

ANTONÍN ČERMÁK – A SON OF KLADNO, A LEGEND OF CHICAGO



Antonín Čermák, a Kladno native, mayor of Chicago.

Antonín Josef Čermák

* May 9, 1873 Kladno, † March 6, 1933 Miami (USA)

An American entrepreneur and a politician of Czech origin. He moved out of New Kladno with his parents early on to the USA (State of Illinois). He had a number of jobs, starting as a coal miner, establishing his own business in selling firewood, later on doing business in real estate. Čermák's political career began in 1902, when he was elected to the Illinois House of Representatives as a Democratic Party member. In 1909 he became an alderman of the Chicago City Council and in 1931 was elected the mayor of the city with the then largest Czech community in the USA, promoting the repeal of the Prohibition, road construction and public park building. His main goal was to secure safety in the city. He managed to have even Al Capone put to jail for tax evasion. In the year 1933 he was, together with other four people, shot and mortally wounded at a public meeting of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. It was then, during his transport to the hospital, when Antonín Čermák reportedly uttered the legendary words, "I'm glad it was me instead of you." On March 6, mayor of Chicago died of his injury. There have been disputes whether it was an attempted assassination of Roosevelt or whether Mayor Antonín Čermák was the target.



Kladno Downtown Panorama – a symbiosis of town and industry. From left, the first Kladno Town Hall, St. Florian Chapel, a school, the second Kladno Town Hall, the church and the chateau area; up front František Mine, second half of 1870s.



View of Kladno from the south – an oil painting by Ledvinka, 1876. This is what the town looked like amidst its tumultuous transformation from a small townlet in the middle of forests into one of the most industrial hubs of Central Europe. Antonín Čermák, one of the greatest Czech Americans, was born out of its womb.



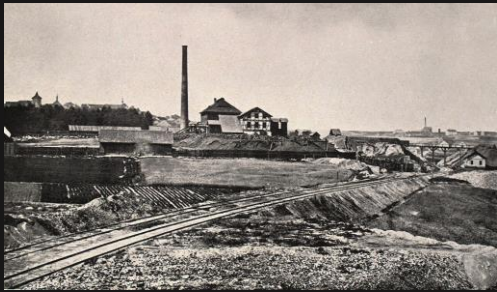
View of Downtown Chicago with a busy DuSable Bridge, 1930s.



This city was under a leadership of Antonín Čermák from Kladno – Chicago Panorama, 1930s.

KLADNO AT THE TIME OF ČERMÁK'S BIRTH

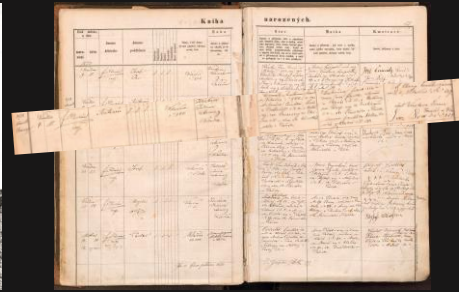
At the time of Antonín Čermák's birth the previously small townlet of Kladno rose up to its dynamic growth. In the year 1870 it was promoted to a town, dozens of mines and Kladno's first ironworks, called Adalbert's, towered over the municipality. The number of its inhabitants grew steeply. Kladno was becoming one of the most industrial towns of Central Europe.



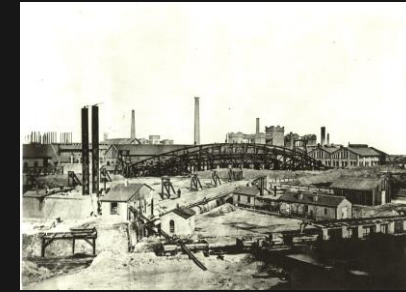
A photo of František Mine, depicting "the coarseness" of the emerging industrial Kladno. This is where Antonín Čermák's father, an Antonín as well, worked in a mine. The mine opened in the year 1852, the mining finished 40 years later.



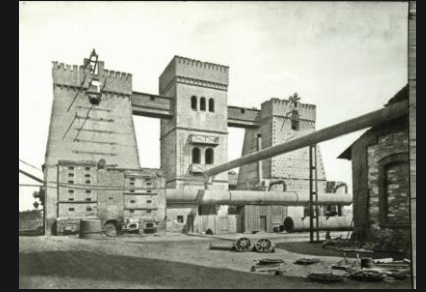
Amalie Mine arose close to a place where Antonín Čermák was born. Building of the mine started in the year 1858 and excavating of coal finished in the year 1896.



A register containing a birth record of a significant Kladno native Antonín Čermák, with detail of the register record of Antonín Čermák's birth, May 11, 1873.



A view of the first Kladno ironworks – Adalbert Ironworks before the year 1880.



Blast furnaces 1 and 2 around the year 1880 – the foundations of Adalbert Ironworks were established around the year 1856 by Vojtěch Lanna.



Antonín Čermák's family. His father, called Antonín as well (sitting on the right), a miner in Kladno, his wife Kateřina, née Franková (sitting on the left) and their family left in the year 1874, according to other sources in 1875, for the USA. The photo was taken already in the USA, the future mayor of Chicago (standing behind his father) is approximately 20 years old, around the year 1893.



Kladno Square around the year 1880, still with the Gothic Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, "špalíček" (several stacked buildings of a medieval origin), the Marian Column and the second building of Kladno Town Hall.



A photo depicting the town part New Kladno, 1880s. Here the streets were marked in an "American way" by numbers. It is precisely in this town part, where the to be Chicago mayor was born on the 5th Street.



House No. 844 on the 5th Street in New Kladno town part. It is in this part of the town, on the 5th Street, where one of the most important Kladnonians was born on May 9, 1873.



Map of New Kladno, the 5th Street and the house No. 844 are marked out – a birthplace of Antonín Čermák.

ČERMÁK'S VISIT OF KLDADNO AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Mayor Čermák's visit of Czechoslovakia in the summer of 1932 became a major event. The famous Kladno native was received by the citizens of his town, he met President T. G. Masaryk in Slovakian Bystřička, spent time in Prague, visited other towns as well. He was negotiating a participation of strong Czechoslovak companies at Chicago World's Fair.



Citizens of Kladno crowded up the square outside Kladno Town Hall during Chicago Mayor Antonín Čermák's visit, August 10, 1932.



Kladno voluntary associations, lined up in Kladno Mayor Antonín Čermák, August 10, 1932.



Welcoming Mayor of Chicago Antonín Čermák, in Kladno Square with Kladno Deputy Mayor František Pavel, August 10, 1932.



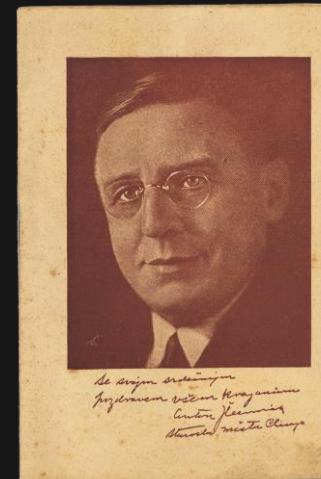
Mayor of Chicago Antonín Čermák with Kladno Deputy Mayor František Pavel outside Kladno Town Hall, August 10, 1932. František Pavel was elected Mayor of Kladno in April 1938, became a victim of Nazi rage at Špilberk in Brno in June 1939, which was a consequence of a killing of a German police officer by Czech students nearby Kladno Grammar School. The German executioners quite likely beat František Pavel to death and threw him out of the jail window.



Chicago Mayor Antonín Čermák at lunch in a restaurant of a hiking lodge on Kožova Mount near Kladno, August 10, 1932. The hiking lodge with a 35 meters tall lookout tower was built by Czechoslovak Hiking Club in the year 1930.



While visiting Czechoslovakia, Antonín Čermák stayed at a renown Art Nouveau Šroubek Hotel in Wenceslas Square, Prague, August 1932. Historic moments of the Czech nation passed through this square. In November 1989 huge demonstrations of public participated on the fall of communism. November 17, 1990, on the first anniversary of the Velvet Revolution, American President George Bush Sr., together with Czechoslovak President Václav Havel, chimed a replica of the Liberty Bell.



Handwritten greetings "With hearty greetings to all countrymen, Antonín Čermák, Mayor of Chicago".



A postcard where Kladno recollected its native, Mayor Antonín Čermák.



Antonín Čermák was, during his homeland visit, also received by a great democrat, President of the Czechoslovak Republic, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, in August 18, 1932. Masaryk's wife, Charlotte Garrigue Masaryková, a writer, an intellectual and a feminist, was an American.

KLADNO CITIZENS DO NOT FORGET ČERMÁK

People from Kladno recognize Čermák's personality, in spite of the dramatic historical changes, this exceptional Kladno native never fell into oblivion. Čermák was decisively not favored by the totalitarian regimes. However, the democrats praised him and praise him on.



Men with a wreath at Bohemian National Cemetery, September 1934. At Antonín Čermák's grave, standing on the right, bespectacled, is his follower, Mayor of Chicago Edward Joseph Kelly, standing on the left, distinctively skinny, an outstanding Kladno soccer attacker, a striker and a Czechoslovak national team player, František Kloz. This athlete perished due to a shot wound he received fighting the retreating Nazi SS troops nearby Kladno at the very end of WW2 in May 1945.



SK Kladno soccer players came to Bohemian National Cemetery to pay their respects to the assassinated Mayor of Chicago Antonín Čermák, September 1934



Czechoslovak stamps depicting outstanding national personalities with a postal stamp at the occasion of the unveiling of Antonín Čermák's plaque in New Kladno. Issued by the City Council, June 1935.



Kladno historian Gabriela Havlůjová at Antonín Čermák's grave at Bohemian National Cemetery in Chicago, June 2017.



Unveiling the historical plaque of Antonín Čermák on his native house No. 844 on the 5th Street in New Kladno in presence of the Head of the Senate František Soukup, June 16, 1935. Far left, Mayor of Kladno Karel Kindl. During the Nazi occupation the plaque remained hidden and was returned on Čermák's native house in the presence of the American Ambassador Laurence Steinhardt on January 5, 1947. It was removed due to a redevelopment of the town part at the end of the 1960s, installed again at the place of the already pulled down Čermák's native house on May 10, 1993.



Kladno was visited by Antonín Čermák's grandson, Anton Cermak Kerner, May 11, 2013. He was accompanied to Čermák Street and to the commemorative plaque in Czechoslovak Army Street by Zdeněk Kuchyňka, the Director of Sládeček Regional Museum.



A newspaper article regarding the return of the Mayor of Chicago Antonín Čermák's commemorative plaque at the occasion of his 120th birth anniversary. Mayor of Kladno Marie Bednářová, together with representatives of the US Embassy in the Czech Republic, festively unveiled an original commemorative plaque at a place of the significant native's birth house, May 10, 1993.



Antonín Čermák's native house on the 5th Street of New Kladno with his commemorative plaque, late 1960's. The communists had the whole specific town part pulled down and had uniform housing projects built. The commemorative plaque ended up in a depository for long years.



The current shape of Chicago Mayor Antonín Čermák's commemorative plaque in Czechoslovak Army Street, April 2023.



A trizna on behalf of Chicago Mayor Antonín Čermák in the ceremonial hall of the Kladno Town Hall, June 16, 1935. Mayor of Kladno Karel Kindl is sitting under a portrait of the famous Czech American. The longtime mayor of Kladno, an anti-Nazi resistance member, did not survive the adversities of Dachau concentration camp.

KLADNO ATHLETES AND CHICAGO

Interconnection of Kladno and Chicago through sports is surprisingly frequent. As a matter of fact, it is soccer and ice hockey, as the most famous sports of Kladno, which domineer. Soccer and ice hockey players from the largest city of the Central Bohemian Region have succeeded in Chicago clubs, took on posts as club officials in the city by Lake Michigan. Poldi Kladno, one of the historically best Czech ice hockey clubs, beat the famous Chicago Blackhawks at their own ice rink, a Kladno born player playing in Chicago jersey lifted the iconic Stanley Cup over his head.



Kladno natives, brothers Josef and Adolf Burger, developed through Sparta Kladno, played for Union Chicago team from December 1923. Adolf, an excellent scorer, became the Chicago Stadium groundskeeper upon finishing his soccer career, later becoming a member of the Chicago Club Board. Josef returned from overseas to Kladno in the year 1947 and became an official for Sparta Kladno. In the photo of SK Sparta Kladno its key player Adolf Burger is standing first from the left, dressed in the Czechoslovak Army uniform, his brother Josef is the fifth man from the left, year 1919.



Miroslav „Čužák“ Rys (*August 17, 1932 - † November 27, 2020), an outstanding soccer player and an ice hockey player, a sport legend of Kladno. He played both sports at the highest national level, also played on the Czechoslovak national teams. In 1968, after the Soviet occupation of our homeland, he and his family emigrated. They settled down in Chicago, and Miroslav „Čužák“ Rys played on the local ABC Sparta club and became its chairman. Due to an unbelievably tragic coincidence he and his wife lost two sons during the period of their American emigration. After the Velvet Revolution he returned with his spouse to Kladno in 1994.



During its US tour in September 1934 the excellent team SK Kladno played 8 matches, also playing Sparta ABC Chicago (9:0, F. Kloz scoring 5 goals!), All Stars Illinois (4:0, the photo depicts this match, September 10, 1934) and Wiebold Wonderbolts Chicago (4:4). The very same year Kladno team eliminated Ambrosiana (Inter Milan) in Mitropa Cup!

**Velmi úspěšný zájezd hokejistů KLADNA
Vítězství na ledě klubů NHL!**

**CHICKAGO BLACKHAWKS - POLDI SONP KLADNO
4:6**

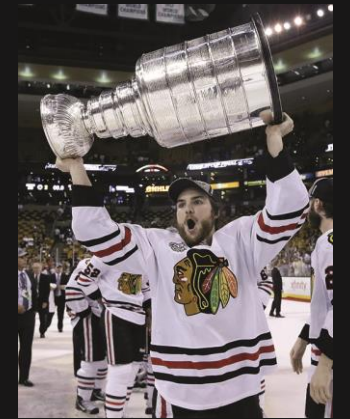
Jedná před pěti roky jsme vyžili k profesionálnímu zámožnému hokeji a republikán. Půlně se hlásí odpraven National Hockey League (NHL), starou již kešl dnstak let, byl však — jak jsme se v dalších letech postupně přeznačovali — přece jen přes jakési říkové byto „Made in USA“...
 Je to tento sport...
 vlnch...
 přece...
 kdy se...
 pon — a...
 a nejlep...
 ude, rep...
 Kladno...
 A ten Kanadákem pohára 1976? Tam jsme dokonce repre...
 se již Kanadčané převládli, že snál v nejlepšíh Evropanech tic se rovná...
 emati úspěše.

Chicago Black Hawks — Poldi SONP Kladno 4:6 (2:5, 1:1, 1:0), úrsko 31. prosince. Branky: Plavka 3 (čtrtin...
 likové agentury nepřinesly — Eber...
 main 3, E. Novák 2, Nový. — V pe...
 rovnání s úběním v New Yorku mllo...
 tuto střetnutí opáčny začátek, Domá...
 cí se ujeli vedení již v 31. sekundě...
 To však naše mužstvo nijak nedepr...
 mowio, do konce třetiny bylo daleko...
 lepší a vedlo o tři branky! Vybora...
 v tomto utkání zahrála první složná...
 rá také obstarala střelbu. Zvlášt...
 rychlé Ebermana byl k nedeřent...
 A tak bylo píně naniště, když Kana...
 dánc po vítězství prohlásil: „Nez...
 gediti prohrát s tak silným mužstvem!“
 Takže by před několika lety náš sa...
 mivili... Tým Chicago Black Hawks...
 je nyní mužstvem i slavného Bobby...
 Ove, který však pro zranění kolena...
 stále mstraje. Mužstvo nyní vede no...
 vý trenér Pluffard a klub je ledním se...
 štosti nejstarších v NHL.

At the turn of the years 1977 and 1978 the ice hockey players of Poldi SONP Kladno with several reinforcing players played four NHL teams in the Super Series. On December 31, 1977 Kladno team beat the famous Chicago Blackhawks 6:4 at the Chicago Stadium! They tied with New York Rangers 4:4, they outclassed Toronto Maple Leafs 8:5, and lost with Cleveland Barons 2:3.



In the 1970s Kladno had an outstanding world class team, became the National Champion five times, in February 1979 it won the Europa Cup, Kladno best players became World Champions, three Kladno players in Czechoslovak national team jerseys reached the 1st year of Canada Cup final against Canada star team in September 1976.



Michael Frolík, a forward, developed through Kladno ice hockey, played 13 seasons in 6 NHL clubs. In the season 2012/2013 he won the Stanley Cup playing for Chicago Blackhawks. In the years 2011 and 2012 he received two bronze medals at the Ice Hockey World Championship.

KLADNO NATIVES AND THE UNITED STATES

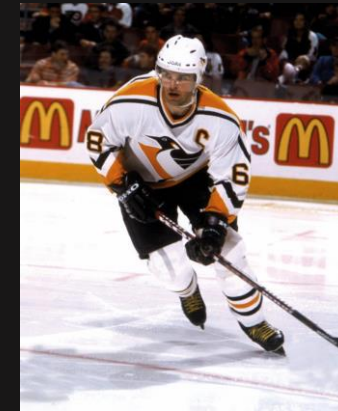
The economic situation in the Austrian-Hungarian Empire and hope for a better life led many Kladno citizens to a decision to emigrate to the US. People of many jobs decided to travel over the great puddle just like Antonín Čermák's family. People from Kladno Jewish community left for the USA to escape the Nazi rage. Most of those who stayed behind did not survive the Nazi terror. Only 120 out of 1623 Jewish co-citizens survived the cruelties of the holocaust. More people left Kladno for the United States in two waves during the communism. Many of these succeeded in the New World, the hopes of others remained unfulfilled. Several of Kladno natives lived admirable careers in the United States.



Kladno native Antonín Raymond (*May 10, 1888 - † November 21, 1976) came from a large Jewish family of the Reimanns, he was the only one to survive the atrocities of the holocaust. He left for the United States as a student, devoted himself to architecture, cooperated with a significant American architect Frank Lloyd Wright who worked also in Chicago. His job brought him to Japan, where he founded his own architecture office. He became the Czechoslovak honorary consul in Tokyo. After the Second World War he worked in General MacArthur's Staff participating on the renewal of Japan. He is considered the founder of modern Japanese architecture.



The Torah of Kladno Jewish community survived the Second World War hidden in the walls of the synagogue. After the war it was placed together with other Jewish scrolls originated on Czech territory. After the year 1964 the scrolls were bought out and later on distributed all over the world from the United Kingdom. The Kladno Torah was overtaken in Farfield, Connecticut by the Jewish community, it was restored and rededicated in June 2008.



One of the world's greatest ice hockey players, a phenomenal attacker Jaromír Jágr (* February 2, 1972) comes from Kladno. The ice hockey icon won the Stanley Cup with Pittsburgh Penguins, won a gold medal at the Olympic Games in Nagano and two gold medals at Ice Hockey World Championships. He is the second most productive player in NHL history, a holder of a number of trophies, having played on 8 NHL teams. This most famous Kladno native still plays ice hockey at the highest level at the age of 51.



Bedřich, later know as Frederick Jelínek, (*November 11, 1932 - † September 14, 2010) born in a Jewish family from New Kladno, was a researcher in information theory, a computer linguist, a writer and a scientist. He is considered one of the main authors of a theory which is used nowadays to develop programs which allow computers convert human speech to letters and words in a digital form. His professional growth took place in the US, he worked at American universities, worked for IBM. After 1989 he was a visiting professor at the Charles University in Prague.



City of Bellevue is located in the State of Washington between Lake Washington and Lake Sammamish, close to Seattle, in one of the most dynamic and prosperous parts of the USA. Companies such as Bill Gates' Microsoft and Jeff Bezos' Amazon were founded in its immediate vicinity. Kladno established a partnership with Bellevue in 1993. The partnership is based on regular exchange programs for high school students of the sister cities, official contact among the representatives of the municipalities and personal relationships of the sister cities citizens.

KLADNO TODAY

People from Kladno recognize Čermák's personality, in spite of the dramatic historical changes, this exceptional Kladno native never fell into oblivion. Čermák was decisively not favored by the totalitarian regimes. However, the democrats praised him and praise him on.



Kladno landmark - six original tenement buildings, "Kladno skyscrapers", built in the second half of the 1950's.



Kladno ice hockey arena was refurbished in the year 2022. Ice hockey has been successfully played in the city since the year 1924. Kladno prides itself with 9 individually achieved Stanley Cups, 5 olympic winners, nearly 30 world champions and 6 National Cups.



City Theatre founded in the year 1912 and its professional theater company, the most important cultural shrine in the city underwent a major refurbishment completed in the year 2015.



Kladno Baroque chateau with its garden is a place for cognition, education and leisure time spent with culture.



Vast Kladno sports facilities fitfully placed in the forests surrounding the city, serve professional, performance and amateur athletes, as well as citizens for their leisure time activities and for concerts.



In November 2000 the Danish LEGO factory opened one of its world's largest facilities in Kladno. Besides standard production, huge creative models for Legolands and shopping centers are made on the premises.



The Faculty of Biomedical Engineering of Prague Technical University of the Czech Technical University has resided in Kladno since the year 2005. Students of the progressive program enliven the city.



The historical Kladno square with a church, the Town Hall and the events of Kladno Christmas with a fairy-tale christmas tree full of gifts for abandoned children and spiritual as well as popular concerts.



City of Kladno takes care of the quality of pre-school and school education in 30 preschools and 17 basic schools.



The Art Nouveau building of Kladno Grammar School established in 1905, with a park used by students. The school has had a number of notable alumni. In June 1942 women and children from the village of Lidice by Kladno, a community wiped out by the Nazi Germans, were interred in this building. Most of them did not survive the rampaging of Nazi murderers.

ČERMÁK'S 150TH BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION IN KLADNO

09
KVĚTEN
17.00–19.00

Antonín Čermák

150 LET

ulice Čs. armády 3209
naproti ulici Čermákovy (byvalá V. ulice)

- ★ VENKOVNÍ VÝSTAVA „ANTONÍN ČERMÁK A KLADNO“
VE SPOLUPRÁCI SE SLÁDEČKOVÝM
VLASTIVĚDNÝM MUZEEM
- ★ KOMENTOVANÁ DOBOVÁ MÓDNÍ PŘEHLIKA SPODNÍHO
PRÁDLA A PLAVEK / CENTRUM TANCE HARMONIE
- ★ VYSTOUPENÍ ORCHESTRU GYMNÁZIA KLADNO
VYSTOUPENÍ INDEPENDENT FLIRT
- ★ KONCERT KAPELY SLAPDASH
- ★ POKOŠTĚNÍ V AMERICKÉM STYLU
FOTOKOUTEK / DOPLŇKY K ZAPŮJČENÍ
TVOŘENÍ PRO DĚTI

Gymnázium Kladno JOT Kladno Státní ústřední archiv Kladno

Antonín Čermák

MAY 9, 2023

A poster for Antonín Čermák's 150th Birthday Anniversary Celebration, held under the patronage of Kladno Lord Mayor Milan Volf, taking place where Čermák's native house used to stand.