



Columbarium Restoration Project Update

Back in the July 2014 edition of the *Heritage Happenings* newsletter (Summer Issue—Vol. 11 No. 1), Friends of BNC announced the start of its multi-year plan to weatherproof and restore the exterior of Bohemian National Cemetery's historic crematorium/columbarium building.



entrance steps and railings, repairs to several components of the main dome and complex roof

phase of repairs that will involve stabilizing the front entrance stairway cheek walls, stabilizing and resealing the upper-level stairway, and repointing the north limestone facade.

Once again, Friends is counting on the generosity of donors and organizations who share Friends of BNC's mission to promote BNC's historical significance and to help preserve its important heritage for future generations.

Watch for mailings on how you can help with support or please visit friendsofbnc.org. We thank you for your ongoing interest and support.

Chuck Michalek
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The first step involved contracting with a well-respected and experienced preservation architect for a thorough assessment of the building's needs, followed by the submission of a detailed long-term work plan. Substantial improvements over the past six years, funded by numerous donors, with many of our members contributing, have been completed, including replacement of the front

system, replacement of the copper gutter system surrounding the dome, and various repairs to the limestone walls and cornices. More detailed descriptions on these work projects can be viewed in past editions of *Heritage Happenings* posted on Friends website: www.friendsofbnc.org.

This fall's fundraising is earmarked for the next



Friends' Winter (Spring!) Meeting

As many of us know, Bohemian National Cemetery owes its origin and much of its ongoing activity to the



Klára Moldová with students' drawings at Eastland Memorial dedication at BNC, 2015

relationships it has with numerous fraternal groups, lodges and societies within

the Czechoslovak community. T.G. Masaryk Czech School in Cicero (<http://czechschoolchicago.org/>) is one such organization contributing to BNC's recent activities. In particular, school instructors Klára Moldová and Irena Čajková have been active in discussing the cemetery in the school's classes and helping arrange BNC tours and visits for foreign students, politicians, artists and musicians from the Czech Republic.

Plan to attend Friend's winter membership meeting via our Facebook page or Zoom link (details on back page) to hear Klára's



Klára Moldová (right) welcomes youth jazz band from Czech Republic to the cemetery

presentation on the school's early history and the current role it plays in helping preserve Czechoslovak culture.

Chuck Michalek
Friends of BNC Volunteer
Wednesday Volunteer

Columbarium Restoration Project Update

With the cold snowy weather, outdoor work on BNC's historic crematorium/columbarium building is temporarily on hiatus. Fundraising for the Columbarium Restoration Project continues, and we appreciate the many donations in response to our Autumn 2021 fundraising letter. If you did not receive the letter, you can find information on Friends of BNC website.

In 2011, Friends initiated a multiyear project to restore the historic artwork found in Ceremony Hall—to preserve the hand-painted, gilded ornamental patterns and emblems done by Moravian-born artist John Mallin. After completing one test segment, it became apparent that repairing the building's exterior roof and masonry walls was first needed to prevent ongoing deterioration of the interior decoration.

Consequently, in 2014, the Columbarium Restoration

Project was initiated. Friends of BNC contracted with preservation architect Charles Pipal to prepare an overall plan for the repair and preservation of the crematorium/columbarium building.

For the past five years preservation contractors, including Marion Restoration and Knickerbocker Roofing Co., have completed various important repairs to the dome's roof structure and exterior limestone walls. Recent repairs involved the reconstruction of roof parapet walls connected to the east and west sides of the bell tower, and the installation of a new roof over the columbarium's entrance hallway. This summer, contractors will make repairs to the stairway entrance cheek walls.

Supported by your generous donations, we are making substantial progress in our multiyear project to weatherproof the building.

The wood-crafted donor wall located near Ceremony Hall still has spaces for donors who wish to make large contributions, offering a unique opportunity to memorialize a loved one. If



interested, visit our website friendsofbnc.org or contact Chuck Michalek: michalekchas@aol.com

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