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Preserve Croatian Heritage Foundation Newsletter

Published for those interested in preserving the memory of St. Nicholas Church, N.S.

Plans to honor Unknown Infants Buried at St. Nicholas N.S. Cemetery

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The St. Nicholas Cemetery located on Hahn Road, Ross Township, PA is in the process of revitalization in an attempt to restore it as near as possible to its original state. There is a section known as “the infants’ section” where the infants of our early parishioners buried their precious little ones. There are few markers for these, some of which have inscriptions that are so weathered that they cannot be read.

The Preserve Croatian Heritage Foundation has contacted John Dioguardi of Rome Monument about the project. Filled with enthusiasm, John visited the cemetery site; and he offered to search their records for the names of any children buried in St. Nicholas.



Mr. Dioguardi also contacted the Diocese of Pittsburgh, where all cemetery records now reside and learned that apparently records have not

been kept as to the names of those infants who are buried in this area. The Diocese offered to continue that search; however, that prospect does, indeed, appear to be bleak.

In an endeavor to upright the infants’ headstones that have fallen over, Matthew Vybril, who maintains both St. Nicholas Cemeteries, has been enlisted to aid in pouring footers and resetting the tombstones in the infants' section. When
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Honoring Veterans of St. Nicholas Croatian Catholic Parish N.S.



PCHF invites everyone to join former parishioners and friends to honor veterans who were members of St. Nicholas Church, N.S., at the Cemetery located on Hahn Road, Pittsburgh, PA at **11 AM** on Monday, **May 28**, 2018, to pay tribute to the 27 North Side Church parishioners who were killed or listed missing in action during their service to our country.

For more than a decade, this beautiful and solemn service has been held at the St. Nicholas North Side Church Cemetery, and we urge you to spend a half hour with us to reflect on all those who paid the ultimate price for our freedom. Participating in this service could help to make your festivities on this day more meaningful. We are pleased that Deacon Greg Jelinek of Most Holy Name Parish will be joining us again this year to offer scriptural readings and reflections about the importance of this day of remembrance.

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Plans to honor Unknown Infants Buried at St. Nicholas N.S. Cemetery

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this work is done, the plan is to eventually place a monument near those burial sites, designed by Rome Monument, honoring those infant souls of our early Croatian pioneers. This monument will contain the names of those children who we are able to confirm. We, of course, will honor those unnamed Angels whose names are only known to God. There will be an open area on the monument where additional names can be added should they become available.

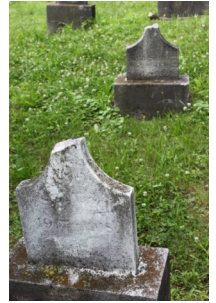


We are now reaching out to all of our Croatian brothers and sisters to help in this endeavor. If anyone has any knowledge relating to these little ones, please contact Bernice Goyak at

412 335-2780 or email Susan Petrick at sypetrick@hotmail.com.

We know that all things are possible with God's help. We are fervently hoping and believing that everyone will assist us in bringing this worthy undertaking to fruition.

Please help us to accomplish this by donating whatever amount you can afford and make your check payable to PCHF (for Infants' Memorial) - mail to Preserve Croatian Heritage Foundation, P.O. Box 5812, Pittsburgh, PA 15209-0812.
MAY GOD BLESS!



By Bill Vergot

Honoring Veterans of St. Nicholas Croatian Catholic Parish N.S.

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American flags will be distributed to the attendees; a eulogy will be given; votive candles will be lit and the bell tolled as names of each deceased veteran is called. The ceremony will close with the playing of Taps and the singing of "God Bless America" led by Bernice Goyak.

Please invite your family members and friends to join you at this most important St. Nicholas Memorial Day Service, **Monday, May 28, 2018 at 11 AM.**



Heinz History Center Update

Heinz History Center (HHC) curator, Emily Ruby, and the HHC Collection Committee have selected the following items for HHC *Library & Archives collection*: 30th - 100th St. Nicholas Anniversary Books, School Reunion books, Parish Photo Directory, *Zajednicar* cover story of St. Nicholas 100th Anniversary in 1994, original Citizenship papers, an original Marriage Certificate of Croatian St. Nicholas Church, N.S. parishioners, Fr. Lawrence Frankovich's 1st Mass booklet and DVD of St. Nicholas Church made in 2000.



Items requested for HHC Museum *artifact collection* includes: altar server surplus & cassock, a church chandelier, Easter cross, candle stick holders, Bingo cards, wine cruet, Croatian wedding dress, statue of dead Christ, church photos and St. Nicholas ornament.

Also, Emily requested that PCHF provide descriptions of several other items being considered for the HHC Museum *artifact collection* including: christening gown, embroidered hemp kitchen towel, Croatian dolls, crucifix, purse and opanke (shoes).

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Heinz History Center Update

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Progress is being made between PCHF and the Heinz History Center in our efforts to put together a display that will include St. Nicholas artifacts and other Croatian items of interest. We hope to meet soon with executives from the Heinz History Center.

We believe there are many other unique items still out there just waiting to be preserved, and we urge you to consider offering any of

those treasures to HHC for safe keeping. Emily can be contacted by phone at 412 454-6350 or by email at elruby@heinzhistorycenter.org.



By Susan Petrick

3 Bags of Gold Donors

A special thank-you is extended to those who have so generously donated to the Saint Nicholas 3 Bags of Gold Fund in memory of deceased loved ones of Croatian ancestry. We want to take this time to acknowledge all of our donors:



Donor

Louise Egler
Charles & Bernice Follen
Virginia Gundy

Mary Jane Hrovat
Mary E. Iski
Mrs. Anna (Pavlicic) Leighliter
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In Loving Memory Of

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Casimir Shelleby
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Katey Rozman, Joseph & Veronica Carr
John & Julia Sibenik
Mom, Dad, Brother, Sister
Parents
Srsic Family
Louise & Sam Zvonar. Barbara Poslek
Walter & Euka Hudak

The funds collected help PCHF defray costs of photocopying and mailing PCHF newsletters, providing the St. Nicholas Church Brochures to visitors at the historic site, expenses of our traditional St. Nicholas services and banquets, PCHF's liability insurance premiums and to allow PCHF to explore new ventures to keep the memory of St. Nicholas Church, N.S. alive.

By Susan Petrick

Joseph Marohnic – His Importance to the Croatian Community in Pittsburgh



Many immigrants spoke and read only Croatian when they came to the United States, thus there was a tremendous need for literature in their own tongue. In America there were no dictionaries to translate Croatian to English, no prayer books to use at worship services, no poems to make the newcomers' heart sing.

Enter Joseph Marohnic! Born in Hreljin, Croatia in 1866, Marohnic came to America with his wife and daughter in 1894 and worked in a print shop in Chicago. Trained as a printer and bookbinder, Marohnic opened a bookstore in the heart of the Croatian community in 1897 at 1420 East Ohio Street, Pittsburgh, PA – a neighborhood then known as “Mala Jaska” (or Little Jaska – named after Jastrebarsko, Croatia, a place which most of Pittsburgh's Croatians called home). Joseph imported thousands of Croatian books from Zagreb, Croatia, established a successful printing business, issued many pamphlets (often written and published by himself), and offered for sale booklets of general information, spellers, dictionaries, and collections of poems (some of which he authored). On January 1, 1899, Marohnic began publication of a humorous monthly periodical, “Brico” (the Barber), to add fun to the Croatian literary scene.

Without Marohnic, the Croatian community would have been lost in their new English-speaking surroundings. Since the immigrants were always anxious for news from the land that they left behind, Marohnic published booklets describing the war in Croatia and other items of interest. His publications included numerous handbooks, grammar books, calendars, novels, anthologies, prayer books, periodicals and collections of poems. Other of his works, gave examples of how to write letters in English, while his monthly periodicals showed how to laugh at one's own hardships.

The combined efforts of Joseph Marohnic and Francis Bogadek, another Croatian writer, led to the publication of the first Croatian-English and English-Croatian dictionary, containing 45,000 words. Prior to the Marohnic-Bogadek dictionary, there was no dictionary in existence in America that presented translations in that manner. Thus Marohnic's dictionaries were greatly instrumental in improving English language skills for all who referenced them.

Marohnic became the first poet among American Croats, and authored two collections: *Jesenke* (1897) and *Amerikanke* (1900). His publications were read both here and abroad.

Not only did Marohnic operate a bookstore, but he became embroiled in the Pittsburgh Croatian community itself. When immigrants felt a need to establish a Croatian church, Marohnic was instrumental in procuring a priest from Croatia so that they could hear the Mass in their own tongue, even housing that priest in his own home upon his arrival in Pittsburgh. Eventually that initial endeavor was to become the first Croatian Roman Catholic Church in America - St. Nicholas Church, North Side (Pittsburgh).

As Marohnic's popularity grew, he became an esteemed person in Croatian circles. He became involved in the National Croatian Society, later to become The Croatian Fraternal Union of America, today a multi-million dollar fraternal organization. He rose to be its supreme president, serving from 1912 until his death in 1921, after having founded its Junior Order in 1915.

Marohnic became the first Croatian who received an invitation to a formal audience with a President of the United States – W. H. Taft in 1911.

Businessman, publisher, poet, Croatian icon – Joseph Marohnic touched the minds and hearts of all who knew him and greatly lessened the plight of Croatian immigrants in their struggle to become Americans.

By Kathleen Buric

Croatian Heritage Day a Huge Success at Most Holy Name Parish

A very enjoyable time was had by more than 150 guests who joined in the celebration of the Croatian Heritage Day on November 11, 2017, sponsored by the Most Holy Name of Jesus Parish (MHN) in the Troy Hill region of Pittsburgh, PA.

CFU National President, Edward Pazo, addressed the crowd, calling to mind that it was also Veterans Day and extended his gratitude to all the veterans who were present. His welcoming comments also reminded the crowd of all our forefathers who first immigrated to the United States so many years ago so that we could share in the freedoms we experience in our country today.



A diverse collection of Croatian artwork and artifacts along with photographs and memorabilia from St. Nicholas Church, North Side, (the first Croatian parish in the United States) was displayed in museum fashion at which the crowd marveled. A table filled with Croatian art activities for the children added to the ethnicity of this Croatian Heritage Day.

Six baskets in the Chinese auction raffle, filled with a wide variety of authentic, Croatian merchandise, drew the attention of the guests who were anxious to participate with the hope of winning one of these treasures.

The talented Hrvatski Tanac folklore ensemble performed several Croatian dances for the enthusiastic crowd, reminding us of the happiness instilled in the minds and hearts of our Croatian ancestors of a generation ago. Hearing their sweet tamburitza music just speaks to the soul!



The dinner hour began at 4:00 PM while old friendships were renewed. Laughter was on the menu as well as the delicious sarma! Washed down with Karlovačko beer and Croatian brandies, it was indeed a delightful experience. Having their fill, the crowd then proceeded into the Most Holy Name of Jesus Church where the resident priest,

Father James Garvey, greeted everyone in Croatian and celebrated Holy Mass. The choir sang their hearts out, doing a marvelous job of singing many Croatian hymns in harmony.

After Mass, everyone gathered in the school hall to hear the wonderful performance of Javor Pittsburgh. They are indeed a priceless asset to the Croatian community! Their sweet tamburitza music and lovely singing voices were the highlight of the evening!

A big THANK YOU goes out to all the workers and performers who made this event possible. Coming away from a celebration such as this one makes one proud to be Croatian.

By Susan Petrick and Kathleen Buric

"Save the Date"
for Saturday,
September
22, 2018
Croatian
Heritage Day
At MHN

Annual St. Nicholas Day Banquet Fills Javor Hall



Over 80 former parishioners, families and friends of St. Nicholas Croatian Church, North Side, gathered once again to feast, renew friendships and celebrate with song and dance at Javor Hall on Pittsburgh's North Side on Saturday, December 2, 2017, to celebrate the annual St. Nicholas Day. Upon entry to the Hall, guests were greeted with a Croatian-themed Christmas wreath reflecting the holiday spirit, and red ribbons, wrapped around wreaths, hung throughout the Hall. Dinner tables were beautifully decorated with red and white tablecloths. PCHF Board Member, Lynne Corsello, and PCHF Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer, Susan Petrick, were busy selling St. Nicholas Christmas cards, note cards, church DVDs and ornaments throughout the evening. Guests were reminded to visit the PCHF website where all items on display at the banquet are available for purchase and can be shipped to the recipient. PCHF Co-Chair and Emcee, Bill Vergot, welcomed new and returning guests of all ages on this festive night and invited Bernice Goyak to lead us in prayer.

Guests were served a delicious buffet of Pittsburgh favorites including: kielbasa with sauerkraut, stuffed cabbage, baked chicken, pierogies, salad & rolls. PCHF board members provided a sweet finale of a wide variety of desserts.

Keeping with tradition, St. Nicholas, made the rounds handing out gold chocolate coins to the young and the young at heart.

Co-chairs, Bill Vergot and Stephen Willing, thanked everyone for attending. Bill reported that the Memorial Day Service was well attended. PCHF is still exploring the possibility of fabricating and installing a plaque to memorialize all of the children who are buried in the St. Nicholas Cemetery.

Progress is being made between PCHF and the Heinz History Center in our efforts to put together a display which will include St. Nicholas artifacts and other Croatian items of interest. We hope to meet soon with executives from the Heinz History Center.

Tickets were drawn and three winners took home door prizes. Mary Bonicky won the first door prize, a statue of Santa holding Baby Jesus. A parishioner from St. Nicholas, Millvale won the second prize — a framed print of St. Nicholas Church, North Side. The third prize, was a framed print of Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto won by Amanda Pietrone.

The Mikey Dee Band returned once again to entertain all with their lively ethnic music. When the band took a break, Javor was then filled with the beautiful voices of the Javor Pittsburgh Ensemble. All joined in singing beautiful Croatian and English Christmas carols. The evening continued with kolo dancing and guests socializing.

The next St. Nicholas Banquet is scheduled for **Saturday, December 1, 2018**. Save the date. We look forward to seeing you then!



Historic Site Illuminated for Saint Nicholas Day



the Memorial wall singing and entertaining arriving guests with her guitar and beautiful voice.

New luminaries were purchased last year to replace the ones used for so many years. Instead of traditional candles, these luminaries contain a bright



light bulb and are battery powered. The luminaries were left on for six days and six nights for all

the motorists from Route 28 to experience. A special thanks to PCHF Board member, Bernice Goyak, for putting in the time making sure that as many people as possible saw the luminaries. Matt Bonicky, dressed as Saint Nicholas, made his annual appearance waving to passing motorists.

The spirit of Saint Nicholas was alive and well, as they responded by honking in support.

PCHF Co-chair Stephen Willing welcomed those in attendance saying, "The purpose of the service was to reflect on St. Nicholas Feast Day as he is the patron of our Church and to be a witness to the motorist and general public of our love and commitment to St. Nicholas Church."

Bernice Goyak, then led the faithful in prayer and song. Silent Night was sung in both Croatian and English.

A short history of Saint Nicholas, the Church's patron saint, was read by PCHF Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer, Susan Petrick.

The Biblical reflection of The Annunciation was read by Donna Zivic.

Josip Kasic recited Luke 2: 4-13, the Biblical reflection of The Nativity, followed by Bernice Goyak leading the group in the Joyful Mystery of the Rosary.

Father Grgo Sikiric, former pastor at St. Nicholas for 25 years, telephoned Susan Petrick earlier in the day and asked her to convey the message that he will be praying along with us from Croatia during our Candlelight Prayer Service. Father Grgo stated, "It is important that we keep the memory of St. Nicholas Church, N.S. alive!"

Croatian hymn, Radujte Se Narodi, led by Bernice Goyak closed out the ceremony. PCHF will continue this solemn and holy service every year on this sacred ground. Please plan to attend next year on **Thursday, December 6, 2018.**

Luminaries began to glow illuminating the Memorial Wall at the St. Nicholas Church Historic Site as the light faded on Wednesday December 6, 2017. Seventeen loyal supporters of Saint Nicholas Croatian Church, N.S. gathered at dusk during rush hour to commemorate the Feast Day of Saint Nicholas. The devout have gathered here every year on the exact spot where St. Nicholas Church, N.S., once stood, to honor its memory and historical significance.

Donna Zivic, with guitar in tow, sat on





Preserve Croatian Heritage Foundation

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**Preserve Croatian Heritage Foundation
St. Nicholas Church, N.S. WEBSITE**

www.stnicholasns.org