

## Project Description

### Reestablishment of the Woodrow Wilson Monument Prague, Czech Republic

American Friends of the Czech Republic (AFoCR), a Washington, DC, based non-profit organization, is rebuilding, in partnership with the City of Prague and the Metropolitan District of Prague 1, the monument to American President Woodrow Wilson at the main train station in Prague. The Monument was built in 1928 but destroyed by the Nazis in 1941 during the occupation.

In 2002 AFoCR established a memorial in Washington, DC, to Tomáš G. Masaryk, the first president of Czechoslovakia. President Wilson collaborated closely with President Masaryk to secure the independence of Czechoslovakia in 1918, and the Czech people revered Wilson for his leadership and vision. The Wilson Monument in Prague, as the counterpart of the Masaryk Memorial, will complete the symbolization of the long standing Transatlantic ties of friendship and democratic values held in common by the American and Czech peoples. It will commemorate the rebirth of Czech democracy after decades of suppression.



Masaryk Memorial, Washington, DC

The project was formally approved by the Prague City Council on August 14, 2007. Prague Lord Mayor Pavel Bém stated:

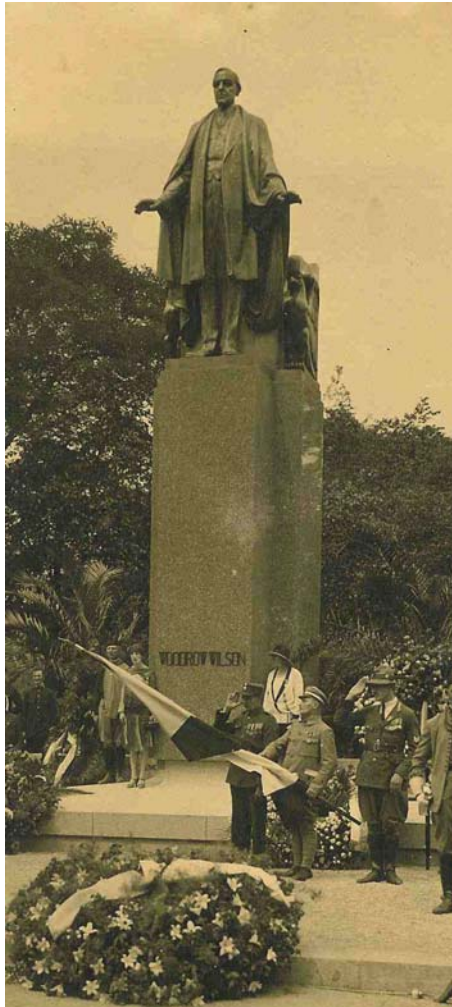
“We want to rebuild the monument for many different reasons. Firstly, because of our respect for Woodrow Wilson, and, secondly, because of respect for our friends in the United States and for our emigrants.”

Prague’s main train station was built in the Art Nouveau style in 1909 and officially named “Wilson Train Station” in 1919. The name reverted to “Main Train Station” under both Nazi and communist rule, but the station was again officially renamed for Wilson in 1990. The current project is timely as the city of Prague, with the Italian company Grandi Stazioni, has underway a complete renovation of the station and the area around it, with completion planned for 2011.



The Wilson Monument originally stood facing the station’s Art Nouveau façade across Wilsonova Ulice (Wilson Street) in Vrchlický Park. In the 1970’s the communist government built a large one-story addition to the station in a functional style, taking a large portion of the park, including the area previously occupied by the monument. The original location is no longer feasible, so the rebuilt monument will face the center of the façade of the station addition, but it will again be in Vrchlický Park.

The original, larger than life-sized statue was bronze and the base was granite. It was the first statue of an American president in Prague, and it was dedicated on the July 4, 1928. The message on the pedestal read: “The world must be made safe for democracy.” in both Czech and English. For historical and artistic reasons the new statue will be a replica of the original one. The size and design of the pedestal and the plaza, however, may vary from the original, in order to best suit the new location.



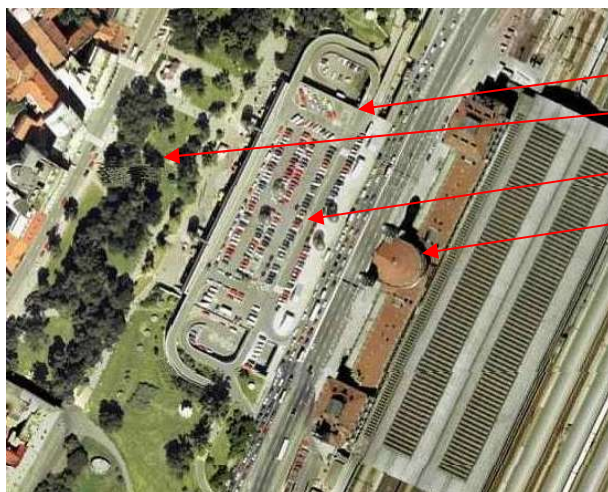
Dedication of Wilson Monument  
July 4, 1928

The statue was created by the great Albín Polášek (1879-1965), born in Frenštát, Moravia, who graduated from the Philadelphia Academy of Fine Arts, studied in Rome, and headed the sculpture department at the Art Institute of Chicago for nearly thirty years. In 1950 Polasek retired to Winter Park, Florida, where he built a home and continued his prolific artistic creativity. In 1961, the sculptor and his wife founded the Albin Polasek Foundation (APF), began buying back his works, and opened the residence, with adjoining galleries, chapel, and gardens, to the public as a museum. The APF continues as an active contributor to the culture of Winter Park and Central Florida in many ways. The APF is an enthusiastic collaborator on the Wilson Monument project. It has a large collection of photos and drawings in its archives and vast experience in recreating Polasek's works.

In an exciting discovery, the original plaster model of the full-size head and shoulders of the statue was found in the lapidarium of the National Museum in Prague in early 2008. This find ensures an exact copy of the most expressive part of the sculpture, and it connects the reproduction directly to the hand of Albín Polášek.

In July 2008 AFoCR received proposals from 13 Czech sculptor teams to recreate the statue. In February 2009 a selection committee comprised of the stakeholders in the project chose the team of Michal Blažek, Václav Frýdecký, and Daniel Talavera to receive the commission for the statue. The multi-generational team has extensive academic training and experience in sculpture and is underway in creating the full size clay model of the statue. The work, including the process of bronze casting, will take 18 months.

In April 2008 AFoCR formed a team of professionals in Prague to carry out the project, in the disciplines of architecture, law, and public relations. For AFoCR the project is being directed by Robert W. Doubek, who was the project director for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on the Mall in Washington, DC. The total project cost is estimated to be \$725,000, and the monument's dedication will coincide with the completion of the renovation of the station.



Station Addition – 1970's

New Site for Rebuilt Monument

Original Site of Wilson Monument

Original Station Building - 1909



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