

Bernard Knezo Schönbrun At The Grape Harvest In Pukanec



This photograph was taken in Pukanec, most likely in the 1970s. I'm sitting at a table with my wife's relatives as the first man on the right. I helped the town of Pukanec a lot after the war. I worked at the Industry and Business Commission [in post-war Czechoslovakia, the Czech part of the state had ministries, and the Slovak part had commissions. A ministry was led by a ministry, and a commission by a commissioner]. At the time the Business Commission was led by Takac. During the nationalization and socialization of businesses, we were deciding where the national companies were to be located, and where business coops were to be put. Of course we put the

national ones into larger places. At one meeting we were discussing the town of Pukanec, right when Takac entered the office. I was promoting the idea of locating a co-op in Pukanec. Takac asked why we were putting it in Pukanec, in such a hole? Finally we managed to push this idea through. Because it would have been a shame if it hadn't succeeded. At that time Pukanec had good carpenters, coopers, blacksmiths... It wasn't reasonable to send them out to surrounding towns, like Kremnica and Banska Stiavnica. So a co-op was organized, which exported various things, even abroad. It was also advantageous for local people. They left for work at 6am, and by 2pm they were already home. In this fashion they managed to also farm their fields. They took a bit of a nap at home, and went out into the fields and vineyards. Well, and after work they used to sit around like this in the vineyard. They'd drink wine and eat homemade foods. The photograph you're looking at is also one of these occasions.. After the revolution in 1989 the co-op slowly fell apart. I couldn't understand it, why? Such clever people and it all slipped between their fingers. I asked them how it was possible. I didn't get an answer.