic Places at the dinner on April 29th, the Friends will also be celebrating this achievement as well. I hope everyone has received his/her beautiful invitation and is making plans to come. The program/ad book will be a special bonus.

Have you considered being a well-wisher or possibly remembering your ancestors with a memorial in this book? It's not too late to be included.

Our thanks to Lilli Nemecek and Jerry Cicela who have helped gather business donations for the silent auction and to the delegate organizations and individual members who have donated or have received donations from businesses. Just a few reasons to bring your checkbook that afternoon:

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Spring Issue, Vol.3; #4

April 2007

Sherida Hudak, Editor

Mission Statement:

Promote the historical significance, enhance the beauty, and preserve the artistic heritage of Bohemian National Cemetery

Vision:

Create an appreciation of BNC in local, national, and international audiences

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Live from BNC

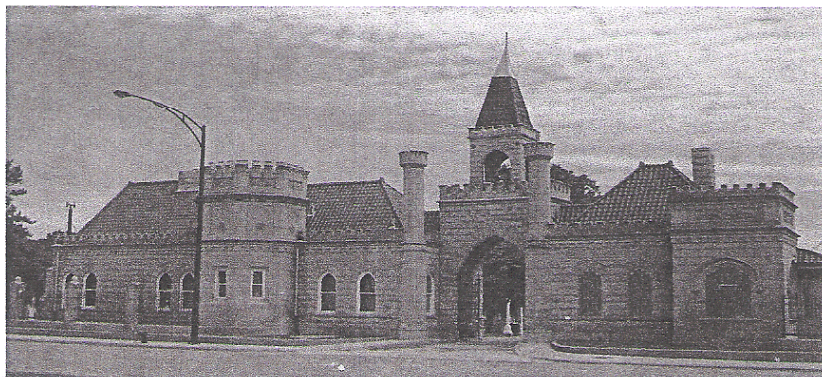
Quite a variety of indoor work took place over the winter, mainly in the Administration Building and Columbarium. The ceiling in the rear room of the Administration Building was torn down and volunteers installed thirteen new lights that replaced the original four. Chuck Michalek studded the old opening and installed a floor on the second level so that it may be used for additional storage space.

The entire rear room was rewired and new conduit was put in place.

In December, work had to be done on the number two retort in the Crematorium. New controls were installed in the electric panel. In January, the retort had to be worked on again, although this instance was due to mechanical

failure. Thank goodness we have

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What's new with Friends of BNC

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- Dinners for two provided by Czech Plaza, Klas, and Little Europe Czech Restaurants
- An autographed copy of his book by Czech-American astronaut, James Lovell
- Themed baskets of various sorts, some from our delegate organizations and others from members
- Games and toys for the children and grandchildren
- Two tours of the Cuneo Museum, site of newly restored J.A. Mallin murals

Many of the offerings will be things you'd be buying anyway. Do your shopping and help support the restoration of the

Crematorium/Columbarium as well.

Our entertainment, the Veselica Slovak Dance group, is another wonderful reason to join the fun! I'm looking forward to seeing you on the 29th!!!

Marge Sladek Stueckemann, President

Members notes

Do you have a short family history story that you would like to share with our readers? Please send your story to Sher Hudak, Editor

sheridahudak@msn.com

My first memory of BNC was in 1954, when I was 8, for my grandfather Frank Subert's funeral. Even more vivid, because of the rain, was the funeral three months later of his brother Tony (Anton—there were four brothers from Back of the Yards: Frantisek,

Josef, Vaclav and Anton—same names as Mayor Cermak and his brothers, I believe). I also remember the banana tree in the hothouse behind the main desk during visits back then. Since we lived in Grand Crossing, BNC was far away.

The next significant memory was at my grandmother Elsie Koutecky Subert's funeral in 1983. In 1981, I had visited Modrejovice, where her father was born and brought soil home in a mason jar. We spread some of that soil on my grandmother's grave.

My last visit was in 2005, when I was glad to be able to report to my grandfather at his

grave that the White Sox were in the World Series. He was a big Sox fan and took my brother and me to games.

The Czech soil in the jar has a story of its own. I asked our relatives in Modrejovice for some soil by looking it up in the dictionary. They took me to the attic and showed me the dust that I had actually asked for before telling me the correct word was "hlina" and taking me into the yard for the soil. So "hlina" is a word I won't forget.

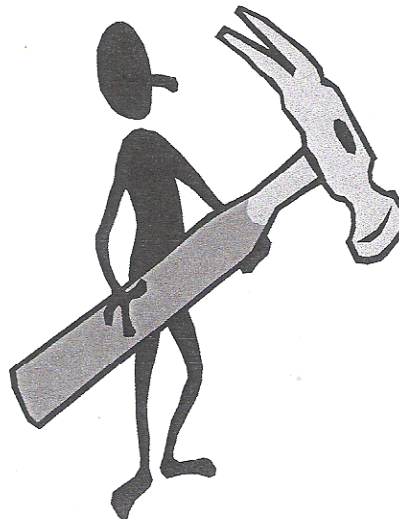
Wesley Johnston Clovis, CA

Live from BNC

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Ken Quick with his knowledge of these matters, which is invaluable.

The front door of the Columbarium was repaired and is now stable. The door and jamb in the retort room across from the Marble Room was also fixed and the door now locks properly. Old linoleum tiles were removed from the windows in the men's and women's washrooms. They were then covered with joint compound and painted with primer. The cloth covering on the walls was separating and has been patched. Before the walls and ceiling can be painted, they must be scrubbed to remove years of accumulated dirt.



The garage and locker room have been closed for the winter and the gas to these areas has been shut off because the underground gas line was leaking. Employees now have their lockers in the boiler room of the Crematorium.

On a brighter note, on January 28, a program about Jens Jensen was given in the Columbarium. Although it had snowed and was a bitter cold day, over seventy people attended. Afterwards, refreshments were served in the Gatehouse.

Andy Bultas



Donor list

Benefactor \$1,000 +

Henrietta Bartizal Pons

Sponsor \$100-\$499

Blanche Babcock

Angeline Bultas

Richard Cinert

CSAGSI

Rick Daitchman

George Drost

Drost, Kivlahan, McMahon & O'Connor LLC

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Illinois Tool Works Foundation

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Frank & Elizabeth Taus

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Sharon & Apostol Triffon family

Jean Uhler

Wayne & Connie Wolf

Donor \$25-\$99

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Sylvia Benjamin

Karyn Bieneman

Marilyn Bishop

Carole M. Blazek Woodham

Arlene M. Borkey

Chris Borman

Joanne Boyle

Betty Bratschun

Patricia Brown

Marcia Brownlie

Cecile Bugh

Pamela Carlson

Lorraine Castelli

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Elections on Saturday, May 5, 2007

Meet in the Gatehouse at noon on May 5th for our annual election of 4 officers and 3 directors who will lead Friends of BNC for another year. The slate of officers will be presented at that time.

Would you be willing to serve? Please call area nominating committee members, Andy Bultas at 630-654-2051 or Juli Nelson, 630-987-0411, to volunteer or suggest a willing candidate. You may also make nominations from the floor provided the candidate is a member in good standing and is willing to serve. Such nominations require the signatures of 3 members.

Volunteers to help with events, create a historical record/scrapbook of newspaper clippings and pictures, grant writing, and fund raising are always needed. Call 847-362-9036 to offer your services or email info@friendsofBNC.org. Thank you so much for your interest!

Festival Prague—Chicago—June 2007

A month-long series of events to promote closer ties between our two sister cities

June 5, Czech Day at Daley Plaza—flag raising ceremony, souvenirs, Czech food and music

June 9, panel discussion on the history and importance of Czech immigration to the U.S. and Chicago area, at the CSA Museum in Oak Brook

June 15—June 21, Czech Film Festival at Facets Multi-Media in Chicago

June 29, gala dinner and ball featuring music by Ondrej Havelka and his Melody Makers

June 30, rededication of Cermak Rd. and commemoration at the mausoleum of Anton Cermak at Bohemian National Cemetery

For more information visit the Consulate General of the Czech Republic in Chicago website at www.mzv.cz/chicago or call Dr. Borek Lizec at 312-861-1037 x 100

Donor list

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Vlasta Chmara
 Frank Chmelar
 Mr. & Mrs. Frank Chmelik
 William Chuhak
 Anne Cicmanec
 Geraldine Coates
 CSA Lodge Rovnost # 53
 Marilee Davies
 Helen Davis
 Robert W. Doubek
 Nilda & Ed Duffek
 James Fergle
 Richard Fialka
 Miriam Filipek
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 Nadine Gorski
 Charissa Grimes
 Dolores Gronych
 Howard Habenicht
 Donald Hajek
 Anton Hanuska
 Barbara Hartpence
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 Frank R. Henry
 Paul T. Hohe
 Mildred Homolka
 Marilyn Hughes
 John & Carol May In Memory of M. Koncel
 Shirlee Jecmen
 Randall Kadlec
 Kadlec Durietz Family
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 Shirley Kenney
 Barbara A. Kostka
 Anne Krishner
 Libbie Krivanek
 Keith & Alice Kubly
 Robert Kukla
 Cecilia Kumarich
 Frank Kurhayez
 Elaine La Miaux
 George & Nancy Lacina
 Barbara Licko

Lodge Century of Progress/Bila Hora #231
 Lodge Anton J. Cermak #99
 Lodge Woodrow Wilson #377
 CSA Fraternal Life
 Mr. & Mrs. Stanley Loula
 Audrey Malan
 June Malina
 Kathy Mallin
 Emil & Barbara Martinec
 Richard Masek
 John & Carol May
 Marie McBride
 Donna Mead

*Thanks to all who contributed to the 2006
 fundraising campaign that will help
 preserve and enhance our beautiful
 cemetery.*

Diane Minarik
 Ray Mulac
 Carl Nemecek
 Paul Nemecek
 Betty Oppenheimer
 John Persic
 Mildred Pesek
 Dee Pirok
 Adeline Pratt
 Bess Prazak
 Ruth Prusha
 Franklin Puncochar
 Florine Resico
 Jacqueline Rock
 Vera Rohozka McGuire
 Anne Roth
 Tom & Judy Ruzicka
 Leona Sauer
 Mildred Brydl Schalk
 Ludwig P. Scheuerle
 Vlasta Schlehofer
 Tom Schneberger
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 JoAnn Starha
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 Grace Vavrina
 Christine Visconti
 John Voss
 Karen L. Welch
 Patricia Young
 Ray & Peg Zajicek
 Mildred Zamis Potas
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Thank You \$1-\$24
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 Grace Hansa
 Mr. & Mrs. Otto Hoffmann
 Richard Holubek
 Ken & Jan Klouzer
 Richard Kowal
 James Laska
 Aloise Lynch
 Elmer Pavlas
 Mildred Saliny
 Thomas Shvachta
 Arnold Spravka
 Dolores II. Stallons
 Mila Tellez
 Frank Zedeck

Monumental musings

One of the joys I experience in giving tours through Bohemian National Cemetery is encountering the surprise of the participants as they see the wonders of the cemetery for the first time.

Just a few weeks ago I had the pleasure of escorting a book group from the Palatine Library on a pilgrimage to Section 16 where so many of the dead from the Eastland disaster are buried. It was a very cold February day and there had been a fresh fall of snow on the previous night, so I expected that the group would want to make their visit as brief as possible and would take note of nothing on their way to and from Section 16.

Life is full of surprises, however, and the group proved to be both hardy and fascinated with their surroundings. The wondrous limestone tree trunks first caught their attention and they were stunned by their number and variety on even so short a walk in the cemetery. Nothing surprised and pleased them more, however, than the wonderful profusion of porcelain pictures that decorate so many of the monuments and make even more immediate the fact that we are in Bohemian National to remember the dead—a remembrance that is greatly aided by these visions of the living.

Porcelain pictures are not unique to Bohemian National, but their number and variety are another of the factors that make the cemetery such a special place to visit.

As is usual with my musings, I am only too happy to share some of my favorites. Any visitor to Block 1 Section Z will be struck by the grand granite monument of Frank and

Josefa Kubiska. The lines are clean and the monument is wonderful to behold, but the true pleasure of the monument comes when you approach and open the little bronze door that is placed at just about eye level. Inside are the Kubiskas, but not in a double portrait as we might expect. Frank's picture is set into the part of the bronze casing attached to the monument while Josefa's is in the door itself. What makes this placement such fun is that, when the door is opened, Josefa is unexplainably on her head until you realize that when the door is closed this husband and wife are given the opportunity to gaze into each other's eyes for all of eternity.

Just south of the Kubiskas are several small stones—one of them for a seven year old named Karl Truhlar. Karl is in his Sunday best with a huge hat and a bow tie that nearly wears him.

In the southeast portion of Section 20 is another couple united for eternity. However, unlike the Kubiskas who died in the fullness of age, John and Marie Wisner were both in their 20's when they died in 1918. John, proudly shown in his military uniform, died on October 16. Mary, dressed in a white dress and holding flowers in a probable wedding picture, died at age 22 on October 18 and rests here with John.

While many of the portraits are lively in nature, others have that degree of stiffness brought about due to having to hold a rigid position while the picture was taken. None, however, have the stiffness of the picture found on the Benes monument at the southeast corner of Section 8. We will never know if

Mrs. Benes had avoided having her picture taken or if there were none that her family felt would be appropriate as her eternal image, but Frantiska Benes is not pictured as she was in life, but, rather as she was in death. Clearly her family and friends loved her greatly as shown by the cascade of flowers around her casket, but one can only wonder if it wouldn't have been preferable to have a picture of a smiling Frantiska rather than a woman of such stiff bearing.

These six pictures are but a small selection of the joys that can be found in Bohemian National. If a picture is worth a thousand words, Bohemian National contains volumes of prose there for our viewing.

Albert Walavich

Welcome New Members

Susan Baird

James Kisela

Geraldine Kraupner

Gary and Mary Petranek

Walter Schauer

Carol Tranter

Officers

Marjorie Sladek Stueckemann, President

Bill Hosna, Vice-President

Juli Nelson, Treasurer

Meribeth K. Tooke, Secretary

Charles Cervenka, Director

Martha Cervenka, Director

Evelyn Krenek Fergle, Director

Henrietta Bartizal-Pons, Membership Chair

Andrew Bultas, Grants

Sherida Hudak, Newsletter Editor

Anna Schnedorf, Publicity Chair

Sue Zielinski, Webmaster

In Memoriam

Helen Dvorsky

We offer our sympathy to her family.

Newsletter of Friends of Bohemian National Cemetery

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Libertyville, IL 60048

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Email: mdstueck@aol.com



Heritage Happenings

We're on the web

www.friendsofbnc.org

Events at BNC

Tours at BNC

Saturday, May 5, 2007

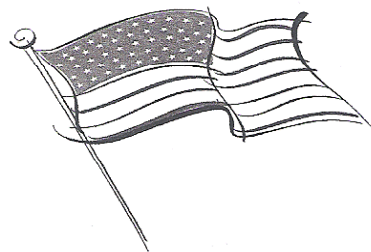
10:00 a.m.—walking tour led by Albert Walavich, historian and tour guide extraordinaire, featuring Anton Cermak history and art deco monuments

1:00 p.m.—Crematorium/Columbarium tour, highlighting the symbols, decorations and craftsmanship of the indoor spaces

Tour cost—\$15 non-members; \$10 members
Register at the Gatehouse the day of the tour or for more information call Anna Schnedorf at 708-366-6564

Memorial Day Services

Monday, May 28, 2007



Memorial Day will bring music, flags, and honoring of all veterans in the audience at the annual service. Come at 9:30 a.m., Monday May 28th. Help place flags the prior week.

Music at BNC

Saturday, June 30, 2007

The vocal ensemble Con Spirito and the Horizon String Quartet will include sacred works by Czech composers as well as modern settings of Bohemian and Moravian folk songs. The Largo theme from Antonin Dvorak's *New World Symphony* will be a highlight.

The choral presentation will follow the rededication of Cermak Rd. and ceremony at the grave of former Mayor of Chicago Anton Cermak.

For more information visit the website of the Consulate General of the Czech Republic in Chicago—www.mzv.cz/chicago or call Dr. Borek Lizec at 312-861-1037 x 100