

My Three Magdalenas by Mile Vučić



Three Magdalenas, grandmother, mother and granddaughter came in cattle wagons to "Pančevački rit" at beginning of 1948, right out of the camp in Molidorf and Knićanin (Rudolfsgnad) . They came to "Krnjača", near "Pančevo Bridge" by railway. Horse-drawn carts transported children and sick people; all others were going on foot to "Kovilovo". The old cobblestone paved way from Turkish times led to "Borča" and from there they proceeded in mud up to their knees to "Kovilovo".

They arrived there at night and were housed in barracks where previously sheep had been kept. The moonlight penetrated through the bare boards and a strong cold wind, which froze the water, blew through the cracks between the boards. The floor was spread over with clean straw. They laid in this and were so tired that they forgot somehow that they didn't have anything to eat for the past two days.

In the morning their new life began.

There were no longer armed guards surrounding them; they were free, had a job and good food. There was a little cultivable land, mostly all weeds and cane. Weeds were chopped down with sickles. Arable land soon started to give plenty of new growth. They planted wheat, corn and many vegetables. They accepted this task as if it was all their own. There were no regulated working hours; they worked on Saturdays, Sundays, even at nights!

That is how the farm property became an enormous agrarian property called "POLJOPRIVREDNI KOMBINAT BEOGRAD". While most of the German people had traveled to Germany, Austria, Australia, USA and Argentina, they remained here. Soon thereafter they signed the working obligation for a duration of three years, were regularly receiving payment, and could freely go to Belgrade, "Zemun" or "Pančevo".

Thanks to their knowledge of the Serbian language, reading, writing and basic math, my mother Magdalena Pfanner became deputy storekeeper and soon got a small apartment in a brick building, where all three of them moved from wooden barracks. She remained there for eight years of service.

After surviving the terrible years in the camps, they decided to never forget their Molidorf and their closest ones, to forgive all injustice done to them and to stay



Department of camp
No 2311
2 III 1948 year.
In Knicanin

This do not serve as road legitimation

ANNOUNCEMENT

For Pfanner Magdalena, born 1930 year in Molidorf
Region _____ with members of family: mother Magdalena
1907, grandmother Ceschan Magdalena 1877

Released from camp and redirected to work in place Krnjača (Pančevacki rit) at employer
Agricultural farm where she's gonna conclude work contract during three years.

Assigned place of work is also assigned as living place, that may not be left or
changed without approval of competent department of internal affairs.

By going to any other place must be declared in office, or at police station
This announcement may not serve as basis for getting permanent personal
legitimation.

Camp commandant

Camp Release Announcement and translation

together. For work, they were organized in working brigades. The leaders of those brigades were young Serbian men and it happened that young German girls fell in love in them, and one by one they got married.



Magdalena Pfanner

So this was how and my mother Magdalena (*1930) met and married with my father Časlav Vučić (*1934). My great-grandmother Magdalena Ceschan, born



Magdalena (Tensch) & her husband Michael Ceschan



Magdalena (Ceschan) & her husband Frantz Pfanner

1878, died 1953 and is buried in "Borča". Magdalena Pfanner

(Oma/grandmother), born 1907 died 1962 and is also buried in "Borča".



Family graves at Borča

My mother Magdalena and father Časlav had a daughter Anica - in 1954, and me - Mile, in 1959. Mother christened my sister and me, with fathers' approval, at Catholic Church of St. Peter in Belgrade, which was a big risk during the communist times. My father, as a civil engineering expert, got a comfortable two-roomed

apartment 1964 in "Krnjača".

Besides his regular job, he had a license for planning houses, thus he succeeded with my mother in building their own house in 1967 in which my sister Anica and I grew up, and where she still lives. Unfortunately father died very young, in 1972, and was buried in "Borča" too. They had nice life together. Although widowed, mother was fighting with all her heart and strength for us, her children, to become educated, honorable and worthy people.

She was often telling us stories about her happy and carefree childhood in Molidorf, about her grandfather Michael (*1877) who died in 1945 in the internment camp, about her father Franz (*1905), and how she had last seen him in spring 1944, about jobs that they were worthy doing, about her dog and horses, but mostly about how Banatian houses looked.

Mother didn't like, and rarely talked about terrible things in the camps (1944-1948), the hunger, sickness and deaths...



Sister Anica never got married. I got married in 1983 with my spouse Svetlana (*1960).

We have two sons, Vojislav (*1984) and Branislav (*1990). We live in city centre of Belgrade.

My mother Magdalena Vučić (Pfanner), born 1930 died in 2001 and is buried in family graveyard in "Borča" near her husband Časlav, mother Magdalena and grandmother Magdalena.

Svetlana, Vojislav, Branislav & Mile