

## PUCHNER BASSOONS

### SERIAL NUMBERS:

| Years Manufactured | Serial Numbers |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 1964-1969          | 6000-7000      |
| 1969-1974          | 7000-8000      |
| 1974-1980          | 8000-9000      |
| 1980-1987          | 9000-10000     |
| 1987-1994          | 10000-11000    |
| 1994-1995          | 11000-11236    |
| Not Used           | 11237-12236    |
| 1995-2001          | 12237-13000    |
| 2001-2006          | 13000-13800    |
| 2007-              | 13800 >>       |

Born in 1870, Vinzenz Puchner lost his parents at a very young age and he subsequently went to live with the Gessner family in Graslitz, Bohemia (at that time, part of the Austro-Hungarian Habsburg Empire). As he grew up, he learned to play the oboe, clarinet and bassoon, and he observed and learned how to make various wind instruments at Vinzenz Kohlert's and Sons (established 1840). His experience as a musician helped him immensely, and from the beginning he placed a high value on quality craftsmanship in the construction of his oboes, clarinets, bassoons and flutes. Vinzenz Puchner established his own woodwind instrument company in August of 1897 in Graslitz. Early-on he took part in regional exhibitions (Aussig 1903 and Komotau 1913) gaining gold medals and establishing his reputation as a master instrument maker. In 1914, he was called into the Austrian military due to the outbreak of World War I, and his son, Josef (age 17 at the time), ran the business while he was away. After World War I, the multi-national state of Austria-Hungary, of which Bohemia was a part, was broken-up into a number of smaller national states. The Bohemian portion of the musical instrument manufacturing industry, represented by the chief cities of Graslitz and Schonbach, belonged to the newly-formed Czechoslovak Republic.

As a result of The Munich Agreement of September 1938, the Czech Republic, occupied by a majority of ethnic Germans, was annexed by the German Third Reich. Shortly after the annexation, many employees of the Puchner Firm were called-up by the German military. During World War II, the company continued to make musical instruments, although mainly for export. A portion of the company was assigned to war production, for the manufacture of airplane parts. After nearly 50 years in business, and just after World War II in 1947, a government commission from Prague under the so-called Benes decree, appropriated and liquidated the

Puchner business into the Czech State Enterprise AMATI. Josef was then made to work as an instrument tuner, while the rest of the family was exiled to Nauheim, in the the state of Hesse, where other instrument makers from Graslitz (now called Kraslice) had already been relocated. Josef was able to join the family in April of 1948. Vinzenz Puchner died in Nauheim in November of 1948, only a few months after being exiled. Vinzenz's son and grandson, Josef and Walter, immediately began new construction for their business in Nauheim, where they founded the firm of Josef Puchner formerly Vinzenz Puchner, Graslitz. The new structure was completed in 1955 on Beethovenstrabe, where it remains today. The shortage of dry seasoned wood hindered the construction of new instruments, and the Puchners were only able to provide instrument repair servuces for local musicians. In addition to musical instruments, they made motorcycle horns, music stands and clarinet mouthpieces from vulcanized rubber. An oppportunity to purchase a supply of older wood, which had been stored for more than ten years, allowed them an oppportunity to again begin to construct instruments, starting first with clarinets, and then adding oboes and bassoons later. Josef Puchner passed away at the age of 91 in 1988. The company was then re-organized under the name J. Puchner Manufacture of Woodwind Instruments Ltd, and Walter's children, Gabriele and Gerald, joined the company as fourth-generation partners. Many of Puchner's employees have been with the firm for more than 35 years. Puchner instruments are treasured by musicians throughout the world. Puchner stamped the serial number into the wood of each joint until about 1965 (the low 6000's). After that time they moved the serial number to the boot flange under the boot cap (similar to Heckel).

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