

Czech descendants to celebrate historical marker designation

By JANE ESTES

The descendants of Pavel Machu will gather Saturday, August 17, at 10 a.m. to unveil the newly awarded Texas Historical Marker at the family cemetery in Granger and to celebrate the man whose vision impacted the small town.

Pavel Machu was born in 1834 in Seninka, Moravia, in the Czech Republic.

He lost both of his parents by the age of 13.

With his wife, Rozina Machu and their three children, he set sail for America in 1870.

The family arrived in Galveston and made their way to Austin County, west of Houston. Because of health reasons, the family moved to Polanka, south of Taylor, but they eventually purchased land southeast of Granger.

In early maps of Williamson County, the Machu homestead was recognized as an individual community.

His first goal was to provide a school for the town and others who had emigrated from Moravia to the area.

With no formal education and a language barrier, Pavel managed to build the Moravian School with the help of other farmers.

He donated a parcel of his farmland and rode on horseback throughout the area to ask for donations for construction costs to build the school.

He was instrumental in founding the first Czech Protestant church in the Central Texas area, The Czech Moravian Brethren Church, held services at the Moravia School built by Pavel and his neighbors.

Pavel helped build a Catholic church in Granger.

When the time came to construct his Protestant church, Catholic congregates returned the favor by helping him build it.

Historically, in the Czech Republic, these denomina-



Courtesy photo

Pavel and Rozina Machu were instrumental to the formation of the City of Granger. Pavel helped build schools and churches in the community.

tions didn't get along but they both found common ground in Texas.

The neighboring churches still stand on the west side of town.

The Machu Family Cemetery began when Pavel saw a woman driving a wagon with her husband's body in it.

She needed a place to bury him and Pavel Machu generously offered her space on his land.

Pavel Machu died in 1907, and the church he helped build could not hold all of the mourners who came to pay their respects.

His wife Rozina passed away in 1920 surrounded by her children and grandchildren.

They are both buried in the family cemetery.

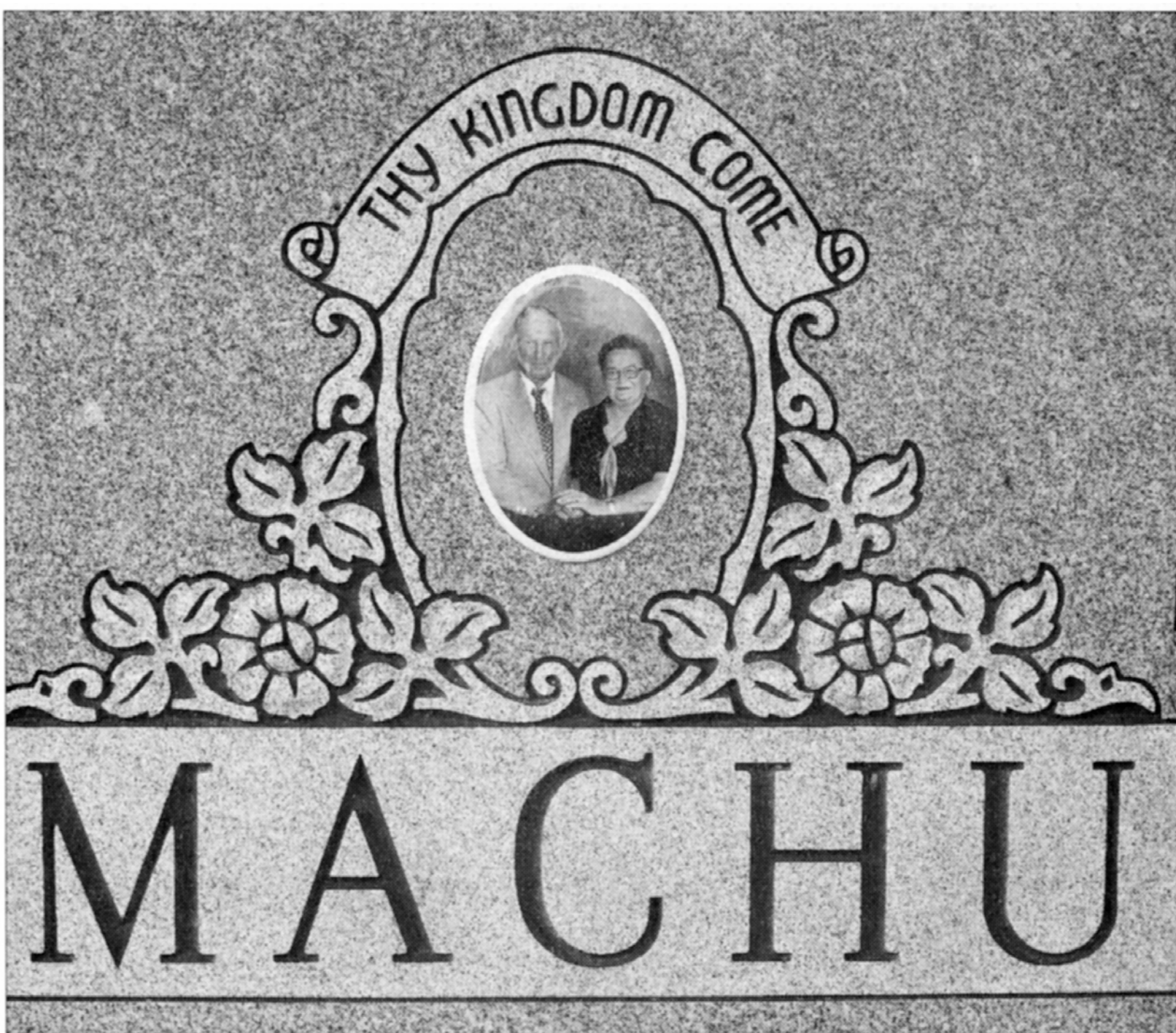
In the early 1970's, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers relocated the Machu Family Cemetery to the eastern edge of the town to create Lake Granger.

Over one hundred years since Pavel Machu settled in his adopted home, his legacy continues.

Officials from the City of Granger and the Williamson County Historical Commission will attend Saturday's ceremony.

Light refreshments will be served afterward.

The Machu family cemetery is located about a mile off Country Road 348 in Granger.



Andy Sharp

The grave of Albin E. and Vlasta Machu, descendants of Pavel Machu, in the Machu Cemetery is pictured on Wednesday. A portrait of the couple is a centerpiece of the stone. The cemetery has been designated a Texas historical Marker and an unveiling ceremony takes place on Saturday.