



## **Czechs in St. Louis Collection (S0034)**

**Collection Number:** S0034

**Collection Title:** Czechs in St. Louis Collection

**Dates:** 1929-1979

**Creator:** The State Historical Society of Missouri

**Abstract:** The Czechs in St. Louis Collection contains anniversary programs, histories, newspaper clippings, and unpublished manuscripts relating to Czech-American life in St. Louis, including Bohemian Hill, St. Johns Nepomuk Parish, and Sokol St. Louis.

**Collection Size:** 0.03 cubic feet  
(4 folders)

**Language:** Collection materials are in English and Czech.

**Repository:** The State Historical Society of Missouri

**Restrictions on Access:** Collection is open for research. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-St. Louis](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at [stlouis@shsmo.org](mailto:stlouis@shsmo.org). Collections may be viewed at any research center.

**Restrictions on Use:** Materials in this collection may be protected by copyrights and other rights. See [Rights & Reproductions](#) on the Society's website for more information about reproductions and permission to publish.

**Preferred Citation:** [Specific item; box number; folder number] *Czechs in St. Louis Collection* (S0034); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-St. Louis [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-St. Louis].

**Donor Information:** The papers were donated to the University of Missouri by Patricia Jones on March 4, 1974 (Accession No. SA2497).

**Notes:** Throughout the collection, the identifier "Bohemian" is used to discuss Czech immigrants. During the 19th and 20th centuries, this term was the most commonly used term to describe Czech immigrants.

**Processed by:** Processed by Rachael Heriford, March 2023

**Historical Note:**

The first arrivals of Czech immigrants to St. Louis were in 1848 due to the Revolutions of 1848 within the Austrian Empire. Initial immigrants settled on Ninth and Lafayette Streets in St. Louis City. The settling of Ninth and Lafayette Streets became the epicenter of ‘Bohemian Hill’. Most Czech immigrants were literate in their native language of Czech, but also in German as it was a required language to learn in the Austrian Empire. The knowledge of the German language played a role in the socialization of newly immigrated Czechs to St. Louis, as one-third of the population in St. Louis was German immigrants at the time. Czech immigrants lodged with Germans and worshiped at the German Catholic Church of Saints Peter and Paul in St. Louis. However, Czech Catholics wanted their own area of worship separate from the Germans, and in 1854 the St. John Nepomuk church was founded at Eleventh and Soulard Streets.

Despite Catholicism as the main religion of Czechs, about half of Czech immigrants separated from Catholicism and formed their groups outside of St. John Nepomuk. An example includes the Česko-Slovanský Podorujici Spolek (Č.S.P.S), a fraternal and benevolent society on Ninth Street between Soulard and Lafayette where members paid dues to create a sick, death, and funeral fund. The Czechs also established many recreation groups on ‘Bohemian Hill’ such as the Slovanska Lip, a literary club discussing drama and singing in 1859, and The Sokol in 1865 to provide gymnastic classes in the native Czech language. By the 1890s, Bohemian Hill became a thriving area with Czech-owned businesses, schools, and churches. However, due to declining immigration rates, ‘Bohemian Hill’ has faced population declines since the 1920s.

**Arrangement:**

The collection has been arranged into four folders by subject matter.

**Scope and Content Note:**

The Czechs in St. Louis Collection contains anniversary programs, unpublished manuscripts, newspaper clippings, and histories of Czech churches, organizations, and Czech-Americans in St. Louis. Materials of interest include the histories and anniversaries of St. John Nepomuk Church from 1929-1964, the 90th anniversary of Sokol St. Louis, and an unpublished manuscript written by Pat Jones titled *Whatever Happened to Bohemian Hill* chronicling the history of Bohemian Hill. The collection has been arranged into four folders by subject matter. The first two folders feature materials relating to St. John Nepomuk Church, followed by the American Sokol Jubilee, and finally, a copy of Pat Jones’ *Whatever Happened to Bohemian Hill*. The materials in this collection date from 1929 to 1979.

**Container List:**

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| f. 1 | St. John Nepomuk Church, 1929-1964               |
| f. 2 | St. John Nepomuk Church, 1956-1979               |
| f. 3 | American Sokol Jubilee, 1955                     |
| f. 4 | <i>Whatever Happened to Bohemian Hill</i> , 1974 |

**Index:**

Index Terms	Folder
Bohemian Hill (Saint Louis, Mo.)--History	4
Catholic churches--Missouri--Saint Louis	1-2, 3
Czech Americans--Missouri--Newspapers	4
Czech Americans--Missouri--Saint Louis	1-4
Czech Americans--Missouri--Saint Louis--History	1-4
Ethnic groups--Missouri--Saint Louis	1-4
Fraternal organizations--Missouri--Saint Louis	1-4
Gymnastic Association Sokol, St. Louis	4
Historic districts--Missouri--Saint Louis	1-4
Immigrants--Missouri--Saint Louis	1-4
Lafayette Square (Saint Louis, Mo.)--History	1-4
LaSalle Park (Saint Louis, Mo.)--History	1-4
Missouri--Social life and customs	1-4
Saint Louis (Mo.)--Church history	1-2, 4
Saint Louis (Mo.)--Emigration and immigration	1-4
Soulard (Saint Louis, Mo.)--History	1-4
St. John Nepomuk Church (Saint Louis, Mo.)--History	1-2, 4