

NOTABLE SLOVENIANS

The most notable Slovenian in Queensland was **Robert Mejač**, an engineer, architect and artist, who came to Australia in 1949. During the first few years of Australian residency he was an adviser to a government minister in Tasmania until he moved to Queensland. He invented a system of steel concrete molding which is still in use today. He also developed a new way to pre-stress concrete. This process was named and patented as MEJAC, LB-SB and is in international use. Robert Mejač, who died in 1992 in Redcliffe aged 77, was also a formidable voluntary worker for the Slovenian community.

Slovenians in Queensland have been successful in many areas. **Slavko Pekol** or Jim Pekol as he is known to wider community, is successful master builder and owner of a shopping centre. He is former president of Slovenian Australian Association *Planinka* and respected Australian community leader. Early this year Australian Government expresses its gratitude to Jim Pekol for his valued contribution toward assisting developing countries to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development. Recognition signed by the then Prime Minister Mr. Howard and Minister for Foreign Affairs was given to Jim for many years of voluntary community work here in Australia and overseas.

Viktor Pahor and his son Frideric Pahor have received awards for their contribution to the building industry. Marko Pregelj became Apprentice of the year in 1984. Marjan Podobnik completed a law degree at the University of Queensland and is now a principal legal officer in Adelaide. University academics include Zlatko Skrbiš, Sara Visočnik Mury and Rok Sosic who now heads a private computer firm.

Julie Majer who came to Brisbane from Mareeba has represented Australia at various international swimming events. At the World Cup of 1991 she won five gold medals and a silver medal. She won bronze at the Commonwealth Games in 1994.

Mirko Cuderman