

**Pavučina Corner – By Tony Kadlec**

**LOUIS MEYER: WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?**

The popular ancestry research show "Who Do You Think You Are?" (Friday evenings, 7pm, on ABC) traces the family trees of celebrities and jets you around the world to interesting places to explore and document the back stories of their mysterious ancestors. Produced by a team of highly paid genealogy research professionals with healthy travel budgets, the resulting family connections are presented neatly and effortlessly over the course of a one hour show.

But how does the solution of a genealogy riddle come about in real life? Here is the story of how an all-volunteer genealogy interest/research organization solved a 'Who Do You Think You Are' type of mystery for a regular person, Mr. Louis Meyer, of Lincoln, Nebraska. Perhaps more importantly, it shows that it is never too late for you to be interested in your own family history.

**91-YEAR OLD LINCOLN MAN TRACES CZECH HERITAGE**

BY JORDAN PASCALE,

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Louis Meyer, 91, always wanted to know exactly where his grandfather came from.

He knew this much: His grandfather was born in 1853 in northwest Bohemia near a town called Karlovy Vary in the present-day Czech Republic.

At 16, Meyer came to America.

He has been looking for answers for years, but after he wrote a letter to the Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International (CGSI) seeking assistance, he found out a lot more.

Volunteers at the CGSI scoured through books, libraries, maps and the Internet searching for Meyer's grandfather's hometown.

Why all the hassle?

"It (the village) is where the past really starts," Meyer said. "It's the only way you can trace your generations back and find out the different influences on your forbears."

He found the answer he was looking for: Schüttiber - a village of 61 houses and 631 inhabitants, including 27 Jews.

One of those 27 Jews is presumably his grandfather, Louie Meyer.

"We think this story is a great example of how it is never too late to be interested in learning about your own genealogy and how a combination of knowledge and teamwork helped CGSI to help member Mr.

Louis Meyer of Lincoln, Nebraska, to identify his family's village of origin," CGSI volunteer Tony Kadlec said in an e-mail.

Friday and Saturday, CGSI will hold a genealogical symposium titled "They Came to the Heartland" at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Union at 14th and R streets.

The symposium will feature informational exhibits, expert presentations, genealogy networking sessions, items to purchase from the CGSI traveling library/store, a social mixer and guided tours of Czech settlements such as Crete and Wilber.



**Louis Meyer at CGSI Symposium, Lincoln Nebraska. Photo Courtesy of Paul Makousky.**

Volunteers such as Kadlec, who helped Meyer with his search, will be on hand to help others with their genealogical search.

By day, Kadlec is president of an engineering/technology company in St. Paul, Minn., and is married with two kids.

At night, however, he volunteers as corresponding secretary for CGSI, responding to all calls that come to the CGSI. He also helps with genealogy research requests.

Kadlec works with all available sources of information and a team of volunteers to satisfy each request.

While the CGSI and Meyer have yet to confirm that Schüttiber is indeed his grandfather's home village, they are pretty confident that their theory is correct.

"The final step is to provide Mr. Meyer with information to connect his family to ancestors in these villages," Kadlec said. "It would be the final set of conclusive proof to explicitly connect him to his village and possible still-living relatives in the area."

Meyer will attend the symposium on Saturday and hopes to meet and thank the volunteers who helped him out.

He also wants to find more maps and learn a little more about the village.

"I'm going to be 92 in July," Meyer said. "I figured if I'm going to figure this stuff out, it'd be wise to do it now rather than later."

### **HOW CGSI FOUND MEYER'S HOMETOWN**

A combination of knowledge and teamwork helped the Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International help member Louis Meyer of Lincoln identify his family's village of origin.

1. Meyer wrote to CGSI to try to identify his family's ancestral village in the Czech lands, which was known to him as "Schuttuver, Austria," near Karlovy Vary (known in German as "Carlsbad") and his remembrance that at one time there was a Jewish community there.
2. Tony Kadlec, CGSI corresponding secretary and genealogy research coordinator, distributed Meyer's request to the CGSI Genealogy Research team of volunteers.
3. Ginger Simek, president of CGSI, spent about 40 minutes looking through the CGSI library collection and a copy of "Das Königreich Böhmen: bd. Elbogner kreis" by Johann Gottfried Sommer. The 1847 book documents the various administrative districts of the Austrian Empire, which included parts of present-day Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine. The source was [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Austrian\\_Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Austrian_Empire).

On page 274, she found Schuttiber with an alternate spelling of Schuttuber as Village #5. It shows a village of 61 houses and 631 inhabitants, including 27 Israeli (Jewish), and reference to the existence of a "Synagogne."

4. Kadlec found "Das Königreich Böhmen" online at

<http://books.google.com/books?id=p8JAAAAIAAJ&pg=PR32&dq=Das+K%C3%B6nigreich+B%C3%B6hmen:+bd.+Elbogner+kreis&cd=1#v=onepage&q&f=false>

With the Google tool bar, he converted the ancient German script to modern German, then translated it into English to be able to find and understand additional information listed in the book for this village.

5. Kadlec found a cross-reference of the village in the Ortlexikon Sudetenland book (a reference book of villages and towns in the Sudetenland with German names that no longer are used). Meyer's "Schuttuver" village in the Ortlexikon is Schüttiber or Šitbor, which is a Czech village relatively close to Karlovy Vary, Czech Republic, which Meyer noted in his voicemail message.
6. Kadlec found the Volume 15 Elbogner Kreis/google book made reference to "Miltigau," which the Ortlexikon Sudetenland book defines as Milíkov, Czech Republic (less than a mile from Malá Šitbor).

7. Kadlec found in Volume 15 Elbogner Kreis/google book reference to Rockendorf with "Dolni Rockendorf" being located near the city of Milíkov, Czech Republic, as indicated in [travel-cs-vd02.evip.aol.com/travel-guide/Europe/Czech-Republic/Dolni-Rockendorf](http://travel-cs-vd02.evip.aol.com/travel-guide/Europe/Czech-Republic/Dolni-Rockendorf)

8. Kadlec researched this a bit more online and found the following link: [www.statemaster.com/encyclopedia/List-of-German-exonyms-for-places-in-the-Czech-Republic#V](http://www.statemaster.com/encyclopedia/List-of-German-exonyms-for-places-in-the-Czech-Republic#V), which confirms that Schüttiber (Schüttüber) is the village of Malá Šitbor.

9. Simek located an entry in the 1655 Berni Rula (tax books) survey of Bohemia for a "Georg Meyer," who was listed as a hospodář (or farmer).

CGSI points out that its research does not prove conclusively that Meyer is related to Georg Meyer, but it does provide a starting point for Meyer to consult with a professional genealogy researcher to trace the line of descendants from Georg Meyer to the present time to see if there is a family connection.

**Source: CGSI, Tony Kadlec**

If you have any contributions or suggestions for topics for future columns, please contact me by email: [tkadlec@gmail.com](mailto:tkadlec@gmail.com) or call me: (651) 271-0422 or send your letters to my attention: 1408 Fairmount Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55105. Thanks! Tony Kadlec