

Otadžbina se voli i preko Atlantika

Rođena Šapčanka Biljana Regan je pre 10 godina u Silver Springu pored Vašingtona osnivala “Udruženje za očuvanje srpske kulture, tradicije i običaja u Americi” i poseduje najveću kolekciju narodne nošnje u SAD

Da ljubav prema domovini čine dela moćna poput Bele kuće savršeno je pokazala Biljana Regan (devojačko Kalinić), rođena Šapčanka koje je pre 10 godina u Silver Springu pokraj Vašingtona osnovala “Udruženje za očuvanje srpske kulture, tradicije i običaja”. Nekadašnja medicinska sestra, strastveni je kolekcionar i baštinar folkloru balkanskih naroda i ponosni vlasnik najveće kolekcije narodne nošnje tog tipa u SAD, gde živi od 2009. Za magazin *Balkan travel* Biljana nam otkriva otkud tolika ljubav ka folkloru, tradiciji, kulturi, narodnoj nošnji i običajima.

- Srpski i balkanski folklor zavolela sam u šabačkom kulturno-umetničkom društvu “Abrašević”, gde me je odveo pokojni otac Jovan. Snažan uticaj na mene imali su i ručni radovi majke Svetlane. Poželela sam da ljubav, znanje i iskustvo prenesem i na druge, posebno jer narodne igre nisu samo koraci i muzika, već čitava istorija i mnoštvo običaja vezanih za svaku od njih. Uz to, razne priče su utkane u najlepše šare i ukrase nošnji i svaki detalj ima značenje. Nošnja koju predstavljamo nije samo tkanina, već autentičan i vekovima star i moćan prizor, bogato svedočanstvo jednog naroda. Odlučila sam da sačuvam od zaborava mnoge naše drevne običaje i kulturu na tlu SAD. Moja sreća je u tome što radim ono što volim i ponosna sam na sve dosad.

Ponosna Mačvanka uspela je da u Udruženju spoji i zaljubljenike u Balkan s prostora Severne i Južne Amerike, Azije i Arfrike.

- Kultura se sastoji od vrednosti, verovanja, sistema jezika, komunikacije i praksi gde ljudi dele zajedničko. Nije bilo teško spojiti sve te divne ljude koji govore jezikom kulture i to me čini srećnom.

Krajem juna naša sagovornica je s Udruženjem bila deo projekta “Srpsko kolo” u neposrednoj blizini Bele kuće, na Džeferson memorijalu ispred Vašingtonskog spomenika.

- Dokumentarni filmski serijal „Srpsko kolo“ dr Željka Mirkovića je priča o tradiciji i identitetu srpskog naroda, o negovanju sreće kroz igru. Srpsko kolo je deo nematerijalne baštine UNESCO od 2017. Mnogobrojna folklorna udruženja iz Srbije i SAD i naše najznačajnije institucije pomogli su realizaciju projekta. Udruženje koje vodim je u projektu učestvovalo izvođenjem prela, starog srpskog običaja. Devojke se bile odevene u narodne nošnje iz Mačve, bosilegradskog Krajišta,

Pčinje, beogradske Posavine, a stajale su iza dva mačvanska ćilima, dok su momci bili iza pirotskog ćilima i uglavnom obučeni u šumadijsku nošnju.

Budući da kroz Udruženje promovise srpsku tradiciju u najširem smislu, čiji je vera neizostavni deo, značajna je i saradnja sa Srpskom pravoslavnom crkvom.

- Sa suprugom Džonom, iako je Amerikanac, redovno posećujemo kulturna događanja u srpskim svetinjama. Crkva Sveti Luka u naselju Patomak u Vašingtonu jedina je naša pravoslavna crkva u prestonici SAD. Starešina crkve Vasilije Vranić nas nesebično podržava u misiji, a od vladike Irineja smo 2019. dobili pismeni blagoslov za rad.

Tekst: D. Kokanović

Fotografije: Privatni album



The motherland is loved even across the Atlantic

10 years ago in Silver Spring, near Washington, a Biljana Regan from Šabac founded the “Association for the Preservation of Serbian Culture, Traditions and Customs in America”, and she now owns the largest collection of folk costumes Win the USA

Biljana Regan (née Kalinić), born in Šabac, founded the “Association for the Preservation of the Serbian culture, tradition and customs” ten years ago, and has since perfectly demonstrated that love for the homeland is powerful as the White House. The former nurse is a passionate collector of the Balkan folk dance heritage and the proud owner of the largest collection of folk costumes of this type in the USA, where she lives since 2009. Specially for Balkan travel magazine, Biljana reveals why she has so much love for folklore, tradition, culture, folk costumes and customs.

- I fell in love with Serbian and Balkan folklore through “Abrašević” cultural and artistic society in Šabac. The handicrafts made by my mother Svetlana also had a strong influence on me. I wanted to transfer my love, knowledge and experience to others, especially because folk dancing is not just about steps and music, but about a whole history and many customs related to it. In addition, so many stories are woven into the most beautiful patterns and ornaments of the costumes and every detail has a meaning. The costume that we present is not just a fabric, but an authentic and centuries-old, powerful sight, a rich testimony of a nation. I decided to preserve our ancient customs and culture on the soil of the USA. My happiness is that I am doing what I love and I am proud of everything so far.

The proud Mačva-born woman managed to bring together lovers of the Balkans from North and South America, Asia and Africa in the Association.

- A culture consists of values, beliefs, language systems, communication and practices that people have in common. It wasn't difficult to bring together all these wonderful people who speak the language of the culture and

that makes me happy.

At the end of June, our interlocutor, along with the Association, was part of the “Srpsko Kolo” project in the immediate vicinity of the White House, on the Thomas Jefferson Memorial in front of the Washington Monument.

- The “Srpsko Kolo” docuseries by Dr. Željko Mirković is a story about the tradition and identity of the Serbian people, about cultivating happiness through dance. The Serbian Kolo has been part of UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage since 2017. Numerous folklore associations from Serbia and the USA and our most important institutions helped enable the realization of the project. The association that I lead participated in the project by organizing prelo, an old Serbian custom. The girls were dressed in national costumes from Mačva, Bosilegrad's Krajište, Pčinja, and Belgrade's

Posavina, and they stood behind two Mačva rugs, while the boys were behind a Pirot rug, mostly dressed in Šumadija costumes.

Since the Association promotes Serbian tradition in the broadest sense, of which faith is an indispensable part, cooperation with the Serbian Orthodox Church is also significant.

- We regularly visit cultural events in Serbian shrines with my husband John, even though he is American. The Church of St. Luke in the Potomac neighborhood in Washington is our only Orthodox church in the US capital. The elder of the church, Vasilije Vranić, selflessly supports us in our mission, and in 2019, we received a written blessing for our work from Bishop Irinej.

Text: D. Kokanović

Fotografije: Private album

