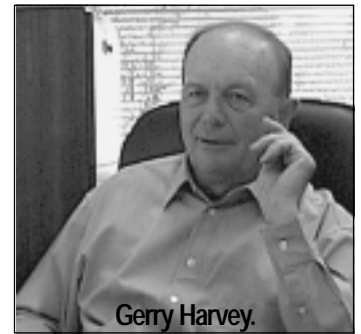


# The voice- Of Slovenia

Year 2 No 25 September 2002



Gerry Harvey.

## Harvey Norman Store In Slovenia - open

On 17. September Ljubljana, another store of the chain of Harvey Norman stores opened, adding to the 137 stores in Australia, 14 in Singapore, 8 in New Zealand, 1 in London and one in Dili, East Timor and with us now is co-founder and Executive Chairman, Gerry Harvey.

...“wow this looks really good, this is really impressive”...



Tanja Smrdel

**Welcome to Glas Slovenije our newspaper, and the Slovenian programme on SBS Radio**

Thank you! We opened last Monday on 17. September in Slovenia and there has been thousands of people coming in and it has been quite overwhelming. One of the interesting little areas is that at the end of the day when business was finished we had a situation where the families of the staff came in and they were hugging and congratulating

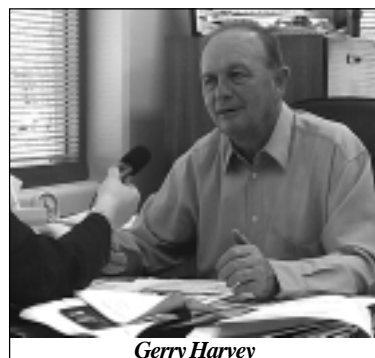
them on joining the company because they think that their children will have a great opportunity since we are open all over the world and it was very touching to see the people so excited. The Managing Director of Phillips was there and he said to our Managing Director, you must feel very proud when you see how happy these people are and he said it does made you feel really proud.

**Why did you open in Slovenia?**

Well we have had a lot of business dealings with Slovenian companies over the years - Europe Furniture, Gorenje and others - and they are good relationships and we like the Slovenian people. We went to Slovenia and thought well this is a country that is really growing and progressing. Its becoming more modern every year and it has great potential. So we thought well if we are a part of that then if Slovenia is going well then so is Harvey Norman and together it's a good partnership.

**How different is the Slovenian Store compared to Australian**

Well actually we have had a couple of people from Australia look at it and they think that the Slovenian Store is better than the Australian Stores. We built it actually to make it look as if it is a very nice building with concrete, steel and glass and all that sort of thing. When I went over their a few weeks ago I saw the President and the first think he said to me was “you have built a really nice building” Well thank



Gerry Harvey

you Mr. President. So from our point of view it is a high class building, size-wise its very big - one of our bigger shops and we are very proud of it.

**How did it feel to be there with the President as you have already met him at the Olympic Games when you had the Olympic conferences here in Sydney?**

Well in one day I spent some time with the Chamber of commerce, the Mayor then the President so, you know, from our point of view its very nice and we had the Sydney Mayor go over and meet the Mayor of Ljubljana so its all good stuff.

**Will the Harvey Norman Culture be also adapted in Slovenia as well**

Yes that that is something that will take quite a bit of work. What we would like to do is get a number of Slovenians working there and bring them to other stores we have got in other parts of the world and then we will send other people there. So its like having exchange students sort of thing and that way you sort of build the culture on a worldwide basis rather than just try to say well this is the culture we have in Australia and this is what we want and I mean you have to demonstrate it.

**I saw the advertisements for the Harvey Norman Store in Slovenia in Australian newspapers looking for Australians to work over there. Did you get may applying and are many of them working there now?**

No, we did get some apply who where not really in our business so it was very difficult. So we decided it was better to try and employ Slovenians there, which is what we have done, and we have got people that lived in Ljubljana and they are working for us now and its just a matter that they have got to learn our product and the way we do busi

ness. This is happening and they have been working over there until 2.00 in the morning day after day, 7 days a week. They are very good workers.

**What kind of red tape did you encounter - if you had any at all?**

Well it wasn't always that easy sometimes and red tape exists in Australia too. It is quite difficult when you are dealing with governments and councils and bureaucracy and it is alive and well in Australia but its also well and alive in Slovenia too.. So it would be better I think if it was easier to do some of these things quicker both in Slovenia and Australia.

**What distinguishes your store from other for the European market?**

Well the store we have built over there and fitted out - well I mean we have people waling in and its public reaction that tells you and they are saying "wow this looks really good, this is really impressive". One girl came from Italy and it took her 7 hours to drive across because she was writing a story for the Australian newspaper and she walked in and said "this is better than anything in Italy, you should bring the store to Italy". So that gives you an indication.

Its not what we think but what the public thinks. When the public are



*Harvey Norman store in Ljubljana*

waling in saying this is a really nice store and spending three hours in the shop - not always buying - just looking. They like the environment and they think this is nice, its got a bit of feel to it and its that feel that is important. If we want to sell furniture and electrical goods, the customer has to feel good in the shop. If they feel good they will buy.

**So the first week has done very well and obviously a lot of interest. How do you think you would go in the future - say possibly a second store somewhere in Europe?**

Well we have to get this one up and running, we are only a week old but the signs are very encouraging and we are hoping to get business from all other Slovenia, not just Ljubljana. We are also hoping to get a bit of business from Croatia and other parts of Yugoslavia as well.

**The Australian people have covered if very well - nearly every day there is something about Gerry Harvey and Harvey Norman Stores**

Yes this is wonderful publicity for Harvey Norman, its wonderful for Slovenia because we are thinking now whether we can do some tourist business. We might talk to some people about sending Australians over there and just increase the awareness.

So it sounds like if it going to do very well. Hopefully other business people might actually look at Slovenia as a market as well.

Well if Harvey Norman go there and do well and there is a lot of publicity then there is the rub off thing and other people start saying "Oh I never thought of Slovenia but if Harvey Norman are there maybe I should go and have a look too and it will have this effect.

**We wish you all the best for the future. Hopefully you will open many more stores and hopefully this one will do really well.**

Thank you!

## Slovenia Has Come a Long Way



*Christopher Bennett, Editor of NATO Review.*

Slovenia expects to be invited to join NATO at the Prague Summit in autumn which does not mean, however, that Slovenians are not already there. Christopher Bennett is a Slovenian, American and English by origin and is the editor of NATO Review. He is fluent in Slovenian, which he learned during his six-month studies in Slovenia, and has received an MA in International Relations from the London School of Economics. He is considered an authority on relations in the Balkan region and has written many articles and books on the Balkan crises. In the interview, he presents his

view of what NATO membership can mean for Slovenia and how Slovenia can play a more active role in the Balkans. He also reveals why it is good to come to Slovenia on vacation.

**Today, NATO is no longer a military-defence alliance but is being transformed and has no external enemies. What is the future of the Alliance? Is the security aspect still in the foreground?**

NATO has always been both a political and a military alliance and will likely remain such for the foreseeable future. As the nature of the security threats faced by the Alliance's member-states changes, so too does the way in which NATO operates. Indeed, NATO transformed itself in the wake of the end of the Cold War from an alliance focused on collective defence to a manager of Euro-Atlantic security in the widest possible sense. And NATO is again going through a modernisation process in response to the security threats of the 21st century. At this stage, it is still too early to predict what kind of Alliance will actually emerge from what are on-going discussions among NATO members. However, NATO foreign ministers decided at their most recent meeting in Iceland in May that the Alliance should be ready to deploy "wherever and whenever necessary". That is a change in the way NATO operates and may herald a greater role for the Alliance in global security. In the discussions on NATO's future, it is clear that it is, above all, the Alliance's military capabilities that makes NATO unique as an international organisation. As a result, the Alliance has to maintain and improve these capabilities to ensure that it can continue to address the security threats that its members face.

**How do you see Slovenia's possibilities of joining NATO? What more should Slovenia do before the Prague Summit?**

Those of us working at NATO do not take decisions about inviting future members to join the Alliance. Such decisions are taken by the member-states and all 19 Allies have to agree that a particular candidate-country should be invited. Slovenia has participated in the Membership Action Plan, the programme preparing countries for Alliance membership, since NATO's Washington Summit in 1999 and must continue faithfully to adhere to it between now and Prague and beyond. Slovenia must also convince all 19 existing members that it would be a good Ally and that it would bring something additional to the Alliance. Since I am Slovenian, I am not objective. I both hope and believe that Slovenia will receive an invitation to join NATO at the Prague Summit. Slovenia has come a long way in the period since it left Yugoslavia and is clearly an economically prosperous democracy that can contribute and is contributing in terms of expertise, manpower and programmes to the Alliance's peacekeeping missions in the former Yugoslavia. That said, I will remain nervous about the decision right up until the moment it is made.

**What would NATO membership bring to Slovenia?**

In the course of the 1990s, NATO successfully managed the end of the Cold War to create a very different security system, based around partnerships, throughout the Euro-Atlantic area in which almost all countries participate. Indeed, the only two countries still outside the security system that NATO built are Bosnia and Herzegovina and Ser-

bia and Montenegro, though even these countries are gradually being brought in. Slovenia was one of the first countries to join the Partnership for Peace, NATO's security co-operation programme with Partner countries, the year that it was created in 1994 and has since participated in most NATO activities, including supporting the NATO-led peacekeeping operations in the former Yugoslavia. While Slovenia has participated in Alliance activities, the country has not participated in Alliance decision-making. In effect, Slovenia has behaved as if it is a member of NATO but has had minimal say in the decisions that the Alliance has taken. If Slovenia were to become a NATO member, Ljubljana would have a voice at the North Atlantic Council, NATO's highest decision-making body, and would be able to help shape Alliance policy. Slovenia would also benefit from an improved status in its bilateral relationship with the other NATO member-states and especially the United States, since all members have to reach consensus before decisions are taken. In addition, the experience of other member-states suggests that there are also certain economic benefits of Alliance membership, though these are difficult to quantify.

***It seems that the key role in NATO is played by the United States. What is the role of small countries in the Alliance?***

The United States plays a key role at NATO in building consensus, investing the necessary resources, both human and financial, to ensure that the Alliance functions successfully. Indeed, US diplomats work tirelessly behind the scenes to cajole other Alliance members into common positions in a wide range of fields. Historically, US involvement in Europe was critical because European countries were unable to build a functioning alliance among themselves in spite of the Soviet threat because of their own rivalries. Indeed, twice in the first half of the 20th century, Europe's great powers failed to resolve their own differences without recourse to war. The NATO framework, based as it is on consensus, is such that all countries, big and small, participate in the decision-making process. In itself, this was a departure from the past, since historically the European great powers had tended to make all decisions about European security among themselves with no regard for the continent's smaller countries. Small countries can and do make their voices heard on security issues in NATO in ways that would never be possible if the Alliance did not exist. But in order to make a convincing case at NATO, small countries have to ensure that the diplomats that they send to the Alliance are of the highest calibre.

***It seems that the Slovenian public is not greatly inclined towards NATO accession. What is NATO's official response to this? Namely, it has turned out that public support of accession is an informal criterion for membership. How can this be when membership is purely about political and expert decisions?***

As I have said earlier, NATO has a complex decision-making process based on consensus. An issue is discussed until all countries agree and once agreement is reached, it is up to the member-states to ensure that public opinion at home is supportive of that decision. Difficult decisions have to be made and member-states have to carry their own public opinion with them. If Ljubljana cannot muster support among Slovenians for Slovenia's entry into NATO, it will hardly be in a position to rally Slovenian public opinion behind difficult decisions. As a result, Slovenia's political leaders have a major task ahead of them in explaining the benefits as well as the responsibilities of NATO membership to their own public. Here, Slovenia is the exception among the NATO candidate-countries. In every other MAP country, public opinion is extremely enthusiastic about the prospect of Alliance membership. In Slovenia, there is much talk about a referendum on NATO membership. If such a referendum does take place, it will require an open debate of the merits of NATO membership, which should clarify matters. Indeed, when a similar referendum took place in Hungary, some 85 per cent of Hungarians voted for Alliance membership.

***Experience of new NATO members has shown that through membership these countries have become much more attractive for foreign investment. Do you think Slovenia could also become more attractive to foreign capital?***

NATO helps provide security and stability for its members. This is an essential pre-requisite for economic growth and was perhaps the key factor in Europe's economic recovery in the aftermath of the Second World War. It is also one factor influencing foreign investors in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland in recent years. But it was not

the only factor. NATO membership would probably encourage some foreign investors to look more favourably on Slovenia. However, on its own, NATO membership is not a magic formula for attracting foreign capital. Slovenia will have to compete with other countries, many of whom will also be NATO members, for foreign capital and will only benefit from such investment if it offers greater potential for earning a good return. If, by contrast, Slovenia fails to be invited or chooses not to join NATO, I fear that the country might seem less attractive to foreign investors and therefore lose out to neighbouring countries.

***You are known to be an expert on the Balkans issue, particularly the development of events in the Balkans in recent years. Where do you see Slovenia's role in preserving peace and developing democracy in the countries of former Yugoslavia?***

Slovenia is already doing a lot in this area, but it could do much more. The International Demining Trust Fund, which is responsible for most of the demining now taking place in the former Yugoslavia, is based in Slovenia and is playing a critical role in creating the conditions for a return to normalcy after war. Otherwise, Slovenian psychologists have pioneered the study of the impact of the wars of Yugoslavia's destruction on children and should be able to use this expertise to assist in their post-war rehabilitation. And, of course, Slovenia has sent its own forces to participate in the various NATO-led peacekeeping operations. Of even greater importance, however, is the role being played by Slovenian business in the region's post-war recovery. Whereas many foreign investors have considered the risk of placing capital in the region to be prohibitive, Slovenian businessmen have been prepared to invest. Indeed, Slovenia is the largest foreign investor in Bosnia and Herzegovina and, judging by what I saw on a recent trip to Belgrade and Novi Sad, Slovenian companies are making major inroads into Serbia. This is significant because, to use a cliché, it is trade, not aid that will give the region a future. I say that Slovenia could do more because Slovenians have the expertise, the language skills and the personal contacts to have a positive impact in the rest of the former Yugoslavia. However, many appear reluctant to become more involved there, as if links with their former compatriots will be to Slovenia's detriment. Such links can only be to Slovenia's benefit.

***You are closely connected to Slovenia, as your mother is Slovenian. How did you manage to make such a glittering international career? What is your key?***

While my career has been international, I'm not sure that it could be described as glittering. There is certainly nothing glamorous about spending many years living in miserable conditions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. I got good experience and made good contacts early in my career as a reporter covering the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia. This has held me in good stead. That said, I took a lot of risks when younger that, now that I have a family, I would no longer consider.

***Can NATO membership be a springboard for young Slovenians' careers?***

Working for or at NATO is an excellent experience. If Slovenia is invited to join the Alliance, more Slovenian diplomats will be required to work at NATO headquarters and Slovenians will be able to compete for international positions with the Alliance. Slovenian diplomats at NATO will be able to learn a huge amount and, because of the large numbers of diplomats from other countries also working at NATO headquarters, they should be able to make good, long-term contacts. At the end of the day, these posts are what you make of them.

***You speak Slovenian. How have you become so fluent in a language that is said to be very complicated?***

I speak Slovenian because I am Slovenian, albeit born and brought up in another country. Since I grew up with the language, I don't have the kinds of problems that a foreigner would have and can even just about handle the dual. Moreover, I spent six months at Ljubljana University at age 18 to make sure that I could speak properly. That said, I've rarely spoken the language in the intervening years with the result that, though I have no problems understanding, I often find I'm stuck for words.

***What are your relations with Slovenia? I hear you come to Slovenia on vacation...***

My parents have a house in Bled. However, between 1992 and 2000 I was so busy that I failed to visit Slovenia once. That year my daughter was born and since then I've visited as often as possible to show her off to friends and family and to let my parents spend time with her. I'll be returning again in August for a couple of weeks.

## Slovene Association Sydney 45<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

Speech by Alfred Breznik,  
 22<sup>ND</sup> September, 2002

Mrs. Mira Smrdel, president of the SAS, The Hon. John Murray, MP, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, NSW Parliament and Mrs. Murray, Mr. Bojan Bertonec, Charge D'Affaires of the Slovenian Embassy in Canberra, Mrs. Bertonec and family, Mr. Dusan Lajovic, Consul General of the R.S. for NZ; Father Valerija Jenko, OFM, OAM Father Filip Rupnik, OFM Representatives of the Slovenian organisations, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen



I've been asked to say a few words in English, for the benefit of our English speaking guests and friends. It is indeed a great pleasure and privilege for me to be asked to speak on this special occasion – the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Slovene Association in Sydney.

Even though I arrived to the shores of this beautiful city two years after the inception of the SAS, I soon found a need, just like most of my compatriots who arrived before me, to join this young association. It was a place where we would gather, mainly on the weekends, to share many common problems, seek advice from each other, speak, sing and play in our mother tongue and eat food prepared the way our mothers used to do it. We thus felt refreshed and re-energized for another working week – in most cases either in the factory or the bush, regardless of our previous professions.

Members, mostly young, full of enthusiasm and optimism, soon felt the need for a place they could call "home". Slovenian clubs are often referred to as "slovenski dom" or Slovenian Home. There were a number of attempts, before this piece of land was found and the present DOM or HOME erected. This is well illustrated at the exhibition in the library, right there at the front entrance. But we must never forget that this magnificent building – or SLOVENSKI DOM, as we call it, is a result of all the members of the association, past and present. They all participated one way or other: by either helping to build it with their own hand or by their financial contributions or both. Many have helped with organizing social and cultural events and thus also contributing with the fund raising.

Even though this building was finished relatively late in the eighties, and as said before, there were other club houses bought or built before. These were all links in the chain which finally lead to this magnificent building, the "Slovenski Dom" or the "Slovenian Club" of which we are all really very proud. Therefore, today as we celebrate the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the SAS, we are also thinking of and thanking all the members, also those who are no longer with us and who have left a significant mark on this institution, for their contribution to the success and prominence of this Association.

We all, however, still have an important task in front of us and that is: to make sure that this Association and this "SLOVENSKI DOM", will remain for at least another 45 years in hands of Australian Slovenians. And how can we achieve this? Simply by telling and teaching our children and grand children about the small and proud nation of our forefathers in the midst of the European Alps - about their culture and language and their achievements. Is this really too much to ask?

My sincere congratulations to all my fellow members of the SAS, past and present committee members and presidents on this important celebration. My congratulations also on behalf of the Slovenian Consulate General in Sydney.

And may I also use this opportunity to congratulate both the SAS, as well as it's longest serving President, Mr. Stefan Sernek, on the high recognition presented to them here tonight, on behalf of the Office for Slovenians Abroad at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the RS.

May you all continue to have a very happy celebration.  
 Prav lep večer zelim vsem!

## Learning Slovenian – language in context

25 years

(In Melbourne, the Victorian School of Languages of the Victorian Education Department offers the Slovenian language to students from years 6 to 12, and adults.)

The Slovenian language course is topic-based and structured to allow the learner to develop language skills in an integrated and systematic fashion. The Slovenian language programme has drawn on communicative learning and teaching approaches, applying the most progressive methodology of language learning defined as "language in context". The student uses and develops language skills in the context of a situation or a theme or topic, to be able to communicate in speech and writing. The situation or topic is based on an everyday situation in life or about an aspect of Slovenian society or culture. Students use authentic and realistic resources, which include: members of the Slovenian community, radio, Internet, audio and videotapes, magazines, television. Culturally significant texts, articles, extracts are included in the course - in the fields of: literature, current affairs, arts, science and technology. Slovenian literature is an important component of the course, including: folktales and myths, poetry, short stories, novels, film and radio scripts. Resources for the study of Slovenian language and culture has been published by the Education Department of Victoria, in "Study Design for Slovenian 2002-2005", and may also be viewed in the Institute's web site Thezaurus in Slovenian Language Resources.

The study of Slovenian is designed for the learner to:

- use Slovenian to communicate with others
- understand and appreciate the cultural contexts in which Slovenian is used
- understand their own culture(s) through the study of other cultures
- understand language as a system
- make connections between Slovenian and English, and/or other languages
- apply Slovenian to work, further study, training or leisure.

The Slovenian language course is sequenced with the systematic development of language skills within the body of a wide range of topics or themes. The four macro skills of listening, reading, writing and speaking are incorporated in the topics with the language tasks or activities. The tasks are learning to use text types in Slovenian, such as: letter, article, brochure, report, advertisement, review, story, play, song, poem, message, recipe, instruction, speech, and interview. With the completion of the set tasks the students develop language skills progressively. The linguistic elements of Slovenian are systematically included in the topics, with attention to revision and reinforcement. Topics and activities are selected with a view to their suitability for the particular age group, and language level.

The themes of the secondary course outline for years 7 to 10 are: Family, Food, School, Shopping, Celebrations, Literature, Health, Youth Issues, Ljubljana, Slovenia, Environment, Work. For each theme, there is a different topic outline based on a theme, for each year level from 7 to 10. For example, in the outline one theme is "Slovenia". The topic "Planning a Trip to Slovenia" is for year 7, topic "Travel Agent - where to go?" is for year 8, topic "Seeing places - Primorska, Maribor" is for year 9, topic "Seeing places - Triglav National Park, Soca Valley, Soca Front WW1" is for year 10. There is a separate course outline for years 11 and 12.

The Slovenian course outlines for primary, secondary, including VCE (final years 11-12) will be published by early 2003. They have been written by members of the Institute according to guidelines set in national statements, policy and the Curriculum Standards Framework set by the Victorian Education Department. The course outline is the plan and a guide for instructors in the preparation of the more detailed individual syllabus for classes.

Sandi Ceferin

Projects

Institute for Slovenian Studies of Victoria Inc

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