

*The Svobodni Razgovori Special Supplement  
Posebna priloga Svobodnih razgovorov*

**THE SUN AND THE SHADOWS OF  
SLOVENIAN HERITAGE**

**SONCE IN SENČE**

**SLOVENSKE DEDIŠČINE**

*The Essays and Poems of Young Australian-Slovenes  
In Sydney 1984*

*Spisi in pesmi mladih avstralskih Slovencev  
v Sydneyu 1984*





Na dekliški državni gimnaziji v Bankstownu (NSW) so trije slovenski razredi. Najstarejšega, ki ga je imela na skrbi učiteljica Mariza Ličan smo vam že predstavili, danes pa vam predstavljamo še "srednjega", ki ga je poučevala Mirjam Sušnik (na skrajni desni).



Razred "najmlajših" je poučevala Olga Lah. Na sliki jo najdete veselo nasmejano v zadnji vrsti.



Letošnji slovenski maturantje na državni gimnaziji v Bankstownu na zadnji dan pouka (27. okt.). V sredini je ravnatelj sobotnega pouka banktownske dekliške gimnazije Mr. Toni D'Abbrera na skrajni pa učiteljica maturantov gospa Mariza Ličan.

## EDITOR'S COMMENT

The Committee of Slovenian-Australian Literary & Art Circle, which came into being only last year, has decided to collect and publish the writings of young Australian-Slovenes attending Slovenian language classes in Sydney in 1984.

The writings from page 1 to page 22 were obtained through an essay competition, others were taken as they were published on Slovenian page in NOVO DOBA, weekly newspaper in Yugoslav languages, published in Sydney and distributed throughout Australia.

Our aim was not to find and present linguistic and literary masterpieces of our young people as much as to find out their feelings, their opinion about being a Slovene descendant in Australia, about what we loosely call 'our Slovenian heritage'. As well, we did not stipulate that the writings must be in one or the other language. Students were free to use English or Slovenian, whichever enabled them to express themselves easier.

We regret that due to high cost of printing and postage and with minimal funds available, we were compelled to present this in the simplest form possible. However, regardless of the form and quality, we believe we have reached our aim and that the message of our young people is here and visible, and waiting for our attention.

All proceeds from the sale of this publication will go to Slovenian-Australian Literary & Art Circle towards future publications.

Odbor Slovensko-avstralskega literarnega in umetniškega krožka, ki je nastal šele lani, se je odločil, da bo zbral in objavil dela mladih avstralskih Slovencev, ki so obiskovali slovenske razrede leta 1984 v Sydneyu.

Gradivo od prve do 22 strani smo dobili skozi natečaj za spise, ostalo gradivo pa je bilo vzeto kot je bilo objavljeno na slovenski strani NOVO DOBA - tednik v jugoslovanskih jezikih, ki izhaja v Sydneyu in ga je mogoče dobiti po vsej Avstraliji.

Naš cilj ni bil toliko, da bi našli in predstavili jezikovne in literarne mojstrovine naše mladine, kot da bi ugotovili njihova čustva, njihovo mišljenje o tem, da so slovenski potomci v Avstraliji, o tistem, kar prosto imenujemo 'naša slovenska dediščina'. Prav tako nismo zahtevali, da bi moralo gradivo biti v enem ali drugem jeziku. Dijaki so lahko uporabili slovenščino ali angleščino, katerikoli od obeh jezikov jim je omogočal lažje izražanje.

Žal nam je, da zaradi visokih stroškov tiskanja in poštnine in z minimalnimi sredstvi, smo bili primorani, da predstavimo to v najpreprostejši možni obliki. Vendar, ne glede na obliko in kvaliteto, mislimo, da smo dosegli naš cilj in da je sporočilo naše mladine tu in vidno, in čakajoče na našo pozornost.

Ves prihodek od prodaje te publikacije bo šel Slovensko-avstralskemu literarnemu in umetniškemu krožku za bodoče izdaje.

Sydney, 12.12.1984

Jože Žohar

Collection, editing, lay-out Jože Žohar  
Published by Slovenian-Australian Literary & Art Circle, Sydney.

UDY ŠAŽN (18 years):

A major happening at our school each year is our "Cultural Day" where each student identifies himself as belonging to a particular nationality, either directly or by descent. The day is spent presenting to our friends and teachers something of that country's heritage - by dressing up, by singing, by displaying artwork and by offering others a taste of traditional dishes. It is always an impressive day. Our school community, like the rest of Australia, is as diverse culturally and linguistically. And each person's heritage enriches further the new Australia that has evolved from the transportation of many cultural traditions by the overseas-born to the Australian-born. As an Australian Slovene I feel an overall sense of gratitude for being endowed with the language and the traditions of my parents, for I can now appreciate two cultures, two languages, two sets of values - two worlds, each with their own little difficulties and delights.

A large proportion of Australia's inhabitants are the children of those who migrated here. We are Australians by birth but we are different kinds of Australians compared to those of Anglo-Saxon origin. I know from my own experience that I was always conscious of an extra addition to my character. I began school fearful of the fact that I had trouble with English and that my surname, however easy to pronounce in Slovenian was always an embarrassing mouthful for my teachers and classmates. At school I did as Australians did - even ate vegemite sandwiches - but when school ended of an afternoon I entered into a different world. Here I lived my second life. Here we speak Slovenian, pray in Slovenian and eat the Slovenian food which my mother lays on the table for us in the evening.

No doubt, my parents' heritage and their values have been passed onto my sisters and myself. Their influences have moulded the person I am today - not that I feel more for the Slovenian heritage or that I consider myself more Slovenian than Australian but that I feel inseparably part of both countries because of my parents. At times I do not show the same degree of affection or affinity for Slovenia because presently it is a land I can only superficially appreciate through pretty pictures in a book. My identity can not develop out of postcards of tourist attractions or historical buildings. I hope, that one day I may be able to go back to Slovenia and through the special knowledge of its culture, I have acquired through my parents and also through Saturday school, deepen and tighten the ties between the two lifestyles and become much better aware of even my own identity as an Australian Slovene.

What I especially feel grateful for out of my second culture is for the added perspective on life and other people I have gained from it. My parents often talk about the way it was "back home"; about the vastly different lifestyles they led there and the difficulties they experienced integrating once over here, particularly the prejudices against them. Old prejudices still die hard. I guess, I am lucky in that respect - my friends are not offended by who I am and I do not have to hide my ancestry. No-one has ever hurled insults but I really get annoyed and hurt when I see others treating migrants or their children badly. Because of this extra culture my parents share with us I find I have become more tolerant of other cultures and gained insight into the feelings of those who do get "picked-on", as we say. It is like being given another pair of eyes with which to perceive and understand the big hopes, big dreams, big disappointments of people from other migrant groups.

The other major happiness I have in being an Australian Slovene is that I am able to share my culture with others. You offer them some of the "potica" you have for lunch and teach them a few Slovenian words and they in return teach you a few things about their cultures.

Life in two different worlds, culturally and linguistically does sometimes meet up with a few difficulties. The major one I have is with language. Unfortunately, my knowledge of Slovenian has not increased its fluency level in proportion to my English and sometimes despite all my efforts I can't communicate in total Slovenian. I tend to compromise far too often between the two languages and come out with imperfect sentences combining both. Some say, that this is the way in which the

Slovenian language and heritage will fade away. But this is no reason to believe that our parents' influences, values, traditions or the mere memory of them will die.

The new Australia is still very much a land of opportunity. I consider myself lucky for being given the chance to appreciate aspects of both cultures and to utilize them in my own life. I and other Australian Slovenes are spoilt in a way because we can take what is best from the both worlds and use them to our own advantage. So we keep drawing the sun of the Slovenian heritage; drawing out its goodness so that perhaps when shadows and black clouds do appear, our ample reserves of sunshine may penetrate deep to their silver linings.

★

*STOJAN BRATOVIČ (14 years):*

My Slovenian heritage is all my Slovenian past and future. I go to a Slovenian club called Triglav in Sydney. I meet all my friends there on a Friday night when we do Slovenian dancing. The instructor in charge of the dancing group rarely speaks English, so I have to get used to speaking and understanding Slovenian a bit more. All the people in the dancing group have a Slovenian national costume. With the group I have been to Opera House for a performance there and also at the Entertainment Centre in Sydney. It is good fun going everywhere, but when I tell these things to my friends at my English school, they laugh and tease me.

My family and I go to the Triglav club almost every Sunday. I have fun there too. Most of all I like going to dances. When bands from Slovenia come down to Sydney, the club is packed out, as it was when Ottavio Brajko band was here. Then even TV cameras came out to record the event.

I go to Slovenian school on Saturday mornings, from 9am to 11am. I catch a train there and back, which takes an hour each way. Most of my friends call Slovenian school "wog school", which is true. I go with a friend to the beach and other places. With my Slovenian friends I go to the club. If they are from an English school, my parents would not let me go with them. I have more fun with my friends from Triglav and Slovenian school than with my friends from English school.

My grandparents are dead. They lived in Slovenia. I still have a few relatives there. I have been in Slovenia once. My family and I might go there again, if we have time.

★

*ANONYMOUS FEMALE STUDENT (16 years):*

Anguish, frustration, confusion, irritation - four of my most strongest emotions as a result of the "Sun and the Shadows of Slovenian Heritage". I feel as though I have had to re-assess my most important value - my identity - , my identity as an Australian. Once I was an Australian. Now what am I? An Australian-Slovenian, I am told. But for me this is not enough. I want something more - to belong to one nation only, to have a national identity.

This is the greatest and only hindrance to my life. I'm proud of my parents' heritage but my heritage has begun here. I have though, been given the opportunity to learn a second language, to understand life in Europe and to appreciate different cultures. ★

MILENA GODEC (18 years):

Firstly, I must introduce myself as being a sixteen years old, Year 11 student, with both parents of Slovene background. My name is Milena Godec. My parents arrived in Australia in early sixties, met here and married.

As we know there are many different nationalities in Australia today: Greek, Italian, Lebanese, "Yugoslav" and the list goes on. You may be wondering why I have inverted Yugoslav. When I was young, to me Slovenian was the same as Yugoslavian. However, my feelings towards being called just a Yugoslav has changed. I discovered that Slovene culture, language and heritage were totally different to those of the other republics in Yugoslavia. Now, whenever one asks me what nationality I am, I simply without hesitation reply "Slovenian". And where is that, they ask. Slovenia is situated to the north of Yugoslavia, with Croatia as its neighbouring southern brother, Italy to its left, Hungary to its right, and to the north the Austrian Alps border this small, yet truly beautiful land of love and peace. My childhood memories escape me, yet the memories of my visit to my mother's land are imprinted ever so clearly. At the age of twelve I travelled with my brothers and parents overseas. During my three month stay, I visited many places all over Slovenia and even Italy, Croatia and Austria. I was intrigued by the beauty and sereness, having been used to only a semi-green Australia, naturally I fell for the fresh green pastures, the fields of wheat and corn, the rumbling, cold streams, the winding roads in mountainous regions and mostly by the feeling of great pride that these people had for their country and still do.

Being a Slovene gives me a great pride and sense of fulfillment, that I have something that I can be proud always, even though I was not born there. My parents always talk about their childhood years back in Slovenia, and since they come from different regions, one from Prekmurje region, the other from Stajerska, I like to spot the differences between even these two regions. Just as Australians have slang, so do Slovenes; accents differ from region to region, making each and everyone of them special in their own way. Having Slovene parents somehow enriches my life, for I feel as if I had a second home even though it may be unfamiliar to me. Being born and brought up in an Australian way of life does not make me an Australian, nor does having Slovenians as parents make me a Slovene. I am an Australian-Slovene.

Yet being an Australian-Slovene does not come without its problems and hardships. Since my generation are first generation Australian born Slovenes, there is, as would be expected, a greater gap between the parents and the children who in attempt try to gain a position of acceptance in the Australian society and at the same time please their parents. Because their parents are new to the Australian way of life, the children find it hard to get their parents to let them do a lot of things, the things that are essential for a child to do, to be accepted and live an Australian way of life.

Something that I particularly noticed about myself, is that because many of us first generation descendants have lighter complexion and not so dominant features, we sometimes are mistaken as Australians. Whether this is an asset to us, I do not know. Quite on the contrary though, a hindrance that is common everywhere is racial discrimination. We all know very well what Europeans are being called today, and that in itself is a big problem. However, if we can learn to overcome the discrimination, I think that not only the Slovene heritage, but many others would surely become quite interestingly wanted by other nationalities.

One thing is for sure, I will never forget or turn my back on my parents' homeland, its culture and hopefully never forget the language which at the moment I am studying. For I know, that Slovenia, a country in itself, is truly a beautiful and inspiring thought to every Slovene. ★

MICHELLE MEZGEC (age 12):

For the past 12 years, I have lived with Slovenian parents, and proud of it too. I would also like to learn proper Slovenian so, it will give my children the privilege of also having another language. For a start, I attend Slovenian school of a Saturday morning and I would rather do that than anything else, because it all adds up in the end. Having another language does not inconvenience me because usually I find time in my day to at least talk a bit of Slovenian, even if I am around my Australian friends.

Slovenian music can be quite interesting too. Now, there are many groups of bands which visit Australia to entertain people at dances, at the well known Triglav Club. There you are not entertained only by the music, but the Club also has separate dining room, kitchen, main hall, bar and classroom, so that people of all ages can come, unlike other Clubs, where children under 18 are not allowed in, because of obvious reasons. Also, if you were to give a party with all Slovenian people, you, the host, would provide everything: the shelter, the food, the drink, the company and the furniture to sit down, and you would not let the guests to bring any of these things with them. What do you think this is..... a "BYO". Sometimes when the men have a bit "too" much to drink, they link arms and begin to sing old favourites that they all know and enjoy. At times, when the house gets dusty, it is time to get out the mop and switch on some good old Slovenian music, to make you enjoy it. Occasionally you may want to go out to town with some of your non-Slovenian friends. You ask your mother and she says no. But isn't it funny that when you want to go somewhere with a Slovenian person, your mother always changes her mind and lets you go. Probably because she knows his or her parents.

Going back to the heritage, it does not really affect my life at all. Occasionally, if you dislike a person, you might speak to them in Slovenian and they won't know a word you are saying. Slovenian also makes me happy and feeling good because..... well, I can not find the words, but for whoever is reading this, if they are from Slovenian extraction, they will know the feeling that you get. Recently my sister Irena came back from Slovenia (Yugoslavia) from a holiday and she was so amazed at the things there, she did not think that it was so civilized now. She also told me many things about my relatives and close friends and also showed me photographs of people that I did not even know what they looked like; it made me cry of happiness. Dad and mum never cease telling me about good old days when they were of my age, and about the war. Sometimes dad and I sit for ages discussing things about their farm and outside gardening jobs which dad has a craving for. Mum, on the other hand, has always been good at cooking and sewing. Everytime she makes "potica" or "njoki" (famous dessert and meal). I'm always there watching, watching her every move so, that when I get old enough, I too could be a great cook like she is.

Many people think they have good friends, well, they are not anything to Slovenian friends. As soon as you know someone from Slovenia, they become your friends forever. You might not see them for a few months, and then you notice them suddenly across the street, and you know straight away that they are one of your good Slovenian friends. I have so many Slovenian friends, I can not keep count of.

Now, if you are having some trouble with some of your subjects at school, well, drop them because Slovenian is going to help you boost up your marks. Don't feel down anymore because you'll know what to turn to if you have problems. You also won't have any problems trying to speak Slovenian because it is a soft language and you don't talk it 100 miles per hour (like some other languages).

Well, that's what I think about Slovenian Heritage.



MARGARET GRŽELJ (13 years):

Countless words lie written of a country so rare. It is one of its kind. The people are so friendly. Wherever you go there is always a friendly hello. The music is good. It is so different from all other music. It is part of their culture. The people love the country and most of the music is about their beautiful country.

I love all Slovenian food, especially 'krofe'. Mum nearly every night cooks Slovenian food.

Slovenia affects all people attending Slovenian school because Saturday mornings are used for learning Slovenian language. All this sacrificing for learning Slovenian - but all will be worth at the end.

What makes Slovenia perfect is the weather. Spring: in spring all the flowers are blooming. Summer: The coming of summer brings us to the beach. The blue and clear water is so beautiful. Autumn: Gentle hills of the softest russet brown. Its richness of red and golden leaves. Winter: White snowflakes fall on mountains which crash against the vivid blue sky.

When I was five, my family and I visited Slovenia. It was really great. We toured many places. All my mother's relatives live up there. The nicest place was Postonjska jama. If time was to stop and start I'd turn it back eight years, eight years of a memory still locked in my mind.

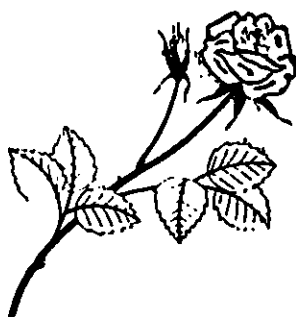
Being and knowing Slovenian has given me many good advantages. I've joined Slovenian choir Zarja and Slovenian school. I have met many new friends, who all have the same Slovenian background. I love being a Slovenian. Before I end this essay with a poem I wrote, I say I love and am proud of Slovenia.

### S L O V E N I A

*It's only one of its kind  
And so rare -  
No country is more beautiful  
Than a country called Slovenia.*

*The road into the future winds on,  
Endless dreams go on  
Like a steady flowing river  
That has no end.*

*But one day a dream will appear  
One I have dreamed for life,  
And one that will never end  
Returning to my country Slovenia.*



### *My special friend*

*I dedicate these lines to you  
for all you've said and done,  
when my skies were dull and grey  
You helped me find the sun.  
A cheerful laugh and friendly smile  
works wonders on my day,  
where there isn't any sun at all  
to chase the clouds away.  
When I was feeling down and out  
and nothing would go right,  
a heavy load I shared with you,  
would then seem twice as light.  
You always had an ear to lend,  
and so these words are just to say  
I'm proud that you're my mum.*

(JOŽICA MODRIJANČIČ)



VANJA KODERMAN:  
(14 years)

SLOVENIA

A place of loving people,  
Who welcome with all their heart:  
A place of colourful fields,  
And beautiful mountains,  
Of sweet smelling flowers,  
And tall green trees,  
Forever haunting my memory.

When in the winter  
The snow has fallen,  
Slovenia is a crisp,  
Fresh smelling land,  
Dominated by white.  
Nothing stirs, except the little children  
Busily building a snowman.  
Here and there  
Grey smoke rises  
From a chimney top.

In the spring  
As I ran over the fields,  
Through the tall grass,  
I felt the love inside me,  
The love for Slovenia,  
The place of my birth.

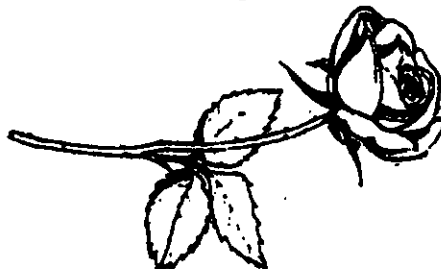
Oh, how I wish  
The whole world  
Could be like Slovenia,  
So peaceful,  
So picturesque,  
So warm.



PAVEL LUKEŽIČ:  
(12 years)

SLOVENIA

I'm proud to be Slovenian,  
Proud, oh yes, I am.  
Talk to your friends,  
The Aussies don't understand.  
Yes, it's good to be Slovenian.  
It makes me happy.  
The language is easy.  
An enemy can be told where to go.  
Slovenian, Slovenian.  
It is good to be a part.  
Yes, I'll always like being a Slovenian.



When people ask me "what nationality are you?", I have a habit of saying that I'm a Slovene. Yet why do I do it? I'm Australian and have spoken a mixture of English and Italian with my parents most of my life. Indeed, during my trips to Slovenia, I found it easier to communicate in Italian. I have no Slovenian relatives here, and there was no reason for me to think in a fond way towards Slovenia. Until now.

After maturing somewhat, Slovenia means more to me. A great deal more. It is the only true culture I can share. Whether I am in two different villages, I will usually hear a different dialect, a different sound. For only, perhaps, three million Slovenians there are many dialects. Yet I am never so much aware of this when I hear my mother speaking on the phone to relatives in Slovenia. The dialect is indeed profound and unique. Although at school we strive for a "pure" Slovene language, we must never forget our dialects, for it indeed is a small part of the Slovenian culture.

Yet I am one of the fortunate Australians. I know my family's heritage, I know that my grandfather was an Austrian and his grandfather was also Austrian, yet lived on the same land. Today, the only present link I have with my heritage is through the mail, which I wait eagerly for.

Sometimes I leave my Australian friends quite confused. They ask "What are you? An Aussie?" I answer to the best of my ability, saying: "Both." Yet they don't understand the feeling I have. Why is it, other children of migrants feel exactly the same way? It is a feeling you receive at birth. A feeling of being different, yet words will not explain. You have to be born to migrant parents to understand. This feeling becomes stronger as I grow older. It will always be with me, the tie I have to Slovenia and the patronage I have for Australia. For we are "mixed children". To be truthful, we are dedicated to both countries. I don't think one country overshadows another, nor should one country's customs and beliefs overpower another. For we are in a unique position of experiencing, understanding, and relating to both worlds, the different ways of thinking and living. It will be people like us, that will understand the problems, frictions and frustrated relations between different people in the world, now and in the future.

Every Saturday there is only one thing that brings people from all over Sydney to Bankstown. And that is of course, the link we all have with Slovenia. I don't think a person would study for more than four years a language that would mean nothing to him. I can only speak for myself in this case. There would be no way I would spend two hours every week for six years studying a language that meant nothing to me besides its matriculation value. It is its cultural value, which people find hard to believe, I study Slovenian for. In Year 9 we as a class were asked to write a short paragraph on why we did Slovenian. I was the only one with the idea of culture, with the idea of hoping that my children would one day study it. And although my essay had the most grammatical errors in it, the message was there. It may sound "corny" but I am afraid that's the way I am! I now feel a part of me is Slovenian, and I hope this sensation keeps growing as I get older.

Yet, how can a spirit, a feeling which brings new light in a life be of "hindrance" to you? I certainly feel proud to be part Slovenian and in that case part Yugoslav. Quite frankly, there is nothing political, nor I wish it to be political when I state, with much pride that I consider myself not only part Slovenian but part Yugoslav, no matter what. I will always consider myself part Slovenian. I will teach my children what they need to know and "push" them like my mother "pushed" me, for which I am now truly grateful to her, as to Slovenian school. Hopefully, they may continue the "pushing".

For "*Slovenec sem, tako mi je mati d'jala*", of course, is largely true.

MARK MAKOVEC (14 years):

Slovenia to me is something that joins me with my friends and my family. If I was not a Slovene, I would miss out on Slovenian school and church.

When I come home from school, my mother gives our family some delicious Slovenian food, such as soup. Every Sunday we go to mass, where we meet all our friends. On some nice days we go for a picnic with them.

I go to Saturday school and learn all different and new things. Before I did not go to Saturday school, I had not known all the little ends to words and I did not know how to read that well. But now it has all changed and I have learnt most of the rules.

Slovenia has influenced many things in my life. Things like holidays and school. The biggest influence on me is the religion. I would probably be a Buddhist if I was born in a Chinese family, but I am Slovene and Christian.

I'm lucky to know how to speak Slovene and it will some day help me to get a job just by knowing a language.

There are so many more things that can be gained by being Slovene. When my grandmother came to Australia she made me think why the best thing in the world is family and friends.



MARIE SREBRNIC (13 years):

I'm proud to be a Slovenian because to me Slovenia is the most beautiful country in the whole Europe. The scenery there is splendid as I visited Slovenia less than two years ago.

My parents are both Slovenians, who found it hard to leave the country they loved and which was their homeland. They have told me everything about Slovenia's culture and traditions, which I will, as I grow older, pass onto my children so that the wonderful ways of Slovenian life will never be forgotten.

The Slovenian community which we live in, gives us, the younger generation, a chance to not only be a part of the Slovenian heritage, but it gives us opportunities to involve ourselves in activities such as: The St. Rafael Church Choir, Slovenian Folklore Dancing Group, and in many other states of Australia the same activities which influence us to recognize our Slovenian tradition which we often take for granted.

My family and I have always enjoyed to be part of any type of celebration which the Slovenian community provided. I'm also glad to have joined the Slovenian Community Saturday School, which gives me the privilege to learn the beautiful Slovenian language. I hope to go on with my studies and explore the Slovenian language as far as I could possibly go. I intend to become a person who will appreciate the fact of being a part of a beautiful community, the Slovene community.



TONY ŠPICLIN (14 years):

9

It is good to be a Slovenian because when you go to the dances, you meet people of your own culture and when one country is in trouble, you can lean back on the other one you belong to.

The clothes in Slovenia are not that modern. They still wear overalls or some other working clothes. But when they go out, they wear the old type fashion.

The bad thing about being a Slovenian is, if you were asked to go somewhere on a Saturday morning, you would have to say 'no'.

The Slovenian food is very healthy and some isn't. The thing I like about their food is that all of the dishes they cook are delicious.

The people there are very friendly people and they always help picking up potatoes or something else that needs a hand with. If a person helps them to do something, they invite them over for dinner.

The thing I worry about is if my grandmother is alright, which I can only find out when they send the letters.

All Slovenians have jobs. Some work in the city. Some work three hours away from the home. The rest work on the farms.



ANITA ERŽETIČ (15 years):

During my contact with the Slovenian culture handed down to me by my parents, I have either grown to like or dislike certain aspects. Though I have never visited Slovenia itself, I believe I have certain of the lifestyle encountered by people living there, and if the privilege of seeing Slovenia arises, I know I would enjoy and love it.

One thing I particularly like is the music and dancing. I love the alpine melodies and lyrics found in the songs because they are very different from the modern music I like to listen to on the radio. These folksongs contain the thoughts of the people who make up the Slovene race. The national costumes appeal to me as they are a symbol of the Slovenian people.

Being brought up around the traditional coloured, boiled eggs for Easter and "jaslice" for Christmas, I find it hard to imagine these festive seasons without them. But I feel that the most important part of the Slovenian heritage is the language. At first I was not too keen on attending Slovenian school and had to be forced to do so by my parents. Now that I'm older, and hopefully wiser, I understand the benefits and advantages of having a second language; and the fact that it is my parents' native tongue, makes it all the more important.

Finally I'd like to say what it means to me having a Slovenian background; it means that I have a link with another country, that I have a link with a different lifestyle, and I know that if in the future I'm to have my own children, I will pass onto them what my parents passed onto me.



My mum and dad come from Slovenia. They are very proud to be Slovenians. Slovenian food, the language and the knowing that these will be passed on from generation to generation, makes them proud to be Slovenians. And knowing that when they came to Australia they had nothing, and now what they have got, they appreciate. Besides what they got, the whole Slovenian community has something - the clubs, which they worked for, three of them in fact in Sydney and at least one or two in each capitol city of Australia. This is what of Slovenian heritage is of use to them in their life here and what makes them happy.

Some of the things which are a hindrance or an inconvenience to my mum, dad and me, is being so far away from my relatives. You get to see your relatives every five years or so. Not only is visiting relatives in Slovenia costly, but it's a long plane trip over this planet, but it is all worth, when you meet your relatives waiting at the airport gates.



WENDY DOLŠEK (12 years):

Slovenian things and people really are good to me. It's good to have another language. It does not matter to me that Slovenian school is on Saturday; dancing is on Friday. I would like to do a lot of things about Slovenian but I have other things to do, but it does not matter.

So, if you want to do Australian things, you are silly because you can still learn about God. So you see how it affects me a lot.



VILKO SODJA (12 years):

I like Slovenia because it is my parents' country. The people in Slovenia are happy and friendly. The music is nice but I do not like it very much. The nature seems to me very nice, as far as I can see from all kinds of Slovenian books. In winter time they have plenty of snow and ice. They got top sports like skiing and ice hockey. Slovenia has lots of mountains and trees. The highest mountain in Slovenia is Triglav and the largest city in Slovenia is Ljubljana.

JANA LIPOLD (13 years):



Slovenian heritage means a lot to me and my family. We like Slovenian music and language and its people. Even though it's hard for me to learn, I think (it is) the Slovene language is one of the most beautiful ones in the world. I enjoy going to Slovene parties and dances and also to Slovene school, because I get to meet a lot of people who are nice and pleasant. The Slovene kids that I know, get along very well and they are a lot of fun to be with. Most of them are happy and have a lot in common. My family and I are proud to be a part of all this and it makes me feel good to know about my Slovenian heritage. I hope that one day, if I will have children of my own, I will teach them all about it, so that, as they will grow up, they too could be a part of all this, and learn and be proud of their Slovenian heritage, like I am now.



MARY BREZOVNIK (13 years):

Slovenian - what it means to me? It has an affect on me that I can't explain. I am proud to be a Slovenian and it makes me feel nicely fulfilled. I enjoy learning Slovenian but the only drawback is that it is on Saturday. I would rather sleep-in because on Friday evenings I do Slovenian dancing. I mostly have things planned but they never work out.

*continued next page*

Slovenia has an unwritten law that Slovenian girls should marry Slovenian boys. Since I respect my nation, I shall marry a Slovenian boy. I have a friend that would love to marry me as soon as I come to age, but time changes things.

My father is Slovenian and so is his family. My mother is Hercegovian and so is her family. I am greatly influenced by my father.

There is not much that I can say but that in every Slovenian there is love.

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*IAN MAKOVEC (16 years):*

As I wake up on Saturday morning, I dress up myself quickly, with the knowledge that I will be bound for Bankstown.

Saturday school seems to feel - that it goes for days, but the interesting subject matters covered over the two hours, are "whizzed" through in no time at all. I have met many people through Saturday school and even when I go to the mass at Merrylands on Sunday, I'm able to associate with these people.

Although sometimes I get up and don't want to go to Saturday school, as I have other things to do, I say to myself: "I'll fit everything in, don't worry!" Although my Saturdays now have a main feature added, I don't feel that it is a waste as it may actually help my future; many jobs require the study of a second language. I feel this is just giving me a head-start on everybody else.

I can remember last year, when I attended Ashfield Slovene Saturday school - some people came from Blacktown and St. Marys etc., to attend the two hour lessons and then a two hour train trip back - I should not complain.

Learning about Slovenia, you can compare and contrast the old, primitive life that is still common to the inner cities. Slovenia is a cross between both. The old lifestyle is mixed with the new, making it one of the most pleasant and humble culture in the world.

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*V. LOCHNER (17 years):*

The Slovenian culture and lifestyle is very much a part of me. At home we speak Slovenian, prepare Slovenian meals and talk about Slovenian issues, when news from Slovenia arrive from our friends and relatives back home. On Sunday mornings listens to Slovenian radio and also listens to her Slovenian records.

I have been to Slovenia three times and each time I went there, my horizons have been broadened. I have learnt their customs, traditions and their way of life. I have learnt that they are of a hard working class. When in Slovenia, I have seen people work in fields for long hours and yet they seem to be the most happy and cheerful people, when their work is done. This attitude of Slovenes towards work is also apparent in Australia. The Slovenian people are not afraid of hard work and no job is too great or too small.

I see the Slovenian culture as one that complements the Australian lifestyle in it's similarities rather than clash with such things as language barriers. I see myself as being very fortunate to be part of two cultures, to be able to understand the Slovenian way of thinking as well as the Australian way of thinking. I am both, a proud Slovenian and a proud Australian. Whenever I see an opportunity to extend my knowledge of Slovenia and the Slovenian people to other Australians, I do so.

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My Slovenian heritage affects me in a lot of ways. I think it is good to have a Slovenian background because lots of Australian families do not go out and they miss out on everything, like helping the Slovenian community or donating money. The Slovenian language is difficult but once you know how to speak it, it will be a lot of use. Slovenia is a Republic of Yugoslavia. It is where my parents lived. Both of my parents lived on farms and grew up on them. The farm life was hard in those days, because they did not have any tractors or other machines that are used today. My parents would wake up early in the morning around about five o'clock and do their chores. They milked the cows and took the milk to the milk factory. Then fed the animals. After that they got ready for school. When they came to school they were glad to sit down. The school they went to was very strict.

In the past wars lots of people died for Slovenia. My two grandfathers had to fight in the wars. They had to fight for Slovenia. They did not have food or water. Lots of people got killed.

The main rivers are Drava, Sava and Mura. Until the wars have ended, Slovenia was in the hands of Germany, Italy, Greece and Serbia. It has very high mountains and lots of tourists come there every winter. Slovenia's population is estimated over two million. Wines are widely grown in Slovenia. Mercury is mined at Idrija, west of Ljubljana. Aluminium is produced near Ptuj, petrochemicals at Velenje, pharmaceuticals in Ljubljana. Ljubljana's population is approximately 250,000. Slovenian minerals and industries are mercury, lead, zinc, oil, iron and steel, aluminium, textiles, engineering, chemicals, paper and salt.

France Prešeren (1800-1840) proved in his poetry that his native language was capable of expressing the subtlest states of the human soul and his *Sonnet Garland* is one of the most beautiful poems in Slovenia literature.

Josip Jurčič (1844-1881) was the first Slovene prose writer to depict contemporary life with a social and romantic approach.

The high Slovenian Alpine region, with its picturesque Martuljak massive and Triglav, the highest peak in Slovenia and Yugoslavia (2,84m). The climatic health resort of Kranjska gora, Bled on the banks of lovely Lake Bled, and Bohinj with its romantic Lake Bohinj, the ancient town of Škofja Loka and Kamnik and Kranj as the centre of this region. The Karst region is abounding with caves (the grottoes of Škocjan, Pivka, Postojna).

Ljubljana is the capitol, historical and cultural centre of Slovenia. It lies along the small river at the foot of a medieval fortress. Its old quarter boasts with lovely architecture and squares, it has well endowed museums and galleries, a fair and a developed cultural life.

Slovenia is one of the most beautiful countries in the world. It resembles Switzerland by its mighty mountains, and some writers call her "Adriatic Switzerland". Yet, in addition to its mountain ranges, Slovenia also has access to the Adriatic Sea. The mysterious Karst with over 400 underground caves and the spacious Pannonian plains. Slovenia is filled with beauty and diversity. Each region is a spectacular, different world in itself. In the west, on the blue Adriatic lies the sunny Littoral. Further inland extends the mysterious interior, with its world famous Postojna Caverns, which are among the largest and most beautiful caves in the world. And Lipica, the original home of widely known Lipitzaner horses. In the east is Vrhnika, the birthplace of Ivan Cankar, the greatest Slovenian writer. Towards Austria, in the north, is Carinthia, which is loved by all Slovenians as the "cradle of Slovenian culture and history".

Enchanting is the mountainous Upper Carniola with the mighty Triglav, with the lovely city of Kranj, Bled and Bohinj resorts. South of Upper Carniola, but still in the very heart of Slovenia is the Lower Carniola with the friendly hills and vineyards and with Novo Mesto, Ribnica and Žužemberk from where so many Slovenians came to Australia. Further east is the green Styria, where mountains and hills melt into the Pannonian Plains, with spacious, fertile fields. In the northeast, towards the Hungarian border is the scenic Mura region, with its tall oak trees and nests of storks on the chimneys. In the southeast, close to Croatia is White Carniola with the little city of Črnomelj, known among other things for its rich folklore. Here is a handful of natural beauties and contrasts, of diverse folklore, customs, dialects, architecture, and styles of life. As flowers of different colours, these regions are tied together in a bouquet full of beauty and attractions.

This is Slovenia, our homeland, our "old country"! It lies in the north of Yugoslavia, where West meets East and Central Europe meets South Europe. Slovenia's neighbours are Italy, Austria, Hungary and Croatia. Slovenia measures 20,251 sq. kilometres, or a little less than 8,000 square miles. A part of Carinthia is under Austria where in spite of ruthless Germanization, there are still some 50,000 to 80,000 Slovenians. Some 125,000 Slovenians remain under Italy and about 10,000 live in the Porabje region, under Hungary.

I am 13 years old. I go to Slovenian school. I have one sister ten years old. I go to St. Scholastica's school and I am in Year 8.

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*OLGA KUŽNIK (17 years):*

I am a Slovenia descendant and am proud to be one. My both parents came from Slovenia, my mother from Ptuj and my father from Novo Mesto. I believe I am one of the lucky people, to be a descendant from Slovenia and also to have been privileged enough to visit this country twice. I am able to appreciate how beautiful it is.

The Slovenian heritage has been very useful and valuable to me and to my way of life. I have grown up in a Slovenian community and have met many Slovenian friends. I seem to feel closer to these friends than to my Australian friends because we seem to have something in common. We are all Slovenian descendants.

I attend Slovenian mass every Sunday and have joined Slovenian youth choir which has become an important part of my activities. There are many Slovenian clubs that have been established. I attend Slovenian dances frequently. I also attend Saturday School of Languages, set up by the Department of Education, every Saturday. I study the Slovenian language with other Slovenian descendants, as part of my H.S.C. I am acquiring a knowledge in a correct use of the Slovenian language. Hopefully, it will help me in my H.S.C. and in my future job prospects.

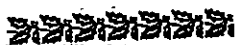
At my house our golden rule is to speak Slovenian, which we always try to do. We eat the same type of food as my grandparents cooked and very rarely we eat pies, fish and chips or hamburgers. All around our house we have pictures and ornaments from parts of Slovenia, so it would never be forgotten, that we are Slovenian descendants.

It makes me feel happy to be a Slovenian descendant, because it is a precious gift, which not very many people in the world are lucky to have. I am not a typical Australian, who only knows the Australian way of life. I feel I have an advantage over all my Australian friends as I also know a different language, culture and lifestyle. I am just becoming aware of how important being a descendant from a different country is and how being able to speak and write the language is valuable to me.



If I ever return to Slovenia for a visit, I will be able to communicate easily with my relatives. Also, some employers ask for knowledge of a language as a prerequisite for a job. Many of my school friends envy me because I know a different language and I am able to speak it, while they know only English.

Being a Slovenian descendant has never stopped me, nor has it inconvenienced me in any way. I'm not treated differently or badly - I'm just a normal person. I am very grateful to my parents for giving me such a valuable gift, a Slovenian background. I would never want to swap my position or hide the fact that I am a *Slovenian descendant*.



MICHELLE KALC (13 years):

My Slovenia heritage is very important to me. Slovenian heritage is about music, people, language, friends, gatherings etc. Here in my essay I'll talk about them and what they mean to me:

Music: Slovenian music is very different from Australian. Not only by the language, but it is more gentle and happy. When we put a cassette on in the house, my parents automatically start singing. Slovenian music isn't hard rock but a music that you can sing along and be happy. I myself am not crash hot on Slovenian music, but I am in the church choir at the Slovenian church in Merrylands and I enjoy it very much.

People: Slovenian people are also very different, they have a complete different attitude to life. Slovenian people aim to get a good job and save, have a house and family which they can raise with manners, dignity and aim to do well at school.

Language: Slovenian language is also different. It is the most gentle language out of all the six Republics of Yugoslavia. The Slovenian language is very handy to know, if you are looking for a job. And it comes in handy at school when I want a private conversation with my two Slovenian friends.

Slovenian friends: My Slovenian friends are completely different to any of my other friends. Although my two best friends are Slovenian, I have known them from childhood. All three of us went to different Primary schools but planned years ahead that in 1st Form we would become a trio. It is one third through 2nd Form and we are still together. We will hopefully be still together at the end of 6th Form.

Gatherings: Slovenian gatherings are also very different to that of Australians. Parties, for example: Slovenian parties, well, whatever the occasion we have a great time. They all seat at the table, eat, drink, talk and laugh to everyone, then usually the men start singing and mums join in, they start telling jokes - some rude, some not. Overall we have a great time. But in Australian gatherings it is B.Y.O. and I do not enjoy them as much as Slovenian parties.

And now I'm going to say something about my life and how it's involved in being a Slovenian. As I mentioned before, I'm in the church choir at the Slovenian church in Merrylands. We go to church every Sunday and then we have choir practice, as in May we are having a concert here in Sydney, where the kids in the choirs from Adelaide, Melbourne and Wollongong are also participating. We all have a joint concert each year. Our choir has about 40 kids (30 girls, 10 boys) aged from about 12 to 23. We have a great time together. We go to Wollongong and Newcastle, Melbourne, Snowy, to the beach and picnics, we go everywhere and we also have a ball.

*NIVES BRATOVIČ (16 years):*

My name is Nives Bratovič. I am sixteen years of age and was born in Australia, while my parents were born in Slovenia, Yugoslavia. Also my grandparents were born in Slovenia but they have passed away a couple of years ago. Slovenian heritage means all the things to do with my ancestors, where they came from etc.

I have been to Slovenia once when I was six years old, but I can't remember much. I have heard from my parents that it is a beautiful country. My parents have been in Australia for about 17 years and I am sure they miss their old country a bit. I think they might like to go back on holidays to see our relatives. But I also know that my mother would also like to go to Canada to see her brothers who live there.

I think the Slovenian language is one of the hardest languages to learn in Yugoslavia as the words are not written the same as they are said. The people there seem to be friendly and nice. I like some of their music. I don't think the Slovenian heritage really affects me at school or at home. It affects my parents because they were born there.

I am in Year 11 and go to Merrylands High School which I have been going there for five years. My Primary School was at Guildford. On Saturday mornings I also go to Slovenian school and I am doing it as a subject at school for my H.S.C. I don't mind going except for waking up early on Saturday morning - but I am getting used to it. I don't mind going to my usual school this year, because I get along better with all my friends and especially the teachers. I can talk to them, but last year I couldn't. This year I hang around with a lot of new friends and I find them great.

On Friday nights I go dancing at the Club Triglav and have a lot of fun seeing all my friends. It gives me something to do instead of staying home and watching T.V. When I first started dancing I did not think much of it but now I like it. We have danced publicly at Triglav, at the Entertainment Centre and at the Opera House, which was really great fun. I have met a lot of new friends at dancing, which I did not really know before. My parents also trust me with my friends to go out, including the guys, as at school I don't think they would.

On my weekends I go out to the Club or I go out with my friends. I usually go to the dances up there and I like going there, except sometimes when I might not be keen on going if I know something is going to go wrong for me, like having an argument with one of my friends. Sometime on some of the dances we might do our dancing in national costumes which, I think, look beautiful, and we feel good doing it because everyone will applaud us which makes us feel like going back and repeat our dance. We are dancing for Mother's Day and I'm looking forward to it except that we are doing the same dance as we did last year - it is the only dance we have learnt and I'm getting sick of doing the same routine and steps while the younger group has learnt three new dances since we started a year ago.




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*Michelle Kalc, continued from previous page:*

I also go to Slovenian school on Saturday mornings for two hours. It is an inconvenience because I want to play tennis instead, but I know in the long run I will be glad that that I do go to Slovenian school. I also have a great teacher that makes it easy for me to understand what we are learning.

So, I'm very proud to be a Slovenian, as I see myself very lucky to have such good parents who are Slovenian. \*\*\*\*

ERNEST ERZETIĆ (17 years):

Slovenia to me has a unique and interesting culture. Slovenija has its own culture and heritage which is completely different to our in Australia.

I feel that the Slovenes are unique in themselves. They sing songs and do things which not too many people of other nationalities do. They have such songs as "Soča teče" which are sung in patriotic style and have some of the most colourful national costumes, something that we here in Australia do not really have.

The finest Slovenian sausage, the "kranjska klobasa" is eaten all over the world along with "žganci" and "repa". Another famous dish that most Slovenians eat is "polenta in golaž", and they bake excellent pastries, including "potica".

We, here in Australia have no really "Australian Culture" but a multi-cultural society that has many different cultures.

One thing that I really think brings out the culture of Slovenian people is the literature and poems that are written by such great Slovenian poets as Ivan Cankar. Poems like "Ptiček" really describe the nice scenery and describes to us the customs and traditions that they, the Slovenes, have and uphold.

Another difference is that the Slovenian people have a number of dialects that reflect all the different cultures that are wound into one.

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DIANA PETREVSKI (12 years):

Slovenia is a beautiful country, clean country. Mountains make up much of Slovenia and about half of the land is covered by thick forests. Mount Triglav is the highest mountain in Slovenia. Ljubljana is the capitol city of Slovenia. Not far from Ljubljana, there are caves called Postojnska jama, which are the largest caves in Europe.

I like Slovenia. It is a beautiful country and I would love to go there for a holiday. I enjoy listening to the music. The people are very friendly. Some people from Slovenia can still speak good Australian. The clothes they wear are nice. Some people have very good attitudes and some have bad ones.

I would say it is a good, clean country, hardly any bad people come from Slovenia. I would like to go there with my family, visit all my relatives and good friends I know.

I like reading, writing and speaking Slovenian although I don't know as much, which does not affect me at all though, I hope that knowing Slovenian will do me a lot of good later on.

Speaking Slovenian makes me happy because I can communicate to my relatives and friends.

Ivan Cankar is a great Slovenia writer. France Prešeren is the great Slovenian song and poem writer.



Every time I get myself into a conversation with somebody I have just met, the subject of nationalities arises without fail. The most common question that is always asked is: "What nationality are you?" When I tell them I am Yugoslav, they immediately ask me: "What part of Yugoslavia do you come from?" Knowing that each state is different in its language and culture, I tell them that my parents are from Slovenia. For a few seconds there is a complete silence, until a final question is asked, which is of course: "Where on the map is Slovenia?" This is where the conversation really begins.

This is the sort of conversation I am faced with all the time and believe it or not, as many times as I have to repeat myself, I love talking about it, for a simple reason that I am, to a certain extent, a part of this small community. Even though I don't live in Slovenia, I'm surrounded by Slovenian people and Slovenian culture.

The first example of Slovenian people around me are none other than my parents. They are the ones that have told me about their life in Slovenia, even though the things they tell me are not very nice. This is because they were there towards the end of the second world war. It is still interesting to know what the situation was like there at that time, because I am able to compare it with the life in Australia at that time. I believe it was much harder living there during the second world war because the people there were faced with the constant terror of their houses being bombed any day. This is the one thing the Australians never had to face.

Another wonderful thing my parents did for me was pay for my ticket to Yugoslavia when I was ten years old. They of course came with me. This was an excellent experience which I soon hope to fulfill again, and hopefully by myself next time.

A fun part of the Slovenian culture I am involved in is the folkloric dancing group of Triglav club, and Slovenian school. Through these activities I have met so many young people that I can relate to really easily for the simple fact that our parents come from the same part of Yugoslavia. The most common thing we find ourselves talking about is our parents and how they treat us, and what they tell us. Most of the time we find that our parents do the same things. A good example of this is not letting us out a lot with other nationalities, and at any time worrying about us. The good thing about these conversations is that we can laugh at them because we all have the same problems. We're also able to realize why our parents think the way they do, which is because they are not able to fully trust this country.

Besides all of this socializing I do through these activities, I'm also able to learn something, or, should I say, learn a lot. From the folkloric dancing we learn many different Slovenian folk dances which are extremely energetic and tiring dances but at the same time are a lot of fun. And from the Slovenian school, which I attend every Saturday morning, I seem to be slowly but surely learning how to read and write. In the long run, I believe, this will be very beneficial for my education. The thing I am finding most interesting is to learn about Slovenian writers and poets. If I was ever to translate a piece of Slovenian poetry or prose into English, I would choose its entire feeling of what the writer is trying to convey. There just seems to be something unique about the style or maybe it is just the language it is written in.

When I really think about it, I find everything about Slovenia unique, maybe because it is the culture I'm closely related to. As much as I love everything Slovenia there is, one thing I have set straight in my mind about it, and that is that I shall remain a proud Slovenian in Australia.

BORIS KOBAL:

Australia is one of the many countries in the world which has a population that has many different cultural backgrounds. On the surface the country has a strong Irish and British background, but more and more often one sees the addition of many different lifestyles which are starting to become accepted, learnt and shared by everyone.

This multicultural society is developing into something which makes the country very colourful and warm.

With the introduction of new languages, people are learning one of the most useful skills obtainable - that of bi-lingual communication.

For me this is already quite apparent, mainly because I come from a Slovene family and have automatically adopted some of Slovenian skills. It seems sometimes natural to speak to my parent and relatives in Slovenian. This helps in learning and enables me to communicate more thoroughly with members of the Slovene community.

Slovene is this year also important to me because I'm taking it on as H.S.C. subject. In this way I'm not only learning the grammar but also of the literature of the Slovenian people, and learning the conversation of the Slovenes. Whether or not I follow Slovenian later on in tertiary studies, it will always be a part of my life. I was born with it, so I can not deny it.

Slovenian in many ways makes life richer and adds variety. With Slovenian social groups one gets to meet many friends and relatives. Slovenian also opens many doors in the future if I ever want to study languages. It is an asset for knowledge about other Slavic languages if I ever want to diversify.

Slovene culture is a part of my life and has always been. With the language, people, family and social life, it adds spice which can in the long run make life only better.

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TANYA BARIČ (13 years):

Slovenia is one of the six republics of Yugoslavia. Slovenia lies on the border of Italy and Austria. The people of Slovenia are kind, generous and helpful. They are also very friendly people.

There are three official languages in Yugoslavia. They are: Serbo-Croatian, Macedonian and Slovenian. Serbo-Croatian is spoken by about 75% of the population. Slovenian and Macedonian are closely related to Serbo-Croatian. Other languages spoken in Yugoslavia include Albanian, Hungarian, Bulgarian, Czechoslovakian, Italian, Rumanian, Turkish and Ruthenian.

Slovenian people wear clothes that are no different to ours. They are ordinary people who wear ordinary clothes.

The Slovenian way of life is more modernized in the city areas. There are big shopping centres, flats and beaches. Further in the country areas there are still the old houses. They still have fresh cow's and goat's milk. They also have fresh eggs and chickens. They don't have many phones in the villages either.

The attitudes of Slovenian people are really great. They are happy, hard working, sun loving people. They are very determined people who will try to help you in nearly every way.

The Slovenian language is of great use to me because when I get older it will count for my H.S.C. If I have children, I will teach them to speak Slovenian. It is a privilege to know two languages. Slovenian heritage doesn't really inconvenience me because nobody except for Aborigines are true blue Australians, no matter how far back you go in time. Being Slovenian is just great. ★

ROBERT ŠUBER:

Jaz sem avstralski Slovenec in sem toliko Slovenec kot sem Avst-  
ralec. Rojen sem v Wollongongu, na južni obali države New South Wales.  
Ostali v družini so prišli iz Primorske, pokrajine v Sloveniji. Iz Slo-  
venije je prišlo moje potomstvo, moje nasledstvo, ki gre nazaj nešteto  
let.

Sem iz prve generacije avstralskih Slovencev, pa se se zavedam  
mojega nasledstva, moje kulture. To mi je velika pomoč, pa ne samo meni  
ampak tudi Avstraliji kajti, Avstralija je polna ljudi iz drugih dežel  
in drugih kultur. In to nas bogati bolj kot katerokoli drugo bogastvo.  
Tu so milijoni drugih ljudi iz vseh držav, vsi pod eno zastavo. To nam  
daje identiteto s katero smo lahko ponosni. To mi je dalo tudi možnost,  
da lahko govorim drugi jezik.

Mi smo edina Šubrova družina v Avstraliji; ostalo sorodstvo je v  
Sloveniji. Naše vezi s Slovenijo so zelo močne. Na Primorskem je veliko  
ljudi, ki jih moji starši poznajo in se jih vedno spominjajo. Prav tako  
ne bomo nikdar pozabili sorodnikov, prijateljev, rojstnega kraja. Hočem  
se učiti moj materni jezik, da bi lahko govoril s temi ljudmi, ki so  
tako ljubeznivi do mene.

Edina stvar, ki ovira našo družino je, da smo ulovljeni na dva kra-  
ja sveta. Večno nas vleče nazaj v domovino, v spomnih, dobrih in slabih,  
je zmeraj potreba za iti nazaj, za videti še enkrat; pa moramo živeti  
in delati tukaj, v Avstraliji. Je pa še ena stvar, ki moti ne samo našo  
družino ampak še veliko Slovencev: da Slovenija ni dovolj poznana med  
Avstralci. Jaz bi rad vsem povedal o Sloveniji, o njenih lepotah in o  
njenih posebnih ljudeh. Druge narodnosti so med Avstralci zelo dobro  
znane. Mi kot Slovenci moramo sami sebe predstavljati, in naš narodni  
ponos. Mi Slovenci se ne smemo bati reči, da smo Slovenci, ali da smo iz  
slovenskega potomstva. Francoz bo še zmeraj Francoz, pa če bo v Ameriki  
ali v Afriki; obdržal bo svoj ponos in dediščino.

Imam dosti prijateljev, ki niso Slovenci. V moji šoli imamo dosti  
Grkov, Turkov, Kitajcev in drugih. Vsi ti sošolci govorijo svoj materin-  
ski jezik. In jaz verjamem, da potomstvo, rojeno slovenskim staršem v  
Avstraliji, ne bi smelo pozabiti materinskega jezika.

Mene nič ne ovira, ker sem slovenskega rodu. Jaz imam svojo osebnost,  
svoj značaj. Ker sem Slovenec, sem že obiskal Slovenijo. Vtisov, ki  
sem jih prinesel od tam, ne bom nikoli pozabil.

Vesel sem, ko vidim, da se Slovenci družijo in preživijo skupaj  
lepe trenutke. Imajo se kaj za pogovarjati. -"Od kod ste, ste že šli  
nazaj, boste tam ostali".

Edina stvar, ki me preseneča, ko stojim zunaj slovenskega kluba je,  
da se takrat počutim kot da ne bi več bil v Avstraliji ampak v kakšni  
slovenski gostilni. Sliši se slovenska glasba. Skupine objetih moških  
skladno pojejo slovenske pesmi - z občasnim požirkom vina. Tu se Slo-  
venci počutijo kot da bi bili doma v Sloveniji. Tu slovenski jezik ne  
bo pozabljen, ker se tudi slovenska mladina zbira skupaj, kot so se nji-  
hovi starši enkrat v mladosti.



JOŽICA MODRIJANČIČ (16 let):

Mi mlajši imamo največjo korist od slovenskih naselbin v Avstraliji, za kar se lahko čutimo dolžne starejšim, ki so se močno trudili in ustvarili nekaj, na kar smo lahko zelo ponosni. Kakor vemo, imamo v Sydneyu slovensko versko središče v Merrylandsu, poleg tega pa še dva kluba: Slovensko društvo Sydney in Triglav. V teh organizacijah se radi shajamo. Imamo pa tudi slovenske radijske oddaje, ki nam med drugim prinašajo novice iz domovine naših staršev in od tukaj.

Mi mlajši imamo tudi to korist, da se lahko učimo in da lahko govorimo slovenski jezik, na katerega je lahko vsak slovenski potomec ponosen in zadovoljen, da ima možnost spoznati od kod izvira. Mislím, da bi se moral vsak otrok slovenskih staršev učiti slovensko, da bi tako lažje spoznal življenje in običaje domovine svojih staršev. Šele tako bi mogel bolj ceniti slovenski jezik.

Rekla bi lahko, da mi v tukajšnjih okoliščinah slovenski jezik ne koristi mnogo, ker v javnosti ni dovolj poznan. Poudarim pa, da mi pride zelo prav doma in med prijatelji Slovenci, ker razumem in se lahko pogovarjam v njem, drugače bi bilo zelo težko slediti pogovorom, posebno, ko se sestanejo starejši Slovenci. Znanje jezika mi tudi omogoča, da lahko poslušam slovenske pesmi, radio itd.

Kot slovenska potomka v Avstraliji sem deležna te nevšečnosti, da Avstralci ne znajo črkovati mojega priimka.

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

TONI BULOVEC (13 let):

Ko sem pred nekaj leti prvič obiskal Slovenijo, sem se le malo spominjal kod smo hodili in kaj vse smo videli. Najbolj sem se spominjal Stola in Zelenice. Spomini so zato bili še lepši, ko sem se z mamo in atijem ponovno vrnil v Slovenijo.

Ko sem po prihodu v Slovenijo začel obiskovati šolo, so mi moji sošolci veliko pomagali pri učenju slovenskega jezika. Zelo sem bil vesel in imel sem veliko prijateljev.

Ljudje v Sloveniji so zelo prijazni, prijazno se pozdravljajo na cesti in pomagajo drug drugemu v stiski. Oblačijo se preprosto ampak lepo. Skrbeti morajo tudi za zimsko obleko. Veliko se bavijo s športom, posebno s smučanjem. Jaz sem bil zelo vesel in zadovoljen in upam, da se bom enkrat zopet vrnil v Slovenijo.

V poletnih večerih smo velikokrat obiskali Bled in poslušali lepe melodije, katere so igrali po verandah hotelov. Rad sem prisluhnil in še danes jih doma rad poslušam. Vzljubil sem Slovenijo, njene naravne lepote, mladino in starejše ljudi. Zdi se mi, da ni lepšega kraja na svetu, kot je Slovenija. Ko sem bil v Sloveniji sem popolnoma pozabil na Avstralijo, kjer sem bil rojen. Nisem bil vesel, ko sta se mama in ati odločila, da se bomo vrnil nazaj v Avstralijo. Zelo težko sem se poslovil od slovenskih krajev, prijateljev in sorodnikov. Sklenil sem, da se bom vrnil, ko dokončam šole, zato sem tudi vesel, da lahko tukaj nadaljujem z učenjem slovenščine.

Ko bom zrasel in dokončal šolanje bom odpotoval v lepe kraje Slovenije, v hribe, kamor sem pogosto zahajal s svojimi starši. Nekega leta, to je bilo drugič, ko sem bil na dopustu v Sloveniji, se spominjam, da sem kar petkrat zlezal v Zelenico. Priznam pa, da sem zelo pogrešal plavanje. V šolskih počitnicah smo bili le enkrat na morju, v koloniji, kjer smo imeli zelo zabavne počitnice. V Sloveniji je poletje zelo kratko, vendar so dnevi včasih tudi zelo vroči.

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

NATALIE ŠPICAR (16 let):

*Kaj jaz mislim o Sloveniji in slovenskem jeziku*

Rojena sem bila v Sloveniji, novembra 1968. Z mamom in očetom smo pripotovali v to daljno deželo Avstralijo 25. decembra 1969. Tega dneva se seveda ne spominjam, saj sem bila še premajhna.

Moje prve besede so bile slovenske. Starši in stari starši so me vedno opozarjali naj govorim slovensko. Ubogala sem jih. Danes, ko pomislím nazaj, sem srečna, da imam starše, ki so me vzpodbujali, da naj govorim slovensko.

Leta 1980 sem s starši in s sestro odpotovala nazaj v domovino, kjer sem spoznala lepote in sladkobe Slovenije. Živela sem na Dolenjskem, v vasi Leskovec pri Krškem. Tu sem tudi hodila v šolo. Slovenščina, ki sem jo že znala, mi je tu prišla zelo prav. Na moj rodni kraj sem zelo ponosna. Nazaj v Avstralijo smo se vrnili decembra 1982.

Letos sem začela obiskovati slovensko šolo v Bankstownu kjer mi tista slovnica od doma veliko koristi. Slovenščino so zdaj priznali v šolah kot tuj jezik in ocene iz nje gredo tudi v avstralsko spričevalo.

Najbolj me razveseli, ko slišim kaj na splošno o Jugoslaviji; pri srcu me stisne. Tako sem uživala, ko sem gledala zimsko olimpijado. Razveselilo me je tudi, ko sem v neki reviji brala, da so Jugoslovani "ljudje ljubezni in pesmi", kar me je naredilo res ponosno. Ponosna sem tudi ko plešem v slovenski folklorni skupini in lahko pokažem nekaj naše kulture.

V Avstraliji zdaj živim s ponosom in ljubeznijo do mojega rodnega kraja, ki ga nikoli ne bom pozabila.



DANICA GRŽELJ (18 let):

Sem dekle slovenskega porekla. Slovenski jezik, nasledstvo in kultura so mi zelo pri srcu in me zanimajo.

Rada bi pohvalila svoja starša. Ona sta me prva učila slovenski jezik in me spoznala s slovensko kulturno dediščino. Odkar sem se rodila, se nisem nikoli kesala, da sem dekle slovenskega porekla. Moji prvi slovenski besedi sta bili "mama" in "ata". Doma smo govorili samo slovensko, zato sem se hitro naučila ta jezik. V šoli in s prijatelji sem govorila samo angleško. Ko sem prvič začela hoditi v vrtec, sem imela nekoliko težav z angleščino, vendar sem se hitro naučila tudi te. Zdaj pa znam angleško še bolj kot nekateri Avstralci, poleg tega pa razumem in govorim še drugi jezik.

Ko sem bila stara šest let, sem začela obiskovati osnovno šolo v Merrylandsu, kjer smo se učili slovensščino vsako soboto od dveh do štirih. Imela sem mnogo prijateljev. Uživala sem, ko smo praznovali praznike kot Božič in materinski dan. Rada sem deklamirala pesmi ali igrala v igrah. V šoli sem se naučila slovenske pesmi kot "Mi se imamo radi", "Naš najboljši brat je Jezus". Vsako nedeljo smo hodili v slovensko cerkev v Merrylandsu, kjer sem sprejela prvo sveto obhajilo in sveto birmo. Tako sem ponosna da sem dekle slovenskega porekla, posebno, ko vidim kakšno močno vero imajo Slovenci, ki prihajajo k maši vsako nedeljo. Ko vsi skupaj zapojemo "Hvala večnemu Bogu", mi je pri srcu tako, da imam kar meglene oči.

V cerkvi imamo mladinski pevski zbor, ki se imenuje Zarja. V njem nas je trideset in smo kot ena družina. Vsako zadnjo nedeljo v mesecu pojemo pri maši. Lani smo nastopili na mladinskem koncertu v Melbournu. Ta čas smo lepo preživeli, ker smo se srečali z drugo slovensko mladino.



Poleti smo bili na skupnem taborjenju. Bilo je zelo lepo. Toda, ni vse tako lahko. Vsako nedeljo po maši imamo tudi vaje. Pevski zbor je zelo pomemben v mojem življenju. Ker mi je slovenski jezik tako drag, rada pojem slovenske pesmi. V zboru imam mnogo prijateljev, ki jih imam zelo rada. Vesela sem, da sem članica slovenskega mladinskega zbora in sploh da sem Slovenka.

Z družino sem obiskala Slovenijo leta 1976. Spomini na ta obisk so ostali tako živi kot da bi bila tam včeraj. Slovenija je res tako čudovita, kot vsi pravijo. Bila je pomlad, ko smo bili tam. Kako krasno je bilo! Bivali smo pri moji stari mami v Sodoviču. Polja so bila okrašena z rožicami, zrak je bil tako svež. Samo, v hlevu sem težko pres-tala. Hitro sem si pridobila prijatelje. Cele dneve smo preskakali po poljih in gozdovih, v toplen soncu. Stari ata mi je posodil svoje kolo s katerim sem se vsepovsod vozila. Zelo rada sem nabirala jagode po gozdovih in še posebno rada sem ob večerih lovila kresnice. Rada sem imela starega očeta in staro mamo, tako da me je srce kar bolelo, ko sem se poslavljalna in vračala v Avstralijo. Videla sem, da so Slovenci polni dobrote in modrosti, posebno starejši. Rada imam prisrčnost in dobroto slovenskega naroda. Ker imam tak občutek do Slovenije, me zelo zanima življenje in kultura Slovencev. Mami mi vedno pravi, koliko je slovenski narod že pretrpel, kako so v petnajstem stoletju Turki napadali Slovenijo in poklali polno ljudi, največ otrok. Kako so sosednje države hotele prevzeti slovensko zemljo. Kako so Slovenci trpeli za svojo preljubo zemljo pod nemškim napadom.

Zelo sem ponosna na bogato slovensko zgodovino in kulturo. Vsi Slovenci so vredni hvale, da so tako marljivo branili in obdržali svojo Slovenijo.

Zdaj hodim v slovensko šolo v Bankstownu. To leto bom maturirala. V slovensko šolo hodim, ker ljubim slovenski jezik in Slovenijo. Nič se ne kesam ampak žal mi je, da bom letos zaključila moje šolanje. Tako rada bi še več vedela o Sloveniji. Veseli me, ko obdelujemo literaturo. Jokam, ko berem Ivana Cankarja, posebno njegovo črtico Mati. Žalostna sem tudi, ko berem Krvni davek. Smejem pa se, ko berem delo Mileta Klopčiča.

S slovensko šolo imam polno dela ampak je vredno zato, ker bi rada postala odlična v Slovenskem jeziku. Ko končam šolo to leto, bi rada nadaljevala študije in postala učiteljica. Rada bi tudi učila v slovenski šoli. Že zdaj vsako soboto, ko končam šolo v Bankstownu, grem v Merrylands in tam pomagam učiti slovenščino tiste otroke, ki še prav nič ne znajo slovensko. To me veseli, ker imam rada otroke in jim rada pomagam pri učenju jezika.

Ker sem slovenskega porekla, me slovensko kulturno nasledstvo zelo zanima. Nič se ne kesam, ker sem Slovenka. Do Slovenije imam prisrčen odnos.



### Mamica moja

Mamica je zelo bogata,  
 bogata v ljubezni.  
 In z ljubeznijo kuha za nas,  
 pere, šiva in pospravlja.  
 In ko ima veliko dela,  
 me tudi zvesto posluša,  
 ko ji brbljam in razlagam  
 o delu v šoli.  
 In če me pokrega,  
 me vedno z ljubeznijo.  
 Če časi so težki,  
 je mama pomoč mi najbližja.  
 O, če bi mama me pustila  
 - bi umrla! Preveč bi jo pogrešala!  
 Kdor ima tako mamo kot jaz,  
 je zelo, zelo hval.  
 Hvala ti za vse - ljuba mama!

CARMEN KALC









THE LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

BARIČ TANJA  
BRATOVIČ NIVES  
BRATOVIČ STOJAN  
BREZOVNIK MARY  
BUČKOVIČ DIANA  
BULOVEC TONI  
DOLŠEK WENDY  
ERZETIČ ERNEST  
ERZETIČ ANITA  
GODEC MILENA  
GODEC TONY  
GRŽELJ DANICA  
GRŽELJ MARGARET  
ISTENIČ SUZANA  
KALC CARMEN  
KALC MICHELLE  
KOBAL BORIS  
KODERMAN VANYA  
KROPE MARKO  
KUŽNIK OLGA  
LIPOLD JANA  
LOCHNER VERONICA  
LUKEŽIČ PAVEL  
MAKOVEC IAN  
MAKOVEC MARK  
MAROLT ROBERT  
MEZGEC MICHELLE  
MODRIJANČIČ JOZICA  
MUHA NIVES  
PETREVSKI DIANA  
ŠAJN JUDY  
SAULING EDWARD  
ŠPICAR NATALIE

ŠPICLIN TONY  
SREBRNIČ MARIE  
ŠUBERT ROBERT  
TOMŠIČ ESTHER  
VELIŠČEK MIMICA  
ZADEL ROBERT  
ANONYMOUS

*All contributors have been in 1984 attending Slovenian language classes at Bankstown Girls High School, Bankstown, Sydney. We are very grateful to all for their understanding and cooperation.*

*It is anticipated that a similar publication will be made next year. Therefore we would like to encourage all students of Slovenian language to prepare their essays and poems for 1985 publication. The works may be written in either Slovenian or English and the theme should deal with the similar matters as in this publication.*

*In order that our work in 1985 could be of better quality, which of course means greater expenses, we would kindly ask for some assistance from our organizations and individuals. Donations may be sent to:*

*Slovenian-Australian Literary & Art Circle, 19A Hume Crescent, Werrington, 2760, N.S.W.*

*Vsi sodelujoči so v letu 1984 obiskovali pouk slovenskega jezika na dekliški gimnaziji v Bankstownu v Sydneyu. Vsem smo zelo hvaležni za njihovo razumevanje in sodelovanje.*

*Predvidevamo, da bomo izdali podobno publikacijo naslednje leto. Radi bi že zdaj vzpodbudili vse učence slovenskega jezika, da pripravijo spise in pesmi za 1985 izdajo. Dela so lahko v angleščini ali v slovenščini, s podobno temo kakor v tej publikaciji.*

*Da bi naše delo v 1985 lahko bilo kvalitetnejše, vljudno naprošamo za pomoč naše organizacije in posameznike. Darove lahko pošljete na: S.A.L.A.C., 19A Hume Crescent, Werrington, 2760 N.S.W.*

### *Maturantski ples v sliki*



**Predstavitve maturantov slovenski skupnosti (iz leve v desno): Robert Marolt, Diana Bučkovič, Irena Mezgec, Nives Muha, Boris Kobal, Danica Grželj in Judy Šajn - manjka Mimica Velišček.**



**Ta večer so se predstavili tudi "mali" maturanti (z leve v desno so): Natall Špicar, Nataša Petrevski, Ian Markovec, Ana Kavaš, Karmen Kalc in Peter Hrašnik - manjka Mishelle Domadenik.**