



CZECH-NEBRASKA

1133 Oldfather, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE, 68588-0315

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Schedule for Fall 2008

Komensky Club Schedule Fall 2008

- Nov. 1-5 **Film** *I served the King of England* (Ross Theater, 13th/Q st)
- Nov 18 **Food Bazaar** Union at 11:30-1:30 UNL Union First Floor
- Nov. 19 **Film** *Something Like Happiness* 7:00 PM UNL Union, Room posted
- Dec. 3 **Film** *The Year of Devil Union* 7:00 PM UNL Union, Room posted
- March 29th 2008 **Czech Language Foundation Banquet** UNL Student Union. Ballroom. For tickets call 770 5029

Czech Events www.nebraskaczechs.org

- Nov. 14th Czechs of Lincoln Meeting; Moose Lodge 4901 N. 56th st. Dinner served at 6:00 PM. For reservation call Ann Callahan 486 4152 (\$10.00 per person).

We are all citizens of one world. To dislike a man because he was born in another country, because he speaks a different language, or because he takes a different view on this or that, is a great folly. Let us have but one end in view, the welfare of humanity. Komenský – Comenius

FLOOD DAMAGED US CZECH AND SLOVAK MUSEUM RECEIVES MILLIONS OF CROWNS FROM THE CZECH REPUBLIC GOVERNMENT

[19-09-2008 13:54 UTC] By Rosie Johnston

Disaster struck the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library in the US state of Iowa in June, when extreme flooding submerged the museum building. The damage caused to the building and its contents is thought to run into millions of dollars, and is expected to take years to repair. But the work should be made that little bit easier by a million-crown contribution from the Czech government which has just been announced. The museum's director Gail Naughton has been in the Czech Republic over the last week to discuss the terms of the gift. I caught up with her in one of her very few spare moments: "I came to visit the US ambassador here, and government officials of the Czech Republic, first of all to thank them for the gift that they are making to the museum for flood recovery. I came as well to make contact with our colleagues at the National Museum. I've also been in Slovakia, where I was talking to the government as well, about a possible gift following the flood."

So can you tell me what the Czech government has done to help you at the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library?

"Yes I can. The government has pledged 10 million crowns in flood recovery for Cedar Rapids, and they are going to be making those donations in the next month or two. It is a wonderful gesture, not only financially speaking, but it is also just a gesture of support, and solidarity, and belief in our mission. It is just fabulous."

When we have spoken on previous occasions, you have stressed that everything in the collection will be okay. But presumably some things are much more damaged than others, so can you tell me about the items that were worst damaged?

"Well, we are just really getting to know exactly what we are dealing with, because these items were for their best preservation whisked off at the crisis moment to the conservators. And now we are getting back their assessment reports of the damage, and what their

recommendations are for restoration. And we need to look at that and make some judgments about which ones we will be able to preserve completely, and which items are less damaged and so we can leave the way that they are. So it is a process which we are very much in the middle of. It is going to take some time, years in fact, I really believe, to deal with all the damaged collections."

I know that you are continuing to put on exhibitions even without a museum building. So whereabouts in Cedar Rapids are you doing these things, and is this as well thanks to the inhabitants of Cedar Rapids that this is happening?

"Well, we are opening a temporary public location at our local shopping mall, which is a new experience, but it may open new audiences to what we do. We will have an exhibit, a meeting room, a museum store there, we will be able to have some programs there. So that will be very interesting, we are looking forward to that."

Have these floods in a way made the relationship between the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library and the Czech and Slovak Republics closer? Because it definitely seems to have raised the museum's profile here.

"Well, you're right. Sometimes an opportunity can come out of a crisis. We have always had a very close relationship with the embassies in the United States, the government representatives there, and with the National Museums in the Czech and Slovak Republics, but this opens up new opportunities to work with various people in the archival and library areas and yes, I do think that this has strengthened relationships all across the board."

NEWS FROM THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Stamp Rarities Came to Prague

Thousands flock to historic international philatelist exposition
By Ondřej Bouda Staff Writer, *The Prague Post* September 17th, 2008 issue
In 1962, Prague established itself as a landmark for global philatelists when it became the first city to host an international stamp exhibition. The country has a long tradition of breeding stamp aficionados, so

when the decennial expo returned to Prague Sept. 12–14 after a 20-year reprieve, thousands flocked to see it at the Prague Exhibition Grounds.

“Altogether, some 45,000 visitors came over the weekend. We were surprised by the great interest in the most precious exhibits,” said Vít Vaníček, chairman of the organizing committee.

The elaborate exhibition marked the 90-year anniversary of Česká pošta, the national postal service. Aside from luring collectors by vending an array of special-issue stamps, the exhibition offered bonus attractions, such as mail service by hot-air balloon or historical coach.

The expo’s biggest draw, however, was the so-called Hall of Fame, which showcased some of the world’s most coveted stamps from the personal collection of British Queen Elizabeth II. “There was a constant line for the Hall of Fame,” Vaníček said. “For security reasons, only 200 people could file through per hour, and so only about 5,000 people saw it.”

Visitors queued for hours to see the legendary blue and red versions of the Mauritius, a Victorian-era stamp printed on the island of Mauritius and the first British Empire stamp printed outside of Great Britain.

Experts estimate that only about 27 of these stamps still exist. Ten of them are stamped on an envelope postmarked Sept. 21, 1849, the first day of their validity. Now a part of Queen Elizabeth’s collection, this envelope was one of the Hall of Fame’s priceless items.

The exhibition was not limited to crowd-pleasing relics, however. Thousands of precious postage stamps were exhibited. Each seemed to find an admirer, or, in some cases, a prize: As post offices from all over the world displayed and sold their goods to collectors, 521 exhibitions from 61 countries vied for first place in the “best collection” competition.

Sentimental value

Surprisingly, the winner of best exhibit had very few actual stamps in his portfolio. An international panel of judges awarded 97 points out of a possible 100 to an assemblage that included letters and envelopes more than 200 years old.

“It is a beautiful example of modern philately. It illustrates the Venezuelan postal history from 1790–1880,” said Charles Verge, a judge from Canada.

He added that philately spanned millennia, and was not necessarily limited to stamps themselves. “Stamps are a fairly new invention, and the pre-stamp era offers great challenges. You could even collect clay tablets used by Romans.”

Richard Stock, a British exhibitor who showcased the Camel Postman stamp from Sudan, agreed.

Stock’s exhibit included original sketches and 1897 trial runs of the iconic stamp, as well as a letter written by its designer about details of the planned prints. He received 92 points for his unique collection.

“A good exhibition is not just about the collected items,” he said. “It also has to tell a story. I have recorded the story of one stamp over a 100-year period.”

Evaluated by judges at 91 points, the highest-ranking Czech collection featured classic Czechoslovak stamps, including several rare pieces. Stamps with unique surcharges and printer errors like the Headless Republic — a 1920 stamp featuring a winged woman with a missing head — made it the most complete collection of Czechoslovak stamps on exhibit.

The total value of the displayed stamps is difficult to gauge. The exhibition was insured for 1 billion Kč (\$56.7 million), but, according to organizer Jaroslav Maleček, the actual price of each stamp depends on the sentimentality of its owner.

“Stamps can serve as a good investment,” he said. “But try offering a billion to [Queen Elizabeth II] for her stamps and see if she sells them.”

Maleček explained that money is irrelevant for most collectors. “The true pleasure in stamp collecting lies in the excitement of the hunt for

missing pieces and the relaxation that comes when you sort through your collection in the evening after a long day,” he said.

Maleček also pointed out that even though serious collectors spend thousands, anyone can collect stamps without any expenses. “The beauty of stamp collecting is that you don’t need any money to start. Just an album and a few letters from friends on vacations abroad can be the start of a lifelong passion,” he said.

While the physical exhibition has ended, a new virtual exhibition is now available at www.exponet.info.

Collectors’ items

The first adhesive stamp was issued in Great Britain May 6, 1840.

While available for as little as \$20, first-day issue stamps still attached to letters have been valued at more than \$100,000.

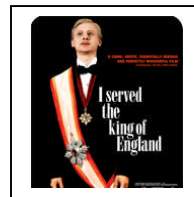
The first Czechoslovak stamps were designed by the Art Deco artist Alfons Mucha, and were first issued Dec 18, 1918.

A scout auxiliary postal service was used in the first days of the new republic, as the old postal service was not trusted. Scouts issued their own stamps, and were surcharged with a special stamp upon the formation of Czechoslovakia.

Czech legionnaires abroad had special stamps for military postal service. These were used in 1919 and 1920 in Siberia by troops returning to Czechoslovakia after World War I.

I SERVED THE KING OF ENGLAND

Showing at the Mary Riepma Ross Media Arts Center from Friday October 31st to Thursday November 6th. It is two hours long and rated ‘R’. The film is in Czech with English subtitles.



Jan Dite (Ivan Barnev), the plucky little waiter who bounces around central Europe in Jiri Menzel’s epic comedy “I Served the King of England,” has colossal ambitions. Catering to political and military fat cats at a fancy brothel in 1930s Czechoslovakia, his appetites are piqued as he observes these pompous boors handling prostitutes on their laps while washing down obscenely rich banquets with beer and brandy. As the song

says, “Them that’s got shall get. ...” These scenes of marathon gourmandizing offer some of the most pungently satirical observations of unfettered gluttony ever filmed. “I Served the King of England” is Mr. Menzel’s sixth screen adaptation of the work of Bohumil Hrabal, the Czech satirist who died in 1997 and is best known for writing the screenplay for Mr. Menzel’s 1966 classic, “Closely Watched Trains,” as well as the novel on which it was based. There is hardly a moment in this new film in which you are not aware that its absurdist view of the human condition was shaped by traumatic 20th-century events. Stephen Holden, *The New York Times*

CZECH LIVING LEGENDS THE PLASTIC PEOPLE OF THE UNIVERSE VENTURED TO NEBRASKA

By Matthew Gregory, *Náš Svět* editor

It was a warm September night when a friend and I rolled into the gravel parking lot of the historic Pla Mor Ballroom just outside the Lincoln city limits on West O St. It was a few minutes before the concert was scheduled to start. When we got out of the car, my friend began talking to the three people hanging around outside. They had driven from Hastings for the show and we all immediately commented on the historical significance of the Plastic People, and the amazement of their arrival in Lincoln. Even more incredulous than their arrival was the choice of venue. There was nothing wrong with the Pla Mor per se, but it was quite a distance from downtown or any concentrated population for that matter, and it usually hosts

country and big band acts. Because of the location and the ticket price (\$15 for a Tuesday night show in the country), I knew it was going to be a small crowd, but that didn't take anything away from the awe of their performance.

The Plastic People of the Universe have been called "the greatest obscure rock band of all time." Formed less than a month after the Soviet invasion of Prague in August of 1968, their name comes from a Frank Zappa song, and their music is inspired by The Velvet Underground. They were just a 1960s psychedelic band until they signed Charter 77, the human rights document that Vaclav Havel helped put together to hold the Communist government accountable for their crimes.

I had the opportunity to see the Plastic People during the last two weeks of my three-year stay in Prague, so I knew what kind of a set was in store. During their set – avant-garde experimental rock – people swayed and head-bobbed and danced when they could. Admittedly, I am more familiar with their legend and history than their music catalogue, but I enjoyed the music that included the saxophone, violin, contrabass, and a lot of keyboard.

The opener was Hungary's Little Cow – a Balkan dance rock act that energized the crowd of thirty or so. The interesting thing about this show was that the crowd became friends for the night. One person was curious to know how the other person knew about the show and what connection, if any, they had to Czech or Hungarian culture. The audience of young and old, hippie and cowboy, scensters and soccer moms, tore up the ballroom dance floor once Bobby Layne, owner of the Pla Mor, introduced them.

For the sake of Nebraska's Czech community, I hope The Plastic People of the Universe come around again, and hopefully somewhere closer to town. While they are not a political band, seeing them is as historical as going to a political rally, but many times more fun. ~

FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTER ADVISER VISITS UNL CZECH CLASSES

René Kubáček, the adviser to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic visited the Czech 101 class on October 29th, 2008. And, according to him, he liked very much what he saw.

WELCOME TO THE NEW TEACHER OF CZECH KATARINA CERMAKOVA

Katarina is an ABD and a seasoned teacher. She came from Brno, and she is finishing her linguistics dissertation at the University of Palacky in Olomouc. She has been sent to us courtesy of the Ministry of Education of the Czech Republic with the approval of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, upon the recommendation of the Czech Republic Embassy in Washington D.C. She is ready to be our contact with the Czech and Slovak Republics, and the Czech and Slovak cultures.

NEW STUDENTS IN THE CZECH LANGUAGE CLASS

We have an enthusiastic group of students in the beginning Czech class. Here is how they described themselves.

Angie Shasteen I am a freshman here at UNL. I decided to take a Czech language course because I am 1/2 Czech and I wanted to embrace that part of my heritage while learning another language. I also want someone in the younger generations of my family to know.

Steve Lahey I am learning Czech not because I have any Czech background, but because of my research interests. I am Assistant Professor of Classics and Religious Studies here at UNL, and publish and teach lots about medieval theology. So I want to learn Czech to understand the transition from English Wycliffism to Czech Hussite

theology. You can learn more about it at:

<http://www.unl.edu/classics/faculty/lahey/cadaversynod2007/cadaver-synod-p7.shtml>

Rachel Tvrdy The reason I decided to study Czech is a funny story. I had decided I wanted to study abroad in the CZ Rep about a month ago, and I've been indecisive up until this point about every detail of the process. I was at Big Red Welcome helping with my booth for FOCUS when a friend had told me that someone was playing the accordion in front of the Czech booth! I literally ran to the booth, and found our teacher, Mr. Pierce. He offered me good advice that had never dawned on me before—learn Czech if you're gonna live there. I thought I could get by...but after being in this class for 2 days, I'm glad I enrolled :)

Brianna Tichy I am just starting my freshmen year at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. My hometown is a small town by the name of Woolwich in Southern New Jersey. I am an avid competitive swimmer, singer, and also did a brief stint as a cross country runner. My father, Fred Tichy, grew up on a homestead right outside of Wilber, Nebraska that our Czech ancestors settled. Currently, I am the reigning Miss Czech-Slovak New Jersey and plan on spending the year attending many of the Czech festivals throughout Nebraska. I am also trying to set up more Czech-Slovak heritage pageants across the East Coast so that more states have representatives at the Miss Czech-Slovak USA pageant.

Jake Parker I have lived in Lincoln pretty much my whole life. I graduated from SCC In 2006 which I got my associates of applied science in Computer Aided Drafting and Design. I transferred to UNL last spring to continue my education. I'm currently still deciding what I want to do. I know very little to nothing about Czech culture or the language. The reason why I'm taking this class is because one of my co-worker talked me into it, plus I think it will be very interesting to learn another language and culture that I know nothing about.

Erika Hepburn I am a sophomore studying International Business and French. I wanted to learn a third language because I love languages and wanted to begin one that would challenge me. So, why Czech? I have no Czech background, I didn't grow up in Wilber, I've never been to the Czech Republic...This past school year, I became friends with the Robitschek scholars. As a result I really would love to spend a significant amount of time in the Czech Republic. I know I will be meeting the families and friends of these people who are very dear to me, and I do not want to be the stupid American who makes no effort to learn about a language or a culture. I also have already met the new Robitschek scholars for this year and had them to my home... so I hope I can create just as wonderful of bonds with them and that they will help me with my Czech!

Jordan Miller I'm currently a freshman majoring in photojournalism (and possibly double majoring or minoring in Native American Studies). I'm quite embarrassed to admit that I know very little about Czech culture, language, or the Czech Republic. My grandma (and her side of the family) is what really inspired me to take this class considering they're mostly Czech (Zeleny), so here's to you grandma! As far as studying abroad goes, I don't know if I'd chose to do that, but I'd love to, and plan on, visiting sooner or later. Can't wait to TRY and learn Czech with all you guys!

Laura Scahill I'm from Omaha Nebraska. In order to graduate I took two years of Spanish at my high school but it was not my best memory. I decided to try Czech because I'm absolutely terrible at Spanish so I thought I would try something different. I'm also about half Czech. I'm looking forward to this semester with all of you!

Staci Parent I graduated from college in 2005 with geography major and a math minor. In the third grade I decided I wanted to learn Czech, so I'm very excited that I'm finally taking the class. Much of my ancestry is Czech, so that is what interested me in the first place. I plan to visit the Czech Republic someday, and I would like to know some language for that. I would also like to add more Czech to my family's vocabulary. My mom is sad that her dad knew Czech and refused to teach her (he and his brother wanted their conversations to be secret).

Alex Haddock I am a sophomore communications major from Omaha. I want to learn Czech because I am roughly half Czech and much of my family can speak it.

Georgia Herman You can also call me "Jirina." I am a freshman at UNL and am really looking forward to studying Czech. I am taking this Czech class because I have recently spent a year living in the Czech Republic. While I was there, I also worked a full-time job at an International Montessori Kindergarden. Half of the days I spent at my job, I worked in a class of children where only Czech was spoken. Hence, I learned a bit of Czech. I miss speaking the language, and I think that if you have the advantage of learning a bit of any language it is a gift, so I decided to study Czech. I don't know where it will take me, or what I will do with the language in the future, but I believe that simply *studying* a language broadens your mind, even if you don't constructively "use" it in the future. I am a psychology major.

Rose Lombard. This is my Freshman year at UNL and my major is Natural Resources and Environmental Economics. I've always lived in Lincoln, Nebraska, and according to my mom I have a great-grandmother who MIGHT have been Czech depending on where the borders were at the time. I'm taking Czech because one of my goals in life is to learn as many languages and possible; after four years of Spanish I decided I was ready to start on my second language. I'm really looking forward to learning more and, of course, getting to know you all.

[International Folk Dance Club](#)

--The group meets for learning sessions on **Fridays**, starting at **7:30pm** in the round hallway **between Teacher's College and Mabel Lee Hall**. (Please, enter through the South-West doors that face the 14th & Vine intersection.) The group has been performing at many UNL events, and even at ethnic festivals and other statewide events.

The membership is free and all students and non-students are invited to take a part in the learning sessions. In fact, students receive extra points in the Russian and Czech programs.

[Czech Language Classes Need Your Help!](#)

--Have you thought about your inheritance making a difference? You can name the Czech Language Program in your will and if your money funds the Czech Language and Culture Chair, it can carry your family name. Remember us in your will.

Contributions in care of the UNL Foundation can be sent to the Czech Instruction Fund #4931, UNL Foundation, 1010 Lincoln Mall Ste 300, Lincoln, NE 68508

[Komenský Club at UNL](#)

--The principal function of the Czech Komenský Club is to sponsor events that focus on culture and history and bring together people of diverse backgrounds who want to share Czech heritage. Readers of *Náš Svět* are encouraged to attend club events and participate in other activities listed in the newsletter in order to enhance awareness of the Czech culture in Nebraska communities. There is a low annual membership fee of \$3.00 for students and \$8.00 for non-students. The membership fee helps finance the films, newsletters and other special activities. Checks should be made out to the Czech Komenský Club and mailed to: Mila Saskova-Pierce, UNL, 1133 Oldfather Hall, Lincoln, NE 68588-0315. Membership is open to everyone!

Contacts

Shawn O'Donnell, Club President mastersplinterod@yahoo.com

Mila Saskova-Pierce - Professor of Czech & Russian,
402-472-1336 at msaskova-pierce1@unl.edu

Matthew Gregory - *Náš Svět* editor at plylas@hotmail.com

Editors of No. 75: Matthew Gregory, Dr. Mila Saskova-Pierce

Náš Svět/ Czech-Nebraska

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

1133 Oldfather Hall

Lincoln, NE 68588-0315

