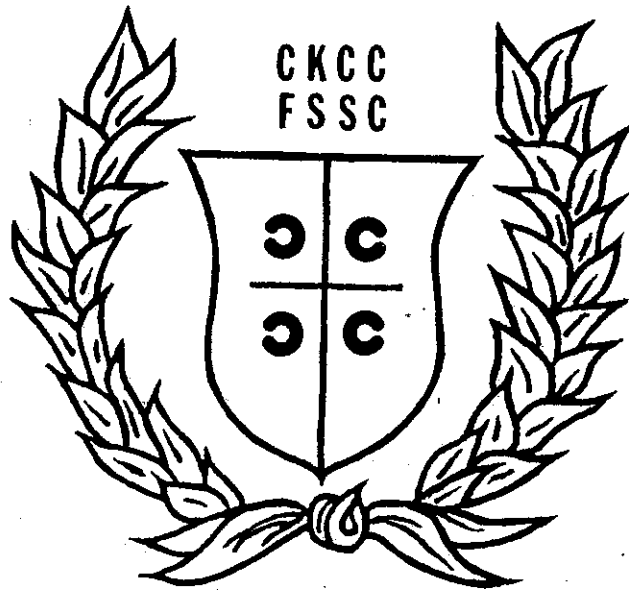


**САВЕЗА КОЛА СРПСКИХ СЕСТАРА
СРПСКЕ ПРАВОСЛАВНЕ СЛОБОДНЕ ЕПАРХИЈЕ
ЗА С.А.Д. И КАНАДУ**



**FEDERATION OF SERBIAN SISTERS CIRCLES
OF THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX FREE DIOCESE
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND CANADA**

The crest on the cover is a design created by Maria Stepanovich of East Chicago, IN in the early years of the Federation.

The Origin of the Circle of Serbian Sisters

Belgrade, Serbia

An historical perspective of the status of the Serbian people at the turn of the last century should be briefly presented in order for us today to better understand the need for the formal organization of our women into sisters circles whose main goals were to give moral, material and monetary succor to all Serbs then. Freed from Turkish oppression through military actions, Serbia was ruled democratically by King Peter I Karadjordjevich. However, many Serbs lived under dire circumstances in the neighboring Austro-Hungarian Empire and under Turkish control in Old Serbia and Macedonia. As the photocopied article and its translation from VARDAR in the following pages states, the Serbs in the south were victims of vicious onslaughts by the Turks, Albanians and Bulgars. Learning these facts, people in Serbia were highly anguished by the acute sufferings of their fellow Serbs and were moved to action.

Among these were two Belgrade women, Nadezda Petrovich, a highly praised artist-painter, and Delfa Ivanich, the wife of Ivan, a consular secretary in the Serbian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In the summer of 1903, they and five friends organized a women's patriotic, humane and cultural association whose main goal was to give monetary support to any victimized Serbs outside of Serbia. The women asked Ivan Ivanich and Branislav Nusich, an acclaimed Serbian playwright as well as a consular secretary, to write a set of precursory by-laws for them. Nusich also suggested the name, KOLO SRPSKIH SESTARA, for the group and thus became its Kum.

A second meeting with the original nine (seven women and two men) and several invited women plus newspaper reporters was held at the end of July, 1903. After discussions of the stressful national conditions and the intentions of the organizers, the preliminary by-laws were read. The reporters were asked to write about what they witnessed and to invite all interested women to a general meeting where they would have the opportunity to join the group. Additional women were recruited before the general meeting so that there were fifty of them as founding members.

The general meeting was held on August 28, 1903, at Kolarac Hall at 3:00 p.m. in Belgrade. About three thousand women and several hundred men came so that all space indoors and the outside garden were filled. Sofia Arandjelovich, a retired teacher, was elected chairlady and Nadezda Petrovich was the main speaker. Her one-hour speech was interrupted often by acclamation and applause for she spoke of the imposed Turkish suffering of the Serbian people and the free Serbian women's duties and responsibilities to their disabled brethren. The by-laws were next read and approved by the assembly. The first officers elected were:

Mrs. Savka Subotich, president
Mrs. Milica Dobri, vice-president
Miss Jelena Lozanich, secretary
Miss Nadezda Petrovich, secretary
Mrs. Marija Jelacica, treasurer

Mrs. Jela Bajloni, treasurer and warehouse clerk
Mrs. Zivka Spasich, warehouse clerk
Mrs. Stana Mihajlovich, audit board, president
Mrs. Aspazija Stanojevich, audit board, vice-president

Under their leadership, much food, clothing and money were collected and distributed so that many Serbian lives were spared and people were inspired to continue fighting for their freedom.

The need for a steady source of income became apparent and the women decided in 1905 to print an annual calendar that they named VARDAR after the main river flowing through Old Serbia and Macedonia. Its contents would be patriotic articles, poetry and pictures about Serbian chetniks, heroes and martyrs as well as Serbian monasteries and

holy sites. The Circle found itself without funds to print the professionally written and edited materials. Ten thousand copies of the calendar were printed, after many pleas and free of charge, by the government's printing office. The first printing was quickly sold that five thousand more copies had to be printed. During World War I, VARDAR was not published. Publication resumed in 1918, and its popularity was such that over 50,000 copies were printed and sold annually.

Between 1912 and 1918, a period of wars that involved the Serbs, the Circle recognized the need for nurses so it directed a campaign for volunteers for whom they provided training. The first thirty volunteers were taught at the Belgrade Hospital Surgery Department by a Dr. Subotic. After their instructions were completed, they patriotically served at various battlefields taking care of wounded Serbian soldiers. The Circle's search for volunteers and provision of nursing training for them continued until the end of World War I. The Sisters also built, equipped, supplied and operated their own hospital in Pristina where more than a thousand seriously wounded and others less so were treated. More than forty other hospitals were also supported by the Circle.

With the creation of the Kingdom in 1918, the new country had to be developed to meet its own needs and rebuilt to remove the ravages of war. The Sisters next established and operated a War Invalids' Home in Belgrade for three years until the government stabilized enough to manage it. Approximately four thousand invalids received full medical care and clothing for themselves and their families upon their discharge.

A second project was the founding of a Boarding House for young women, first available only to those whose fathers perished in the wars but later opened to all young girls, attending high schools, trade schools or other higher educational institutions in Belgrade. These young women diffused their knowledge and culture upon finishing their schooling and also became active members of the Circle.

Between 1918 and 1941, the Circle expanded to include 160 chapters in Serbia and the Sisters helped organize similar groups throughout the rest of the country. They were members of the Yugoslav Women's Federation and the Union for the Protection of Children. Members gathered national handcrafts including regional attire and these collections were exhibited internationally where they received many awards. Through the donations of members, supporters and benefactors, the Circle purchased a Belgrade site and built its headquarters which was dedicated on its twentieth anniversary celebration on October 28, 1923. Many dignitaries and prominent guests attended the event, among them King Alexander, the Serbian Patriarch Dimitrije, Bitolj's Bishop Josif and those from the government, universities and patriotic groups. Queen Marija was the honorary life president of the Circle and she supported it morally and financially. The Circle's Ball, held annually, was regularly attended by Queen Marija who came dressed in a national costume, each time from a different area of the country.

The German occupation of Yugoslavia during World War II brought new challenges to the Sisters. Meetings were held secretly and projects to collect and make clothing, find necessary medical supplies and the delivery of both to the nationalistic guerrilla forces of General Mihailovich became hazardous. Quite often, members of various chapters, displaying great courage, became couriers for the underground movement.

The Circle of Serbian Sisters was forbidden to exist and all of its assets were seized by the communist regime that came into power in 1945. For over forty years, the members of the Circle were highly regarded and earned the respect of their fellow countrymen. Their display of compassion, idealism, patriotism and bravery remains the paradigm for all of us to follow. As a final example, it is said that Delfa Ivanich, one of the first two founders of the Circle in 1903, and who was an honorary president to the end of her life, made an offer to the communist leader. She wrote him and offered her life in exchange for the life of General Dragoljub Mihailovich. This heroic act by a noble lady was rejected.

FEDERATION OF SERBIAN SISTERS CIRCLES

Савез кола српских сестара

of the FREE SERBIAN ORTHODOX DIOCESE of the
United States of America and Canada

During the great migration of people from Eastern Europe to the United States between 1890 and 1914, many Serbs entered this country to join the work forces in heavy industry, railroading and mining. Few women came in the beginning but they began to arrive once their men had earned enough money to send for them. Their lives were difficult, oppressive in some instances, for they did not know the language or culture of the land that welcomed them. It took time to become acculturated so our forebearers sought comfort among their own people. First they built churches and then a social center, usually in the basement of the church. The mothers, sisters and wives of these men often helped them in this work.

They soon learned that women in Serbia had in 1903 formed a humanitarian organization called the Circle of Serbian Sisters whose main purpose was to help their brethren who were victims of war cruelties. Using this as an example and guide, the women in America began to organize their own local circles of sisters. Most usually were part of the local church. Some localities had no church but did have a chapter of a fraternal or patriotic organization with which the women worked. As far as we have been able to ascertain, the first circle of sisters was organized in Cincinnati, OH in 1909 and requested a charter from the state in 1910. The charter was granted in 1912. It recently celebrated its 75th anniversary! The Serbian Orthodox Church was not formally organized as a complete entity until after World War I and the creation of the new country called the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in late 1918. Because there was no Serbian Church Diocese in this country until the mid-twenties, most Serbian organizations, for legal purpose, applied for charters from the states in which they were located.

In the beginning there were local difficulties but the Serbian women who loved their church and their people overcame the problems and went forward. With their untiring commitment to their circle's purposes and goals, the sisters showed excellent results for their efforts. One problem that persisted was that contacts among circles were poor because of isolation created by distances between the localities where our people lived.

The late Bishop Dionisije worked hard to get our people to understand the concept of unity among ourselves and to accept the Serbian Diocese that was established in the mid-twenties in Libertyville, IL. Our churches earlier were under the jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Church and were loosely controlled -- we enjoyed our local independence! He introduced the idea of a summer camp for our children as one avenue of uniting us.

In the First Camp Book of 1942 we read: "In the name of God, the first Serbian children's camp in America was opened at St. Sava Monastery in Libertyville, IL on the first of August of 1942. With blessings from Bishop Dionisije, the first camp director was Jeromonah Nikolaj Dazgich, parish priest from Joliet, IL. His first classes with the children were in the Serbian language, catechism and singing.

The camp site was the remodeled house next to the church and it had its own kitchen and dining facilities. The directors for the second and third week were Rev. Vladimir Mrvicin from Gary, IN and Sindjel Dimitrije Balach from Omaha, NE. Because this was the first attempt to operate a camp, plans were made to accept only fifteen boys with the hope that in 1943 fifty boys would attend."

We gleaned the following interesting facts from the St. Sava Monastery Camp Bulletin of September 3, 1944. In 1942, there were 13 boys in camp; 24 came in 1943; and, in 1944, the first girls were invited and 24 came plus 31 boys. Each group had its own three-week camp session. Most of the boys came from Milwaukee and the girls from Chicago. The average age of the children was eleven and the majority were going to enter the seventh grade. There were five sets of brothers, four of sisters, and five pairings of brother and sister. Fourteen cities and eight states were represented. All the children had gained an average of five pounds in weight during their three-week stay! The camp time schedule and general program that is followed to this day in a revised form are included in the bulletin as is the personnel list.

Camp attendance doubled in 1945 with 56 boys and 57 girls present. The purposes of holding camp for our youth met with public approval. They were: instill in the hearts of our young American Orthodox Serbs a true spirit of Orthodox Christian leadership; to teach them about their faith and worship practices, their ancestral history and Serbian culture; and, to inspire them to use what they learned in their daily living. Thus, they would become good American citizens and able leaders of our church-school congregations, circles of Serbian sisters, church choirs and other youth organizations. To reach all these goals, the camp program needed the full support and help of some organized group.

After a very busy day on July 21, 1945, several women, voluntarily working at camp, including Ljuba Bjelajac and Ljuba Jankovich Zugich, plus other staff members and Iguman Balach started to discuss the tremendous amount of work involved in operating the camp. They concluded that most of the women who came were members of Circles of Sisters and had willingly assumed the responsibilities to help. This small group decided it would be prudent to organize all existing Circles of Serbian Sisters into a federated group whose main goals would be to maintain and conduct the camp. A second meeting, with Sisters from nearby Circles in attendance, was held on August 27, 1945. There the plan was presented to Bishop Dionisije and he heartily approved it. Information about the idea and invitations to a meeting to be held in November were next issued to all Circles in the United States and Canada.

Delegates, 45 in number and representing 24 Circles located in the eastern and midwestern sections of the United States, arrived for the convention held at St. Sava Monastery, Libertyville, IL on November 11, 1945. This date represents a very important step the delegates took for they agreed to form the federation. They chose the name The American Federation of Circles of Serbian Sisters of St. Sava Monastery and their main purpose was "to help the Diocese and Monastery to conduct and maintain Summer Camps." Officers were chosen for several boards, and the idea had become a reality! From that day, all local circles had the duty to broaden their scope of their religious and patriotic duties to include regional and national views and needs. Call it the will of God, "sudbina" (fate) or an historic irony that at the time American Serbian women were uniting to better help their own, the new communist regime in Yugoslavia dissolved the original Circle of Sisters and confiscated all its assets!

In the summer of 1946, we learned that General Dragoljub Mihailovich, "Cica Draza," a friend of the Allies and leader of the Yugoslav resistance forces fighting against the external German invasion and internal communist enemy, was executed on July 17, 1946 by the new regime. President Truman posthumously awarded him on March 29, 1948 the highest honor our government can bestow upon a foreigner, the Legion of Merit ". . . through the undaunted efforts of his troops, many United States airmen were rescued and returned safely to friendly control. . ." was part of the statement issued when the award was made. "Glory and eternal memory to him!"

Several years later, the federation was elevated to "The Diocesan Federation of Circles of Serbian Sisters" with the aim "to cooperate in all matters with the Serbian

Eastern Orthodox Diocese for the United States of America and Canada and the Diocesan Bishop in the promotion of the Serbian Orthodox faith, education and culture. In the name of the Diocese, it shall conduct and maintain children's camps, homes for Serbian orphans and the aged, and other activities entrusted to it by the Diocesan Council. It shall assist the Diocesan Council in its efforts to erect and manage buildings for this purpose on this continent."

From 1945 to 1949, during the presidency of Nada Rashovich (+2-12-65), camp enrollment increased and the facilities for the children became inadequate. With a little over \$400 in the treasury, the Sisters started a building program. Appealing to the general Serbian public for funds, the women invited them to attend the dedication of the intended building's cornerstone on September 2, 1946. Leposava Ducich of Butte, MT was the dedication Kuma and Sophia Ducich was also present.

Funds were donated slowly so the interior of the structure remained unfinished. However, campers and staff utilized it while the sisters sought a way to raise money. The current Federation president was head counselor in 1948 and 1949 and fondly remembers these events.

Ljuba Bjelajac (+10-60) was elected Federation president in 1949 and served until 1953. The biggest challenge confronting her board was finishing the camp building. On November 30, 1949, the main topic at a Federation Board meeting was how to raise money to complete the camphouse in 1950. The Board decided to hold a raffle with three prizes: a 1950 Buick 4-door Super Sedan, an RCA television set, and a GE vacuum cleaner. The women hoped to sell 5,000 books of tickets for an expected income of \$25,000, enough to finish the building. All the needed monies were not realized and the building remained unfinished.

In the summer of 1952, the Serbian Brothers Help (Srpska Bratska Pomoc) volunteered their labor to finish the upper floor of the building if the women would furnish the supplies. They spent weekends toiling hard with brotherly camaraderie and lived up to their name while they completed their task. For the purpose of raising funds, the Federation sponsored its first picnic at the monastery grounds on September 14, 1952, and reminded the public that the camphouse was incomplete. In that same year, Bob Susnjar and his wife Elsie from Milwaukee offered to donate enough funds to finish the rest of the building. American-born Serbs, they showed their love for St. Sava Monastery and the children who came to camp there.

The first camp was held in Shadeland in 1953, and, the Federation Board decided to both hold its first Slava and bless the finished Libertyville camp building on August 16, 1953. Great benefactors Bob and Else Susnjar were Kumovi for the celebration. A Pontifical Liturgy was conducted in the morning and a rich banquet was served in the afternoon. Entertainment was provided by singers Blaga Mitrovich and Mitar Bulatovich while music was furnished by the "Beograd" orchestra for the festive event.

At the convention held in 1953, Olga Parnasari was elected president and she served four years. In 1955, the women at the convention discussed creating pins for Federation presidents. It was agreed that the pin designed by Maria Stepanovich that she had presented to the past presidents of her local Circle in Indiana Harbor (East Chicago) be used as Federation pins. There are three versions of the pin to distinguish local, regional and national presidents. On June 15, 1957, Olga Parnasari, Sally Ranich and Maria Stepanovich traveled to Fresno, CA where they met with Sophia Ducich and seventeen western Sisters to acquaint them with the Federation and camp work.

Protinica Jelisavka Marcetich became Federation president in 1957 and served for three years. In this time period, she managed to provide the leadership that resulted in paying all debts yet owed for the camp building. These included plumbing, electrical, all furniture, bedding, dining room and kitchen equipment bills that were outstanding. She

and her Board divided what monthly income they had into portions and sent each merchant a share towards his billing. An earlier loan of \$25,000 from the Serb National Federation made to the Sisters but held in escrow by the Diocese was paid off at this time also. Thus, in "dribbles and bits," they satisfied all providers for services earlier rendered.

The first Teen-age Camp was held in Libertyville in 1958 with Maria Stepanovich as chairman. On February 1, 1959, Todor and Andja Polich were given the highest award of the Serbian Orthodox Church for their extreme generosity to the Serbian Church and Camps. King Peter II came to visit St. Sava Monastery on February 20 of 1959 and his son, Crown Prince Alexander, camped for a week in Libertyville and visited Shadeland in August of that year. The Federation members graciously received both of them. Because one of the goals then was to unite all local Circles of Sisters through the Federation, Protinica was delighted to welcome San Diego's Circle as the first western group to join.

Protinica Jelisavka started her work with the Sisters upon her and Father John's arrival in the United States in 1946 when they were assigned to the Indiana Harbor parish. To this day, she is active and is on the 1986 Midwest's Board. In her forty years of service, she has held four different offices at each level, local, regional and national. Asked what she considered the highlight of what she experienced in these years, she stated that greeting King Peter II on his first visit to America in the name of the Federation during a gala banquet was most memorable. She received a Merit Award Certificate from the Federation in 1968. During a visit to Australia in the early 1980's, she helped the women there form a Federation and counseled them in the operation of children's camps. A candid, compassionate and charming woman, she always finds time to succor those who seek her help. Her energy is boundless and her devotion to our Church and Sisterhood is most admirable.

The era of Andja Polich's service to our Church and youth began in 1953 and ended with her death on February 4, 1970. All that she and her husband did for the Eastern and Western areas of our country are described in those sections. Elected president in 1960, she served almost ten years in that capacity. Rapid change, turmoil and strife accompanied her and challenged her leadership to the utmost.

Seeing the need to better manage the Federation and to leave local problems to the local people to solve, the Federation was reorganized at the 1960 convention into three regions under the administration of the Federation Board. Because of "growing pains" in the Federation and the sense of provincialism that existed, Andja Polich began through her many travels to further unite the Sisters by helping the regional boards get organized and pointed them in the proper direction to get their work done. A Federation Newsletter, published quarterly, was first printed in February, 1961 and it contained news of Circles, camp sessions, special events, household hints and recipes. It was well-written and served to bring the Sisters closer to each other. A set of By-Laws were revised and published also. The first exchange camper year was successfully held in 1960 in which children from each area spent camp season at another site.

Political unrest entered our Diocesan lives in the early sixties and culminated in a church split in May, 1963. The atheist communist Yugoslav government, through its religious commission which regulates the lives of their churches, wanted to control our Diocese as well, for our Diocese's anti-communist position was a thorn in its side! A choice was made by many of us not to obey them by declaring our independence and in so choosing, we spent the next two decades in litigations of various kinds. The Federation of Serbian Sisters Circles remained with the Free Diocese. Because some Circles and officers decided not to stay with us, new officers were elected and our paths of action and conduct were chosen.

The Twentieth Anniversary of the Federation was celebrated in May, 1966, at Libertyville. Merit Awards were given during the 1966 Convention to Serbs who uniquely affected the Federation and its commitment. They were: "Baja" Bosanac, "Maja"

Bosanac, Zagorka Bugarsky, Sophia Ducich, John Ljepava, Popadeja Angelina Marijanovic, Protinica Andja Pavlovich, Todor Polich, Gilbert Popovich, Darinka Stepan and Nikola Stepanovich. It was also decided at the 1966 Convention to assess each region \$15.00 per month (\$180.00 per year) to help support the Diocesan Observer which came into existence in 1965.

On August 28, 1968, ground was broken for the proposed addition to the Federation Camp Building. The cornerstone was placed in December, 1968. This dormitory wing was dedicated on April 27, 1969, with Andja Polich as Kuma. She now was Kuma for all three camps!

Andja Polich, philanthropist and great benefactor of our Diocese, was a shrewd businesswoman and a perceptive judge of people who knew how to organize them to do good. Often opposed to public declarations of the gifts she and her husband bestowed, she preferred to work quietly and diligently for our holy Serbian Orthodox Church and its children. Feeling that she was directed by the Lord to dedicate her life to Church work and that He would instruct and lead her, she happily pursued her goals until they were fulfilled. She and Todor lived with their two sons in San Marino, CA.

Maria Stepanovich assumed the presidency of the Federation in February of 1970 and was elected to the office at the October, 1970 Convention. During her term of office, her major project was the renovation of the older section of the Libertyville camp building. A new pitched roof was built so that the two units were united as one. This also eliminated the old roof's annual problem of snow damage. The project was completed and paid for in a very short time. With the two wings of dormitory space, girls and boys could camp together and each could occupy one wing because the office and staff quarters were in the middle of the building.

Maria visited Circles and Regions for meetings, attended slavas, spent time at all three camps, was present at church dedications, presented trophies at sports events and enjoyed the annual social festivities of the Federation. In November of 1970, she was present at King Peter's funeral. She was a guest at the White House on September 12, 1971. A member of the Kornelije Stankovich Choir of Indiana Harbor, she enjoyed her trip with them to Galveston, TX on November 25, 1971.

In 1972, Maria joined our young adults at a Teen-age Retreat in Libertyville. A testimonial dinner was held for Bishop Dionisije honoring his 32 years of service to our Diocese and she represented the Federation. A California Mission group visited the Midwest and Maria hosted them at an Ice Cream Social in her home on July 12, 1972.

Maria Stepanovich has given her time unstintingly to her church and all its affiliates since her youth. Possessing great leadership qualities, she has always used them intelligently to help others reach their potential. A gracious hostess, she has opened her home on many occasions to entertain a variety of guests. The St. Joannikije Cross was awarded to Maria in April, 1973. Maria and her late husband Nikola, an attorney who served our Diocese for many years, lives in East Chicago, IN. Her four children (two daughters and two sons), five granddaughters and great grandson live nearby.

In 1972, ~~Dragica Stokovich was elected Federation president and served for the next twelve years.~~ Because of the continued court procedures, she had to lead the Federation's work during the first half of her tenure in the most unassuming manner. She made several hundred visits and quietly encouraged and worked with all the Sisters she met at meetings, slavas, anniversaries and other affairs. Churches continued to be built and dedicated, children's camps were operated, and Diocesan sports events were held with Dragica present at most of them.

A turning point in our Federation's life was 1976 when all conventions were postponed indefinitely because of Diocesan litigations. The member Circles continued to function on the local level and camps were operated for our children. Future plans were put on "hold."

In that same year, a group of Serbs purchased lovely property at Third Lake, IL. This land was blessed on October 2, 1977. The Shadeland Home for the Aged was closed in November, 1977 and the Serbian men were transferred to the facility operated by the Stokovich family. In the spring of 1979, within ten days, Bishops Dionisije and Balach, spiritual advisors of the Federation, passed away. That summer, we had to leave Libertyville and Shadeland. Throughout this turmoil, Dragica kept a steady hand on the Federation's quiet efforts to help our Diocese.

The 1980's brought a new era of revitalized enthusiasm to all in the Free Diocese. The property at Third Lake, IL became the new headquarters and a great effort was expended to organize Fund drives so that a whole new center could be built there. Plans included a church that would be the replica of Gracanica on Kosovo Field and a large complex that would house the Diocesan offices, the children's camp and a seminary.

At its convention in 1980 at Third Lake, Dragica was elected to an unprecedented third term and was charged by Bishop Iriney to lead the women in raising funds for the proposed construction. Delegate Mildred Lukic moved that the Sisters start a Brick Drive through which they could collect funds. It was agreed to "sell" each brick for five dollars and the motion carried. This project netted over \$84,000 that was given to the Diocese.

At the blessing of the Monastery foundation on July 4, 1981, Dragica was Kuma. All circles actively were raising funds for the construction at Third Lake. Bishop Iriney asked the delegates of the 1982 Convention to keep the Board intact so they could finish the work they started for Gracanica Monastery. His request was honored. The women earned and donated one-third million dollars from late 1980 to 1984, an astounding feat!!

The Diocesan Camp-Seminary Building was dedicated in July, 1983 with Dragica Stokovich Kuma for the Camp. On that day, she presented Bishop Iriney with a Bishop's crown on behalf of the Federation. In July of 1984, this building was consecrated.

August 11 and 12, 1984, were historical days for the free Serbs all over the world for Gracanica Monastery and its Church were consecrated with 17,000 people as witnesses. The Stokovich family were Kumovi and donated the iconostas; Proto and Protinica Marcetich gave the Holy Altar; and, the Stepanovich family contributed the fountain, benches and landscaping between the Church and Camp building. Women from the Midwest Region prepared and served food to over 2,000 guests and deserve our highest accolades for a job well done. Two beautiful Memorial Books were issued about the Consecration and are truly worthy of being additions to the library of every Serbian home.

We wish to express our gratitude to all Sisters who always responded to our Church's needs, no matter what the request, willingly, with unselfish sacrifices, devotion and untiring efforts. To those who were our pioneers, thank you for showing us the way and for remaining beautiful role models for us to exemplify. May we remind the younger sisters not to put aside what their elders created but to learn from their experiences. Let the young use their zeal and creativity to honorably serve their lively enthusiasm. Sisters in the middle years of life will provide the strong support and love needed to balance the whole. We must never lose sight of the fact that we have one purpose and that is to serve our free Serbian Orthodox Church to the best of our ability.



1946
Libertyville:
Nada Rashovich
Leposava Ducich
Sophia Ducich



from left:
Mildred (Kukic) Lukic
Dora Maravich
Julija Bolanovich
Libertyville, 1948



Ljuba Bjelajac in right center, 1948



1965 Board: front: H. Triptow, A. Polich, M. Djidich, A. Chuk
rear: M. Matich, J. Marcetich, S. Duchic, D. Bolan, B. Packovich

KSS Federation Presidents 1965 – Present

1957 – 1960	Protinica Jelisavka Marcetic (member Past National President's Council and Midwest Region KSS Advisor)
1960 – 1970	Andja Polic
1970 – 1972	Marija Stepanovich
1972 – 1984	Dragica Stokovich
1984 – 1986	Mildred Lukic (member Past National President's Council)
1986 – 2003	Bratislava "Beba" Bjelopetrovic
2003 – 2004	Regina Sekulic (interim Federation President)
2004 to present	Mira Andjelkovic