

THE HISTORY OF SLOVENIAN AUSTRALIAN SOCIAL AND SPORTING CLUB JADRAN

S.A.S. & S. Club 'JADRAN' was established on October 17/1971. It was so named as the majority of members originated from the Primorska (Coastal) region of Slovenia. Later the name was changed to 'Slovenian- Australian Community and Sporting Club – JADRAN. In the club's constitution, it is stressed that the club is a social one, therefore nothing of a political or of a religious nature is to influence its affairs. The name *JADRAN* was suggested by the then secretary, Branka Jelenič, and embraced by the majority of members.

The first president of the newly formed club was Alojz Valenčič who came from Zarečje near Ilirska Bistrica. In 1973, with the donations, memberships and the admission fees of dance parties, a block of land, with a small house on it, was able to be bought in Diggers Rest. In 1977, with volunteer labour and under the direction of Anthony Kirn, *Kirnova Koča* was built. The cottage soon became too small for the growing number of members and other visitors, that in 1980, building of a larger hall began. The official opening of the new hall was in 1982 and the president at the time was Franc Likar.

Various sporting venues were added – tennis court, soccer field, volleyball court, six undercover bowling lanes. Men's and women's soccer was also successful in the Victorian amateur league. Some of the 'stars' that emerged included – D. Vlah, T. Poklar, T. Zanetič, L. Lipec, D. Maddison, M. Knežević, A. Stolfa.

The most active and consistently successful was the bowling club. Outdoor bowling was formed quite early in its history and became under cover by 1986, in the years that Franc Iskra was president of the club. Throughout its history, the bowling referees were Franc Iskra, Silvo Juriševič, Rudi Iskra and Jože Dekleva. The Retirees Bowling section was established in 1996 by Slave Crooks and these bowl every Wednesday

In 1978, the choir *Jadran* was formed under the leadership of Vladimir Trampuž. They performed Australia-wide and in 1982, also in the motherland-Slovenia. Later they amalgamated with the choir of Slovenian Association Melbourne and were renamed **PLANIKA**. From this emerged the choirmasters Vladimir Trampuž, Hogo Polh and Roland Carmody.

Soon after the formation of the club, the Supplementary Slovenian classes began. The teacher was Ivanka Škof. Casual teachers included Vesna Iskra, Anne Zorzut, Zora, Danila and Valentin Breclj, Viki Mrak and Dino Rupnik. In 1984 the then president Ivan Valencic and secretary Marija Iskra, first began the printing of the *Jadran* calendar and the club news. The newsletter only lasted for a short time though the calendar continued for years. Printing of the newsletter was re-instated in 1995 under the title of *Zvon* at the time of Slave Crooks' presidency. The editors were Peter Mandelj and Dušan Maslo.

In 1979, a plaque dedicated to Slovenia's greatest poet, Oton Župančič, was placed on the property. In his writings he touched on the issue of immigration. In that same year, the library, SREČKO KOSOVEL was opened and was managed and organised by Valentin Breclj.

Every eight years the Jadran Club hosts the Slovenian Festival, which is organised by The Council of Slovenian Organisations of Victoria. Almost every Slovenian Club in Victoria participates in this festival.

Three times in its entire history, Miss *Jadran* was organised - the beauty contest – the first year winner was Cvetka Natlačén, then the following year Sandra Iskra, followed by Sandra Starc.

In 1994, The bee-keeping section, under the title of title .Bee-keeping school, with a multicultural intake, began under the supervision of Stanko Starc. The beekeeping section at the annual BEEKEEPING FESTIVAL takes place on the club grounds, is very well supported.

In 1990, a chapel dedicated to Saint Joseph was erected on the grounds and the feast day is celebrated with holy Mass.

On the feast day of All Saints, November 1, prayers are said for all deceased, at the East Keilor Cemetery, followed by dinner with members at the *Jadran* Club.

Other important occasions at the *Jadran* Slovenian Club are Lent and the Day after Shrove Tuesday, a traditional funerary ceremony marking the beginning of the Lenten Period, which immigrants from the Primorska area brought with them.

Slava Crooks organised bus tours of the surrounding areas. Ana Iskra assisted with these tours and they were continued by Marta Ogrizek. This work is momentarily organised by Romana Žetko and Zlata Vitez.

The most memorable events celebrated in the year include – Lent, the feast day of Saint Joseph, Mothers Day, Fathers Day, Slovenia Day, Wine and Smallgoods Tasting, Club Anniversary, November 1 – All Saints Day, Melbourne Cup, Miklavž (Saint Nicholas Day), and Silvestrovanje (New Years Eve).

These days, the club is host to visitors from the Mother Country, who by their appearance enlivens our everyday existence.

Also of note is, that, to this day, all work at the club is carried out on a voluntary basis.

For our young ones, of most importance is Miklavž (St. Nicholas), who arrives with Santa in an open-top car with gifts for the children.

Of utmost importance to all our clubs is keeping ties with the motherland, the old and the new, the preservation of the Slovenian language, the culture and customs among Slovenians on this continent, especially for our descendants.

We, the SLOVENIAN CLUB **JADRAN**, have our home on our land, and well established premises, and we are proud of ourselves and our ancestors and hopeful for the future generations.

Marija Iskra