

Pavučina Corner – By Tony Kadlec

FIRST ANNUAL SILVER LAKE HISTORY ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

Silver Lake Leader: Why did you decide to host the event this year?

Kadlec: earlier this year I was contacted by Silver Lake native Wallace Oliva, who wanted to get together to have a one on one history discussion about Silver Lake history. Then we decided to expand the discussion to a larger group of people and in April of this year, I sponsored the discussion at the McLeod County Historical Museum/Library in Hutchinson. It was a good discussion with more than 40 people on hand and we made a digital recording of the discussion for posterity. The group wanted to get together again, so I thought it would make sense to hold it as a Pola-Czesky Days event.

Silver Lake Leader: What will the event entail? Conversation? A look at old records? History about Silver Lake?

Kadlec: yes, all of the above. 'Roundtable' means everyone has an equal place in this discussion, whether you are Czech or Polish or Austrian; Catholic, Protestant, or a Freethinker, Country or a Town Kid, 80 years old or a 30-something. It is hoped that we can bridge some of the gaps between these groups with our memories. This week's Pavucina Corner article includes a list of proposed discussion topics to get the discussion going.

Silver Lake Leader: Why hold a history discussion?

Kadlec: My college roommate Tom, who was a history major, said that the problem with getting a history major is 'there's no future in it'. Either you are interested in history or you probably don't really care. As I started having children, I became more interested in my own genealogy and recording family stories, so that I could be sure my children would have a better chance of passing this information along to their children, and their children, and so on.

Case in point: before moving to Silver Lake, I was kid growing up in nearby Hutchinson. The City opened a new fire station and gave away prizes at the grand opening. It was at this event that I won my first ever prize, a shiny new fire extinguisher, which was a pretty exciting experience for an eight year old. That very night I had a dream that my neighbor's house was on fire and I put out the fire with my new fire extinguisher and saved the neighborhood. In retrospect I probably wouldn't have had that dream if I hadn't won that prize. My childhood house at 845 Lynn Road still stands and it reminds me of that memory, but most of those neighbors have moved on. And so much else has changed in a mere 40 years, not just the landscape, buildings, and businesses, but our way of life and society in general. Talking about history provides an opportunity for people to cope with these changes and to take a moment to reflect on simpler days and remind ourselves that it wasn't all a dream.

FIRST ANNUAL SILVER LAKE HISTORY ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION TOPICS

On the Saturday afternoon (1 – 4 pm) of this year's Pola-Czesky Days celebration, August 6th, we will be holding a roundtable history discussion at the American Legion Hall. At this event we will have

volunteers on hand with a printer/scanner available to make a digital copy of your historical Silver Lake photographs, so that you can share them with the community, along with your stories about the 'good old days'. This will be a great opportunity to network with other local historians to try to help label the people, places, and things in your old photographs.

Discussion Topics:

1. What do you remember about your old, old, old ancestors?
2. Czech, Polish, or German expressions that we recall (write them on the wall)
3. Life on the farm (butchering, threshing, making wood, horses, tractors, storms and tornadoes; When was your first: electricity, running water, indoor toilet? Where are the remaining log buildings in the county?)
4. Life in town (stores, taverns, pastimes, notable characters, and neighbors we recall)
5. A woman's work is never done: washing clothes, cooking, canning, ironing, etc. What do you remember about your mother and grandmothers' life? What was your favorite food they made?
6. Socializing: (dances in ballrooms, barns, wedding halls, street dances, homecoming dances, cruising Main Street)
7. Church History (Protestants, Catholics, ministers, priests, nuns and nun lessons we recall)
8. Bohemian Hall, Bohemian National Cemetery, and the Free Thinkers
9. Stories/Memories of the Great Depression and how it affected your family
10. Family connections: for the active genealogists, what family lines are you researching and where are you getting stuck? Is there an interest in establishing a Silver Lake genealogy/historical society group?

The above topics will serve as our general guide for this informal discussion. Admission is free and pivo will be available for purchase to loosen the neurons and stimulate the discussion.

If you are unable to make it to the discussion in person but would like to contribute your memories on any of the above topics, please write or email your information and we'll do our best to include it in the discussion or a future column of Pavucina Corner.

SILVER LAKE CAST OF CHARACTERS, ACT III

Leader readers may recall the above picture was submitted by a reader with the hopes of identifying the cast of characters who performed in this play at the Silver Lake Opera House in June 1919 entitled "Teta Mistra Stycha" (The Aunt of Mr. Stych).

Cast members identified so far are: back row, 2nd from left or 'B2' is Richard Penaz, B3 is Mary Emilie Teply, B6 is Joe Vasko and either B5 or B7 is Emil Honzalek.



In this past week, a Silver Lake Leader-reader has brought us the identity of another cast member. Silver Lake resident, Martha Klenicky called to say, “the young lady in the front row, 4th from the left is my mother, Emily (Hornicnek) Klenicky. She was 18 years old in the photo. On October 2, 1923 she married my father, Alex Klenicky and she died on August 11, 1937. We have a large version of this picture in our family.”

We look forward to finding out if there is a label on the back of Martha’s picture, to resolve this riddle once and for all.

Mluvíte Český? Do You Speak Czech?

pivo - (‘PEE-voh’) – beer

As a rule, you should always stress the first syllable of a Czech word!

If you have any contributions or suggestions for topics for future columns, please contact me by email: tkadlec@gmail.com or call me: (651) 271-0422 or send your letters to my attention: 1408 Fairmount Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55105. See this article online at: www.kadlecovi.com Dekuji! Tony Kadlec