



## The Slovenian Genealogy Society International, Inc.

Founded by , Al Peterlin, Camp Hill, Pennsylvania, in 1986



[SGSI Home Page](#)

### Volume 1 Issue 1 Newsletter of the Slovenian Genealogy Society January 1987

I would like to extend my best wishes to all of you who have indicated a desire to see our organization grow into a useful tool for those studying Slovenian Genealogy. This first issue will be short, but we have faith that it will grow as member input increases. We would like your contribution on any subject of interest to a genealogist. Just keep it as short as possible. Include a self addressed stamped envelope with any request.

Our 1986 ad campaign was very well received at a minimal cost. we were able to receive some type of promotion in *The American Home Newspaper*, *Zarja*, *The Dawn Magazine*, and *The Ava Maria Magazine*. My hometown newspaper, *The Forest City News*, ran a lengthy piece on our society. We received an excellent response from many different states. If you see mention of our society in any publication, please clip and mail it to us making special note of the name of publication and date. If you can have our group mentioned in a local publication, please do so. Send us a copy. John Kaneen, owner of *The Forest City News*, has given us permission to begin an obituary index for his paper. We need volunteers in the Forest City, Pennsylvania area to work on this project. If you can think of a similar project for your area, let us know. We'll put out the call for help.

The **UNITED SLOVENIAN SOCIETY** is trying to document all Slovenian organizations in this country. A roster of organizations has been prepared and now lists over 1000 Slovenian affiliated clubs, lodges, and churches. More than 200 orchestras play Slovenian Music. There are more than 40 button accordion clubs. Cecilia Dolgan has spent more than 2 years compiling and computerizing this information. You can purchase their directory by writing to the **UNITED SLOVENIAN SOCIETY**, P.O. Box 17348, Cleveland, Ohio 17348. This book is a valuable resource for Slovenian genealogists.

We would like a listing of individuals with fluency in the Slovenian tongue. If you read, write, or speak Slovenian, please let us know. Make sure you indicate your willingness to 1) do some volunteer work for our Society, 2) do some volunteer work for other members, 3) do special work for individuals for a fee.

Our Society would also like to keep track of place name changes in Slovenia. If you are aware of the old Germanic or Austrian name of cities and the current Slovenian name, please write to us. We will then be able to pass the work when asked.

When I first became interested in genealogy, I looked to the public library for help. On the shelves, were numerous books on how to organize and begin a detailed search of ancestral records. Many were helpful, but over the course of time I settled on one book that appeared to be the most complete and readable. In my opinion, *The Source, A Guidebook Of American Genealogy*, edited by Arlene Eakle and Johni Cerny is the one book each genealogist would do well to have on the bookshelf. The book is quite massive and the print is small, but don't let the size alone intimidate you. There are 23 information packed chapters that will stimulate some action-some new thought or approach-every time you read it. This book is not meant to be read and put away. Its real value is that there is just so much information, you can't help but return time and again. Part I covers the topics generally discussed in beginner volumes, but with more depth. It's hard to overstress the value of family contacts or the worth of government and religious records. Part II covers other, not so well known, information sources such as city directories and newspapers. The chapter on indexes and their use was especially helpful to me. If Part I is the heart of this volume, for the ethnic genealogist, Part III is the soul. There is an entire chapter on tracing immigrant origins. Chapter 15 alone makes this book

soul. There is an entire chapter on tracing immigrant origins. Chapter 15 alone makes this book valuable to the Slovenian genealogist. There is also a series of appendices covering governmental archives, historical and genealogical societies, LDS branch libraries, addresses by state for Vital Records, genealogy publishers, and an excellent glossary.

If you come across a useful genealogy volume, please write us a review for us.

### **TRACING AUSTRIAN (now Slovenian, Yugoslavia) ANCESTORS**

By Harriet Ayres

The usual first step in tracing an ancestor back to Slovenia is to first obtain the immigrants United States naturalization papers from the County Clerk where the person was naturalized. This will usually provide a village name, but more may be needed because of the vast number of other villages in Slovenia with the same or similar names. Mine was Stari trg ob Kolpi (Old market or place) by the Kupa River. There are many Stari trgs in Slovenia, but only one by the Kupa River.

Ancestral papers frequently list Krain, Osterreich (Austria), or Laibach. They are all now Slovenia, Yugoslavia. This is where a gazetteer would prove helpful. Also, one parish in Slovenia will frequently serve many surrounding villages. My ancestor's village was Gorenj Rodenci, and it was served by the parish of Star Trg ob Kolpi (town).

Once the village and town name is determined, you can write to the Bishop's House where records of all parishes are kept. Write to: Nadskofijjsi Ordinariat, Archiv, Ciril-Madrtodov trg 4, 61001 Ljubljana, pp 121/111, Slovenia, Yugoslavia.

Letters can be in English, but Slovenian is preferred. All replies will be in Slovenian. If writing in English, don't use any abbreviations or use contractions. They use an English/Slovenian dictionary just like us. Do provide all data that you can, including: date of birth, names of parents, and name of spouse if married in the old country. Do not send any money until they reply. The amount requested is usually very reasonable. If no fee is charged, make a donation. It will be appreciated and will give added incentive to search for you in the future. All payments should be made by International Bank Check or Money Order. They can be purchased at most banks. Never send cash or personal checks.

Every request should include at least 3 international postal reply coupons. These can be obtained at the Post Office, and will cover postage when they reply to you. I always use an air mail stamp and ask for the reply to be sent airmail. I've received a response as early as 12 days where usual times can exceed 6 weeks. Do not send a self-addressed stamped envelope rather than the international reply coupons. Remember: the search is not over, when you get your reply, that is, if you don't read and understand Slovenian. Translation, is one of the most difficult aspects of the entire process, and access to a translator really becomes a must. A dictionary helps, but is not truly a substitute for the knowledge and understanding of a person. Good luck with your search.

**QUERIES:** Queries are free to members. Be brief. We will edit as space dictates.

#### **Query 1: POJE**

Katarina **MAJETIC POJE** (born 1904) married Anton **POJE** in 1926 in Borovica. He died in Slovenia in 1945. Daughter Marija **POJE KERN** was born in 1936 in Morova. She and her mother left for the U.S. in 1959. Contact Dianne Ulyon, 1003 North Elmwood, Oak Park, IL 60302

#### **Query 2: PETERLIN / JERIN**

Joseph **PETERLIN** (H) was born 19 Jan 1887, in Krise, Austria. Arrived in New York 30 Jan 1907. His father was Bartholomew, his mother, Agnes. Theresia **JERIN** (W) was born 20 Dec 1885 in Sobrace, Austria. Arrived New York 21 Jan 1908. Father was Joseph.. Brother Joseph. Contact Albert Peterlin, 52 Old Farm Road, Camp Hill, PA 17011

Finally, I'd like to close this first newsletter with a thank you for early support and a plea for more support in the future. I would like to add special thanks to Harriet Ayres for an interesting article about her genealogical search. Thanks also to Barbara Puchnick for heading up our obituary indexing work

her genealogical search. Thanks also to Barbara Puchnick for heading up our obituary indexing work group in Forest City, Pennsylvania; to Jeff Struzel in California for volunteering to computerize our 3x5 card ancestral index; and to Michael Vidmar, in Illinois, who has offered some useful suggestions and guidelines about our organizational structure. Write with suggestions, information, or requests. Remember the SASE. Thanks again. Albert Peterlin

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## **Volume 1 Issue 2 Newsletter of the Slovenian Genealogy Society April 1987**

I'd like to start out this newsletter with a plea to all of our members to become an active participant in gathering information about our Slovenian ancestors. I ask everyone who subscribes to a Slovenian newspaper or magazine to constantly note listing of births, marriages, and obituaries. Please index all such notices on 3x5 cards or on a separate sheet of paper. On each sheet include: the name of publication and the date, name of the individual, and all dates, places, and relatives mentioned. In this way we will constantly be enlarging our ancestral index. Please sign and include a current date on each sheet as you proceed. Let me know what you're indexing to avoid duplication. Mail the sheets to use every 3 months.

I have seen several reviews of the new **Atlas Slovenije** in the past several months. All have been full of praise for a map series 20 years in the making. The book contains topographical maps covering all cities, town, and hamlets and is fully indexed for quick reference. According to **Rodna Gruda**, "The atlas includes practically all the territory where Slovenes live including S.R. Slovenia and the neighboring lands of Italy, Austria, and Hungary." Joseph Drasler, whose article appears on the reverse, recommends the book highly for locating those hard to find hamlets in Slovenia.

I am pleased to report that our obituary index for **The Forest City News**, Forest City, Pennsylvania is moving ahead rapidly. Barbara Puchnick is working hard along with several volunteers. The index is complete from the first issue in December 1886 through 1952. Barbara has also managed to begin a marriage index for the same time period. If you believe you have a Forest City connection, we would be happy to search the indexes for you. There will be a \$1.00 donation for the search, and a self-addressed stamped envelope should be included with the request.

**QUERIES:** Queries are free to members. Be brief. We will edit as space dictates.

### **Query 1: HRIBAR**

Bartl **HRIBAR** probably was born in Islake. Lived for a time (1907) in Fayette, Pennsylvania. Would appreciate any information. Would also like location of village in Slovenia called Jerjaska or Jerjarka. Barbara Vodovnik, 4642 Heritage Hills Drive, Bloomington, MN 55437

### **Query 2: HERZOG**

Would like information about Max or Angeline **HERZOG**. Last known address Florida. Related to late Franc **HERZOG** who settled in Arizona after leaving Slovenia. Reply thru Slovenian Genealogy Society.

Individuals frequently need to ask for help in parts of the country they do not have ready access to. There is a small utility paper in central Indiana that will run genealogy queries without charge. If you need help in Central Indiana, you can write to Who's Who in care of Electric Consumer, P.O. Box 24517, Indianapolis, IN 46224. A short paragraph is acceptable.

Slovenian's who believe their immigrant ancestor traveled through Hamburg on their journey

westward, may be able to find a large amount of information available through the Hamburg Historic Emigration Office. A record search costs \$30.00, and if the searcher supplies the emigre's name and year of emigration, the office may be able to supply age, occupation, marital status, number of children, ship's name, the city of origin, final destination, and the date of sailing.

Write to: Historic Emigration Office, Holstenwal 24, 2000 Hamburg 36, Germany.

## **SLOVENIAN GENEALOGY-MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCES**

*By: Joseph Drasler*

The foremost problem for Slovenian genealogists is the scarcity of vital records in all parts of Slovenia, the lack of emigration records of any kind, and precious little data available in the genealogy departments of our public libraries, comparatively speaking.

According to the historian Zontar, who focused on Slovenia more than other genealogists or historical demographers, earliest available vital records in most of Yugoslavia reach back only to the 16th Century. Furthermore, earliest archival documents were written either in Italian or German, and preceding that in Latin. Yugoslav names, usually difficult to pronounce, were often Italianized or Germanized in vital record books, while in the United States, for the most part, they were written phonetically.

From the 12th to the 20th Centuries, parts of Yugoslavia were under Austrian, German, Hungarian, and French domination, while at the same time were buffeted by wars, fires, floods, and the deliberate destruction of records. The Slovenian genealogist has many barriers to face.

Even the Mormon Genealogical Library in Salt Lake City, famous for its genealogy collecting, has not microfilmed vital records in Yugoslavia. The library has produced a very good film on Yugoslav demography (Number D83938-583458, Slovenia, Yugoslavia) available at its branch libraries.

While these obstacles of various proportion loom before the Slovenian genealogist, the challenges are not insurmountable. The researcher should never become discouraged or give in to defeat.

People seeking their family ancestry should not overlook contacts with living relatives in this country and in Yugoslavia. Such contacts provide the most definitive leads to secure additional information. Once correct given and surnames are known, along with birthdays and birthplaces, assistance is available at vital statistic bureaus in most major cities.

The picturesque city of Vrhnika, southwest of Ljubljana, and the small cities and hamlets encircling it, including Verd, Breg, Dol Borovonica, Lasce, Laze, Pako, Pekel, and to the west Kamnki, Presrje, and Brzovica appear to have been the source of the Drazler families. Because of their close proximity, my requests for vital statistics were limited to the cities of Vrhnika and Ljubljana.

Vrhnika is the birthplace of Slovenia's' greatest poet and author, Ivan Cankar. A monument built in his honor, stands at the entrance to the city, his birthplace has been turned into a museum, and a memorial has been built on the hilltop overlooking his beloved city. The Church, mentioned so often in his writing, still stands upon the hilltop.

My requests for vital statistics received prompt reply, and were usually supplemented with photostatic copies from original records, by both registrar Ivanka Sirok, Bureau of Vital Statistics, 61300 Vrhnika, and Director Marija Oblak-Carni, Arhiv SR Slovenije, Zvesdarska 1, 61001 Ljubljana. The Ljubljana Arhiv maintains vital records for Borovonica as follows: Births from 1758 to 1860, marriages from 1758 to 1849, and deaths from 1758 to 1883. Borovonica's vital records date from 1842.

My most productive source of vital data has been the parish priest, Jose Strzaj, at Rimska cesta 35, 61353 Borovonica. He employs the help of young parish students, versed in the English language, who are very helpful providing one has correct names, birthdays, and birthplaces of ancestors.

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### **Volume 1 Issue 3 Newsletter of the Slovenian Genealogy Society July 1987**

Our Society has received quite a number of Parish dedication and Jubilee books in the past few months. Many are excellent compilations of Church memberships and we would like some volunteers to alphabetize every name indexes. If you send your name and address to us, we will mail you a booklet. This can be rather tedious work, but the results are useful. If you have access to any parish histories, please donate a copy to us

We have already received a copy of ***Yugoslav Fatalities in Colorado Coal Mines 1884-1979*** by Joseph Drasler from Mister Drasler. I have already compiled an every name index for this volume. I have also compiled an every name index to ***Slaves to No One***, a history of the Holy Trinity Church in Indianapolis by James A. Devita. If you believe you may have a Colorado or Indianapolis connection, send \$1.00 and a SASE and I will search the indexes for you.

Father Rudolph Flanik donated a copy of the final 300 pages of ***Amerika Na Amerikanci*** by J. M. Trunk. This book was privately printed in 1912 and these final pages are of great genealogical value. This is a volume written by a Slovenian, about Slovenians in America, for Slovenians in Slovenia. We would like a copy of this book in English, so we are asking for as many translators as possible. If we can get 20 individuals to work on the project, it could be accomplished quite quickly. This might be a project that friends or relatives in retirement or rest homes could spend some time on. If you have retained your gift of the Slovenian language, please help us.

A Slovenian Letter Writing Guide that would be useful to individuals trying to write directly to Slovenia has been completed. It contains 4 form letters and a number of useful terms, phrases, and sentences in both English and Slovenian. Copies are \$3.00.

The *University of Minnesota Immigration History Research Center* has a large volume of information useful to Slovenian genealogists, including books, manuscripts, Church documents, ethnic newspapers, and magazines. The center is open to all scholars doing serious research, and while they do not have materials such as census records, naturalization papers, or ship passenger lists, they do have extensive holdings of fraternal records of the *Slovenska Nardona Podorna Jednota* and the *Slovenska Svobodomislana Podporna Xveza*. If you know that an ancestor was a member of these groups and can furnish as much information as possible, such as, dates, lodge locations, insurance identifiers, etc., they are willing to search and can sometimes locate useful information. Their address is: *Immigration History Research Center, 826 Berry Street, Saint Paul, MN 55114.*

Our society has been contacted recently by Adam S. Etorovich. He is the president of the ***Croatian, Slovenian, and Serbian Genealogical Society***. He welcomed our society to the genealogical fold and offered to send us as much information as possible. He will forward any additional genealogical requests to us so that he can concentrate on Croatian and Serbian genealogy. We are grateful for his help, and have every intention of cooperating with him in every way possible.

It seems time and space runs out at a more rapid pace each newsletter. I would like to ask each member to read Marileas's article in this issue. I have found this source of information especially valuable. Please request all records for your family as quickly as possible because the records are destroyed a set interval after notification of an individual's death. However, even if the main file has been destroyed, some Form 5s have been microfilmed and you can, at least, get a copy of it.

### **USING SOCIAL SECURITY RECORDS as a SOURCE of GENEALOGICAL INFORMATION**

*By: Marilea Dixon Zajac*

For several years, I tried, unsuccessfully, to obtain the names of my husband's paternal grandparents. Even though I checked the usual sources, marriage and death certificates, obituaries, immigration papers, etc., I was not able to find the information I needed. After reading an article in the May-June 1985 issue of *The Genealogical Helper*, pp. 110-111, I wrote to the Social Security Administration and obtained copies of my father-in-law's "Application for Account Number". He had, indeed, given the full names of his parents on that application. In addition, his home address and the name and address of his employer at that time were given. With this information, a serious researcher would be able to determine if the place of business still exists. If so, there may be records of former employees which could provide still additional information.

I was happy to have been successful by using this source of information, and I urge others to use this procedure, also. This is what to do:

1. Determine the Social Security Number of the person whose information you are seeking. It is often given on the death certificate. If you cannot find the number, then you must take:
  - a. a death certificate of the person
  - b. proof of your relationship to that person; and
  - c. a reason for wanting the information (genealogy, of course!) to your nearest Social Security Office.

They will attempt to assist you in finding the number.

2. Write to the :

**Social Security Administration**  
**Office of Central Records Operations**  
**Baltimore, MD 21201**

and request Form SSA-L997 ("Social Security Number Record, Third Party Request for Extract or Photocopy").

3. Complete Form Number SSA-L997 and attach a copy of the person's death certificate, and mail it back to the Baltimore address.

In approximately 4 to 6 weeks you will receive a photocopy of the original application or an extract of the information contained on the application. The Social Security Act was passed in 1935. For persons who died before this date, social security information would not, of course, be available. However, for anyone who was living at that time, it is possible that an application was made, even though the person may never have received any benefits from it.

## USING YUGOSLAV CONSULATE SERVICES

*By John C. Sullivan*

Beginning with my wife's grandparents, Franc **SVETE**, born 1 Jan 1868, and Marija **MULH**, born 16 October 1880, we have been successful in filling in the blanks in her lineage. Knowing that both her grandparents were born in Novo Mesta, Slovenia, we sent this information to the Consulate General of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Park Center, 1700 East 13th Street, Cleveland, OH 44114. Although it did take quite a bit of time, they were able to discover the names of both sets of her great-grandparents from the documentation supplied to us. Our total cost? Five dollars each--Remember this was a few years back. Costs change, and it is always wise to ask for charges before any action is taken. An upper cost limit should always be included with any request for a genealogical search.

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**Volume 1 Issue 4 Newsletter of the Slovenian Genealogy Society October 1987**

The *Iron Range Research Center Library and Archives* in Minnesota maintains a collection of ethnic information that is especially useful to the Slovenian genealogist. Many early Slovenian settlers migrated to the Iron Range area seeking work in the mine. The library has a strong reference collection, and they maintain a wide range of information specifically aimed at the genealogist, including census schedules, naturalization papers, city directories, plat maps, and passenger lists and indexes. They also have a strong newspaper collection. They are interested in preserving the historical perspective of the region and accept personal papers from individuals, business, and industry as well as historical photographs and oral histories. Their address: *Iron Range Research Center, P.O. Box 302, Chisholm, MN 55719*. You can contact them at 218-254-3321 if you'd like to discuss their collection content and accessibility before making a trip.

Another group that is collecting information about ethnic groups, including those with Slovenian background is the *Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies, 18 South Seventh Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106*. They are building a museum and ethnic library that should be useful to those of us with Slovenian backgrounds. They have a reading list available for many ethnic groups, We Slovenians are grouped within the South Slav designation. They provide a wealth of information about their services and publications when asked.

Timothy Gasper's article is especially timely this quarter in light of new services offered by the National Archives. For those not able to make it to the nation's capital to use Archive material, the National Archives is now making its microfilm rolls available direct to individuals as well as to libraries at reduced rental rates. For information about what is available directly from the Archives, write: *National Archives Microfilm Rental Program, P.O. Box 2940, Hyattsville, MD 20784*.

I was recently contacted by the *Society for Slovene Studies*. This is a scholarly nonprofit organization dedicated to fostering closer communication among scholars interested in Slovene studies. They publish both a newsletter and a journal. For information about this worthwhile organization, write: *Society for Slovene Studies, c/o Dept of GREAL, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH 43403*.

I wonder if anyone noticed the Ann Lander's column on Wednesday, August 12, 1987. There was a letter reminding everyone that "An old person dying is the equivalent of a library burning down". The recommendation was to record and preserve as many "oldtimer" stories as possible. We agree. There is a book by William Fletcher Dodd called ***Recording Your Family History*** that offers tips and guidance on recording family histories. It would be very nice if our school children in cities where Slovenian Homes are located would tape record histories of the residents, possibly as a history fair project. Please make the suggestion to school authorities in your hometown.

Ship passenger arrival records are one of the best sources of information fixing the Slovenian city of residency of our immigrant ancestors. You can have these records searched for you by writing for a copy of NATF Form 81(11-84) from the Reference Branch, National Archives & Records Service, 8th & Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington, DC 20408. When you receive the form, fill in the full name of your immigrant ancestor, the port of entry, and the approximate date of arrival. The workers at the archive will search their files, and if the record is found, you will be billed \$5.00 for a copy of the record. This means you pay only for a successful search, and even then, the fee is very reasonable. Records date back to 1820 for most east coast and gulf coast posts and a few date back to 1800 for Philadelphia. There is no index available for the port of New York for 1847 to 1896. For this period you will need to know the name of the vessel your immigrant ancestor arrived on or the port of embarkation. If you know the date and port of arrival...you can find the ship's name by researching the Morton-Allen Directory of European Steamship Arrivals.

**NATION'S CAPITAL**

*By T. J. Gasper*

As a novice in the field of genealogy, I feel very fortunate to be living in the metropolitan Washington DC area. The Nation's Capital is a treasure trove of information for the beginner and the more advanced Slovenian genealogist. While most of my research has centered around the National Archives and the Library of Congress, I am frequently discovering additional sources of information, such as, the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

The National Archives is best known to genealogists for its many government documents, such as land, property, and military records, but the documents that would probably be of most interest to the Slovenian genealogist are the ship passenger lists and census records. There is available on microfilm almost all passenger lists for ships arriving in New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Baltimore, and New Orleans from about 1820 to the 1940's, depending on port. Most passenger lists are indexed, so knowing the name and the approximate age of your ancestor, it is quite easy to locate the passenger records. I have located passenger records for six of my ancestors, from Slovenia; and a record for my grandmother when she made a return visit to Slovenia's in 1930. 20th century passenger lists give about 30 columns of information on each passenger. 19th century lists are less informative.

Some useful information--besides date of arrival and name of ship available--include name and address of nearest living relative in the place of origin, and age. There are several columns on personal appearance, including height, weight, color of hair and eyes, and marks of identification.

Census records from 1820 -1920 are on microfilm, and most states are indexed. These records give about 28 columns of information on each person. Again, 20th century records are more informative than earlier records. Useful data includes date of birth, year of immigration to the United States, Citizenship status, names and dates of birth for wife and children, and occupation.

The Library of Congress has information on almost any subject. The map division, periodicals division and main reading room are invaluable to genealogists. The main reading room has no less than 3 card catalog drawers of listings for Slovenia, Slovenians, and Slovenian immigrants, including some published family histories. Books on the history of ships and ship lines are also available.

The map division is certainly unparalleled. It contains an atlas of all countries from many centuries, including sectional maps of Yugoslavia, that if pieced together, would be 22 feet from top to bottom. For the first time, I was finally able to locate my grandparents' village, Zarecje, on one of these maps. It is so detailed that it actually shows buildings.

The periodicals room, room LM133 of the Madison building, has newspapers from all large cities in the United States on microfilm dating as far back as the 18th century. Obituaries and burial permit notices can be useful.

The genealogy division of the Library of Congress deals almost exclusively with genealogy in America. It is of value to the beginning Slovenia genealogist, since most of those of our nationality were late comers. Printed histories of families on file and histories of counties for all states may help. They were valuable to me in finding information about the companies that employed my grandfather.

A trip to Washington DC is well worth the effort, especially if you are just beginning your search. The information sources here are quite unique and thorough enough to get anyone well on the path toward his or her ancestors.

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