

# Heritage Happenings

Newsletter of Friends of Bohemian National Cemetery

Summer Issue ~ Vol. XVIII No. 1

July 2021

carol jean smetana, 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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## What's New with Friends of BNC

Do you come to the cemetery from the south and turn north on Pulaski into the gates? If so you may have noticed how decrepit the white wall, the last part of the former greenhouses, looked. No more! This wall is now restored, thanks to the Friends treasury and the 2021 grant from the Czech Republic.

If you have been a member for a while, you may have enjoyed an in-person tour by Albert Walavich, professional tour guide, including coffee and goodies in the gatehouse, plus our Friends book table. Due to Covid plus some

insurance difficulties, we had to stop doing these tours. On a beautiful day this past June, Albert provided a terrific tour that was professionally recorded. Look for information on how we will edit the footage and use it as a resource for meetings and on our Friends website and Facebook page.

There are seven newly planted trees, including linden (the national Czech tree), serviceberry and red maple, now enhancing the the lawn in front of the

*(continued on page 3)*

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## Live from BNC

Each year, Friends of Bohemian National Cemetery chooses a repair or beautification project to form the basis of our grant application to the Czech Republic's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These grants are provided by the Czech Republic to help support various activities of Czech compatriot organizations, including maintenance and repairs of organizations' properties,

monuments and other items of Czech heritage abroad. These grants, along with donations from Friends of BNC members, have helped fund a variety of projects at Bohemian National Cemetery, including road maintenance, tree removal, and the ongoing Columbarium Restoration Project.

Situated along Pulaski Road,

*(continued on page 7)*

## Heritage Happenings

Heritage Happenings is published quarterly by Friends of Bohemian National Cemetery, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

Manuscripts, articles, photographs, and advertisements for Heritage Happenings may be submitted to carol jean smetana, 167 County Road A4A, Sapello, NM 87745-5026 or emailed to her at editor@friendsofbnc.org.

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### Officers of Friends of BNC

President:

*Marge Sladek Stueckemann*

Vice-President: *Juli Nelson*

Secretary: *Helen Gaydusek*

Treasurer: *Glenn Spachman*

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*Mary Syrup*

*Jim Trnka*

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*Joseph Topinka*

Membership: *Juli Nelson*

Newsletter: *carol jean smetana*

Publicity: *Linda Burton*

Sales/Marketing/Gala Chair:

*Juli Nelson*

Special Projects Co-Chair:

*Chuck Michalek*

Webmaster: *open*



*from the editor's laptop*

The Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International (CGSI) will hold its 2021 Genealogical Cultural Conference virtually from October 11-16, 2021, with the theme "Celebrating Connections."

*I will be doing a presentation at the conference entitled "Bohemian National Cemetery in Chicago: A Living Legacy." CGSI is offering three levels of registration options for the conference. You can find out more information at <https://cgsi.org/2021-cgsi-conference>.*

*I hope some of you will be able to join me for a look at the history and legacy of our Bohemian National Cemetery.*

*Na shledanou  
carol jean smetana*

## Donations

**Benefactors**  
(\$1000—\$9999)  
James Trnka

**Sponsors**  
(\$100—\$499)  
Kay Benson  
Lillian Hahn

**Donors**  
(\$25—\$99)  
Lodge DuPage  
Pioneers #409

**Thank you all for your generosity. Your donations help preserve and restore Bohemian National Cemetery.**

# Děkuji vám!

The **Driehaus Foundation** for the generous grant to provide seven large trees including planting;

**Chuck Betzold** for working to find the trees, supervise the planting and keep them watered;

**Juli Nelson** for finding a video company and coordinating the video project of a tour of BNC;

**Albert Walavich** for being the tour guide for the video project;

**Chuck Michalek** for supervising the restoration of the Pulaski wall;

**Chuck Michalek** for writing the 2022 grant proposal to the Czech Republic for repairs to the steps and cheek walls at the main entrance to the crematorium/columbarium building.



## What's New with Friends of BNC

(continued from page 1)

crematorium/columbarium

building, the gatehouse and the Masaryk Memorial Mausoleum. Mausoleum.

They are very large and were purchased with a generous grant from the

Driehaus Foundation. Chuck Betzold worked with the foundation and nursery to

choose the trees, help supervise the planting, and



keep them watered. The latter is a big job, because they required 50 gallons of water

per tree per week, due to the drought we have had this summer. I hope you can make a trip to the cemetery soon to see them!

I am looking forward to our August 29th Zoom membership meeting (also available on our Facebook page) at 1:30 pm. Look for details on page five and the back page of this newsletter!

**Marge Sladek Stueckemann**  
**President**

### Upcoming Events at Bohemian National Cemetery

**Cemetery grounds are open  
7:30 am to 4:00 pm  
seven days a week.**

**Cemetery office is open  
7:30 am to 4:00 pm  
Monday through Friday;  
9:00 am to 1:00 pm Saturday;  
Closed Sunday.**



## New Trees at BNC by Chuck Betzold

Bohemian National Cemetery has always been known for its variety of trees, shrubs and flowers. This spring a generous donation by the Driehaus Foundation allowed the planting of seven new mature trees at the cemetery, adding to the existing beauty of the grounds.

The large, eight-inch-diameter trees were planted in areas surrounding the historic buildings of our cemetery.

Three multi-trunk serviceberry trees were placed on the open lawn areas of the Gatehouse. Two red maples were placed on the front lawn of the Crematorium Building, and two linden trees now flank the entry walkway of the Masaryk Memorial Mausoleum.

The trees were purchased from GRO Horticultural Inc., one of the top nurseries in the Midwest. It took two days to move and plant all seven trees. They were selected from a nursery in Kanesville,

Illinois, which is 60 miles west of the cemetery.

Each tree is surrounded by porous vertical tubes, designed to water the deep roots of each tree and to provide soil aeration.

Cemetery volunteers have been faithfully watering the trees during the hot, dry spells we have had this summer in Chicago. The serviceberry tree features lovely grey bark and showy flowers, as well as terrific berries for pies and gorgeous fall color. But equally beautiful are the stories and folktales that have been associated with this tree for hundreds of years.

One story is that the first settlers in the New England area often planned funeral services at the same time that the tree bloomed. Its blooming was a sign that the ground had thawed sufficiently to be able to dig graves. So the tree became known as the 'serviceberry tree.'

Red maple, or acer rubrum, is an eastern North American deciduous tree known for its brilliant red



*One of three serviceberry trees being transplanted in front of the gatehouse at Bohemian National Cemetery. The circular hole was excavated the previous day by the same piece of equipment. The stone you see resting at the edge of the sidewalk was found at the bottom of the seven foot hole. It was probably a piece of leftover construction material, dating back to when the gatehouse was built in 1906.*



autumn foliage. It is one of the first trees to change color.

Red maples are fast-growing and can reach 40 feet to 90 feet tall and 150 years of age. Trunks grow up to 30 inches in diameter. The crown is rounded when mature and spans 25 feet to 40 feet in width.

Linden tree (Czech: lípa) is the Czech national tree and one of the national symbols of the Czech Republic. Lindens are long-lived trees, known to reach an age of 1000 years.

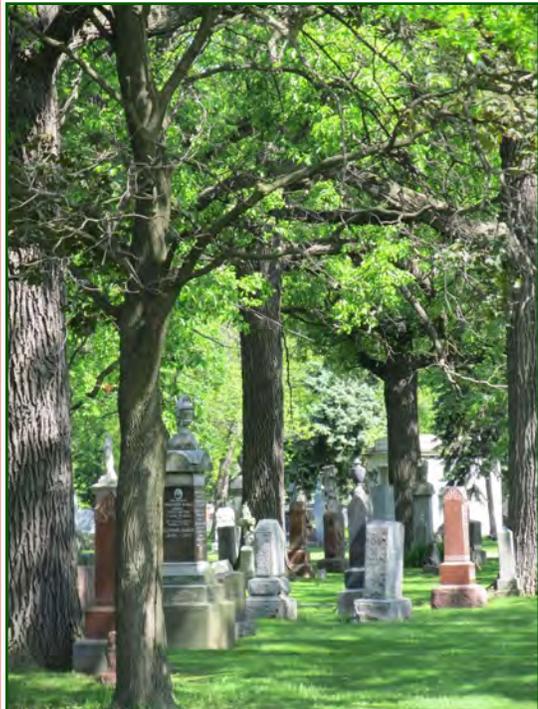
Linden trees produce a tiny fruit that is sweet and sticky. With that in mind, the

lindens at Bohemian National Cemetery were planted well off the road, so cars parked near them will not end up with a layer of sap.

Come out to the cemetery this fall and enjoy the seasonal colors that all these new trees will provide.

## Trees and Shrubs of Bohemian National Cemetery ~ Friends of BNC Online Summer Meeting ~

Our Friends of BNC summer meeting will be held online on **Sunday, August 29, 2021**, at **1:30 PM Central Time** (US and Canada).



Our guest presenter **Bob Porter**, from the North Park Village Nature Center, who will tell share his knowledge about the flora of Bohemian National Cemetery and the local area.

The address to join our meeting via **Zoom** is:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87817432714>

Meeting ID: 878 1743 2714

One tap mobile  
+13462487799,,87817432714# US (Houston)  
+12532158782,,87817432714# US (Tacoma)

Dial by your location  
+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)  
+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)  
+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)  
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+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)  
+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kzo451fk5>

You can also watch live on our Friends **Facebook** page at  
<https://www.facebook.com/Friends-of-Bohemian-National-Cemetery-181958125204936/>

## Revised and Updated Publications from Friends of BNC

*Introduction to  
Crematorium/Columbarium Building  
Bohemian National Cemetery, Chicago*



*"Let us remember that this building will survive us, that it will stand when those who speak our beautiful Bohemian language are probably fewer in number. And if, by the cessation of immigration and by the complete assimilation of our fourth or fifth generation into an American nation of one single language, the Bohemians should disappear in this country, this building will remain as a permanent monument to their efforts and to their Bohemian characteristics, the most marked feature of which is courage—courage to seek truth and to fight for liberty."*

*—Dr. Frantisek Iska  
Cornerstone Ceremony, 1913*

**Evelyn Krenek Fergle, Marilyn John, Juli Nelson  
Marjorie Sladek Stueckemann, Albert Walavich  
Carol Jean Smetana**

Revised 2021

Friends of Bohemian National Cemetery  
[www.friendsofbnc.org](http://www.friendsofbnc.org)

The revised and updated edition of Introduction to Crematorium/Columbarium Building Bohemian National Cemetery, Chicago with more photos and additional text, is now available for \$5.00 + \$2.00 shipping & handling.

Mail a check to:

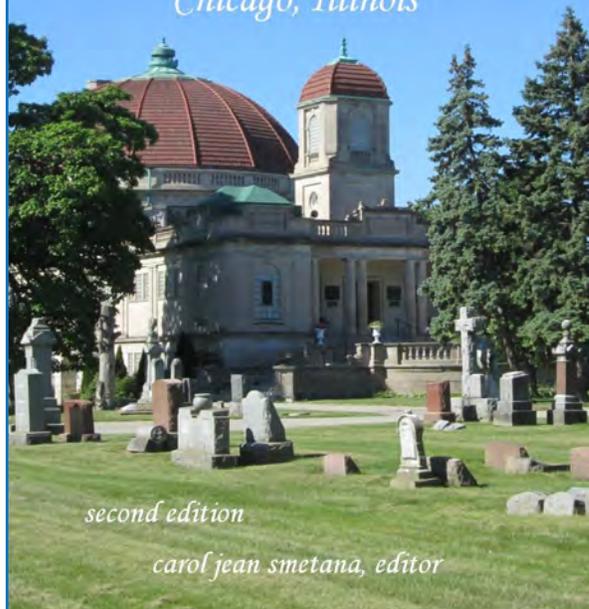
Friends of BNC  
P.O. Box 72746  
Roselle, IL 60172

Or order from our website store at:  
[www.friendsofbnc.org](http://www.friendsofbnc.org)

Also available is the second edition of A Dear and Precious Heritage with information about the new Eastland Disaster Memorial. It costs \$25 for members (\$30 for non-members) plus \$2.00 shipping and handling.

*A Dear and  
Precious Heritage*

*Bohemian National Cemetery  
Chicago, Illinois*



*second edition*

*carol jean smetana, editor*

**Welcome to  
Our New Members!**

**Cynthia Jensen-McMullin ...**

Aliso Viejo, CA

## Live from BNC

(continued from first page)  
which forms BNC's western boundary, is a row of old iron fencing and a stretch of four-foot high cement foundation wall that was part of the old greenhouse complex.



Over the years, the rumble of trucks and buses on Pulaski Road, along with splashing of winter road salt,



caused the old cement foundation wall to crack and crumble. The unsightly structure near the cemetery's main entrance resulted in

Friends of BNC requesting and receiving matching funds from the Czech Republic to repair and repaint this wall.

This past summer, the BNCA board and Friends of BNC contracted with Dardon Exteriors to make repairs to the cement wall, along with additional repairs for the Administration Building's west exterior masonry wall next to the cement wall.

The repairs and repainting were recently completed and reveal a much improved appearance by the Pulaski Road cemetery entrance. Later this summer, volunteers will begin scraping and painting the exterior wooden section of the administration building, which formed the entrance to the old "flower room."

Volunteers continue to spend time cutting and removing dead and fallen trees and branches around the cemetery. Tasks of

watering flowers and caring for recently planted trees also are performed by regular volunteers including: Chuck Betzold, Charlie Betzold, Jim Miller, Bill Servis, Carl Brader, Bob Weniger, Mary Lachiewicz, and Chuck Michalek.

Friends of BNC extends well wishes to Mr. Jan Kubišta, Deputy Consul of the Czech Consulate in Chicago,



who has departed for his new diplomatic post in Germany. Friends of BNC greatly appreciated his assistance with giving tours of the cemetery to visiting dignitaries from the Czech Republic, as well as with the grant application process.

**Chuck Michalek**  
**Friends of BNC Volunteer**  
**Wednesday Volunteer**

# *Friends of Bohemian National Cemetery*

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Roselle, IL 60172-0746

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## *Heritage Happenings*

we're on the web  
[www.friendsofbnc.org](http://www.friendsofbnc.org)



## *Trees and Shrubs of Bohemian National Cemetery*



Join Friends of Bohemian National Cemetery for our online summer meeting on  
**Sunday, August 29, 2021, at 1:30 pm central time.**

**Bob Porter**, Natural Areas Manager at the North Park Village Nature Center, will identify and discuss many of the trees and shrubs at BNC and tie them to the flora of the region.

You are invited to join the presentation on Facebook Live by going to the  
Friends of BNC Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/Friends-of-Bohemian-National-Cemetery-181958125204936/>

Or you can participate via Zoom. See page 5 of this issue for details on Zoom links.