

the Bohemian state of mind



CONSULATE GENERAL
of the Czech Republic

monthly newsletter for Bohemians by birth and bohemians at heart

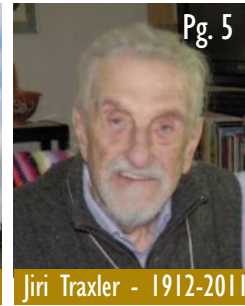


September 2011

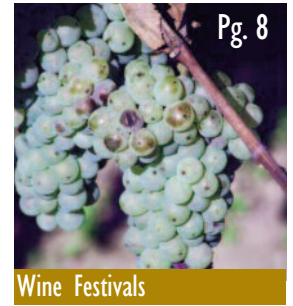
- Dear Bohemians
- Travel Tips
- ELL near Prague



Flag Raising Ceremony



Jiri Traxler - 1912-2011



Wine Festivals

Events Calendar

Czech Events

Aug 26 – Sept 14

From Sea to Sea

Paintings at Gallery Hittite
www.standasedlak.com

Sept 9 @2:15 pm

Alois Nebel

Scotiabank Theatre 3
www.tiff.net/thefestival

Sept 10 @5 pm

Sokol Toronto Social Dinner

St. Wenceslaus Church
Info: 905-838-5269

Sept 10 @8 pm

Alois Nebel

AMC I
www.tiff.net/thefestival

Sept 16 @7:30 pm

ZADRUHA

Moravian folklore

Prague Restaurant
450 Scarborough Golf Cl. Rd.
Info: 289-234-0264

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Bohemian Journey

– New Tourist Phenomenon: Dark Tourism

Apart from Second World War themes, with typical destinations such as the towns of Terezin and Lidice, there are also many other places in the Czech Republic that could attract tourists keen on dark stories – places rich in legends bordering between fact

and fiction; many inexplicable mysterious phenomena and enigmas.

Ossuary in Sedlec near Kutna Hora

Earth from the Holy Land was scattered in a local cemetery under the rule of Otakar II.

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Czech Cinematography

– Presented at TIFF 2011

With the beginning of the Indian summer, Toronto welcomes the best of the World's cinematography at its annual Toronto International Film Festival. Among the hundreds of films presented this year, the curious eye of a movie viewer cannot miss the newest release of Czech cinema – *Alois Nebel*.

Director Tomas Lunak combined animated and feature film techniques making this



movie “cartoonishly” unique. The choice of black and white perfectly matches the tone of

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phone: 416-972-1476, fax: 416-972-6991, e-mail: toronto@embassy.mzv.cz, web: www.mzv.cz/toronto

Events Calendar *cont'd*

Sept 18 @3 pm

Alois Nebel

AMC 2

www.tiff.net/thefestival

Sept 18 @5 pm

Boris Krajny – piano

St. Wenceslaus Church

Info: 905-232-3092

Sept 18 @5 pm

Evening of

Remembrances

Adolf Toman (1942-2011)

Mysteriously Yours Theatre

Info: 416-486-7469

Sept 23 @7 pm

Venetian Gala

Fundraiser

Arcadian Court Hudson Bay

401 Bay Street, 8th floor

www.torontophilharmonia.com

Sept 24 @6 pm

60th Anniversary of

St. Wenceslaus

Church

“Vinobrani”

St. Wenceslaus Church

Info: 416-538-2468

continued on next pg.



Dear Bohemians

– by *Consul General Vladimir Ruml*

Every year on August 21st we remember the sad anniversary of the Invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Soviet army and the armies of then Communist countries of the Warsaw Treaty in 1968.

Twenty years ago, the last general of the Soviet army occupying Czechoslovakia left our country. His departure ended a shameful occupation that put Czechoslovakia under political oppression that lasted 23 years.

We shall never forget these unfortunate events in our country's history and the lives lost because of them. And we shall continue to work on preventing history from repeating itself again, as we have to remember that there

are still people among us who willingly participated in this shameful act of disgrace and who turned their backs on their country and its citizens.

On the occasion of this year's anniversary, I had an opportunity along with my wife and daughter accompanied by Mr. Josef Cermak and the representatives of our communities to visit the Monument dedicated to the victims of the totalitarian regimes at Masaryktown on Saturday, August 13th. Here we paid our respects to over four thousand people who lost their lives at the Communist-run work camps in Czechoslovakia.

Yours,

Vladimir Ruml

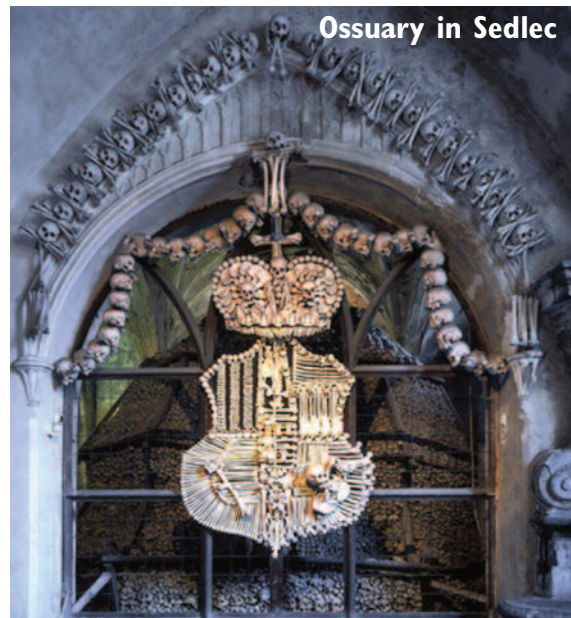
Bohemian Journey *(continued from pg. 1)*

Victims of the plague epidemic in 1318, about 30,000 bodies, were buried here.

Bones were stored in the lower chapel after the Hussite wars when the cemetery was phased out. It was probably during interior remodelling in 1709 when altars and bone decorations were created; the ossuary decoration as we know it today originated in 1870. The remains of some 40,000 people are estimated to be stored here.

Museum of Torture in Cesky Krumlov

Medieval cellars in the ancient town hall building were restored and they now feature the exhibitions of the Museum of Torture. The authentic premises take visitors back to the times of the Middle Ages when torture was in full bloom, and the guilty – as well as the innocent – were tortured using the



most cruel methods with sophisticated, specifically designed torture instruments.

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Events Calendar cont'd

Sept 25 @10:30 am
St. Wenceslaus Mass
 St. Wenceslaus Church
 Info: 416-538-2468

Sept 28 @12 pm
**National Day of
 Czech Statehood
 Flag Raising
 Ceremony**
 Queen's Park, Toronto
 sekretariat.cgto@gmail.com

Slovak Events
Sept 10 @7 pm
Tribute to ELAN
 Hall of Cyril and
 Methodius Church
 www.cskstore.com

Sept 16 @8 pm
The Gilded Red Cage
 The Assembly Hall, Toronto
 www.skvosty.com

Sept 17 @5 pm
Poetry Evening
 St. Paul Church
 1424 Davenport Rd., Toronto

Bohemian Journey (continued from pg. 2)

Almost 100 torture instrument exhibits are displayed in an area of more than 400 m². The exhibition features 10 wax figures and two unique audiovisual effects: witch burning and a decapitation.

Vamberk Mummies Stored under Broumov Monastery

The vast cellar of Broumov Monastery holds 34 mummies from St. Prokop's Parish Church in Vamberk. When excavation work took place in the 1980s, the local sewage system was damaged and waste water flowed into the crypt. Due to climatic changes (higher moisture levels in particular), a number of mummies started to rot and some of them had to be buried in the ground as they were in an advanced state of decomposition. Thirty four out of the original 50 mummies were saved and temporarily stored in a depository of the District Museum of the Orlicke Mountains, situated in the town of Vamberk. One adult, as well as two child mummies, were transported to Broumov Monastery.

Capuchin Crypt in Brno

The Order of Friars Minor Capuchin is a monastic order and one of the three branches of the Franciscan order. Its members are colloquially referred to as "Capuchins" who came to the countries of the Czech Crown around 1610 via Vienna and established themselves in Prague, Olomouc and Brno. The Capuchin tomb also holds the remains of the famous pandour commander, baron Trenck (1711-1749),

who died in 1749 in the Spilberk prison. The crypt also features the famous saying "We were once what you are now – you will be what we are now"... Rather dreadful curiosities decorating the place are chandeliers made of human bones.

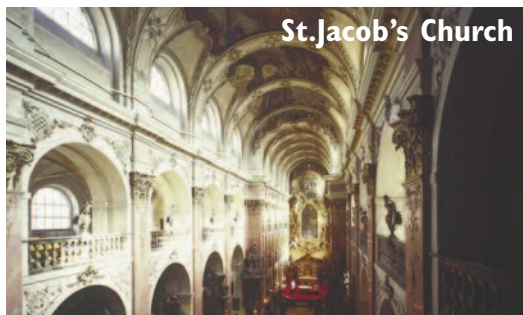
Macocho Abyss

Everyone who has visited the Moravian Karst knows that Macocha Abyss is nicknamed after a certain stepmother who allegedly threw her stepson into its mouth. It turned out that the legend handed down from generation to generation might be true, as described in historic sources (Vigsius, 1663). The forested edges and sheer rock sides of Macocha Abyss attract visitors, adventurers, poets, writers and painters alike.

Church of St. Jacob the Bigger in Prague's Old Town

There are several legends associated with this church. One of them talks about a robber who stayed in the church after prayers and got down to his business at night. When he tried to reach a wooden statuette of the Virgin Mary, she grabbed his hand. She held the robber so firmly he could not get free and had to wait all night until a surprised priest arrived. What's more, he could not even move any more and they had to cut his hand off. It was

decided to hang it by the church entrance to remind all the passers-by of one of the Ten Commandments. The robber repented for his sin and his hand has remained in the church until today.



St. Jacob's Church

www.czechtourism.com/News/Dark-Tourism-jeden-z-novych-fenomenu-turistiky.aspx

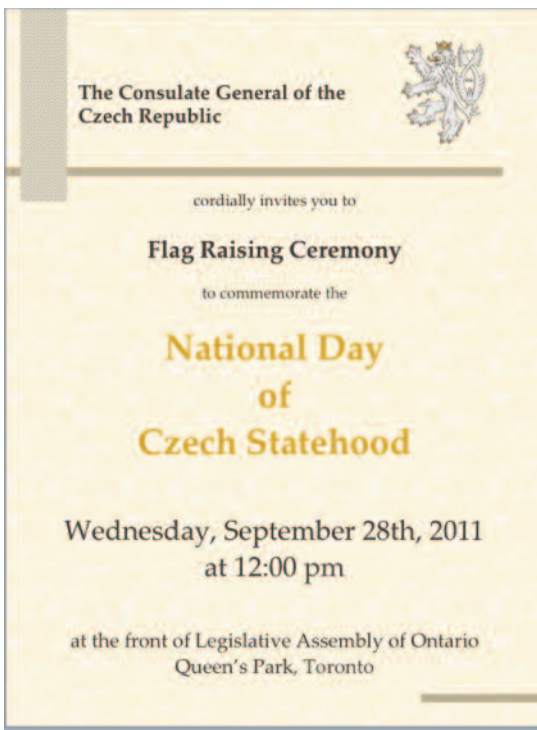
Event Highlight:

National Day of Czech Statehood – September 28th

On September 28th in the year of 935, Wenceslaus, the Czech Prince of the Premyslid dynasty who played an important role in the emancipation of the Czech state and cementing the Premyslid dynasty within the Bohemian Kingdom, was murdered in the town of Stara Boleslav by the hand of his brother Boleslav in a ruthless bid for power.

Ironically, Boleslav pushed for his brother's canonization only two years after his death and Wenceslaus became the patron of the Czech nation. According to legend, he will be its "savior" in time of greatest need. The legend of Wenceslaus was created to help the newly-born Czech statehood, and his name Wenceslaus (Vaclav) became synonymous with Bohemia and the Czech Crown.

It is therefore most appropriate, that the biggest and most central square in Prague that witnessed the



most important events in Czech history, such as the proclamation of Czechoslovakia in 1918, the Nazi army marching into the city in 1939, the protests against the Soviet-led invasion in 1968 and the demonstrations of 1989 that ended the 40-year-long communist regime, bears his name – the Wenceslaus Square. And there, at the very top of the square, by the equestrian statue of St Wenceslaus you can bow your head to the great prince of Bohemia, the patron of Czech statehood.

The Consulate General of the Czech Republic will commemorate this Day of Czech statehood by raising its national flag at the courtesy flagpole in front of the Ontario Parliament Building, Queen's Park (south-west corner) on Wednesday, September 28th, 2011 at noon. Come and join us for this memorable event.

Czech Cinematography (continued from pg. 1)

the story where each scene of the film had been shot with live actors on location or in the studio and then redrawn and animated.

Alois Nebel is an adaptation of the graphic novel written by Jaroslav Rudis and Jaromir 99 capturing the end of the eighties in the twentieth century in Czechoslovakia.

You can see *Alois Nebel* in Toronto at the following screening times:

Friday, September 9 @2:15 pm,
Scotiabank Theatre 3

Saturday, September 10 @8:00 pm, AMC 1

Sunday, September 18 @3:00 pm, AMC 2

To purchase tickets online and for more information visit <http://tiff.net/thefestival>

In Memory of Jiri Traxler

— by George Grosman

When a friend or a close relative dies, you feel sad and depressed. It's natural. You were close to that person and you feel a gap in your life. Additionally, you are confronted with your own mortality – certainly something to make you pensive and sad. But sometimes a person leaves this world and you feel a sadness that is inexplicable. You were not close friends or relatives. Yet after they are gone, you feel bereft in a way that puzzles you.

Such is the case with the passing of George Traxler. I would prefer to say the death of Maestro Traxler but perhaps George, who was incredibly modest, would object to the title. There is nothing to object to. George Traxler, who passed away recently at the age of 99, was truly a giant of Czech swing music. Along with Kamil Behounek, R.A.Dvorsky and Jaroslav Jezek – Traxler's frequent collaborator and mentor – George stood at the cradle of Czech swing and jazz music. During the 1930's and the 1940's he composed, arranged and played on dozens of dance and radio hits, criss-crossed the country and performed with the best musicians of his time. After the war, and especially after the Communist takeover, swing music wasn't what the regime wanted, needed or even tolerated. Traxler found himself semi-employed and fully disgusted with the new government. He managed to escape – first to Germany, then to Canada where he lived another 60 years of a full, productive and exciting life in a completely different career. He also managed to write an excellent book called “Ja nic, ja muzikant” (the closest English equivalent is “Don't Shoot Me, I'm Only the Piano Player”)

George Traxler's CV is fairly well known. I would rather write a paragraph or two about the kind of man he was, about the generation he came from and what we lose when we lose people like him.

George was 6 when WW1 ended. The world had

just undergone a tremendous cataclysm and the thinking was that the future can be

nothing but brightness. If you studied hard, worked hard and followed your dream, post WW1 Czechoslovakia was a good place to be. Only behind France and Great Britain in all of Europe in terms of industrialization, scientific advancement and cultural diversity, the country in general and Prague in particular was a great place to be. The whole cultural underpinning of society was as different from ours as we can imagine. George knew in his heart of hearts that even after he was chased out of his homeland, even after losing everything, after leaving a whole life behind, he could start anew and once again, through hard work and determination achieve his dream. I am not sure that we have too many people like that around today – in a culture of entitlement, a culture of “me first”, where self-esteem is valued more than sacrifice and hard work.

Lest I get too serious, let us remind ourselves that George was a really funny guy who liked nothing better than a joke and a humorous story. A raconteur of the first order, he would hold his company spellbound with stories and anecdotes from his work with the most talented musicians of his generation. You're not among us anymore, George, but I know you're playing a mean piano and swinging a hip tune up there, while the angels are laughing at your stories. It was a pleasure knowing you.

George Grosman and “Music On The Corner” will celebrate the life of George Traxler with his music on November 12th at 8 pm at Prague Restaurant



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 Oakdale Place

OSHAWA
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PICKERING
 Pickering Town Centre

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 Woodbine Square
 Brimleywood Mall
 Scarborough Town Centre
 Parkway Mall

STONEY CREEK
 Eastgate Square

THORNHILL
 Promenade
 Cauters Mill

TORONTO
 Queen's Quay Terminal
 Queen West
 Picon Marketplace
 Yorkville Shopping Centre
 Hill Roadway Centre
 Yonge-Eglinton Centre
 Shops at Don Mills
 11 Dundas St E
 Eaton Centre
 College Park Shops
 Center Point Mall
 Eglinton & Ossington
 Jane & Sheppard Mall
 Dufferin Mall
 950 Allison Rd
 Midland & Danforth
 404 Finchview Blvd
 Shoppers World Danforth
 1632 Jane St
 2649 Weston Rd
 Finch & Weston
 Parkside
 1 Thorncliffe Park Dr

VAUGHAN
 Oakview Shopping Centre

WILLOWDALE
 Woodbine Square

WILLOWDALE
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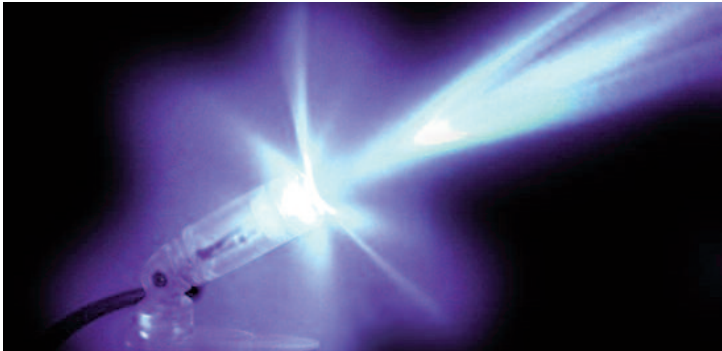
WILLOWDALE
 Woodbine Square

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Info Goulash

THE LARGEST LASER IN EUROPE WILL BE CONSTRUCTED IN PRAGUE

Czech scientists are about to launch their greatest project yet – the construction of Extreme Light Infrastructure – ELI. The biggest research laser facility will be built on the site of a dilapidated cowshed in the village of Dolni Cernosice, near Prague. The laser, which will be as big as an airport hall, will be used not only Czech physicists but by experts all over the world as well. The purpose of the laser is aptly expressed in the motto of the project: ELI = “from cancer treatment research to astrophysics”



www.czech.cz/en/104678-the-largest-laser-in-europe-will-be-constructed-near-prague

170TH ANNIVERSARY OF ANTONIN DVORAK'S BIRTH

The famous composer Antonin Dvorak is ranked among the most outstanding personalities of the Czech nation. He is the most celebrated Czech composer and also the most frequently interpreted. Antonin Dvorak, along with Bedrich Smetana, is the founder of modern Czech symphonic, chamber and opera music.

www.czech.cz/en/104879-170th-anniversary-of-antonin-dvorak's-birth



CZECH STUDENTS GAIN AWARDS AT SCIENCE COMPETITIONS

Czech students have achieved roaring success at two world science competitions. A team of students from the Czech Technical University in Prague won the NYC contest called Next Idea. The second success belongs to a high school student from Letohrad (Usti nad Orlici district) who won one of the four grand awards in the I – SWEEEP international young scientist competition in the US

www.czech.cz/en/104651-czech-students-gain-awards-at-science-competitions-all-around-the-world



Czech Republic Travel Tips for September 2011

43RD YEAR OF OLOMOUC INTERNATIONAL ORGAN FESTIVAL
05/09/2011 - 19/09/2011

The Olomouc International Organ Festival takes place every September in the Church of St. Maurice in Olomouc on one of the largest organs in the Czech Republic. A number of renowned artists
www.mfo.cz/varfest_en.html



PALAVA WINE FESTIVAL
09/09/2011 - 11/09/2011

This South Moravian town has kept the tradition of vine harvests for over two centuries. Visitors to this festival can enjoy the historic parade, folklore performances, crafts fair, and concerts by stars from the Czech music scene. Of course, there will be plenty of young stum wine and tents with culinary specialties.
www.mikulov.cz



TABOR GATHERINGS
09/09/2011 - 11/09/2011

Do you enjoy a medieval atmosphere? Then be sure to come to Tabor for the 20th year of this international historic festival. The town comes to life for three days with ancient history, parades, fireworks, medieval markets, and plenty of sword fighting and jousting.
www.tabor.cz



EUROPEAN HERITAGE DAYS
10/09/2011 - 18/09/2011

Over two days see the most interesting sights, buildings and premises, including many not normally accessible or only partially accessible, opened up to the general public.
www.shscms.cz/ehd/en/

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Czech Republic Travel Tips *(continued from pg. 8)*

15TH KARLSTEJN WINE FESTIVAL 24/09/2011 - 25/09/2011
Historic wine festival in the presence of the Holy Roman Emperor and Bohemian King Charles IV and his court. Visitors may expect a rich programme set in medieval times, wine tasting, specialised cuisine, knight tournaments, performances by magicians, and other surprises.
www.hradkarlstejn.cz

NATO DAYS IN OSTRAVA 24/09/2011 - 25/09/2011
This is the largest air/military/security show in Central Europe. Ostrava will host a display of heavy military, police, and rescue technology, dynamic demonstrations of special unit training, and air demonstrations. Munitions, equipment, and accessories for special units will also be presented.
www.dny-nato.cz/



For more information visit www.czech.cz , www.czechtourism.com or www.tipsfortrips.cz

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