

U STONEHENGE

Po stopách dudáka Švandy







At Stonehenge

In the footsteps of bagpiper Schwanda

Schwanda is the most famous Czech bagpiper. But did a piper of that name ever live? It is quite likely that he not only lived but also played the pipes so well that he even made it into popular literature and became an inspiration for many works of art.

Schwanda was allegedly among the best pipers in Prácheň region, but it is not known when he lived. Josef Formánek, a teacher from Strakonice, is said to have met people at the end of the 19th century who had heard the stories about Bagpiper Schwanda from his friends and relatives.

Josef Režný, a folklorist from Strakonice, tracked down more than two dozen Schwandas living in several villages south of Strakonice during the 17th and 18th centuries.

The Strakonice model of Stonehenge is an imitation of one of the gates the trillth of the ancient shrine in real size. The concrete blocks were used in experiments that aimed to reveal the secrets of lifting and precisely setting the huge stone lintels on top of the pillars. The experiments were performed by Ing. Pavel Pavel of Strakonice in 1991 and 1992.

The Otava River originates from the confluence of Vydra and Křemelná at Čeněk's sawmill in Šumava mountain. It is famous for gold panning and extracting freshwater pearls. In the past it was of great importance for timber rafting and also served as a source of livelihood. Today it is not only an attractive destination for people who love water sports, but also hiking and cycling enthusiasts.

[1] Photo: monument to Schwanda the bagpiper on Big Square in Strakonice, author: academic artist Jiří Kubelka, 2011







