

Helena Kovanicova With Relatives And Friends In Krkonose Mountains



This photo was taken in the Krkonose mountains in the 1930s. From the left are Oskar Laufer, Hana Lebenhartova, I, my cousin Helena Vohryzkova, in front is the Taussig's son from Rokycany, on the right is my mother, Olga Munkova (nee Nachodova). In this photograph I might have been around 12 years old. We're standing in front of the Petrovka chalet, or Peterbaude, where we had gone for a walk.

Oskar Laufer was the son of our family doctor and my father's relative, Dr. Laufer. He was with us in Spindleruv Mlyn only once, when his father went to Vienna to have his thyroid operated on.

Hana Lebenharova was a relative of the Lustigs, who had a liquor factory in Brandys. She was a year older than I. In Brandys I used to go to her place, they had a large single-story villa in a garden, which was called the 'planta.' She was really great. We met each other again in Terezin, but she then died there.

In Spindleruv Mlyn we met up with the Taussigs, who were a family from Rokycany. It's possible that they were relatives or friends of the Lustigs.

Back then we all carried walking sticks, and whenever we reached some chalet, we'd get a little plaque that they'd nail to our sticks. Each chalet had its own plaque. So on each walk we'd 'bag' some plaque, and then we'd compare to see who had the most of them on their walking stick.

When we were in Spindleruv Mlyn for the first time, I was about eight years old. At first we stayed in the Belveder hotel, but then each year we always lived in the Hotel Esplanade. The owners of that hotel, the Blechas, already knew us, and they'd call us in advance that our rooms are already reserved, and whether we were coming. We used to go there up to when I was 13 or 14.

Because my father liked to walk, every day we'd go on big hiking trips in the surrounding countryside. We'd for example walk around the Bile Labe, where there were loads of waterfalls, and also the chalet 'U Bileho Labe.' One year by the Divci Lavka, which was in the valley under Spindleruv Mlyn our father built us a small wooden waterwheel, which turned as the water spun it. When we returned there the next year, we were ecstatic, because the waterwheel was still there! I remember that in the store by the bridge down in Spindleruv Mlyn they sold peaches, but because they were too expensive, my mother always bought us one apiece.

The last time we were in Spindleruv Mlyn was when I was 14.