



# Croatian Fraternal Union/Hrvatska Bratska Zajednica

Topic Guide for Chronicling America (<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov>)

## Introduction

Founded in Pennsylvania in 1894, the Croatian Fraternal Union (CFU) is now the oldest and largest Croatian organization in North America. The Croatian Federation was first established in 1894 after the merging of six Croatian societies, changing its name to the National Croatian Society in 1897 and to the Croatian Fraternal Union in 1926. Ohio has been home to numerous local chapters of the organization, particularly in cities with large Croatian populations like Cleveland and Youngstown. Over the years, the CFU started a newspaper, orphanage, tamburitza (musical instrument) group, and junior division. The CFU pledged its loyalty to the United States during the World Wars, but continued to support Croatia's independence at the same time—a street in Croatia's capital is named for the CFU.

## Important Dates

- 1893: Croatian-American journalist Zdravko V. Mužina calls for a convention to organize a benefit society for Croatian-Americans.
- January 14, 1894: 300 people answer Mužina's call and convene in Allegheny, Pennsylvania.
- September 2, 1894: Six existing Croatian societies are merged into the Croatian Federation.
- 1904: The *Zajedničar* newspaper is founded as the official organ of the National Croatian Society.
- 1912: At the 1912 convention, the amount of dues for members is set, based on age and insurance.
- 1915: Josip Marohnić proposes setting up a Junior Order Department for the younger generation.
- 1926: The National Croatian Society merges with Croatian groups from Illinois, Kansas and Indiana to form the Croatian Fraternal Union.
- 1939: The Croatian Fraternal Union absorbs the Slovanic Croatian Union.

## Suggested Search Strategies

- Try the following terms in combination (as an "all" word search), proximity or as phrases: Croatian Federation, National Croatian Society, Croatian Fraternal Union, Hrvatska Bratska Zajednica, Zdravko V. Mužina, Josip or John Marohnić.
- Combine the group's name with a city or town name to find news and events related to local chapters.
- Search newspapers in all states, not just Ohio.
- Use online translation tools to translate search terms and articles between Croatian and English.

## Sample Articles from Chronicling America

- "[Charter Members Will Assist With Anniversary Exercises](#)" *Harrisburg Telegraph* (Harrisburg, PA), February 9, 1915, Image 9, col. 3.
- "[Jugo-Slavs Ask U.S. Recognition](#)" *Washington Times* (Washington, DC), September 27, 1918, Image 5, col. 5.
- "[United Committee of South Slavic Americans Adopts 10-Point Program](#)" *Enakopravnost* (Cleveland, OH), August 14, 1943, Image 4, col. 1-2.
- "[Membership Status...Not Detrimental!](#)" *Zajedničar* (Allegheny, PA), March 24, 1954, Image 3, col. 3.
- "[Josip Marohnic Great Man](#)" *Zajedničar* (Allegheny, PA), June 29, 1955, Image 8, col. 6-7.
- "[Demokracija u Zajednici](#)" *Zajedničar* (Allegheny, PA), July 18, 1956, Image 2, col. 1.