

## Collecting Gone Bad is NOT Hoarding!

by Connie Sue Davenport

In the late 1970's I met an antique dealer named Donna in Lima, Ohio, while buying antiques with my Mother, to sell from our shop in Madison, Tennessee. Donna sold antiques from her home. Although it always required many calls and drive-bys to connect with Donna, the challenge was well worth the trouble. Her yard was strewn with quirky statues, antique tools, whimsies and plastic flowers.

Mother was so self-assured when buying. She and Donna had a mutually respectful relationship. She would name a price and Mother would hesitate, or use her clever, diversionary tactic of requesting something else. They would flit about the house like this for an hour or so, then settle in to consummate the final deal.

Meanwhile I moved about the 1930's era house. There were probably paths at one time, but years of acquisitions had obliterated them. Stepping over the knee-high piles was now the only way through the rooms, so agility was a factor.

There was order. Donna had departments, in a way. A pile may have only LIFE magazines, or a Victorian settee may hold only vintage linens. Nothing was priced. Recent buys were on the top.

Dingy Donna, as we lovingly called her, lived in the back portion of the house. It is so cold in northern Ohio that people tend to select a smaller space within a big house to heat in the winter. Donna never moved out in the spring. The other rooms were full.

Donna was a rather private person. Heavy drapery always covered the windows. The dishes from a recent meal were left for the cats to finish. She had a mystical look of the dark side about her. She had long, curly hair dyed black and corralled by an antique barrette. It was obvious she preferred being the first one at the sale over morning hygiene. But we always bought a load of fine antiques to fill our van. Over the years, we must have made 30 – 40 trips.

So was she a hoarder? Nope, she had just discovered a way to make a living. Even before we were granted entry into her house/shop, we were anticipating all the fabulous finds. She knew where everything was and she knew what she had paid for every item.

Many of my clients are the children of collectors, or collectors themselves. They ultimately inherit their parents' things and try to assimilate them into their already full homes. When invited, I price hundreds of items so that they can distribute things to their future heirs, or sell, donate, and even discard. These people are not hoarders. They simply live amid the end result of too much stuff.

I've been in the homes of honest to goodness hoarders, by request of the heirs. The house is easy to spot on the street because it has a huge dumpster in the driveway and a for sale sign in the yard. It usually takes two to three visits to price all the items worth selling. There are layers of things. Antiques that were bought in the 1970's are piled and stored with take-out food packaging. An envelope of cash can be wrapped in soiled laundry, and then stuffed into a basket of unfinished needlework.

But excavate and extricate we must, so the house can be sold, and the families can move on. The heirs finally realize why this family member hasn't hosted guests in a while. There is nowhere to sit, nothing clean to eat from, and guilty purchases are piled in every space. But respectfully, I always work with the family and do my best to quickly resolve their situation.

## Antelope Antiques and Czech

by Amy Lagler

When we re-opened our antique store in downtown Ann Arbor two years ago, one of the first things we did was to figure out how to place a showcase full of Czech glass and pottery in a visible location right inside the door. We still remember how we felt 15 years ago when we first saw Joe Mattis' booth full of Czech glass at Mount Dora (and bought our first piece of Czech glass from him). We knew that just as we were drawn into that booth, the colorful glass would help draw customers into our shop. And it does. Every week we have customers come in and admire the Czech glass and pottery that we have for sale. An even more effective way to draw people into the shop is to put one of the bright Ditmar Urbach Toucan pitchers in the window. Everyone loves those. The questions we often get asked though are "Do they buy?" and "Are they Czech collectors?" The answer is yes and no.



Toucan Pitcher

Sold for \$295

First, we should note that while we have been dealing in and collecting Czech glass and pottery for 15 years, we are general antique dealers. Our shop is an old time mom and pop shop with everything from coins and stamps to pocket knives, furniture, jewelry, books and postcards. Czech items make up a VERY small percentage of our inventory and our sales. Our location, on a busy street in downtown Ann Arbor, also is somewhat unusual and it means we have a different clientele than many antique shops. Our customers range in age from 4 years old to 94 years old but the average age of our shoppers is probably in the late twenties. This may be unusual for an antique shop but our proximity to U of M and our varied inventory attracts a large number of students and younger people. They buy a range of items but typically not art glass and pottery (American or European).

So who is buying the Czech glass and pottery in the shop? They are typically older (than student age) individuals who fall in love with a particular piece because of the vibrant colors or the fabulous patterns and shapes. Other buyers collect something specific, like chickens or dogs, or they love birds, and so they buy a piece of Czech without even noticing it is marked. The vast majority of our Czech buyers are not Czech collectors (at least not yet!). In fact, in the two years since we opened in this location, we have only had 3 Czech collectors (that we know of) in the shop. In spite of this we usually sell a few pieces of Czech every month in the store. Although we have a large collection of Amphora for sale and a number of beautiful glass pieces, they rarely sell in the shop. Instead, our local buyers opt for the smaller whimsical pottery items, the floral hand-painted pitchers, PAI, or the ever popular bird wall-pockets and bud vases.



Sold for \$35



We do sell to Czech collectors but almost all of these sales are through our web site ([www.antelopeantiques.com](http://www.antelopeantiques.com)). Czech glass and pottery are the only items we specifically feature and sell on our site and we try to keep our entire Czech inventory photographed and up for sale online. I must confess that I don't particularly enjoy updating our website but we sell far more Czech items online than in the shop so I force myself to do it. Featuring our Czech glass and pottery online also generates a lot of calls from people with Czech items to sell and this is the primary way we restock our Czech inventory. If we are really lucky, they offer us something that we personally collect (like Amphora wall pockets with birds on them!) More often, they have a collection of Czech items they inherited and want to sell. Sometimes these collections are small, under a dozen pieces, but they can also be quite large. In the last four months we have had calls from 3 different people looking to sell very large collections (over 700 pieces each). Unfortunately, two of these calls were from people located in other states and it is almost impossible to buy collections this large long distance as the shipping is prohibitive. We are working to buy the one large collection that is here in Michigan, as well as a smaller (200 piece) collection located in Chicago. We hope to have this inventory with us at the Czech convention this year.



Bought for \$150 for our own collection

As far as our online sales, almost all of them are to Czech collectors and, like many of us, they collect multiple things and often buy more than one item. Most recently, we sold a Czech Toucan Pitcher, a black floral hand-painted vase, and a small parrot pitcher to a collector in New Mexico. She, like most of our online buyers, was not a member of CCA. All of these customers, both in the shop and online, are potential new members for CCA so we always take the time to describe the club, give them fliers, and direct them to the CCA web site. We hope that some of them follow through and at least check CCA out. Our biggest outlet to Czech collectors is, of course, the Czech Convention. We have set-up at almost all the conventions and are planning to set-up at Indianapolis. Convention goers always come ready to buy and add something new to their collections. We hope to see you there!



Sold for \$65



Sold for \$45

**"Update!** We did purchase both Czech collections and now have 800 new pieces of Czech pottery to sort through and sell. Because of the sheer volume of pieces I will not be able to get them all online right away so your first chance to buy most of them will be at the Convention!"



## Children's Dishes

by Eleanor Harris

Like many of you who are members of the Czechoslovakian Collectors Association, I have been avidly collecting Czech pottery for many years, fourteen years to be exact.

Besides this colorful pottery, I also collect children's pottery dishes, which came in sets. Sets usually consisted of 15 pieces: a tall slender teapot with a long spout (it measured 4 3/4" tall including lid), a tall slender creamer, a sugar with lid and round handles, 6 cups and saucers, and 6 bread and butter plates, which varied in size from 4 3/4" to 5 3/4" in diameter. A sample of the bread and butter plates is shown below. (Fig. 1).



Fig 1

Of the several patterns that I have found, the most common is the "Rooster" pattern (Fig. 2 - left side shelf 5) Another fairly common one is the "House, Tree, and Bird" pattern (Fig. 2 - right side of shelf 5).

The rarest, as far as my collection is concerned, is the "Swan" pattern which comes in two colors of background; a very dark brown and an ecru color. (Fig. 2 - middle and right side of shelf 3).

Another set, with different shapes, is the "Three Legged Dog" (Fig. 2 - left side of shelf 3). The contrast is clearly visible – a squat teapot with short spout (it is 3 1/2" tall), a squat creamer and sugar, both of which have pointed handles. All of these sets are signed "Czechoslovakia" or "Cecho Slov".

I also found a rather unique set, produced in Japan, which has a "Rooster" pattern but made on the shapes of the "three legged dog". It too is a complete set, which comprises teapot, creamer, sugar, 6 cups and saucers, and 6 bread and butter plates. (Fig. 2 - shelf 4) There is also a non-patterned plain dark brown set on shelf 4 as well.



Also on the right side of shelf 4 is a small collection of Native Indian Six Nation, Ontario, pieces of a children's set in a mottled brown color.



Fig 2

Finally in the same cupboard, shelves 1 and 2, there is a collection of Posset cups. Some are stamped "Austria", and some "PAW"; however most just have plain unglazed, unsigned bottoms. They are unique with recessed "circles" and carvings.



There are several other pieces, which are hard to find but add interest to the collection. These are vegetable dishes, soup tureens, square and round bowls, etc. (Fig. 3).



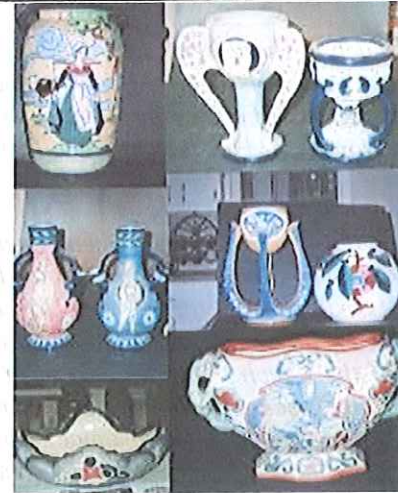
Mrazek made another wonderful set. The teapot is 5 1/2" tall and of a very different shape. Each and every piece is stamped "Peasant Art Industries made in Czechoslovakia" with the "Blue Bird" logo on the underside. (Fig. 4)

Once hooked, it doesn't take long to enjoy and appreciate the fun in collecting these magnificent children's dishes.

Happy hunting!!!



**Magnificent Contribution –  
A Room Full of Treasures –  
The Ottervik Collection**



**by Effie Rosene, Chair/CEO  
Czech Center Museum Houston**

Eric and Barbara Ottervik of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, visited our gift shop store in Northwest Mall. (We just celebrated five years in our new building.) They were in town visiting their daughter and family. The daughter is an executive with the Museum of Fine Arts Houston.

Some time ensued with several visits, but the last time bringing pictures representative of their collection and indicated it was to be a gift to the Czech Center Museum Houston. The pictures displayed some 692 pieces! In order to acquire the collection it had to be transported to Houston so we ask several moving companies in Bethlehem to assess the collection and estimate the cost of packing and shipping telling them we thought it was the number of pieces displayed in the pictures. Eric advised us the actual number was 1200!

The following is their story told by Barbara Ottervik: *“Simpý put, Eric Ottervik fell in love. Not just with his bride-to-be, Barbara Špatná, but with her family and all things Czech. Most importantly, he fell in love with helping Barbara get further in touch with her heritage and her roots.*

*Barbara, a full-blooded Czech and first generation American growing up in Queens, New York (home to many Czechs and Slovaks as well as the “Bohemian Hall and Beer Garden”, and perhaps the last remaining Czech restaurants in New York City - “Zlata Praha”), grew up speaking Czech as her first language, yet never really appreciated her heritage until she met her aunt and uncle from Prague for the first time in 1981. It was a pivotal moment for her and was followed by her first trip abroad in 1982 to spend a month in what was then Czechoslovakia. At that point, she was hooked.*

*Eric and Barbara met in 1985, married in 1987, and in 1988 took their first trip together to what was still communist Czechoslovakia. Eric was into his “music phase” and collected as much Czech classical music as possible on that first trip to Prague – so much so that they had to pay \$72 duty to leave the country with all the records! Returning home, there was no turning back: He was as much in love with his new country as he was with his wife. And then the fun began. Together, Barbara and Eric, started scouring flea markets, antique shows and emporiums, looking for “all things Czech” from the time period 1918 to 1938 when the country was independent. And thus began the collection. An end-of-day vase, a belt buckle, a piece of Amphora, perfume bottles, candlesticks...pottery, glass, porcelain...a vast and varied collection, not just quality, but also representing all facets of the items that had been exported at the time.*



*Much of these items, created solely for export during the period of 1918 to 1938, were actually never available (or seen) in Czechoslovakia. And all were marked (or "signed" as the expression goes), with some sort of etched or stamped marking. In fact, when Barbara's relative saw the collection, they were astonished. The items were unlike anything they had seen in their youth or since.*

*Fifteen years later, when their daughter Kathleen Ottervik Jameson returned to Houston (she is now Assistant Director of the Houston Museum of Fine Arts), the family stumbled upon the original "outpost" of the Czech Cultural Center in a strip mall and met Effie Rosene, the effervescent darling of Czech culture! Again, it was happenstance...collectors and lovers of all things Czech...Barbara and Eric were always looking to expand their collection and meet new people. Of course, Barbara had to buy a necklace from the gift shop offerings!*



**David Whitehead and Effie Rosene**

*Barbara and Eric had always thought that their collection of over 1200 pieces of glass, china, and pottery was "museum quality" and especially worth sharing with the others; particularly because for native Czechs, these items were unknown, and for "transplanted" Czechs, the collection was all encompassing and brought a whole new art form to the world and the Czech culture.*

*And so, they started to look for the perfect place to donate their collection. They were keen on finding people as passionate about their heritage and sharing that heritage with the rest of the world. And during all this time, Bill and Effie Rosene were seeking to do the same, establishing the Czech Cultural Center to celebrate, share and promote the rich cultural abundance of a major Slavic ethnic group and their history. There was no doubt in Barbara and Eric's minds, that these folks were as committed to the preservation of history as they were. And so began conversations on the potential donation of their lifetime collection. The rest, as they say, is history."*

Effie and Bill Rosene visited the Otterviks and the collection in situ, spent two nights and one glorious day with them (great folks, great hospitality) at their beautiful home in Bethlehem, a beautiful city. Eric (a PhD) is a retired administrator of Lehigh University and Barbara was an executive with a publishing company. They have amassed seven or eight collections, one a very impressive collection of Japanese prints (some are being sold at auction), a collection that the Asia Society would probably love to have.

David Whitehead, a certified appraiser has examined each piece for insurance purposes. CCMH will acquire appropriate display cases and compile a catalogue. In amassing their collection the Otterviks insisted each piece have a distinctive mark attesting to its origin and provenance during the First Republic 1918 to 1938.

Glassware made in Czechoslovakia for the twenty year period 1918 to 1938 between the two world wars with addenda of Pottery, Porcelain and Semi-Porcelain comprises the collection.

The Czechs and the Slovaks settled in Bohemia centuries ago. On October 28, 1918, they were set free of the Austria Hungary domination of 600 years and granted a country of their own called Czechoslovakia, its first president Tomas Masaryk.



The same glass artisans who made Bohemian, Moser and Austrian glass came forth with a portrayal of color in glassware which brightened the gloom of even the Great Depression of the 30's.

The glass of Czechoslovakia is blown, molded and cut in the many forms of vases, perfume bottles, water sets, boxes, lamps, baskets, etc.

The Czechoslovakians created great beauty with the skillful use of beads, flowers, dancing girls, birds etc., in vivid colors and icy crystal. It is known and revered in the world. The Art Deco influence is quite prominent since this was the period when Art Deco was popular. Also, the Egyptian influence prevailed because of the opening of Tutankhamen's Tomb 1922-23.



Most pieces are marked. The mark is usually found on the bottom. Occasionally the mark can be found on the side. Types of marks are: Acid Etched, Ink Stamped, molded, Stamped in metal and small metal name plates. The type of mark is of little importance. However, it is of great importance to collectors that the piece be marked.

The Czechoslovakian glass of later date has a paper sticker. Printed on the sticker usually is "Bohemian Glass Made in Czechoslovakia."

*Ed: The CCMH is quite overwhelmed by the Otterviks generosity of this magnificent gift. Until this collection is displayed, for reference view similar items on display in the collection of James and Danna Ermis.*

[www.bohemianhall.com/main\\_body.htm](http://www.bohemianhall.com/main_body.htm)

[www.zlatapraha.cc/main.htm](http://www.zlatapraha.cc/main.htm),

**9 February 2010:** The Grand Collection: February 2010 was to have been our Grand Unveiling of CCMH's (Czech Center Museum Houston) incredible Ottervik Collection of Czech art glass, pottery, crystal, some 1289 pieces made between the two world wars 1918 – 1938 until Hitler blew up the production facilities in Moravia's Znojmo region and elsewhere. The holdup is due to the city's inspection interrupting our third floor AC installation for need of a new set of plans because it's considered a new project although it was built five years ago as the third floor of our building at which time we didn't have the funds to build out!!! But stay tuned. That Unveiling is coming! Regards, Effie Rosene

**Update:** ..is ready to be viewed at the Czech Center Museum Houston . They are open Monday thru Saturday 10:00AM to 4:00 PM. The whole collection is 1289 pieces of pottery, art glass and crystal made between 1918 and 1938 in the Moravian Znojmo region glassworks and other areas. Call ahead to make arrangements to see the collection.



## 'Twas a Convention in Indy

by  
Tom Rood  
Shelbyville, IL

*An adaptation of the famous Christmas poem  
'Twas the Night Before Christmas  
featuring **Dave Phelps** as Santa*

'Twas a weekend in June,  
Drive on in; what the heck.  
See old friends and meet new,  
They're all collectors of Czech.

Registration is easy.  
Put your check in the mail.  
The committee worked hard,  
And I'm sure they won't fail.

The members have all wintered  
In cities hot, cold, and windy.  
They're anxiously awaiting  
The convention in Indy.

Many people worked hard  
Putting this event altogether.  
At the beginning of summer...  
We'll have beautiful weather.

When out in your mailbox  
There arose such a clatter.  
Your club packet's arrived  
With great printed matter.

Away to the couch  
You fly like a flash.  
Rip open the package  
And start counting your cash!

The dealers will be ready.  
Their Czech items will glow.  
You're gonna' be sorry  
If you don't pack and go.

And then what to your  
Wondering eyes should appear?  
You're bidding at auction  
To get an item so dear.

There'll be speakers and speeches,  
Not too many, just a few.

And if you're not careful,  
You might learn something new.

More rapid the collectors  
And members they came.  
By the end of the week  
You'll know them all by name.

There's Deborah! And Donna!  
Sandra and Ian are seen.  
Hi Bonnie. Hello Aggie.  
Hey, there's Patti and Gene.

There's editor Jorie.  
We love to read all her words.  
And don't forget David,  
Who's always playing with birds.

As the dealers set up  
Beautiful pieces to sell.  
Will you find that rare vase?  
You never can tell.

They have Czech glass and pottery.  
It's all old -- nothing new.  
There's jewelry and birds,  
Art deco figurines too.

And then it's announced  
While we're all in our seat.  
The banquet's at seven,  
Let's have fun and go eat.

So as you all get in line,  
Keep turning around.  
'Cause here comes Dave Phelps  
In a leap and a bound.

He'll be all gussied up  
From his head to the floor.  
All the members will gasp  
When he walks through the door.



The same glass artisans who made Bohemian, Moser and Austrian glass came forth with a portrayal of color in glassware which brightened the gloom of even the Great Depression of the 30's.

The glass of Czechoslovakia is blown, molded and cut in the many forms of vases, perfume bottles, water sets, boxes, lamps, baskets, etc.

The Czechoslovakians created great beauty with the skillful use of beads, flowers, dancing girls, birds etc., in vivid colors and icy crystal. It is known and revered in the world. The Art Deco influence is quite prominent since this was the period when Art Deco was popular. Also, the Egyptian influence prevailed because of the opening of Tutankhamen's Tomb 1922-23.



Most pieces are marked. The mark is usually found on the bottom. Occasionally the mark can be found on the side. Types of marks are: Acid Etched, Ink Stamped, molded, Stamped in metal and small metal name plates. The type of mark is of little importance. However, it is of great importance to collectors that the piece be marked.

The Czechoslovakian glass of later date has a paper sticker. Printed on the sticker usually is "Bohemian Glass Made in Czechoslovakia."

*Ed: The CCMH is quite overwhelmed by the Otterviks generosity of this magnificent gift. Until this collection is displayed, for reference view similar items on display in the collection of James and Danna Ermis.*

[www.bohemianhall.com/main\\_body.htm](http://www.bohemianhall.com/main_body.htm)

[www.zlatapraha.cc/main.htm](http://www.zlatapraha.cc/main.htm),

**9 February 2010: The Grand Collection:** February 2010 was to have been our Grand Unveiling of CCMH's (Czech Center Museum Houston) incredible Ottervik Collection of Czech art glass, pottery, crystal, some 1289 pieces made between the two world wars 1918 – 1938 until Hitler blew up the production facilities in Moravia's Znojmo region and elsewhere. The holdup is due to the city's inspection interrupting our third floor AC installation for need of a new set of plans because it's considered a new project although it was built five years ago as the third floor of our building at which time we didn't have the funds to build out!!! But stay tuned. That Unveiling is coming! Regards, Effie Rosene

Update: ..is ready to be viewed at the Czech Center Museum Houston . They are open Monday thru Saturday 10:00AM to 4:00 PM. The whole collection is 1289 pieces of pottery, art glass and crystal made between 1918 and 1938 in the Moravian Znojmo region glassworks and other areas. Call ahead to make arrangements to see the collection.



## 'Twas a Convention in Indy

by  
Tom Rood  
Shelbyville, IL

*An adaptation of the famous Christmas poem  
'Twas the Night Before Christmas  
featuring Dave Phelps as Santa*

'Twas a weekend in June,  
Drive on in; what the heck.  
See old friends and meet new,  
They're all collectors of Czech.

Registration is easy.  
Put your check in the mail.  
The committee worked hard,  
And I'm sure they won't fail.

The members have all wintered  
In cities hot, cold, and windy.  
They're anxiously awaiting  
The convention in Indy.

Many people worked hard  
Putting this event altogether.  
At the beginning of summer...  
We'll have beautiful weather.

When out in your mailbox  
There arose such a clatter.  
Your club packet's arrived  
With great printed matter.

Away to the couch  
You fly like a flash.  
Rip open the package  
And start counting your cash!

The dealers will be ready.  
Their Czech items will glow.  
You're gonna' be sorry  
If you don't pack and go.

And then what to your  
Wondering eyes should appear?  
You're bidding at auction  
To get an item so dear.

There'll be speakers and speeches,  
Not too many, just a few.

And if you're not careful,  
You might learn something new.

More rapid the collectors  
And members they came.  
By the end of the week  
You'll know them all by name.

There's Deborah! And Donna!  
Sandra and Ian are seen.  
Hi Bonnie. Hello Aggie.  
Hey, there's Patti and Gene.

There's editor Jorie.  
We love to read all her words.  
And don't forget David,  
Who's always playing with birds.

As the dealers set up  
Beautiful pieces to sell.  
Will you find that rare vase?  
You never can tell.

They have Czech glass and pottery.  
It's all old -- nothing new.  
There's jewelry and birds,  
Art deco figurines too.

And then it's announced  
While we're all in our seat.  
The banquet's at seven,  
Let's have fun and go eat.

So as you all get in line,  
Keep turning around.  
'Cause here comes Dave Phelps  
In a leap and a bound.

He'll be all gussied up  
From his head to the floor.  
All the members will gasp  
When he walks through the door.