

## Anna Mrazkova In A Traditional Czech Costume



This photo was taken by a girlfriend of mine, it's from the time we were already occupied. At that time we were putting on some sort of amateur patriotic play. I participated in Czech patriotic events like this amateur theater, the same like I attended Sokol from the age of three, my father used to attend it as well, and when my sister Eva was born, they also had her registered at about the age of three. I liked Sokol a lot, but later we stopped going there, so as not to endanger the rest of the Sokol members by associating with them. I exercised together with my father at the last

pre-war all-Sokol Slet [Rally] at the Strahov Stadium in 1938. To this day, I've still got the garland that I had on my head back then! The last rally was very nice, I've got beautiful memories of it. The atmosphere was pleasant, and none of us back then wanted to admit that things would soon so drastically change for the worse, that Munich and the war would come. I remember realizing that the situation was bad when they annexed the Sudetenland. People who up to then had been closet Fascists suddenly showed their true colors, and that was quite a big shock for us. But I've also got to say that at home in Luze the situation was a little different, in that Jews, as a quite strong community, had lived there for generations, and there weren't any problems. We'd always associated with non-Jews as well, no one differentiated there. For example, when Jews were ordered to turn in animals and other things, the Czech police chief, some Mr. Burian, came to notify us ahead of time. Mr. Burian came ahead of time and warned us that they had a confiscation order, so that we'd have time to hide valuables with friends where they'd be safe. Almost everything was being confiscated: valuables, jewels, gold, furs, dishes, carpets, cars, bicycles, radios, dogs, cats, household animals. So thanks to the warning, we were for example able to hide our furs with friends, and turned in these horrible old ratty moth-eaten furs ? when you touched them, clouds of vermin would rise from them. Or we for example turned in our bicycles, but this policeman, Burian, came after the war and brought our bicycles back. He was an awfully decent and honorable man.