
FAMILY REUNION NEWSLETTER

Stepan, Gornik & Zallar

Volume 1, Issue 1

December 2008

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Vesele Božične in Srečno Novo Leto!

In Slovenia, the holiday season begins on December 6th, St. Nicholas Day. St. Nicholas is accompanied by devils that reprimand bad children and give the good children small gifts of candies and fruit.

There is a corner of the house called "God's corner" where the head of the family will place the Nativity scene. On Christmas Eve the family gathers around the Nativity scene to pray. Each room of the house, the barns and out buildings are blessed with Holy Water.

The family attends midnight mass with other villagers; they carry lit torches and sing Christmas carols on their way to the Church. The Festival of the Three Kings marks the end of the Christmas season. On this day, children carry lighted stars and sing carols from house to house.

North Pole website and Santa Tracker

Visit the North Pole website at www.northpole.com. You can send a letter to Santa, check the naughty or nice list. There are activities and recipes... On Christmas Eve you can see where Santa is!



Important Reminder!

Return RSVP's by December 31, 2008

Please remember to return the RSVP. We need to know how many plan on attending the reunion so we know how much food we'll need and what activities to plan.

The RSVP and T-Shirt order form is attached to the invitation, just tear off that section and return it in the pre-addressed, stamped envelope with your T-shirt order, recipes and completed family group sheet.

Thank you

Reunion Updates

Slovenian-English Book to Raffle off

The Book, "Lojza iz vesolja" (Louisa from Outer Space) is written in both English and Slovenian. Beautifully illustrated and includes a glossary for some words. It retails for \$27.00 plus postage from Slovenia, tickets will be sold at the reunion for \$1.00. Would make a great gift for children!

Tentative Plans

We plan on setting up for the reunion early Saturday morning, if you don't mind being put to work you're welcome to help.

We'll start checking people in about 11:00am, if you ordered T-shirts you can pick them up when you check-in.

We will serve light snacks, coffee and punch around Noon. Dinner time has not been set yet but should be around 4:00 or 5:00pm.

There is a well equipped playground and a train museum near the Civic Center. We are checking on setting up a volleyball net on the lawn area.

We're planning a craft and game area to help keep children occupied.

We're working on having a display of traditional Slovenian clothing and items. If you have something you would like to share, let us know.

We are still in need of entertainment! If you can help or have ideas, let us know.

Reunion Website

For those with internet access, you can visit the reunion website at <http://reunion.piledhigher.org> for updates. Another newsletter will go out before the reunion with updates around April. If you have questions you can contact Mary Alice Schwanke at 612-619-9781, 952-912-9968 or via e-mail at piledhigher@msn.com.

Fun and Games

B	S	A	G	N	A	P	E	T	S	M	V
B	L	E	T	A	D	E	P	O	K	E	I
C	O	O	G	O	S	M	U	N	L	T	N
E	V	T	O	Z	S	D	L	I	W	L	O
V	E	F	R	D	A	E	K	M	W	I	T
O	N	B	N	N	S	A	N	I	F	K	A
R	I	N	I	P	R	A	R	N	F	A	C
B	A	E	K	A	B	G	U	E	I	U	O
A	N	A	C	I	T	O	P	S	W	M	N
R	I	H	R	E	P	O	L	K	A	O	I
G	N	C	R	A	L	L	A	Z	E	G	T
A	H	E	I	R	O	N	R	A	N	G	E

Find these words in the chart above.

BAKE	ORE
BIRCH	POLKA
BLOODSAUSAGE	POTICA
DATE	SLOVENIAN
FOOD	SOUDAN
FUN	STEPAN
GORNIK	TACONITE
GRABROVEC	TOWER
IRONRANGE	VELIKARACHNA
METLIKA	VINO
MINES	WILD
MINNESOTA	ZALLAR

What's in a Name?

How common are our family names? Here is some information from The Dictionary of American Family Names by Patrick Hanks, 2006. To put these frequencies into perspective, **JOHNSON** appears 610,104 times per 88.7 million names in US:

STEPAN – (Frequency of 379 per 88.7 million names in US) Czech (*Štěpán*) from the personal name *Štěpán*, Czech form of Latin *Stephanus* (aka Steven).

STEPHAN - (Frequency of 3,200 per 88.7 million names in US) German from the German personal name *Stephan*, a vernacular form of Latin *Stephanus* (aka Steven).

GORNIK - (Frequency of 166 per 88.7 million names in US) 1. Polish: occupational name from *górník* ‘miner’; 2. Polish: topographic name, an agent derivative of *górný* ‘upper part of a settlement’; 3. Slovenian: from *gora* ‘mountain’, ‘hill’, in any of several senses. It may be a topographic name for someone who lived on a hill; a habitational name from any of several places named with *gora* or the adjective *gornji* ‘upper’; or a feudal status name for the steward of a vineyard, from *gora* in the sense ‘hill planted with vines’.

ZALLAR (Zalar) - (Frequency of 172 per 88.7 million names in US) Slovenian: 1. (mainly eastern Slovenia; *Žalar*) status name from the dialect word *žalar* ‘cottager’, ‘tenant’, from the Austrian German word *Sölller* (aka Sellner). This denoted a day laborer who lived in a small house with no agricultural land. 2. habitational name for a person from the village of Zala.

Problems Encountered While Researching Our Family

One problem we’ve run into is the various spellings of Surnames. There are many, here are a few examples:

- Anton **Stepan** and his brother George **Stephan**. We’ve also seen Stepon, Steppan, Stepien, etc.
- Gornik, Gornick Garnick and Gorniak
- On Martin Zallar Sr’s passport, both Zallar and Zalar are used in the same document. Other spellings are Zollar, Zoiller, Zaller, etc.

Then there is the difference between the Americanized and Slovenian spellings of given (first) names:

Mary – Marija, George – Jurij, Frances - Franciska

Not to mention the frequent use of given names between siblings in one family. While brother 1 names his children Joseph, John, Martin, Anna & Anton, brother 2 does as well. It gets confusing trying to separate which Joseph belongs to which brother.

In Slovenia... Are the Gorniks that lived in #16 in Grabrovec around the late 1800’s related to the Gorniks that lived in #15 in the same time period? Most likely... but how?

And there’s the 3 Zollar’s that married 3 Stepan’s....