

Czechoslovakian Collectors Association



Spring Newsletter
April 2011

Czechoslovakian Perfumes 101

by Rosie Bodien

I started doing Czech genealogy about 1990. Somehow that led me to finding Czech perfumes in antique stores. I bought my first bottle in 1994 in Salem, Oregon while visiting my dad. The bottle is clear, cut glass. The stopper is intaglio, which means a shape is incised into the glass. This stopper had intaglio flowers. Later I learned that the bottle and stopper were a marriage, meaning they did not fit together exactly as an original pair.

My second Czech perfume bottle treasure was a blue glass perfume with a “Tinkerbell” engraved on it. Today it remains one of my favorites.

As I added pieces to my collection, I realized that my interest was in those items made during the “First Republic.”



For centuries glassware was produced in Bohemia. It was exported all over

the world. Czechoslovakia became a country after being under the auspices of the Austrian or the Austro–Hungarian Empire for 300 years. The Thirty Years War started in 1618, with the Bohemians losing to the Austrians at White Mountain in 1621. This was a religious war between Catholicism and Protestantism. Catholicism won, but after a horrible thirty years. After that, glass producers created, but under the direction of the Austrian Empire. For a good review of the glass industry, Robert & Deborah Truitt’s chapter “A History of Bohemian Glass Production,” in their book *Collectible Bohemian Glass 1880 to 1940*, is excellent.

The “First Republic” of Czechoslovakia was formed in 1918. It lasted only from 1918 until 1938 when the miseries of Hitler’s occupation and WWII were thrust upon the new country. During this time, the glass schools educated talented people who designed and made lovely items that are still collectible today.

It took until about 1928 to fully establish exportation of the many glass items. These items went mainly to other countries, the United States being one of them. Some were signed “Made in Czechoslovakia” in a circle, an oval or just the words by themselves. Heinrich Hoffmann pieces have a little molded butterfly on them. Others had old Ingrid, Morlee, or Irice paper labels on them. Not all Irice bottles were made in Czechoslovakia, though —so read that label.

The company DESNA produces bottles using the ORIGINAL OLD MOLDS, which is acceptable. A few of the older producers like Halama still make their own designs. But these are not the collectibles sought after by seasoned collectors who want “First Republic” perfumes. By joining the Czechoslovakian

Collectors Association (czechcollectors.org) or the International Perfume Bottle Association (perfumbottles.org/home.cfm), you can learn the “ins and outs” of Czech perfume bottle collecting. Many of these bottles are sold through internet auction sites, but be careful of reproductions!



Soon I had a beautiful transparent green perfume that

had a pedestal, then I found the rich blue bottles. Then I bought a topaz transparent bottle. The real treasure is the vibrant transparent, red perfume I found. My first opaque bottle was from Seattle's Kusak Cut Glass Works (www.Kusak.com). It was made in the early 1940s, not the original "First Republic" piece, but then I learned how to identify those.

Czech perfume stoppers fit perfectly into the bottle neck. You give the stopper a quarter turn and the stopper will stay in place when turned upside down. BE CAREFUL if you do this, lightly hold on to the stopper to make sure it does not fall out!! Later I also learned that some of these bottles come with a glass rod, or dauber attached to the stopper. My first Czech perfume does not have a dauber, but I love the flowers! Now these clear, cut glass, intaglio perfumes are reasonable in price compared to colored or opaque glass perfumes.

Ruth Forsythe wrote two books (*Made in Czechoslovakia*, Book 1 and Book 2) that showed some of the various pieces. One day I had seen a perfume at an antique store that looked Czech but was not marked. I called Ruth. After I described it, she told me, "Buy it. Some bottles had paper labels that came off over the years (Irice, Morlee) or if they are from a set, only one piece is marked." I value my "perfume" friendship with Ruth Forsythe. She recently passed away, but her books live on helping people collect "Czech."

Soon I learned more about opaque glass bottles that have a marbled look created by Henry Schlevogt, who

was born in 1904 in Jablonec, Bohemia. His father had a glass producing business there. His father-in-law, Heinrich Hoffmann, was a Bohemian contemporary of Lalique. Hoffmann was based in Paris but his items were made in Jablonec and finished by cottage industry there. Both Hoffmann and Schlevogt manufactured items from their own designs and those of famed contemporary artists.*



* Ken Leach. "When Luxury Was a Necessity, Czechoslovakian Bottles in America."

Hoffmann & Schlevogt created colored glass perfumes (opaque malachite, lapis, and other opaque colors) and numerous accessories in clear and opaque colors.

Ruth Forsythe is the pioneer to write about collecting perfumes in her two books. Later Jacquelyn Jones North wrote *Czechoslovakian Perfume Bottles and Boudoir Accessories*. Verna Kochen followed suit with her *Perfume Bottles for Purse and Dresser from Czechoslovakia 1920s – 1930's*. These books are awesome.

If you went to the Czech Republic now, you would find very few of these perfumes and accessories. Some antique stores have a few pieces, but very few!! I know that personally. Instead you will find many colorful reproductions made by some new glass factories. These are fine for remembrances from your trip or gifts for family and friends. If you are serious about collecting the First Republic pieces that bring big prices, beware!!! Some of these glass factories advertise “old” trade names using molds taken from old perfumes.

You can't believe the creativity in the “First Republic” Czechoslovakian perfume bottles.

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HISTORICAL TIME FRAMES OF CZECH & SLOVAK PRODUCTION

Rosie collects perfumes made during the Czechoslovakian First Republic. For most collectors, this needs some explanation. Here is a brief history.

First Republic: 1918-1938. Czechoslovakia was formed after the First World War out of Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia from the Austrian Empire and Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia from the Kingdom of Hungary.

Second Republic: 1938-1939. Czechoslovakia was forced to cede the Sudetenland to Germany.

Czechoslovakia was under German “protection” from 1939 to 1945.

Third Republic: 1945-1948. Czechoslovakia was restored after World War II.

1948-1989: A coup transformed Czechoslovakia into a people's democracy; a puppet state of the Soviet Union. This would have been the **Fourth Republic**, but it's not called that. In 1960, the country's name was changed to the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic.

1989-1992: After the fall of the Berlin Wall, the country was known as the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic; they enjoyed the Velvet Revolution and this would have been the **Fifth Republic**.

1993: Czech Republic and Slovak Republic separated. This is the **Sixth Republic** but not called that.

Treasurer's Report as of 1/31/11.

As of January 31, 2011 the balance in the CCA checking account was \$15,828.84. Dues for the next membership/budget year --- 3/1/11 thru 2/28/12 --- have been coming in since the beginning of January.

As of January 31, 2011, income is 5.77% more than budgeted. Total budgeted income was \$11,790 with actual of \$12,470. Total budgeted expenses were \$11,130 with actual expenses of \$9,155.66. This represents 82.26% of the budget. With just one more month in the current financial year (03/01/10 thru 02/28/11), it appears there will be a surplus in excess of the \$660 that was built into the budget. The actual numbers will be available when the year is closed.

I am in the process of developing the budget for the next financial year with input and recommendations from your Board of Directors. The first draft of the budget was presented at the Board meeting via conference call on March 15, and, barring any unforeseen problems, the final budget should be approved at the meeting (via conference call) in April.

At the February 22 conference call meeting, your Board of Directors unanimously agreed to move forward with resolving the issues dealing with the IRS status. Barry Handwerger of the Pennsylvania law firm Zimmerman, Pfannebecker, Nuffort & Albert will be handling all the work. In a nutshell, his recommendation is to form a new not-for-profit corporation and merge the existing corporation with the new entity. At this point in time we don't know if there will be questions that the IRS might raise. Mr. Handwerger is both an attorney and a CPA and we are confident that he will be able to see us through to a resolution. The estimated cost for the legal work that must be done is approximately \$2,000.

Respectfully Submitted,
Aggie Elwell, CCA Treasurer

What is it?

This item has been described as:

- Portable communion set (there is no place for wafers).
- Ladies' liquer set.
- Liquer set for greeting guests.

Does anyone have any experience using one of these?

Does anyone have a catalog, photograph, or other source explaining what this "egg" is?

Email: Debbie at ccatruitt@sbcglobal.net



Identifying Unusual Mrazek Pottery

by David Phelps

Most collectors will say they enjoy seeing other people's collections as much as their own (perhaps with a little envy). I had such an opportunity a few weeks ago while I was visiting Member Willie Luse. He told me he had a new bird that I would want to see. After spending some time admiring his collection, he brought out the piece shown in Picture 1.



It is an off-white piece about 10 inches tall with a blue-green interior and bottom. He was wondering if I could tell him about the mark on the bottom shown in Picture 2. Since the mark is simply "Made in Czechoslovakia." and "920.", it does not give any clues to the maker.



Since there are so many different manufacturers of Czech pottery, what is there about this piece that may identify the origin? I noticed three very distinctive characteristics that lead me to believe this is an unusual piece of Mrazek pottery or PAI (Peasant Art Industries). [One of the reasons I have always liked PAI is that nearly all pieces are marked, making identification easy. Obviously not all ... though.]

The first subtle clue is the mold number. Handwritten numbers are very characteristic of PAI. The majority of pieces have mold numbers and all are handwritten.

The second clue is the design in the band around the middle. This band appears on a piece I own, shown in Picture 3. While the band appears to be metal, it is part of the pottery. The design is nearly identical. This is too coincidental in my opinion to be copied by another maker. In addition, it is an unusual piece, not likely to be



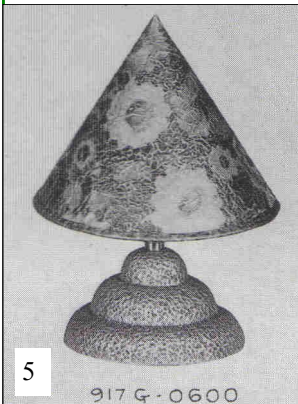
reproduced. Patti Ferguson also has a similar piece that has a slightly different design in the band, but the background is the same.

Finally, the color of the inside and bottom paint is the same as that found on the inside of some “P” pieces and is the color of the DG pattern shown in Picture 4. It is a thick paint used to cover the surface entirely. It is not a color or consistency I have seen on Czech pieces other than PAI.



These three clues convince me this is Mrazek. Even so, since it is not marked, is it really? After all, Czech pottery has been copied by other countries. The quality and “feel” of this piece tell me it is PAI.

There is only one way to know for sure and that is to find this piece with the Mrazek mark. For more information, I contacted Robert Mrazek (grandson of the founder) for his thoughts. To my delight, he said he has similar pieces in the family collection, also confirmed by his brother, who has a similar piece that is marked. [I hope he brings a piece like this to the convention in Syracuse where he is scheduled to speak and show other family pieces. Don’t forget to mark your calendars for June 2-5!]



My final thought on this piece is whether it could be the elusive “G” pattern (Picture 5). To my knowledge, no marked piece has surfaced. The picture shown comes from the original PAI catalog. The texture is very similar, however, again, until we find a marked piece, who knows? If anyone has a piece similar to this one or one marked “G”, please let me know.



In case you were wondering, the bird that caught my eye was not the one he thought it would be. He showed me the unusual Royal Dux bird pictured in Picture 6. It is one I had not seen before, but not one I collect.



The bird that I did like was the Bird on an Ear of Corn with the red dime mark (Picture 7). His example is a different size than mine, so I can now document that that particular bird comes in at least two sizes.

Q

Q: I just bought a 1930s Czech vase that says "Made in Czechoslovakia" and "Celebrate" on the bottom. Can you tell me anything about the Celebrate company? I'm looking on the Web and can only find references to it.



&

A: The vase you have is pottery. It was produced in the 1930s. Celebrate was not the company that made the piece but rather the importing company that bought the piece to sell. It was a very common custom for companies to mark pieces for the importers if they bought a large number of lots. This pattern came in 4 different colors and many different molds. I hope this helps.

A

David Fein, South Beach Antiques

Q: I have four Czech Republic glass musicians that may or may not be done by Jaroslav Brychta. I live near Syracuse, NY. Is there any place you could recommend I go to, to see if they are hers or exactly what they are and if there is any value to them? Any help would be appreciated.

A: As with most Bohemian glass, it's a long story to explain how I know that these figurines were not physically made by Jaroslav Brychta himself. However, Brychta was the person who designed this style of figurine and taught students at the Secondary School of Glass Studies in Železný Brod to make them.



The Železný Brod School was founded in 1925 and Brychta was one of the professors during the early years. In the 1930s, he worked with the glassmakers at the furnaces at the Harrachov glassworks to create the "hutni" figures (such as yours) - at this time, the school did not have a furnace. Brychta designed figures to use in his classes as models for his students. Then the students used this knowledge to design additional figurines for the companies where they were employed.

In 1948, the Železnobrodské Sklo glassworks was founded in Železný Brod (its label is ŽBS). One of its products was figurines. I have copies of a selection of sales catalogs from the 1950s through 2000. These figurines are distinctive because of the glass base. There are series of figurines based on Shakespeare and Dickens, folk heroes, sailors, musicians, clowns, doctors.

The pieces that you have are from 2 different series. Notice that the base of one of the musicians is green, while the other 3 are white. The cello player is one of a series of 5 musicians wearing black pants, red vests and black bowler hats (pictured in a sales flyer from Nunnally International Trade, 1994. Nunnally bought from ŽBS). I didn't find the other 3 in any of the reference materials that I have. They are, however, of the same style. All are production pieces, as opposed to one-of-a-kind.

Jaroslav Brychta died in 1971. His daughter, Jaroslava Brychtová, married to Stanislav Libensky, produced studio art glass, among other things. She was not involved in making figurines. The items that Brychta, himself, made are most likely retained by the family or by the school - some are probably in the glass museum in Železný Brod. So, while Brychta started the technique of "hutni" figurines, it was his students who designed most of the ones that went into production. Typically the company did not identify the workers with their products - it was a business.

Debbie Truitt, Glass Concepts

2011 Publicity Report

Building on the list of organizations that was developed last year, CCA information was sent to them, along with membership forms and a press release for the show. A list of antique magazines and journals was put together and the press release for the convention was sent to each. The press release is generally published closer to show time.

Any time a Member sees an auction where Czech items are being featured, please contact me so flyers/membership forms can be sent. Members are also encouraged to distribute the membership forms and flyers at antique shows. These can be printed off the website or let me know if you need some.

Flyers for the convention will be sent to malls in the Syracuse area for display. A flyer has already been sent to Members electronically with the hope you will print it and post it in antique malls and other places where potential new members or those interested in the convention might be found.

I recently came across a newer antique site ([iantique.com](http://www.iantique.com)) that has a large number of collectors with very diverse interests. Joining is free. You can advertise to buy and sell, but better, you can establish groups and advertise events. I'm going to try to stir up some interest, so you might want to try the link: <http://www.iantique.com/home.php>.

The Czech Cultural Center in Houston had a nice article regarding CCA in its winter newsletter, written by Member Sally Teresinski. If anyone else is a member of a local or regional organization, you are encouraged to write a brief article for them to publicize the club and show.

The June 2010 issue of *Naše rodina* featured articles about Czechoslovakian glass. Member Rosie Bodien had two articles published: "Made in Czechoslovakia" and "Czechoslovakian Perfumes 101."

The only other article I know of that was published by Members since the last convention was a repeat of my article on Czech birds with the Red Dime mark that was published in the *Journal of Antiques and Collectibles* in August.

Writing an article on your favorite collecting area is easy and fun, and magazines are always looking for articles. This is a great way to give CCA and the convention a little boost in advertising. Be sure to let me know and if possible send me a copy for our archives.

Respectfully submitted,

David Phelps, Publicity Director

CCA CONVENTION 2011

CCA's 2011 convention offers another opportunity for Members to learn about the ABCs, add to their collections, share information and stories, and socialize with others with the same passion. Some of the program events are unique.

The convention is being held at the Maplewood Inn, outside Syracuse NY. Members will start gathering on Thursday afternoon, June 2 for a Members Only opportunity to purchase at the dealers' booths before they are opened to the public on Saturday. Old and new friends can then go to dinner at the selected restaurant, or on their own.

Friday entails a bus trip to Corning NY for a day at the Corning Museum of Glass and Rakow Library. Look at the website: www.cmog.org for information about the Museum. During the bus ride, the Board will hold the Annual Member Meeting.

In addition to exploring the glass collections on your own, CCA has arranged for knowledgeable docents to guide groups of approximately 20 through the Museum and for library staff to provide tours through the library collections.

Czech studio glass artist Martin Rosol will demonstrate his techniques for making his sparkling geometric glass sculptures. See website: www.rosolglass.com. Martin is teaching a 1-week class at The Studio and will take time from this to talk with CCA members.



Wing.



Nautilus.



For those Members who wish to make a piece of glass, The Studio is offering glassmaking activities at group rates (if we have 10 Members for an activity). You can sign up for flameworking, forming, or fusing glass which requires overnight annealing; or for sandblasting which results in a piece you can take with you immediately. [Information about these opportunities is in the Registration Package on the CCA website: czechcollectors.org.]

The key event on Saturday June 4 will be the presentation of Robert Mrazek: "The Art Pottery of Joseph Mrazek." Robert is the grandson of Joseph Mrazek who founded Peasant Art Industries. He will speak about both the history of his grandfather and the history of the pottery he made. He will bring examples of pottery from his family collection and you also are encouraged to bring pieces to show. After his talk, Robert will sell and sign copies of his book of the same title.

Saturday afternoon at the convention features mini-seminars in the dealers' and exhibitors' booths. Typically these mini-seminars focus on examples of glass, pottery, or jewelry in the booths; this allows you to make comparisons, see features that you have only heard about, and informally ask questions. A schedule of these mini-sessions will be available at Registration.



Mrazek ceramics.

Convention 2011 closes with the Banquet. Surprising things happen at these banquets: sometimes there's poetry— sometimes a game ... It's a chance to meet Members you haven't met previously; it's a time of fun; and it's the time to say fare-well to friends you won't see for another year.

Sunday morning provides one more chance to focus on the future of the organization—the Planning Breakfast for the 2012 Convention. Those who can, meet for breakfast and talk about what went well at the 2011 convention and what should have been done better. Then plans for 2012 are discussed.

More details and the registration form can be found on CCA's website: czechcollectors.org.

How did it get here?

What do you do if you have an idea for a glass sculpture and can't make it yourself? Carol Klapper went to Bohemia.

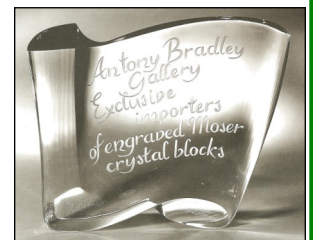
It was the 1970s. Carol owned a gallery (Antony-Bradley Gallery), but it was through her uncle's contacts as owner of Toscani Imports that she was able to meet with the engravers at the Moser firm in Karlovy Vary, Czechoslovakia.

Carol had the idea to create blocks of clear glass and engrave them with appealing motifs. She took this idea to Designer, Luboš Metelák, who was receptive.

Over the next few years, Metelák designed several limited-edition blocks based on Carol's concepts. Some Metelák engraved himself and some were engraved by Ivan Chalupka.

Carol imported and sold the blocks in her gallery, some to famous people, one to the Corning Museum of Glass. The gallery is now closed, but Carol still has a collection of blocks with Metelák or Chalupka signatures and Moser stamps, along with the original design drawings, certificates of authenticity, and the original boxes.

These blocks have fond memories for Carol. And, as with many collectors, she is often asked if she would sell them. Her reply: Selling these used to be my business. Now, I could bear to part with only one or two of them.



CCA is Critical !

CCA has been functioning this past year without anyone in the Board position of Secretary. This is in violation of CCA By-Laws which form the basis of the organization being incorporated.

CCA is a membership organization. It is Members who do all the work—there is no paid staff.

Current Board Members have asked individual Members to serve as Secretary and not found anyone to agree.

The core of the Secretary position is to serve on the Board as a policy-maker, take minutes of Board and Annual Member Meetings, and provide general communications. The CCA Newsletter falls under the Secretary's statement of duties; however, if no one volunteers to create the Newsletter, none will be produced.

The corporation cannot continue to exist without the interest of the Members sufficient to fill all Board positions.

So !! Who will step up and serve in the Secretary position? Just contact one of the current Board Members.

President's Report

My term is not quite over. There's still all the planning for the convention in June, the Membership Directory to produce, and the balloting to be done. But I am already looking ahead to being a Member instead of a Board Member.

I've been a Member of CCA (including it's antecedent CCGI) since 1995. I have learned a lot about the ABCs through the Journals, Newsletters and conventions. I have made a number of friends who share my passion for the ABCs. I have bought (what I consider) wonderful pieces of glass for my collection at the auctions and from the dealers. I will continue to take advantage of these mission-fulfilling opportunities in the future.

I have seen a lot of effective people take leadership roles. However I have also seen the membership decline over the years and don't fully understand why. I know that Members have different outside commitments. I could not serve in a leadership role while Bob was sick. But the time came when I could.

I thank those who encouraged and worked with me over the past two years. I will remember this always.

To the new Board: best wishes as you lead CCA forward.

Debbie