



“SERBIAN SOKOL” IN BARBERTON (OHIO)

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Abstract

Serbs in America during 1909 began to accept Sokol idea started in 1862 in Prague (Czech Republic). That is the time when also appeared the first initiatives for founding of Serbian Sokol Societies. In the second mid of 1909 two societies were formed, and in the next 1910 five more, so until the end of that year seven societies were active. Serbian Sokol Society in Barberton was founded in 1910, as fifth in a row. After forming of Serbian Sokol District (Union) in America (Union of all Serbian Sokol Societies in America), on October 2nd 1911 in Gary, Society from Barberton became its member. During their existence and work, Sokols from Barberton gave significant contribution to not only Serbian, but also Slavic Sokolism in America. The goal of this research is to highlight and tear off from oblivion formation, work and contribution of this Sokol society to development of Sokolism in America. Numerous primary and secondary historical sources originated in the time of societies' existence as also the ones originated later, were reviewed and analysed.

1. Introduction

Sokol movement started in 1862 in Czech Republic with formation of Prague Gymnastic Society in January the same year. Two years later, with proposal of Professor Emanuel Toner, the Society changed its name to “Sokol” (Hawk). From that year Sokolism started to spread to all countries inhabited with Slavic people. That is how it came to Slavs who lived in America. During 1909 Serbs in America started to accept the Sokol idea as a new way of gathering and body workout, most of all for body and spiritual strengthening and uprising of their people. In 1909 started also the first initiatives for forming of Serbian Sokol Societies.

In the second mid of 1909 two societies were formed, in Cincinnati (Ohio) and Detroit (Michigan), and in the next 1910 five more in: Gary (Indiana), Chicago (Illinois), Barberton (Ohio), Akron (Ohio) and Indiana Harbor (Indiana). Besides Serbian, societies of other Slavic nations living in America

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were also formed: Russian, Czech, Slovak, Croatian, Romanian, etc.

Serbian sokols had great cooperation with all of them. The subject of this research is Sokolism in America, and the goal is to highlight and tear off from oblivion the formation and work of Sokol society in Barberton, as also its contribution to development of Sokolism in America.

2. Material and methods

Historical method was used in this research. Primary and secondary historical sources originated in the time of the societies' existence, as also the ones originated later, were reviewed and critically analyzed.

3. Results and Discussions

Foundation of Serbian sokol society and its work until end of 1911

Serbian sokol society in Barberton was founded in 1910, as fifth society in a row. In reviewed sources we did not find the exact date of foundation, names of initiators, first members as also other details about its work until end of 1911. (Nedeljković, 2006).

By the end of 1910 two more societies were formed, so at the end of the year there were all together seven societies. Until end of September 1911, one more society was formed, society in Sent Luis. As there were already eight functional societies, appeared the need for their representatives to get together and make arrangement about further common work towards achievement of sokol goals.

The initiative for this meeting came from sokols from Cincinnati and Gary. Sokols from other societies accepted this initiative and first meeting of Serbian sokols from America was held on 1st and 2nd October 1911 in Gary. Among others, the meeting also attended the representative of Serbian sokol society (s.s.s.) from Barberton, Petar N. Kumanovac. Mr. Petar, among others, held a speech during dinner on Sunday, October 1st, prepared by sokols from Gary for all sokol representatives and other guests.

During next day, Monday, October 2nd, the representatives started to work at 9 a.m. Inter alia, that day the Serbian Sokol Union in America (SSUA) was formed. Seven s.s.s. joined the Union, among whom also society from Barberton. At the time, this society had 60 members, 32 regular and 28 helpers. From that day all s.s.s. received common name "Serbian Sokol".

After formation of SSUA, they elected the Board of four members for preparation of *Rules for Serbian Sokols*, and one of them was sokol from Barberton, Petar N. Kumanovac. At the end, during the last point of the agenda, they elected the Authority of SSUA. Two sokols from Barberton were members of the Authority, Petar N. Kumanovac as a leader of Union, and Velimir Hajdin as a member of Supervising Board. (Prvi sastanak..., 1911)

Velimir Hajdin addressed a wire congratulation card to Serbian sokol meeting in Gary, saying: "To Serbian Sokol meeting in Gary, Ind. Hello, be an example for others, do it the sokol way." (Pozdravi i čestitke, 1911, p. 13).

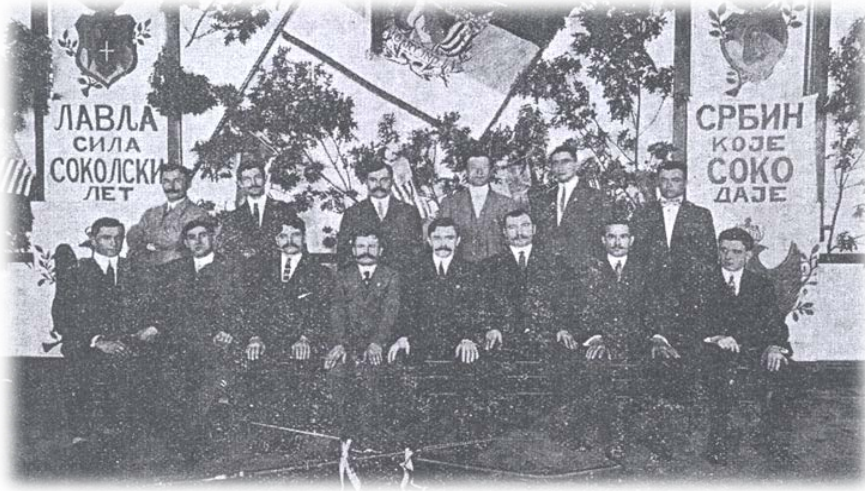


Figure 1. *The first Serbian sokol meeting in America* (Наше слике, 1911, p. 9)
Second person in a first row, from left to right, Petar N. Kumanovac from Barberton. (Ibid, p. 16)

From their very beginning until the end of October 1911, sokols from Barberton held 3 public exercises. On November 19th 1911 in Cleveland in J. Popovic's hall (2539 St. Clair Ave) they performed their 4th public exercise. The program had 7 performances. First of all 25 sokols performed "Serbian exercise with bat" from Frantisek Hofman, and after that 20 sokols performed a 4th and 5th form of and exercise from Croatian sokol slet in Zagreb.

After recitation of a poem "Tomb of Sindjelic" by Mitar Manojlovic, there was a competition in wrestling between sokols Milorad Andjelic and Lazar Kozarski, both from Barberton. There is no note who was the winner. After wrestling competition Milan Kacanski recited the poem "Greetings to Vidovdan slet".

Further on sokols performed exercise "Pyramids" and together with their leader exercises on bars. After exercises leader of SSUA Petar N. Kumanovac welcomed all present and appealed to form the sokol society here as soon as possible. After that started the party accompanied by Tamburitza orchestra from Akron. (Српски Соко у Барбертону, December 1st 1911, p. 30). In November 1911 "Serbian Sokol" had 51 members, 31 regular and 20 helpers.

Regular members were: Milorad Andjelic, Joca Aradjanski, Radovan Bacic, Lazar Vukobratovic, Kosta Gajin, Joca Dragišić, Velja DJurdjev, Vlado, Ilija and Luka Zaharjanski, Velja Jankovic, Nikola Jurišić, Bogoljub Kaludjerski, Milan Kacanski, Lazar Kobiljski, Milan Kovacev, Lazar Kozarski, Lazar Kunic, Petar N. Kumanovac, Paja Makaji, Mitar Manojlovic, Lazar Marinkovic, Nikola Martić, Živa Nešić, Petar Nikolic, Aleksandar Pavlovic, Joca Savic, Luka Stankov, Radovan Stojšić, Manojlo Topalski and Nenad Crnjakov.

Helpers: Milan Berarov, Djoko Bugarski, Triva Bunjevcev, Ljubomir Vuckovic, Vasa Ivanov, Zarko Jakovljevic, Boško Katanic, Vaso Kacanski, Nikola Lazic, Omer Lazic, Ljubomir Pavaški, Mile Paunovic, Lazar Radic,

Stevan Rogic, Jovan Rusov, Stevan Cosic, Velimir Hajdin, Nikola Hajdin, Stevan Celic and Sima Sampanjski. Address was: Српски Соко, 620, Cornell Str., Barberton, Ohio. (Ibid, p. 31) Lazar Kozarski was a head of Serbian Sokols. Besides Joca Aradjanski and Petar N. Kumanovac, we did not find any other data about other members of Government.

Work of Society from beginning of 1912 until end of June 1914

In mentioned period Serbian sokols continued their successful work on pursuing sokol goals on benefit of their members and all Serbs in America. They continued with regular sessions, annual assemblies, they were involved in work of SSUA, they organized public classes, exercises, excursions, shows and parties, common manifestations with other societies and performed in manifestations of other, not only Serbian, but societies of all Slavic nations, they wrote for Journal of Serbian Sokols in America, etc.

Based on the available sources, in the following text we will try to make a reconstruction of those activities and in that way try to take them out of the oblivion.

On their session on January 14th 1912 sokols from Barberton elected new members of the Government. For Government Board were chosen: Vaso Ivanov, supervisor; Novo Lazić, supervisor's deputy; Ljubomir Glavaski, secretary; and Milorad Andjelic, treasurer. For Supervising Board members: Djoko Bugarski, Trivun Buncev, Bosko Katanic and Velimir Hajdin. (Српски Соко у Барбертону, О., March 1st 1912)

In the late January of the same year on suggestion of Court of Honor of "Serbian Sokol" from Barberton, Joca Aradjanski and Petar N. Kumanovac were excluded from the societies' Government "[...] due to bad work in Serbian Sokol". (Записник сједнице Српске Соколске Жупе у Америци, March 1st 1912, p. 39.)

On session of SSUA on February 15th 1912, after discussion about exclusion of above mentioned sokols, it was decided "[...] that the conviction of society and Court of Honour is valid and that above mentioned sokols have no right to be Serbian Sokol members, what they are until Union assembly in June this year, and then they can address and appeal in their own defence." (Ibid.)

After exclusion of their leader Petar N. Kumanovac due to certain irregularities, on session of SSUA on February 15th the same year, the communication between excluded sokol and union Government continued. During following month the irregularities were fixed and they reconciled, so the Government of "Serbian Sokol" from Barberton suggested returning the membership to Petar N. Kumanovac.

On session of SSUA on March 15th 1912 was decided to accept the suggestion of Serbian sokols from Barberton and that "[...] brother Petar N. Kumanovac can be a member of their Sokol, as also all other sokol societies in Union, and also their leader." (Записник сједнице Српске Соколске Жупе у Америци, April 1st 1912, p. 59) We did not find any source about returning to membership of sokol Joca Aradjanski, so we stay unfamiliar with the fact if he, along with Petar N. Kumanovac, were returned to membership.

During the first half of May 1912, as a part of preparations for First Serbian Sokol Slet in Chicago, Serbian sokols from Barberton received 114 slet badges and instructions for their use from Government of SSUA. (Записник сједнице Српске Соколске Жупе у Америци, June 1st 1912). On session of SSUA on may 20th 1912 in Gary, Petar N. Kumanovac was re-established as a leader of SSUA, replacing Milan Meandzija. He embraced his duty the same day.

On First Serbian Sokol Slet in Chicago, June 22nd and 23rd 1912, participants from Barberton were: Petar N. Kumanovac, leader; B. Bozin, Milan Kacanski, R. Pacic, Radovan Stojsic, Manojlo Topalski and I. Crnjak, competitors. Besides them, also were present: Vaso Ivanov, head; Milorad Andjelic, Ljubomir Glavaski, Nikola Jurisic and Aleksandar Pavlov, members.

During the first day of the Slet, June 23rd, in the afternoon, the Head of SSUA Luka Grkovic and his deputy Petar Sekulovic assigned rewards (wreaths with golden writings) to winners of that first day. Serbian Sokols from Barberton won the second reward on that first day for their exercise with bats. On the same day sokols from Barberton performed simple exercises, seventh in a row. (Први српски соколски слет у Чикагу, August 1st 1912, pp. 105 – 110)

On session of The General Assembly of Serbian Sokols in America held on 24th and 25th of June 1912 in Chicago, among other things, the new Government of SSUA was elected. Petar N. Kumanovac was elected as a leader of SSUA and Vasa Ivanov as a member of Supervising committee, both from Barberton. (Нова управа С.С. Жупе у Америци, August 1st 1912; Извјештај и записник Главне Скупштине С.С. Сокола у Америци, August 1st 1912)

On session of SSUA on July 21st 1912, among other things, the letter from sokol Bosko Katanic from Barberton was read. In that letter sokol asked them to send him two sokol youth uniforms. As he did not sign any measures for the asked uniforms, they decided to ask him to do so, and then they will send them. (Поповић & Јокановић, September 1st 1912)

Sokols from Barberton were regular in paying their obligations towards SSUA. Therefore, in the second half of August 1912 they sent to the Union's Government 16.65 dollars of membership, and informed them that the rest of the money will be sent soon. The letter was read in Union's session on September 1st 1912. (Поповић & Јокановић, November 1st 1912)

Serbian sokols from Barberton together with s.d.d. "Vojvodina" no. 87 and Union of joined Serbs "Sloga" built "Serbian house" in Barberton were they planned to hold: exercises, meetings, assemblies, parties, gatherings, etc. Throughout "Soko" journal from October 1st 1912, where they published the news about new house built in Barberton, they also sent the appeal to all Serbs in America with note that this should be an example to all Serbian colonies "[...] and especially those that talk a lot and work little" (Српски соко у Барбертону, October 1st 1912, pp. 144–145) that they should also build such houses (institutions) in their places, because they are needed for all Serbian societies, especially Sokol.

During SSUA session on June 24th 1913 in Chicago, among else, was decided to write to Serbian sokols in Farrell (Pennsylvania), Lorain (Ohio),

Cleveland (Ohio) and Barberton (Ohio) and ask them to participate in *Slet of Slovenske Telocvične Jednote Sokol* in Cleveland on July 6th that year. Ljubo Vuckovic, sokol from Barberton, was in charge to represent SSUA during banquet prepared by Slovenian sokols on that same day. (Поповић & Јокановић, September 1913). In annual report of SSUA for period June 25th 1912 – June 25th 1913 stands that “Serbian Sokol” from Barberton on day June 25th 1912 had 37 members, and one year later, on June 25th 1913 that number reduced to 29. (Поповић & Јокановић, August 1913)

During session of SSUA on August 24th 1913 in Chicago, among other things, was elected the Board of six sokols with goal to prepare the exercises for Serbian sokol Slet on June (Vidovdan) 1914 in Cleveland. One of them was also Petar N. Kumanovac, Sokol form Barberton and leader of SSUA. (Поповић & Јокановић, October 1913)

In “Soko” journal from October 1913 was announced that Serbian sokols from Barberton on Saturday, October 19th the same year, plan to hold a public sokol exercise and a party, both in Barberton, and that all earnings from tickets will be a gift to Serbian sokols from Akron.

They will perform as follows: “1) 5 simple exercises (Czech); 2) 5 simple exercises (Slavic); 3) pyramids; 4) on barnams; 5) dance.” (Српски Соко у Барбертону, О., October 1913, p. 249.) In the following number of “Soko” journal we could not find any data if the mentioned exercise was actually performed. Nevertheless, due to the fact that all previously announced exercises and manifestations were regularly performed, we can therefore assume that the same thing happened with this one.

During session of SSUA on December 1st 1913 new members of Union’s Government were elected. From Barberton, as a member of Supervising board, was elected Bosko Katanic, instead of previous member, Vaso Ivanov, also from Barberton. (Нови чланови управе Српске Соколске Жупе у Америци, December 1913; Поповић, Б. Душан & Јокановић, Милош, January 1914)

During session of SSUA on December 28th 1913 in Chicago, inter alia, they also discussed about content of letters from Serbian sokols from: Detroit, Youngstown and , criticizing the work of Union’s leader, Petar N. Kumanovac. After discussion they decided to dismiss the Union’s leader, and replace him with Jovan Papic from Chicago. (Поповић & Јокановић, January 1914)

Head of SSUA, Dusan B. Popovic and secretary, Milos Jokanovic informed all Serbian sokols about this matter throughout announcement in “Soko” journal from January 1914. The text of that announcement is as follows:

“We inform all, due to our clear mind, members of Serbian Sokol Union in America that according to conclusions of sixteenth session held on December 28th 1913, Mr. Petar Kumanovac is no longer a leader of Serbian Sokol Union in America.

For Serbian Sokol Union,
Secretary

Head

28. децембра 1913. год. у Чикагу, Ил., Соко, орган Српских Сокола у Америци и лист за народно просвјетивање, 4 (1), New York, pp. 19 – 20;
7. ПОПОВИЋ, Б. ДУШАН & ЈОКАНОВИЋ, МИЛОШ. (1914, January). *Објава*, Соко, орган Српских Сокола у Америци и лист за народно просвјетивање, 4 (1), New York, p. 18;
8. ПОПОВИЋ, Б. ДУШАН & ЈОКАНОВИЋ, МИЛОШ. (1912, September, 1st). *Записник друге сједнице Српске Соколске Жупе, одржане 21. јула о.г. у „Српској Читаоници“ у Чикагу, Ил.*, Соко, лист Српских Сокола у Америци, 2 (9), New York, pp. 132 – 133;
9. ПОПОВИЋ, Б. ДУШАН & ЈОКАНОВИЋ, МИЛОШ. (1912, November, 1st). *Записник четврте сједнице Српске Соколске Жупе у Америци, одржане 1. септембра 1912. године у Чикагу, Ил.*, Соко, лист Српских Сокола у Америци, 2 (11), New York, p. 166;
10. Pozdravi i čestitke. (1911, November, 1st). *Soko, list srpskih sokola u Americi, 1* (1), New York, p. 13;
11. Права и дужности чланова. (1912, January, 1st). *Соко, лист Српских Сокола у Америци*, 2 (1), New York, p. 8;
12. Prvi sastanak Srpskih Sokola u Americi. (1911, November, 1st). *Soko, list srpskih sokola u Americi, 1* (1), New York, pp. 7 – 11;
13. Први српски соколски слет у Чикагу. (1912, August, 1st). *Соко, лист Српских Сокола у Америци*, 2 (7 - 8), New York, pp. 105 – 110;
14. Српски Соко у Барбертону, О. (1913, October). *Соко, орган Српских Сокола у Америци и лист за народно просвјетивање*, 3 (10), New York, p. 249;
15. Српски Соко у Барбертону, О. (1912, March, 1st). *Соко, лист Српских Сокола у Америци*, 2 (3), New York, pp. 41 – 42;
16. Српски соко у Барбертону. (1912, October, 1st). *Соко, лист Српских Сокола у Америци*, 2 (10), New York, pp. 144 – 145;
17. Српски Соко у Барбертону, О. (1911, December, 1st). *Соко, лист Српских Сокола у Америци*, 1 (2), New York, p. 30;
18. Записник сједнице Српске Соколске Жупе у Америци. (1912, March, 1st). *Соко, лист Српских Сокола у Америци*, 2 (3), New York, p. 39;
19. Записник сједнице Српске Соколске Жупе у Америци. (1912, April, 1st). *Соко, лист Српских Сокола у Америци*, 2 (4), New York, p. 59;
20. Записник сједнице Српске Соколске Жупе у Америци. (1912, June, 1st), *Соко, лист Српских Сокола у Америци*, 2 (6), New York, pp. 90 – 92;
21. Извјештај и записник Главне Скупштине С.С. Сокола у Америци. (1912 August 1st). *Соко, лист Српских Сокола у Америци*, 2 (7-8), New York, p. 114;
22. Naše slike. (1911, November, 1st). *Soko, list Srpskih Sokola u Americi, 1* (1), New York, pp. 9 – 16;
23. N Нова управа С.С. Жупе у Америци. (1912, August, 1st). *Соко, лист Српских Сокола у Америци*, 2 (7 - 8), New York, p. 114;
24. N Нови чланови управе Српске Соколске Жупе у Америци. (1913, December). *Соко, орган Српских Сокола у Америци и лист за народно просвјетивање*, 3 (12), New York, p. 289.