THE MASARYK CLUB WAS FORMED IN 1947 at the University of Chicago as a forum fordialogue and cooperation. Though Czechoslovakia fell under Soviet domination in 1948, the democratic traditions of the 6th Czechoslovak Republic continued to live on.
The Masaryk Club was originally meant to promote home cultural understanding between the two countries and bring various aspects of Czech and Slovak culture to the University community. Soon, their actions and influence went beyond the mission.

THE CITY & THE UNIVERSITY THAT HELPED CREATE A COUNTRY!

In 1918, in the wake of World War I, 300,000 Czechs and Slovaks who had been displaced by the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire flocked to Chicago. With America’s declaration of war on Germany in April of 1917, the American Czechs and Slovaks formed a strong support system for the Allies and became an important part of the American war effort.

Beneš described the meeting in his memoirs. “We received you very warmly, grand as president and added that theinfo Munich agreement does not exist and that I continue to be president for him. The Czech ambassador is the one that needs to sort this out, and not the US president.”

Beneš was warmly welcomed in the US Congress when he officially addressed both chambers about the Czechoslovak future. Beneš also returned to the University of Chicago where his professorship continued. His friends and colleagues at the University prepared a grand welcome for him. He delivered several political addresses open to the public.

On May 28, 1939, Nazi Germany invaded the rest of the territory of the Czech lands and Germany invaded the rest of the Czech Republic. Beneš led the Czech government-in-exile, and also as World War II began, he headed the Czechoslovak provisional political center of Czechoslovak resistance called “Foreign Action.”

Beneš' salary as a University of Chicago professor was realized on October 28, 1918. (See Page 2)

The University of Chicago managed to do so officially in 1918 and 1919.

On May 28, 1939, before World War II began and as President Beneš was invited to Washington to meet with US President Franklin D Roosevelt.

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THE CRANES OF CHICAGO

Professor Masaryk recalls, “One early morning in 1901 I had a visit from an American. Until that time I didn’t think an American would come to visit me in my study, but I was glad to see him. He was a musician in need of information and I was glad to give it to him. I was glad to talk to him. We talked about the music of the Czechoslovak Republic. The success of the Czechoslovak Legions in the struggle for Czechoslovak independence came from the support of the Czechs in Chicago. The people of Chicago and the Czechs in Chicago were our best friends.”

THE CRANES OF CHICAGO

Charles Crane was a major patron of the legendary Czech-Austrian-Norwegian artist Alfons Mucha during the countries’ monumental search for, and search for, identity. Mucha also portrayed Josephine Crane-Bradley, daughter of Charles Crane, as Svatý (Sveta Godkin). An edited version of this portrait appeared on the cover of the First Czechoslovak Republic – which also featured art by Mucha.

A Czech-American Family.

The CRANES OF CHICAGO and the First Czechoslovak Republic came together in more ways than one. Soon after Czechoslovakia’s creation, two of Charles Crane’s sons, Richard and John, moved to Prague. In 1919, Richard Crane was appointed the first US ambassador to the newly independent country. His father bought the Schönborn Palace, which was turned into the American Embassy. Richard Crane’s term was over, the palace was then sold to the US government. It is still used as the US Embassy in Prague today.

Ivan Král

His is a unique musical voice. In Czech, “Kral” means “King.” One of the kings of popular music for those born during the last decades has been Ivan Král, composing movie soundtracks and music for some of the world’s most influential artists: U2, David Bowie, Patti Smith, Iggy Pop, John Water, Rake Generation, and others. His GRAMMY-winning work is heard around the world. On September 29th he will be heard in the Czechs at a special performance honoring the Czech Republic and the University of Chicago.

Jim Petrik

Rock Star & Musical Vehicle.

It all began in Buffalo. Jim started a band with fellow Czech-American Morton Westmakors. They drew to the top with his like in “The Ides of March.” Than, up part of some of his music, he won a GRAMMY win for Eye of The Tiger. His recent project, The Song, has new versions of his classic. He has written for the Beach Boys, M, Spanday, and Seneca Hager. Jim says, “I’m thrilled to bring Czech music to the world, I’d like to bring some of my best melodies in my rock songs maybe had something with the Czech composers.”

Anna Nosy Perleberg

shares memories of the friendship between her and the Masaryk family as well as the feelings of a little girl immigrating to the United States after facing the Nazi threat. The Czech Chicagoan has written a fascinating and compelling memoir. Congratulations!

The House in Prague

How a Little House Helped an Immigrant Girl Find Her Way Home

By Anna Nosy Perleberg

A tattoo on my arm of a rose and a heart has such personal meaning for me; it is the symbol of love that my husband gave me on our wedding day. It is a symbol of the love and respect that I have for my home in Prague and for the city in which I grew up.

The Beneš Connection.

DO YOU KNOW THAT MIKA BRZEZINSKI, co-host of the popular Morning Joe, is a great-grandniece of Czech President Eduard Beneš? Her grandfather was a Czechoslovak diplomat and personal secretary of President Beneš during World War II Bohus Beneš. Her mother, a well-known Czech sculptor, Emilie Benešová, married Zdeněk Beneš, President Jana Beneš’s National Security Advisor. Mika is one of three daughters. Her brother Mark and his family live in our family’s home in Prague. He is a professor of history and political science at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

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