

*Slovenian Association Sydney
50th Anniversary*



1957 - 2007



My name is Ben.



I love going to the club with my stara mama and stari ata. My brother Ethan and I sometimes go there on Fridays.

Ethan is 3 years old. We have yummy food and we play table tennis in the hall. Stari ata plays table tennis too. Stara mama plays with me. We can watch footy on the big screen. It is so much fun. I like it when there is music playing at the club and I can play with my friends.

But sometimes there are no other kids there. I wish more kids would be there.

I wish that the club would be forever. It makes me happy to go there.

Ben Gaspersic

(6 years old)

To the Slovenian Association Sydney on their 50th Anniversary



Whenever I'm in the hall of the Slovenian Association Sydney, my attention diverts to the back wall, which is dedicated to past Presidents and those members who, over 50 years volunteered their efforts to bring life to the vision and create the building we have today. I ponder over these names with respect, sensitivity and gratitude, with knowledge that without them the Slovenian community would not have this home. Amongst the names are also those who have already gone to God, seeking reward for their hard work. They invested many hours of volunteer work and much personal sacrifice to give the community this home- a place where we can all meet, converse in our native

tongue, enjoy festivities, performances from here and Slovenia and enjoy a variety of sporting activities.

We can also enjoy enticing meals in the restaurant. Several members are also involved with this service to the community. We must acknowledge their efforts and thank them for their commitment, so that we can continue to enjoy this service. It is essential that we give our patronage to the restaurant and encourage others to do so.

To the committee members of the Slovenian Association Sydney - past and present, to all members and friends, to all those who value their work - congratulations on the celebration of the association's 50th anniversary. I ask God that He continue to bless your efforts into the future!

As the psalm highlights: "Builders efforts are for nought, if God is not building a house". From humble beginnings scattered across parts of Sydney, from Horsely Park, for which we must give thanks to 'Akcijska Zveza', to the buildings and sporting facilities at Wetherill Park, we give thanks.

And what of the future?! We must do all that is in our power, to pass onto the younger generation an appreciation of all that was done in the past and a sense of commitment to carry on the work that was begun. Perhaps their approach will be different, more akin to a younger spirit. Nevertheless, the most important mission is that they will show interest and be prepared to take the reins, when the older generation is no longer capable. My responsibility to them is and always was, that I seek on their behalf, God's blessings - particularly for those who are involved with any Slovenian associations across the whole of Australia. I hope that they will accept and undertake their mission as responsible young men and women.

*Father Valerijan Jenko OFM, AOM.
September, 2007*

A history in brief - Slovene Association Sydney

Towards the end of 1956, the desire and endeavours of post war Slovenian migrants in Sydney, to form an association which would include all Slovenians, came to fruition. The Slovene Association Sydney was established.

Father Bernard Ambrožič had leased a house from the Franciscan Order. This was at 121 Queen St. Woollahra. In this house, the newly founded association made its first home.

A meeting was called on 12. Jan, 1957 to establish a steering committee. Those present were : M. Lajovic, L. Urbančič, Jože Čuješ, M. Pleterski, J. Klemenčič, S. Rapotec, O. Turnšek, R. Mršnik, S. Fretze.

The task of this steering committee was to organise a general meeting for all members of the Slovenian community in Sydney.

ROJAKINJE IN ROJAKI!

Kot Vam je že več ali manj znano, smo v Sydney-u ustanovili "ZVEZO SLOVENCEV", ki naj bi postala osrednja organizacija slovenskih izseljencev v Avstraliji.

Izvedbo organizacije in pripravo prvega rednega občnega zbora - ki bo v času božičnih delavskih počitnic - so Slovenci v NSW zaupali peterim sorojakom, ki sestavljajo začasno predstavništvo organizacije. Naloga predstavništva je, da prične takoj z organizacijskimi pripravami, da skrbi za kulturni, družabni in socialni razvoj slovenskih naseljencev v Avstraliji, da z denarjem in drugimi sredstvi pomaga rojakom, ki so vsled nesreče prišli v stisko, iz katere si sami pomagati ne morejo ter da razvija in goji slovenski tisk v Avstraliji ter izkuša izpopolniti zvezni list "MISLI", da bodo res slika našega življenja in mišljenja v Avstraliji.

Zveza Slovencev je nepolitična in nestrankarska in je zato v njej prostora za vsakega, ki je in hoče ostati pošten zaveden Slovenec, in je po svojih močeh pripravljen sodelovati pri delu za boljšo bodočnost našega življa v Avstraliji.

Vsako mora biti sprejeti v Zvezo Slovencev na redni seji predstavništva. Tudi prijatelji in drugi podporniki bodo lahko postali člani. O vsem odloča Predstavništvo.

Predstavništvo "Zveze Slovencev" se tem potom obrača do Vas vseh s prošnjo, da se vsi zavedni Slovenci brez izjeme priključite slovenski organizaciji in na ta način pomagate ohraniti enotnost naših ljudi v Avstraliji: Več glav več ve - več ramen več nese! Ostanimo složni in enotni, da bomo tako dali posameznemu vrednejši pogled našim sorojakom po drugih kontinentih. Strankarska pripadnost in osebne razlike naj nas pri delu za skupen cilj ne motijo. Pokažimo, da smo pripadniki sicer malega, a kulturnega naroda in da smo zmožni podrediti osebne in sebične interese interesom skupnosti!

V trdnem prepričanju, da med nami ne bo nikogar, ki bi stal prekrizanih rok, ko bodo drugi delali, Vas vabimo, da se danes vključite v vrste Zveze Slovencev in tako dejansko in formalno dokažete, da ste pripravljeni pomagati pomoči potrebnim in da se vedno zavedate, da je ljubiti domovino ne samo pravica, temveč tudi dolžnost.

Istočasno se tudi obračamo na Vas in Vas prosimo, da se naj vsakdo, ki je pripravljen kakorkoli sodelovati pri kaki pevski vaji, ali pri kakem koncertu in pri drugem delu, javi, da vemo s kom imamo kje računati. Tako se bo delo lažje porazdelilo.

V Sydney-u, 21. avgusta 1953.

Predstavništvo
"ZVEZE SLOVENCEV"

The first attempt to organise a Slovenian association in Sydney, came with the establishment of the 'Slovenian Alliance' (slovenska zveza) in 1953. It was the forerunner of the club.

At this meeting, to be held on 2nd Feb. 1957, the following people were elected into the steering committee: President, Milivoj Lajovic; Vice Presidents, Ivan Plesničar and Simon Pevc; Secretaries, Ljenko Urbančič and Tončka Vodopivec; Treasurers, Janez Perko and Niko Krajc.

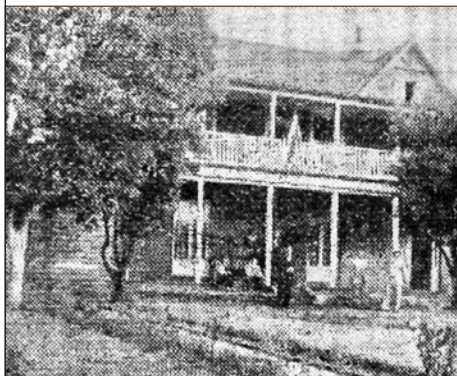
The remaining committee members were: Milan Pleterski, Alojzij Kepa and Jože Renko.

At this meeting the new club's constitution was adopted. The main aim of this constitution was stated thus:

"THE AIM OF THIS CLUB IS TO UNITE ALL WELL MEANING SLOVENIANS, WHO CARE ABOUT THE CULTURAL, ECONOMIC WELFARE AND FREEDOM OF SLOVENIAN PEOPLE.

THE CLUB IS A-POLITICAL AND HAS AS ITS GUIDELINES DEMOCRATIC, CHRISTIAN AND HUMANITARIAN PRINCIPLES."

Slovenski dom v Sydneyu



121 Queen Street, Woolahra NSW

ODPRLI BOMO V SYDNEYU
ZA POSKUSNJO

SLOVENSKO

PISARNO 121 Queen St. Woollahra,
BLIZU POST OFFICE-A

дне 3. maja 1956.

To je v hisi, ki naj postane **SLOVENSKI DOM**.

Je deset minut hoda od najinega bivalisca na 66 Gordon St., Paddington. Mimo hise vozi Ocean St. tram in od Central Railway postaje avtobusa Dover Heights in S. Head Cemetery, st. 333 in 360.

V mesecu maju bo odprta samo naslednje dni in ure:
Ob четриh ves dan, od 9 dop. do 8 zvečer.

Ob torkih, sobotah in nedeljah samo pop. od 2-8.

Telefona xcenkrat se ne bo.

V zadevah MISLI, Slovenskega Doma, za nabavo knjig in podobno se boste lahko obracali tja. Na svidenje!

Slov. duhovnika.

VABILO

na

OBLETNICO AKCIJE ZA DOM

V soboto 21. avgusta 1965 ob 7.30 zvečer v

ST. FRANCIS HALL — OXFORD STREET, PADDINGTON.

Sodelujejo v s i odseki Slovenskega društva.

Po kratkem kulturnem programu vesela domača zabava, ki take še niste doživeli!

Ne zamudite tega večera! Pridite vsi!

V zaupanju je moč — v sodelovanju slovenski dom!

Prisrčno vabljeni!

Odbor Akcije.

S.D.S. "AKCIJA ZA DOM"

SE VAM PREDSTAVLJA Z NOVO
SENZACIJO

VELIKA VINSKA TRGATEV

IN SPLOŠNO RAJANJE

**Z BOGATIM SREČOLOVOM. ŠALJIVO POSTO
IN "CELJSKIM STARIM PISKROM"**

v soboto

10. JULIJA OB 8h ZVEČER V ST. PATRICK HALL
OXFORD ST., PADDINGTON.

Odlična godba, ki si je imo pridobila še zlasti
na VESELEM večeru na ladji

The general elections resulted in the election of the following people:

Honorary president:	Father Bernard Ambrožič
President:	Milivoj Lajovic
Vice Presidents:	Simon Pevc and Ivan Plesničar
Secretary:	Ljenko Urbančič
Assistant Secretary:	Tončka Vodopivec
Treasurer:	Janez Perko
Cultural Secretary:	Neva Rudolf
Caretaker:	Milan Pleterski
Member:	Alojzij Kepa

...the Slovenian community decided on a name for its club. It settled on 'The Slovene Association Sydney'. Thus begins, what can be referred to as 'the first phase' of its history.

In the initial years they created a club 'home' and established a cultural section which ran a number of Sunday afternoon lectures and community events. In the main, these new club premises housed single, Slovenian men.

It was at this time that the idea was born to establish a legal entity or group, which would run the home and investigate its possible purchase. The opinion was that by the end of June, 1958, when the current lease expired, negotiations would commence to purchase the property at 121 Queen St, Woollahra.



A table covered with food and drinks..... Slovenians meeting and socialising.

The club was to sponsor the purchase and provide the initial capital. The 'Slovene Dom Pty Ltd' was formed and registered as the legal entity for the purchase. Unfortunately, it was soon realised that the Woolahra property was unavailable for purchase, so instead a property was purchased at 7 Metropolitan Rd. Enmore.

Unfortunately, luck was not with the Slovenian community and the club was forced to sell the new club premises due to financial difficulties. From then on, meetings were held in private homes such as that of Vlasta Cergol, Lojze Kmetič and Tončka Vodopivec.

With the arrival of Father Odilo Hajnšek, the church hall at Paddington was made available to the Slovenian community, for drama and singing rehearsals. From 1963 till 1969, Jože Čuješ was President of the association. Tončka Vodopivec filled the position of Secretary for this period, whilst Vinko Ovijač filled the position of Treasurer from 1965 till 1968.

It was during these years that the club began establishing the tradition of celebrating certain annual celebrations. For example, Mother's and Father's Days; 'Jožefovanje'; 'Kurentovanje'; 'Jurjevanje' 'Kresovanje'; feast of St Nicholas; Boxing Day and New Year's Eve. The club still celebrates most of these today.

In the year of 1963, we welcomed Father Valerijan Jenko amongst us. He undertook responsibility for providing spiritual guidance and set about establishing the Slovene Missionary Centre.



7 In 1963 we welcomed p. Valerijan Jenko amongst us. Here he is becoming acquainted with members of the Slovenian community.



'Slovenska kmečka godba'. Father Odilo Hajnšek organised a group of talented Slovenian instrumentalists to play together at Slovenian functions. (circa 1962)



Performing for audiences at Slovenian functions were much loved choir members of 'Škrjančki' (the Larks). The conductor was Ludvik Klakočar.



Children from Slovenian classes regularly performed at Slovenian functions. In the main, Jože Čuješ and Antonia Vodopivec organised such performances.



Some recognizable faces of Slovenians enjoying themselves at a function.



The Action Committee For A New Home - (Akcija Za Dom)

The forming of this committee in the July of 1964, was a very significant event in the creation of a future for the club. The disappointments of the previous years, with the forced sale of the club's premises had brought an end to the ambition of Slovenians ever owning their own premises. Many thought it would never happen. However, a group of visionary and motivated people resurrected the will to try again. A group of 7 people formed this action group.

It included: Alfred Brežnik, Rudi Brežnik, Vinko Ovijač, Stanko Salobir, Franc Novak, Jože Cetin and Virgilij Ferfolja.

They were later joined by: Mihela Šušteršič, Antonija Vodopivec, Albin Poršek, Franc Valenčič, Lucano Mozetič, Alojz Kučan, Stane Petkovšek, Rafko Pavlovec, Franc Mramor.

They formed a fund raising committee, which would work to amass funds for the purchase of new premises.

JAVEN POZIV SLOVENCEM V SYDNEYU

(Prejeli smo in objavljamo — Ur.)

Dragi rojaki: —

Že dolga leta sem po svetu, nikoli v svojem življenju pa nisem bil organizator. Vedno sem pa rad mislil na našo skupnost v izseljenstvu in njeno kulturno življenje.

Opazoval sem rad tudi podjetnost drugih narodnosti. Ne bom jih našteval, da me ne bo kdo napačno razumel. Dejstvo pa je, da smo Slovenci premalo zavzeti za skupnost. Vsaka skupina vleče na svojo stran, sredina je pa puhla in gnila. Tako ne sme iti naprej. Ozdravimo si to sredino, združimo se, začnimo delovati skupaj kot ena sama enota. Samo na ta način bomo uspeli.

Trdno sem prepričan, da to ni samo moje mišljenje. Zato začnimo orati celino, napravimo si zrahljano njivo, posejmo vanjo dobro seme. Ne bo nam žal. Z veseljem bomo gledali prve klice — množile se bodo iz dneva v dan in komaj se bomo zavedeli, že bo pred nami lepo zelena trata. Ta bo rasla in rasla do vrhunca. Nato bo napočil dan,

ko bo naše žito dozorelo in takrat bo naše veselje še večje. To bo naše plačilo, z zadovoljnimi očmi bomo gledali uspehe svojega truda.

Zato kličem: Zberimo se skupaj, začnimo z delom!

Vsi vemo, kaj nam je najbolj potrebno — DOM in CERKEV! Oboje bomo dosegli, samo začeti je treba. Začeti z dobro voljo — boste videli, da nam bo uspelo.

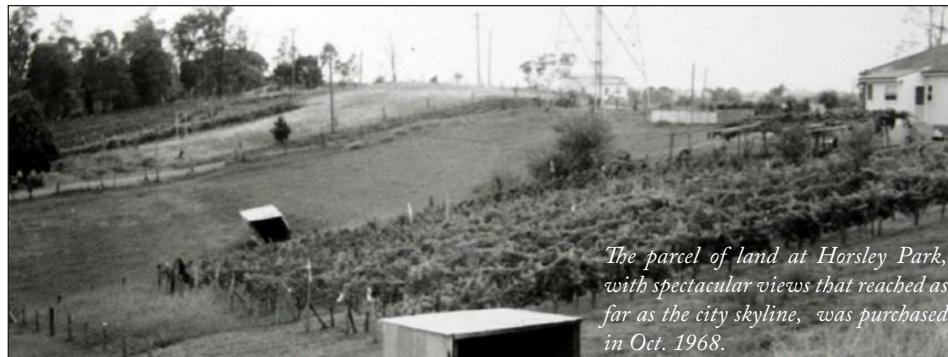
Dragi rojak, rojakinja! Ko sta prebrala te vrstice, premislita dobro, kaj bo vašin odgovor na moj poziv. Ali se strinjata? Če je tako, prosim, žrtvujta nekaj minut in par pennyjev, sporočita svoje mnenje na moj naslov pisмено ali ustno po telefonu. Če pa rajši naravnost na MISLI, pa tudi prav.

Vroče pozdrave vsem rojakom širom po Avstraliji!

Vinko Ovijač, TEL. 70-6185
555 Hume Hwy, Yagoona, Sydney

Misli, February, 1964

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The parcel of land at Horsley Park, with spectacular views that reached as far as the city skyline, was purchased in Oct. 1968.

From amongst the group were chosen three trustees for the funds collected, who would lead the community towards the legal requirements of purchase. These were: **Father Valerijan Jenko, Alfred Brežnik and Vinko Ovijač.**

At the end of its first year, the Action Committee published its first brochure – 'Prvo Letno Poročilo', containing the year's Financial statement. Another such brochure was published the following year and the third and final brochure in July of 1967.

By the end of the third year a total of \$6681 was collected. The principles of this Action Committee were adopted by and become a part of the Slovenian Association's stated principles of constitution.



AKCIJA ZA SLOVENSKI DOM V SYDNEYU

"JAVEN POZIV SLOVENCEM V SYDNEYU", ki ga je dal v letošnje februarске MISLI rojak **Vinko Ovijač**, le ni izzvenel popolnoma v prazno. Seme njegove besede je sicer počasi poganjalo, končno so se le prikazale iz ne preveč rodovitne zemlje prve zelenе bilke.

Kljub vsemu je treba priznati, da veliki večini rojakov ugaja misel: Zbirali se bomo pod **lastno streho**, pod njo bomo prirejali igre, koncerte, zabave in tako naprej. In se je zgodilo, da se je Vinkove zamisli oprijelo neko število rojakov in rojakin, ki so z njim skupaj organizirali akcijski odbor za zbiranje darov v ta namen. Vsi so se povezali z obstoječim Slovenskim društvom in se z njim domenili za enotni postopek pri akciji.

Akcijiski odbor je razdal, oziroma razposlal po pošti, med rojake veliko število pisem s ponovnim pozivom in primernimi pojasnili. Tako so rojaki v Sydneyu in bližnji okolici že poučeni o obstoju akcijskega odbora in poznajo ljudi, ki ga sestavljajo. Vedo tudi, kako si odbor skuša pridobiti zupanje rojakov, kar je vsaj v začetku eden najbolj nujnih pogojev. Lahko so uvideli, da je vsaka vsota, ki bi jo dali, krepko zavarovana

Verjetno bo kljub vsemu še veliko pomislekov. S tem ni nič narobe — tudi ljudje, ki sestavljajo akcijski odbor, niso začeli brez mnogih pomislekov. Končno so se pa le odločili in stopili na plan. Tudi od drugih rojakov ne pričakujemo, da bi na omenjena pisma kar brž začeli pošiljati — stotake. Zato imamo načrt, da bodo člani akcijskega odbora še osebno obiskovali rojake in jih pridobivali za stvar Vsak se bo pravilno legitimiral s pooblastitilo in bo sposoben pojasnjevati in razblinjati morebitne še nadaljnje pomisleke. Prepričani smo, da hoste agitatorje povsod prijazno in dobrohotno sprejeli.

V spodbudo rojakom naj bodo tu navedeni prvi temeljni kamni, prvi darovi, ki so že v blagajni akcijskega odbora: £ 50 Vinko Ovijač, po £ 20 Alfred Brežnik in Rudi Brežnik, £ 10 Marija Ovijač, po £ 5 Jože Čuješ in Marija Kecelj. Prva podlaga je torej že položena — drugi pa krepko dolagajte! Vseh oči bodo uprte v rast te začetne vsote.

Naj pripomnim, da je Slov. društvo odločilo: Od že napovedane **prireditve v soboto 15. avgusta** v Redfern Town Hall pojde ves dobiček za Slovenski dom. Če povem, da **bodo na tej prireditvi ponovno nastopili s svojim prelepo uspešnim koncertom naši SKRJANČKI**, ne more biti dvoma, da hoste rojaki napolnili dvorano do zadnjega kotička. Na svidenje! — **Rudi Brežnik.**

SLOVENIAN ASSOCIATION SYDNEY
S.D.A. AKCIJA ZA DOM

ANNUAL BALL



Finally, dreams became reality when a parcel of land was purchased on the 31st Oct., 1968, at 45 Ferrers Rd. Horsley Park. The trustees entered into a contract, on behalf of the association, to purchase the land for the sum of \$ 16,600. This parcel of land had spectacular views that reached as far as Sydney Harbour. The credit of finding this land must go to Adolf Persic, who had spent much of his personal time searching for it. The first main event organised on this land was Preseren's Picnic or fair, in the summer of 1969.

Starting with Mass, there followed sporting activities, a cultural program and a dance.



The first significant event organised at Horsely Park, was 'Prešerni tabor' in February 1969. Starting with Mass and a blessing for the future, the day was filled with sporting and cultural festivities.



Slovenian Association Sydney - 50 Years



The years that followed were prosperous for the Slovenian community.the committee however, was determined to build its own hall on the parcel of land. The plans for this hall were prepared by Ivan Žigon but they were never fully realised.



These photographs depict some of the sporting and cultural activities organised in the early years at Horsley Park.....bocce, choirs, performances in National dress and many picnics.





Dark Clouds on the Horizon

During this time there was some friction in the association and the committee. The trustees therefore called an irregular meeting, which took place on the 26th July, 1970 at the Polish Hall in Canley Vale. The meeting did not settle matters, but resulted in more confusion and mistrust.

Five committee members resigned. The break up or division did not only happen within the committee, but was also evident in the community itself. From this point onwards Lojze Kmetič led as President.



Stane Petkovšek and Marija Košorok organised many performances by children. There was an upsurge of pride in the wearing of Slovenian national dress.

'Pust' (Kurentovanje) and 'Miklavževanje' was always celebrated by the association. Enthusiasm always ran high in the community.



The Slovenian Association began a new phase of its existence.

The drive was still there to establish their own completed premises. Eventually, the club was registered on the 16th August, 1971. The first AGM as a registered body took place on the 7th November, 1971.

Upon registration, the property was signed over to the association by the trustees. This brought to an end the role and responsibilities of these trustees.



Many volunteers contributed much time and effort into landscaping around the Association's premises. 'Many hands make light work'.





The Building Of The Club's Premises

The first committee after the registration, as did all the ones that followed thereafter, worked extremely hard on tasks that were quite difficult. Even at the stage of seeking approval to build, they came across bureaucratic obstacles. It became clear that the parcel of land that had been bought at Horsley Park, was in fact, located within a green belt and was not zoned for any construction. This zoning was decreed by the State Zoning Authority. All attempts to find a loophole met with some success and permission was granted to build on the property. This loophole was to cost our community dearly. Because the wheels of bureaucracy move slowly, the building was half finished by the time the authorities withdrew the building permit.

The building of the club was also hampered by lack of funds. The committee solved the problem by borrowing funds from a bank and borrowing from members on a 'no interest' basis. It then proceeded to furnish the premises, establish bowling lanes, swimming pool and parking areas. Members helped with funds, voluntary work and resources.



Moving to New Premises

This phase, the third for the SDS, can be noted as starting in 1985, a significant time for the association. The club was aware that it urgently needed to find a new location for its premises.

In December of 1984, Ivan Kozelj resigned from the Presidency and the position was filled by Štefan Šernek. The authorities offered a compensatory exchange for the land at Horsley Park. The new location for the club's premises was established on the parcel of land at Elizabeth St., Wetherill Park. The club is on these premises today.



Under the Presidency of Štefan Šernek, the building of the current clubhouse got underway. The efforts revived the enthusiasm of the Slovenian community. The final years of the 1980's were crowned with glory. Productivity, goodwill and team effort resulted in the completion of the current club building.





Slovenian Association Sydney - 50 Years

In August of 1986, the club received its compensation. Plans were made for the new building. An application for a building was lodged but because of bureaucratic red tape, the building did not commence until March, 1987. The foundations were blessed on this day by Father Valerijan Jenko with the assistance of Father Ciril Božič. The building proceeded at a fast rate and by 23rd April, 1988 the almost completed building was blessed by the Toronto Archbishop, Dr. Alojz Ambrožič, with assistance from Fathers Valerijan Jenko and Ciril Božič.



During the years that followed the club began to take on the look it has today. We must acknowledge that the president of the time, Štefan Šernek, was extremely successful in finding volunteers and friends to help fulfill the endeavours of building the new premises. The work was challenging but crowned with success. The names of all those who helped with this new building are enscribed on a board in recognition of their contribution as is the Presidents Honour Board. Štefan Šernek presided as President for ten years and led committees that fostered years of prosperity.

His Presidency was followed by these Presidents: Jože Lah, Ivan Koželj, Mira Smrdel, Robert Fisher and currently, Ivan Gerič.



The crowning glory of the association was always the involvement of the Slovenian youth. The young Slovenians were particularly active in folkdancing. Popular Rudi Črnčec, accompanied the groups with his accordion.



Changes to the Club's Environment

In 1998, a parcel of the club's land was sold for industrial subdivision. The proceeds of the sale was to fund some necessary updates to the premises.

To celebrate the 40th Anniversary, the Slovene Association Sydney, developed 'Prešeren Park', named after France Prešeren, the club's historical and symbolic patron. In the park are planted some tree specimens reminiscent of those found in the forests of Slovenia. Symbolically, a 'kozolec' (hay/corn drying rack) stands in full view.



In June 2006, on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the Slovenian independence, in 'Prešeren Park' a shrine - 'kapelica v cast Mariji Pomagaj', was unveiled by Alfred Breznik, the Honorary Consul General of the Republic of Slovenia and blessed by Fr. Valerijan Jenko, OFM, OAM. The occasion was marked by the presence and performance of the octet ZVEN from Domžale.



Sporting and Social Activities

The sporting and social activities of the club were also well supported by members during the 50 years of the club's life.

Choirs

Between 1972 and 1980, within the Slovene Association Sydney (S.D.S.), a men's choir, under Ludvik Klakočar, performed at various club's functions. Many of the members were either members of the church choir or members of the original 'Škrjančki'.

This choir was reorganised and became the choir 'Lipa'. Formed in 1981 by Štefan Šernek, it also had among its members some of the original members of 'Šrjančki', the choir that had had so much success under Ludvik Klakočar. 'Lipa' enjoyed much success for over 20 years, until it became part of the newly formed 'Rožmarin Pod Južnim Soncem', led by Uroš Ergaver, in 2003.



'Lipa' accompanied by Rudi Črnčec



'Lipa' under conductor, Jože Urbas



'Škrjančki' (The Larks) conducted by Ludvik Klakočar



'Rožmarin Pod Južnim Soncem', under conductor Uroš Ergaver.

Folk Dancing

Although there had been an awakening of interest in folk dancing and the wearing of national costumes, generally in the 1960's, no organized dancing is noted before the end of that decade. The first recorded performance by a local folk dancing group in Sydney was at the first special event organized by The Slovene Association at the newly acquired land at Horsley Park. This was Prešeren's Picnic or Fair in February 1969.

The members were: Vlado Šmajgert (leader and instigator), Mari Hue (Ovijač, Marija Lukežič (Verzel), Mirko Lukežič Olga Lah (Ovijač, Jože Lah, Juri Sušnik and Sonja Posenelli.

The costumes were made by and borrowed from, Marija Košorok. Mrs. Košorok was also one of the earliest folk dancing teachers. She was assisted by Nives Muha, who also played the accordion. Martin Konda also played the accordion at times. S.D.S's folk dancing group 'Planika', formed in 1979, competed against 27 other folkloric groups at the Opera House in Sydney and were awarded first prize for the most ornate and colourful costumes. After Marija Košorok, in the early 1980's, 'Planika' was taught by Ivana Slobodnik



Over the decades, the members of the folkdancing groups regularly changed. Their performances added colour and sparkle to all festivities.



The performers were mainly 3rd generation Slovenians and the group numbered over 40 dancers. The age span of the dancers ranged from 7 to 16 years. The group in fact became so large, that dancers had to be broken up into smaller groups, to facilitate their learning.

In the late 1980's and early 1990's, there were two other noted dancing groups: 'Mali Prešeren' (the younger children) and 'Prešeren' (the older dancers). After about 1993, 'Prešeren' reformed and became known as 'Zakladi Slovenije'. This newly named group was taught by Lolita Žižek. However, by 2000, only the younger group, "Mali Prešeren", continued to perform.



Over several decades, all the mentioned folk dancing groups were taught by a series of dedicated teachers that should be acknowledged:

Lolita Žižek, Ivan Koželj, Ljubomir Čordaš Majda Kosovel, Adriana Kustec, Natalie Brook, and most recently Lily Biščan and Perina Keen. It is noteworthy that Rudi Črnčec accompanied the groups on his accordion for many years. His talent for playing his 'harmonika' must be applauded.

The folk dancing groups performed within the Slovenian community, but most memorably in the wider Australian community. They performed in Melbourne, Canberra and Adelaide. These were prosperous times for the promotion of the Slovenian culture.

Since 1998, the folkdancing groups have been disbanded.

Hunters' Group

A Hunters' Section was formed in 1977, under the wings of the Slovene Association Sydney. In 1979, Pavle Bogataj founded the Fishing club of SAS and this group immediately began organizing fishing competitions.



On the 25th April 1980, both of these groups combined to formally form the : 'Lovska Ribiška in Taborniška Družina'.

This group has played an important part in the life of the S.A.S.

Over the last 27 years, members have collected a bank of fond memories of hunting and fishing trips. The motivation for these activities however, is not the catch or the trophy, but rather, the social interaction, exercise, but above all, the friendships they form.



The first 'Head' (starešina) of the club was Drago Rabar. He was followed over the years by: **Štefan Šernek**, **Henrik Juriševič** and **Janez Klavžar**.

SAS provided the group with a fine Hunters' room on the first floor of the club's premises. The members' uniforms are distinctive and are often worn, with pride. Soon after their founding, a badge was designed by Henrik Juriševič. The section has also an impressive banner, which they exhibit on special occasions.

Records show that these names were the initial committee members who made significant contributions to the setting up of the 'Hunting, Fishing and Scouting' section (Lovska – Ribiška in Taborniška Družina) : **Štefan Šernek**, **Pavle Bogataj**, **Rafael Lauter**, **Branko Zobec**, **Hinko Nell**, **Dare Borec**, **Jovani Poštaj**, **Martin Marks**, **Nikola Poštaj**, **Toni Bundrla**, **Viktor Ozimec**, **Alojz Gominšek**, **Duro Zobec**.

Of course many other people made a strong contribution in the early years, but there are too many to mention.

Štefan Šernek was the last 'starešina' for the Hunters Group. This group has ceased meeting and its future is currently in question.



Bocce Group

The bowling faction of the Slovene Association Sydney (S.D.S.) has always been active. Every weekend, without exception, the activity of the bowlers livens up the atmosphere of the club. They are a very important part of the life and history of the club.

The bowling lanes were first built at S.D.S. (Slovensko Društvo Sydney) in Horsely Park, in 1974. The bocci lanes were officially opened and blessed by Father Martin, who was on visit from Slovenian, with the singing priests 'MINORES'. The President Jože Petrič rolled the first bocci ball.



From the early 1970's, bocce teams for the men and women were actively involved in inter and intra competitions. They remain an important aspect of the club today.



New lanes were built as soon as the club moved to its new premises in Wetherill Park. A shelter was built over the lanes in 1995.

Since the beginning, the bocci- bowling group regularly organizes inter and intra club competitions. That they are very successful at such competitions is evidenced by the numerous trophies in the club's trophy cabinet in the main hall.

'The Prešeren Cup' is a major annual competition, first played for in 1978. Other competitions have been for the: Ampol Cup, ANZAC cup, Cankar Cup, Planica Cup, Župančičev Cup, Fathers' Day Cup, Mothers' Day Cup etc.

On many occasions, a dance follows a long day of competition ('balinarski ples').

Currently, Slavko Prinčič is the President of the Bowling Group. They are still active in inter and intra competitions.



Tennis:

In the mid 1990's, The S.D.S. focused on expanding the activities it provided for its members. With this in mind, the committee, under President Jože Lah, passed a resolution to build a tennis court at the back of the existing hall. This they did and the official opening was held in 1996.

The club promoted competitive games and 'with tongue in cheek', referred to the competition as the 'SAS Open'.

Tennis coaching for the younger and older groups was arranged by the club every Saturday. The enthusiasm was very evident for several years, however, the interest has waned significantly in recent years.



In the mid 1990's, under the presidency of Jože Lah, tennis courts were built and became a popular activity for all, but particularly the youth of the community. Annual competitions highlighted many gifted players.



31 Slovenian tennis player Katarina Srebotnik, currently ranked 24 in the 2007 ATP/WT, visited SDS in January 1998, on the way to Australia Open in Melbourne

Table tennis

Although table tennis was played at S.A.S. as early as the 1970's, this activity reached the height of popularity in the mid 1990's.

Players were outfitted with uniforms and were very competitive. A committed group continues to play informally each Friday night.



Schools

From the early 1960's, a partnership existed between the Slovene Association Sydney and the Slovene Catholic Church, in the teaching of the Slovenian community language classes. They were mutually supportive of one another.

The humble beginnings of the Slovenian language classes were informal programs of learning and catered mainly to young children who were the offspring of the first wave of immigrants from Slovenia. The first lessons were held at 121 Queen St. Woolahra and were run under the wings of Karitas (an humanitarian organization of the Catholic church, catering for the needs of the newly arrived migrants).

The lessons were taken by Father Bernard Ambrožič who was later assisted by Virgilij Ferfolja.



Leichhardt – 1958

Another Slovenian language class, established in the Sydney basin, was at Leichhardt. These classes again catered to the very young children. Initially, Father Bernard Ambrožič was assisted by Virgilij Ferfolja and Antonia (Tončka) Vodopivec, who motivated the children with her playing of the piano, drama performances and singing. These classes ceased by the end of the 1950's. Under the support of the newly arrived Father Odilo Hajnšek however, classes recommenced at Leichhardt in 1962. These continued until the mid 1960's with the work of these fine teachers – Anton Omerzel, Virgilij Ferfolja, Marija Kokl and M.Vojšk (relieving).





Paddington – 1961

With the arrival of Father Odilo Hajnšek in 1961, language classes moved to the new location of Paddington, in the hall attached to the Church of St Francis. With two dozen students Father Odilo began classes once more. This time, he was assisted by a qualified teacher, Anton Omerzel. Antonia Vodopivec took over these classes in the second half of the 1960's, after which classes ceased.



Cabramatta –1962

In the 1950's and 1960's, the expansion of the general population of Sydney out to the western suburbs of Sydney, reflected the settlement of migrants generally, but specifically Slovenians. There was an obvious need to open up Slovenian language classes further out in the western suburbs of Sydney. This was done with the opening at two new locations –Cabramatta and Condell Park.



The Cabramatta classes were held at the Sacred Heart School, Park St. Cabramatta. The teachers were: Jože Čuješ, Father Bernard Ambrožič Ludvik Klakočar (singing) and Antonia Vodopivec. By 1970, these classes ceased.

In 1964, under the wings of the Slovensko Društvo Sydney, Jože Čuješ wrote and published a textbook for the teaching of the Slovenian language.

It was called: 'Prvi Koraki'. This text was used in the Slovenian classes.





Jože Čuješ and Antonia Vodopivec organised many performances by the students of Slovenian classes.

Condell Park – 1962

Demonstrating industry and practicality, Jože Čuješ started classes at Condell Park. Jože Čuješ taught these classes in the main. He was relieved by Tončka Vodopivec on a few occasions. Vinko Kobal assisted with the children's singing. Classes were held in the garage of the private home of the Kariž family at Lancelot St. Condell Park. These classes ceased two years later.

Horsley Park Slovenian Classes

After the establishment of the Slovene Association Sydney club house at Horsley Park, the Slovenian language classes were commenced and taken by Antonia Vodopivec and Zlatka Ratko for a short time. These classes commenced in 1969 and ceased after 2 years. In 1978, there was an attempt to restart the language classes, with teacher, Marjan Tomažin but with little success. A year later, 1979, Slovenian Language classes were again started at the club, this time under teacher, Pavla Gruden, who was well loved by her students. Liza Reja assisted for a short time.

In 1982, records show that Ivana Slobodnik began to teach Slovenian classes at Horsley Park for a short time. After this period, language classes ceased.



Publications

The Slovene Association Sydney was for several decades, extremely active in issuing publications for the Slovenian community in Sydney. Many of these publications described activities within the club and served as an important source of information within the community. Following is a brief description of these publications and those who must be credited with the works.

Included in the descriptions are some excerpts from other authors, providing another dimension of views to the publications.

Naš Dom Our Homeland

Jože Čujes published this bulletin between 1960 – 1961.

No known copies exist today.

Slovenska Kronika The Slovenian Chronicle (second version)

There had been a first version of this publication between 1954 –1956. It was in fact, the first lay, ethnic newspaper published in Sydney.

The editor was Jože Čujes.

In 1970, there was an attempt to resurrect this first publication, which had ceased in 1956. The first edition of the renewed 'Slovenian Chronicle', was published in July, 1970. Its publisher was the Slovene Association Sydney, S.D.S. (Slovensko Društvo Sydney). It was a 3 monthly publication. However, due to unrest at the time within S.D.S., this publication ceased in December, 1970. (3 editions)

The editor was Jože Čujes.

Pravijo, da je tisk velesila. Najbrž bo kar držalo, zato se je tudi Slovensko društvo Sydney odločilo, da se posluži tudi te takozvane velesile. No čeravno ne bomo velesila, vendar je to potrebno, da dobimo in postavimo tesnejšo vez med člani, rojaki in med drugimi bratskimi društvi v Avstraliji. Zato naj naše glasilo zaide v sleherno slovensko ognjišče. Velika razkropljenost rojakov po širnem Sydneyu, res otežkoča društveno delo, zato naj nas to povezuje v tesnejšo in močnejšo skupnost.....

Novi časi prinašajo nove potrebe in zahteve. Danes je vse povezano, vse organizirano, zato se moramo povezati in organizirati tudi mi, zato nam je to glasilo potrebno, da bomo tudi mi skupno in organizirano nastopali. Le na ta način bomo Slovenci v izseljenstvu mogli uspešno vršiti naloge, katere nam nalaga čas in dolžnost. Zato naj nam ta list skuša posredovati predvsem naslednje: da nam skuša posredovati kulturne dobrine, da med nami izseljenci obranja in krepi narodno zavest, da nam skuša nuditi moralno oporo, da obvešča svet o Sloveniji in Slovencih, njihovih težnjah in problemih. V prvi vrsti pa seveda, da obvešča o Slovencih na področju Sydneya, društvenega delovanja med nami v Sydneyu, naj pa bo tudi zvest spremljevalec vseh naših izseljencev v Avstraliji, vaj se veseli z veselimi in joka z jokajočimi, naj govori resne besede, naj pa ima tudi mnogo smisla za razvedrilo in smeh! Predvsem pa naj bo močna opora slovenstvu v tujini....

Lofže Kosorok, Predsednik S.D.S. -

Slovenska Kronika, July, 1970 - Štev. 1

Akcija Za Dom , Action for a Home



Three annual publications, reporting on the fundraising and progress towards the building of the premises, for the Slovene Association Sydney – Slovensko Društvo Sydney.

The issues came out in: July, 1965 - Prvo Letno Poročilo
July, 1966 - Drugo Letno Poročilo
July, 1967 - Tretje Letno Poročilo

The editor was Jože Čuješ. Agata Logar designed the covers.

Preteklo je leto dni odkar se je ustanovila 'Akacija za Dom'. Mnogo bi se dalo ob tej priliki napisati. Vendar ni naš namen premlevati stvari, ki so bile že tolikokrat povedane oziroma napisane. Namen in cilj Akcije je vsakemu poznan, tako vsaj upamo.

Ta prva obletnica je za nas akcionarje velikega pomena. Pomen ni samo v finančnem stanju Akcije, kajti obdolženi bi bili prezgodnjega ustenja. Pomen je vse večji. Skupina rojakov, ki smo to akcijo začeli, smo res že takoj v začetku naleteli na majhen odpor pri poedincih. Nezaupanje, posmehovanje, idealisti ali pa norci (razlike ni), vse to in še več je bilo videti in slišati. Vendar, poguma nismo izgubili. Odbor SDS z ostalimi odseki, so bili na naši strani od vsega začetka. Nesebično so nam vsestransko pomagali. Na občnem zboru, januarja 1965, so se začrtale prve smernice dela za dosego skupnega cilja. Delo v odsekih (igralci, pevci in Akcija) in to na polju osebnega zanimanja, je bila najboljša rešitev za sodelovanje. Dokaz tega sodelovanja so številne prireditve, ne glede na organizatorja, za dosego istega cilja. – SLOVENSKI DOM.

p. Valerijan Jenko OFM, Vinko Ovijač, Alfred Brežnik. 'Prvo Letno Poročilo'. July, 1965



Društvene Novice Association News 'Glasilo Slovenskega Društva Sydney'

When the 'Slovenska Kronika' ceased publication in Dec. 1970, it continued to be published, but under a new name : 'Društvene Novice'. It was a free newspaper, targeting the members of S.D.S.

It was published 4 times annually.

The editors were:

Alfred Brežnik, - 1971 - 1972

Vlasta Klemenčič - 1972 - 1974

Danica Petrič - 1974 - 1977

Avstralski Slovenec The Australian Slovenian

This publication specifically targeted the members of the Slovene Association Sydney, S.D.S. (Slovensko društvo Sydney), and follows on from the 'Društvene Novice', which had folded in 1977.

Its first edition came out in March, 1979. It was initially a monthly paper.

The editors were:

Ivanka Bulovec, Pavle Bogataj and Dare Borec -

Ivanka Bulovec and Pavla Gruden

Pavla Gruden, with assistance from:

Lojze Košorok, Jože Žohar, Ivan Koželj

and Marjan Tomažin

Editorial Committee

Jože Žohar

Ivan Koželj and the committee of S.D.S.

March, 1979 - Feb., 1980

March, 1980 - Nov, 1980

Dec., 1980 - March, 1981

March, 1981 - June, 1981

July, 1981 - April, 1983

May, June, July, 1983

PRILOGA "GLAS SLOVENIJE"

SDS had an insert within every second edition of GLAS SLOVENIJE

Editor - Ivanka Bulovec

31. October 1996 - 26. April 1997

40th Anniversary Booklet

The booklet was published in 1997, to celebrate the Slovene Association Sydney's 40th anniversary. It documented a brief historical overview, mainly in photos. The information was collated by Olga Lah, with technical support from Florjan Auser. It is unfortunate that independent publications by the Slovene Association Sydney have ceased and were discontinued more than 20 years ago.

Contributions were made for several years however, to other community publications, such as 'Glas Slovenije', originally edited by Stanka Gregorič.

Currently, club information is relayed to members through regular mailouts.



Slovenian Association Sydney Presidents



Milivoj Lajovic

2. 1957 - 2. 1958



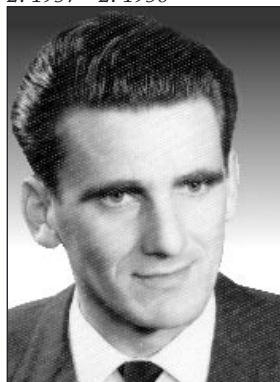
Janez Perko

2. 1958 - 2. 1960



Ludvik Klakočer

2. 1960 - 5. 1960



Lojze Košorok

4. 1962 - 1. 1963

10. 1969 - 7. 1970



Joze Čujes

1. 1963 - 10. 1969

3. 1971



Angelo Batič

7. 1970 - 11. 1970



Ivan Bavčar

12. 1970 - 2. 1971



Lojze Kmetič

3. 1971 - 11. 1972

12. 1973 - 7. 1974

Photos not available

Janez Klemenčič

5. 1960 - 4. 1962

Henrik Juriševič

3. 1982 - 4. 1982

Peter Česnik

9. 1997 - 11. 1997



Joze Petrič

*11. 1972 - 12. 1973
7. 1974 - 8. 1974*



Dušan Lajovic

9. 1974 - 10. 1975



Vinko Ovijač

*10. 1975 - 5. 1978
10. 1980 - 8. 1981*



Anton Bulovec

5. 1978 - 8. 1980



Drago Raber

8. 1980 - 10. 1980



Janez Zafošnik

8. 1981 - 3. 1982



Slavko Prinčič

*4. 1982 - 5. 1982
2. 2006*



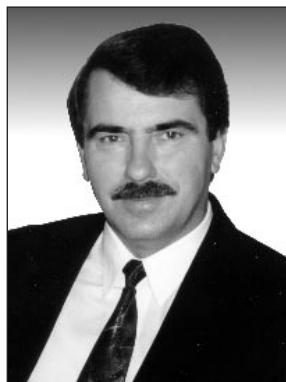
Ivan Koželj

*6. 1982 - 12. 1984
11. 1997 - 10. 1999
11. 2004 - 12. 2005*



Štefan Šernek

12. 1984 - 8. 1994



Joze Lah

8. 1994 - 9 1997



Mira Smrdel

10. 1999 - 11.2004



Robert Fisher

2.2006 - 11. 2006



Ivan Gerič

11. 2006 -



**Slovene Association Sydney
Committee Members 2007**

President

Ivan Gerič

Vice President

William Pušenjak

Treasurer

Jože Nemeš

Secretary

Helena Gerič

Committee member

Marija Nemeš

Michael Benk

Assistants to committee

Mira Smrdel

Erika Žižek

Tania Smrdel

Tamara Letnar

Renee Letnar

**Slovenian Association Sydney Presidents
1957- 2007**

Milivoj Lajovic

2. February 1957 - February 1958

Janez Perko

February 1958 - February 1960

Ludvik Klakočer

February 1960 - May 1960

Janez Klemenčič

May 1960 - April 1962

Lojze Košorok

April 1962 - January 1963

Joze Čuješ

January 1963 - October 1969

'Akcija Za Dom' begins -

**18. July 1964 Property purchased
(45 Ferrers Rd, Horsley Park)**

31. October 1968

Lojze Košorok

October 1969 - July 1970

Angelo Batič

July 1970 - November 1970

Ivan Bavčar

December 1970 - February 1971

Joze Čuješ

March 1971

Lojze Kmetič

March 1971 - August 1971

**Registration of the
Slovene Association Sydney**

16. August 1971

Lojze Kmetič

August 1971 - November 1972

Joze Petrič

November 1972 - December 1973

Lojze Kmetič

December 1973 - July 1974

Joze Petrič

July 1974 - September 1974

Dušan Lajovic

September 1974 - October 1975

Vinko Ovijač

October 1975 - May 1978

Anton Bulovec

May 1978 - August 1980

Drago Raber

September 1980 - October 1980

Vinko Ovijač

October 1980 - August 1981

Janez Zafošnik

August 1981 - March 1982

Henrik Juriševič

March 1982 - April 1982

Slavko Prinčič

April 1982 - May 1982

Ivan Koželj

Jun 1982 - December 1984

Štefan Šernek

December 1984 - August 1988

**Re-location of S.D.S. to new premises
(Elizabeth St, Horsley Park) -**

August 1988

Štefan Šernek

August 1988 - August 1994

Jože Lah

August 1994 - September 1997

Peter Česnik

September 1997 - November 1997

Ivan Koželj

November 1997 - October 1999

Mira Smrdel

October 1999 - November 2004

Ivan Koželj

November 2004 - December 2005

Slavko Prinčič

2. 2006

Robert Fisher

February 2006 - November 2006

Ivan Gerič

November 2006 -

Bo moj vnuk še pel slovenske pesmi?

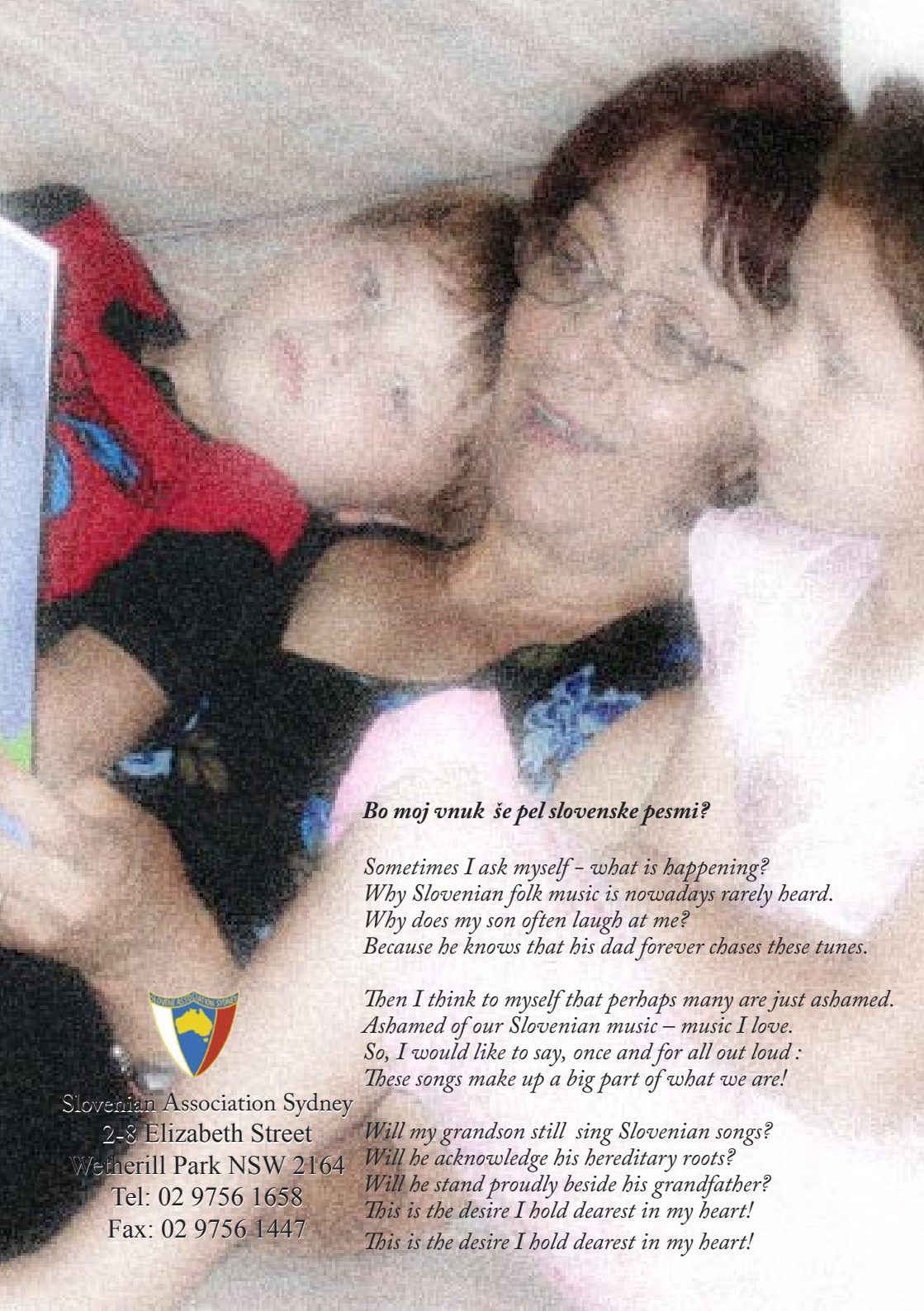
*Se včasih vprašam tako, le kaj se godi?
Da pesem domača vse bolj poredko zveni.
Zakaj se mi večkrat moj sin samo zasmеji?*

*Zate ko ve da 'moj ata za pesmi leti'.
Potem se zazdi mi kakor da mnoge je sram
Teh pesmi domačih ki jaz jih res rad imam.
A rad bi povedal saj enkrat vsem skupaj na glas
'Teh pesmih prelepih – v njih se skriva del nas'.*

*Bo moj vnuk še pel slovenske pesmi?
Se bo zavedal svojih korenin?
Da bi ponosen bil kot njega dedek,
Le tega v srcu si močno želim*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The contribution and effort of these participants must be acknowledged: Olga Lah, Research, compilation of information. Florjan Auser, Desktop publishing and technical support. Many thanks to individuals who provided personal photographs for this publication. In particular, Štefan and Ana Šernek; Lojze Kmetič and Florjan Auser.



Bo moj vnuk še pel slovenske pesmi?

*Sometimes I ask myself - what is happening?
Why Slovenian folk music is nowadays rarely heard.
Why does my son often laugh at me?
Because he knows that his dad forever chases these tunes.*

*Then I think to myself that perhaps many are just ashamed.
Ashamed of our Slovenian music - music I love.
So, I would like to say, once and for all out loud :
These songs make up a big part of what we are!*

*Will my grandson still sing Slovenian songs?
Will he acknowledge his hereditary roots?
Will he stand proudly beside his grandfather?
This is the desire I hold dearest in my heart!
This is the desire I hold dearest in my heart!*



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