



MAGYAR STUDIES OF AMERICA

Magyar News Online

www.magyarnews.org

January 2016 Issue 95

***We wish all our kind Readers a happy New Year!
Minden kedves Olvasónknak boldog Új Évet kívánunk!***

May God Give Us

Töröcsik Julianna

May God give us a good new year,
In the new year new chair for here.
With the chair a nice big table,
Dinner set fit for a fable.

Our daily bread give us today,
Place on our chair graces to say.
'Round the table place for others,
For the whole World, to be brothers .

May God give us good will's present,
From our pure heart real presents.
Strength, persistence, wisdom, powers,
Snow white soul to grow its flowers.

May God give us peace, good feeling,
Diligence, good health and healing.
True partner, good friends around us,
Neat house, good coat wrap around us.

In the good coat place for big heart,
In the big heart, faith's a big part.
In true faith there's God existence:
May He bless your true persistence!

Translated by Olga Vállay Szokolay

Töröcsik Julianna is retired and lives in Kunhegyes



Adjon Isten

Töröcsik Julianna

Adjon Isten új évet,
Az új évben egy új széket!
Adjon elé asztalt, nagyot,
Teritéket, szép gazdagot!

Mindennapi kenyerünket,
A székünkön a helyünket,
Asztal körül helyet másnak!
Helyet az egész Világnak!

Adjon Isten jó szándékot,
Tiszta szívből ajándékot!
Erőt, tudást, akaratot,
Fehér lelket, patyolatot!

Adjon Isten békességet,
Szorgalmat, jó egészséget!
Igaz társat, hű barátot,
Tiszta házat, jó kabátot!

Jó kabátban jó nagy szívet,
Jó nagy szívben igaz hitet!
Igaz hitben igaz élet!
...Adjon Isten boldog évet!

Installation of New Pastor at St. Emery's

Fr. Milan Dimic will be installed as the new Pastor of St. Emery Church in Fairfield, CT on January 10th, 2016 at the 11 o'clock Mass by Bishop Frank Caggiano of Bridgeport. It will be a combined Hungarian and English service.

St. Emery's, an ethnic Hungarian Roman Catholic church built in 1932, and originally serviced by Hungarian Franciscans, received recognition as a Historic Place from the Connecticut Historic Preservation office in 2013. (See Magyar News Online, October 2013 issue.)

The last Franciscan serving at the church was Friar Louis Pintye who left in 2011. Fr. Dimic is of Slovenian origin but has great enthusiasm for bringing back the Hungarian faithful to St. Emery's. **Let us show our appreciation and support his efforts by having as many of us as possible attend his installation.**

Hope to see you there!



Place

We Hungarian-Americans have experienced the tug of two cultures, but here it is articulated as the experience of a young American woman who grew up in Hungary. She wrote this in 2004, while at college back in the States.

Abigail Lee

Who am I? It's a question I've never thought of answering with a place. But what is place? Surely place is not just a landscape – not just buildings I see and go into, not the pavements beneath my feet, not only the land. It is a people, it is sound, and smell, and subtler things than the entirety of a looming landscape or city skyline. Therefore I am ...

Hungarian. Not the nationality – the language. I am the soft consonants and the fluid rapidity with which it is spoken. I am the way my voice changes to make room for the sounds English doesn't have. I am the tears that roll down my cheeks when I hear it spoken by a voice other than my own, talking to nobody, for the first time in over a year.

I am Budapest, but not its skyline, not the bridges or the Castle, Hero's Square, or the Parliament or grand hotels or the Opera House. I am the smell of the urine that fills the underground walkways that shelter Budapest's homeless in the winters. I am the toothless grin and the raspy "Isten áldjon!" that the beggar gives the one who offers him a loaf of bread, or puts money in his old Burger King coke cup. I am the smell of body odor and cheap perfume and cigarettes and alcohol that saturates the air of the crowded bus I'm riding on. I am the angry dogs that bark at me from behind countless wrought iron gates in my neighborhood. I am the old car from the Communist regime that sits with its hood always open, perpetually un-worked on in my neighbor's front yard. I am the old woman who has come in from the countryside who stands in the subway and sells violets or lily of the valley from her garden that is hours from here.

I am the fourteen year-old girl who goes clubbing and gets drunk. I am the

old man across from me on the tram who will not smile back at me, hard as I try to make him find something he is happy about. I am the smell of the incense as I walk into the stores that sell only things imported from India – fabric and bags, and necklaces, and nose rings and books interpreting the Bhagavad-Gita. I am the smell of lilacs and cherry blossoms in the spring. I am the cookie-cutter high rise apartments on the outskirts of the city. I am the unplanned one-way streets downtown. I am the graffiti on the side of an old Communist statue. I am the smoky underground tea houses and pubs. I am the giant green wooden doors of my elementary school. I am no ice in my flat coke. I am spicy sausage on bread with lard. I am the open courtyard in a 200-year old apartment building. I am the elementary teacher who still thinks it is my job to teach morals at school. I am an umbrella repair shop. I am a solemn and hopeless national anthem. I am Petőfi Sándor's revolutionary poetry. I am the out of place McDonalds between two buildings from two centuries ago. I am the train station full of pickpockets. I am high gasoline prices. I am the depth of conversation that can be reached with a stranger in a matter of seconds. I am the gray Danube River that runs under the Chain Bridge. I am the bright gold rings, earrings and crucifixes that women wear on their fingers, ears and around their necks. I am ...

Therefore, I am not and can never be American. Not the citizenship – that I have... but the mind. I am not rich. I am not the standard intersection gas station, KFC or Taco Bell, strip center with a bank, grocery store, a Blockbuster, a cheap hair-cut place, and a dry cleaner. I am not Wal-Mart. I am not the brand-new church buildings that look like shopping malls to me. I am not obsessed with my rights. I am not the uniform green street signs. I am not the big back yards. I am not no fences. I am not no sidewalks. I am not fat. I am not just buy a new one. I am not good at sports. I am not divorced. I am not wide open spaces. I am not a new car. I am not the friendly person at the customer service desk. Little league baseball and block parties.

My very inability to come up with other things that I am not confirms to me that I am not from here. I could never write about what it's like to grow up in the United States. I do not mean to boil down anyone else's growing up to these things. I know that Wal-Mart is not what it means to live here. Money is not what it means to live here. I don't know what it means.

I am worried – in three years I will no longer be able to say that I've lived most of my life in Hungary. On that New Year's when the clock strikes midnight, will I become American, my coach turn into a pumpkin and my ball-gown to rags? Will I understand what it means to live here, and embrace the processed, packaged, strip-center life?

As I sit here writing, I realize that place is so much of who I am, and consequently, who I am not. Therefore, I think that whether I am writing expressly about place or not, place is there. It has to be. I will only ever write about things that I feel I have at least a quarter understanding of – I don't think I'd ever be able to convincingly fake it. Place – if it's defined as I have defined it above – will be the thing that gives all of me context, every thought that I have for the rest of my life, whether I ever go back or not.

Abigail Lee is the daughter of American missionaries who moved to Hungary in 1989 when Abigail was seven years old. She lived in Budapest for 18 years. Returned to the US, Abigail graduated summa cum laude from Oklahoma University, where she met her husband. They have two children and are now doing missionary work in Southeast Asia.



IN MEMORIAM: KATALIN MÁKOS

*Here is a lovely tribute to Mákos Kató
(as she was known to her friends),
written by her daughter.*

*November 23, 1935 - November 2,
2015*

Hana Ildikó Lang

During the late autumn of November 1935, Katalin Várszegi was born in a small village called Püspökladány in Eastern Hungary near Romania and Russia (now the Ukraine), a few years before World War II would ravage Europe. Püspökladány was centered around the railroad industry; as such her father, József, worked at the station while her mother, Teréz, stayed home and tended to the house, vegetable and fruit gardens, chickens, pigs, as well as their four children.

Katalin began her life by defeating all odds and would continue to do so for the rest of her life. A couple of weeks after her birth, the family made funeral arrangements for their new baby girl, seeing that she would not start eating and was already born underweight. Per a neighbor's folk remedy suggestion, they tried bottle-feeding sugar water, after which Katalin began to eat and gain weight. The youngest sister to József, Mária and Piroska, she attended grade school in her hometown and high school in the nearby city of Debrecen where she excelled in gymnastics. During her childhood, her family survived numerous air raids by hiding in below-ground shelters.

After high school, Katalin continued to live in her hometown surrounded by her large family. She had a love of dancing and music, thus would attend local village dances with her sisters. She worked in an office providing healthcare and social services for local Hungarian folk artists. There was a rumor that she went above and beyond her responsibilities to make sure these artists and their families were taken care of properly, whether the current Fascist or Communist government approved or not. This office is where she would meet her future husband, Károly, a courageous freedom-fighter, who was working as a

traveling supervisor. This was during the Russian Communist regime, and the day they met was March 15th, 1956. To demonstrate her family's anti-Communist spirit, Katalin wore a traditional Hungarian rosetta pin made of red, white and green ribbon, the colors of the flag. After meeting Katalin and recognizing her bravery, Károly knew in that moment she would be his wife. After a two short weeks together however, they would not see each other again for seven years until their marriage.

The Revolution came later that year when Károly was working in Miskolc, and he immediately joined in. One month later in November, he had to leave the country, otherwise he would have been hung/killed. He crossed the border into Austria as a bullet clipped his elbow, but he made it. He was in Austria from November 1956 until March 1957, after which he immigrated to the United States, arriving at Camp Kilmer, NJ. He did not contact Katalin and her family for about three years... because it would have endangered their lives.

However, he sent messages to her through Radio Free Europe eventually and his family (from Szombathely) went to visit hers in Püspökladány, to make sure they were a decent/ good family – and they apparently passed with flying colors!

After these three years, Károly and Katalin (Dad/Mom) corresponded by letter for another four years. At age 28, seven years after they met, Katalin made the difficult decision to leave her family and her country to marry the

man she loved and move to the United States. They had a wedding in Paris, France in November 1963.

The Hungarian secret service came looking for Katalin in Paris to return her to Hungary, only to find Károly in her room, to their surprise... since they had switched rooms to mislead the secret service. They were "stuck" in Paris for several weeks longer than planned because JFK was shot, airports were closed. But they finally made it out. Katalin got her citizenship right away due to their marriage, and settled in CT! She resided in Fairfield until the last few years when she moved to Tucson, Arizona to be nearer to her daughter and granddaughter.

Katalin took great pride in her home and was a homemaker for the majority of her adult life. She was an excellent chef and her homemade pastries and desserts were the talk of the town. She and her husband and daughter were heavily involved in the Hungarian community of Connecticut. They had numerous friends and acquaintances for whom she was a much loved hostess.

Katalin will always be remembered for her generosity towards family and friends and a good heart, her outstanding will in spite of physical challenges and her uncanny sense of humor. She will be missed by her family – husband Károly (Charles), daughter Hana Ildikó and granddaughter Dahlia Grace – as well as many close friends. May she find comfort and peace in this new phase of life she has entered and is blessing with her presence.



Cafe Dolce

Paul and Debbie Soos

Good news for all of you who love Hungarian pastries! A new pastry shop has opened in Norwalk, CT, with mouthwatering offerings!

A little taste of Hungary came to Norwalk, CT in November 2015, when Zoltán Bona and Norbert Dudás opened the *Café Dolce* at 345 Main Avenue.

Café Dolce is a coffee and pastry shop (*cukrászda*) whose quality of fare reminds us of the famous *Gerbeaud* in Budapest. The European cakes and pastries are prepared on site by owner and award-winning pastry chef, Zoltán Bona (*cukrász*). Our goal is to sample each of the offerings. So far, our favorites include the *dobos torta*, *Eszterházy* cake, and the spiced rum cake (*puncstorta*).

As we enter the shop, a wall-sized mural of Budapest's St. Stephen's Basilica on the left adds the ambiance of a European outdoor café as we proceed straight ahead to the display case showing all of today's temptations. We are more than ready to enjoy a cappuccino with a Hungarian pastry.

But wait! The menu also shows sweet and savory crêpes and paninis with homemade fresh bread, soup of the day, pasta of the day, along with a large variety of hot and cold drinks and smoothies. Oh the choices!

Although they have been open only a short time, news of *Café Dolce* has spread quickly among the local community – especially the Hungarians. On our last visit, Sunday after church, we met old friends and enjoyed an old-world style lunch and conversation. Just like the old days.

Zoltán and Norbert are off to a great start with *Café Dolce* and we wish them well. Sok szerencsét!!!

Paul Soos is a member of the Editorial Board of Magyar News Online, a lay reader at St. Ladislaus R.C. Church in South Norwalk, Connecticut, and a student at the Magyar Studies Hungarian School in Fairfield. He is a former U.S. Air Force Officer. Debbie and Paul have been together for 25 years. Debbie is Paul's inspiration and our "official photographer".

Hungry for Some Hungarian...

László Tibor Laky

A lighthearted quest for chicken paprikás turned into a deadly serious tornado chase.

It was the evening after Christmas, and all thru the house, not a creature was stirring, not even a wife. So onto the internet to seek out some *paprikás*, and lo and behold we find a Hungarian restaurant named "The Armoury D E" (Deep Ellum, on the east side of downtown Dallas, a bar scene of many eclectic clubs, diners, bars, and of course, Rudolph's Meat Market!) Deciding to go out and get some fresh cooked Hungarian vs. cooking it myself, we loaded up the car and headed out.



But there was to be no Hungarian food this night, as God had other plans and He had us booked for assignment, yet we knew it not. As we approached the deep east side of the Dallas Metro area, the warnings went out that a tornado may be afoot and up to no good. We pulled the Suburban over onto the shoulder on a hill overlooking the Dallas area and looked carefully across the horizon, and there it was! We saw a large funnel shape starting to descend from the shelf cloud (a cloud that is distinctly flat across the bottom and markedly lowered from the other clouds), and there we saw a rapidly growing full blown EF4 Tornado touch down. Calls were made and the local

dispatch center got adjacent cities on the line and the alarms continued to be sounded!

If you've never seen a tornado, it is a sobering and monstrous, forceful display of the mighty power and energy of God's creation. We watched it travel and grind its way through a heavily populated group of suburbs that border Dallas on its east city limits. We watched it cross over a heavily traveled Interstate and continue northeast. We were instructed to keep sight of it and report any changes and we followed dutifully north-east as it ripped and roared through community after community, leaving behind warzone-like destruction in its wake. In what started out as a craving for great Hungarian food now turned to shock and awe as we encountered damage unimaginable, dazed and hurt victims, and even victims who didn't make it!

After assessing damaged and destroyed rural farm homes and turning back traffic, the dinner-date turned storm-chasing date took a somber turn as we started hearing reports of fatalities in the wake of this massive tornado: the man at the gas station we stopped at as the debris was still falling from the sky, the dispatcher caught in her car, a mother and one-year old child who had inadvertently driven into the funnel, and several more, who would not live to see tomorrow.

Life has a sobering way of keeping us grounded. Hug your loved ones, kiss your kids or parents like you mean it, because you may not have another chance. Love like there is no tomorrow, because on this night, nine people had no tomorrow.

Be prepared, have a plan, be safe, and I hope that we all learn to be safer and respect this thing we call weather.

László Tibor Laky is first generation Hungarian, a motorcycle officer who escorts funerals, parades, dignitaries, and sports teams. He is one of six children of immigrants Anikó Hódosy of Arad and Tibor Laky of Székesfehérvár. He and his wife Lynette are certified volunteer storm spotters with the National Weather Service. This was Lynette's first tornado assignment.



Magyar News Online

242 Kings Hwy Cut-off
Fairfield, CT 06824
www.magyarnews.org

Editor: Erika Papp Faber

Founder, Editor and Publisher Emeritus: Joseph F. Balogh

Editorial Board: Olga Vallay Szokolay, Éva Wajda, Charles Bálintt
Eliz Kakas, Judith Paolini, Paul Soos, Joseph Ull,

Webmaster: Karolina Szabo

Assistant Webmaster: Zsuzsa Lengyel

Treasurer : Zita Balogh

Pannonia Club Christmas Pageant

The tradition is carried on, as described by a former participant, son of the chief organizer Zsuzsanna Deer.

By: Peti Deer

The Pannonia American-Hungarian Club held their annual Christmas Pageant on December 13th at the Calvin United Church of Christ in Fairfield, CT. Around 40 Hungarian children, ages 3-12, who reside around Fairfield, participated in the event and mesmerized members of the audience, both young and old. From groups of children singing cheerful Christmas songs to talented young musicians playing their instruments, everyone was impressed by what the Hungarian language could do to kindle even more Christmas spirit.

The reenactment of the "*Bethlehem játék*" or Nativity Scene was a truly enchanting sight to see, bringing the often forgotten true meaning of Christmas right to us. Being a past participant in these pageants, I am always so excited to see what new and exciting talents will be presented each and every year. Right before the end of the show, all of the children are full of excitement and joy as the Hungarian Santa Claus gives both participants and children in the audience a "*Mikulás csomag*" filled with all sorts of goodies; included in the bags this year was a nutcracker too! The Pannonia Club also gives each participant a \$20 gift card to Target.

After the wonderful performances, everyone dived into the awaited bountiful feast, filled with mountains of hot dogs and traditional homemade Hungarian pastries. While the young children played and kept themselves busy with arts and crafts, the proud parents, relatives, and friends couldn't help but talk about the performance they had witnessed.

The unseen heroes of the show are the Pannonia Club members themselves, working tirelessly to make sure that the performance is as perfect as it can possibly be. From late nights transforming the stage into a lavish wintery landscape to preparing all of the delectable pastries, the show wouldn't be anything without the efforts of the Club itself. But from what I've seen, I think the person who deserves a big round of applause is Zsuzsanna Deer, the president of the Pannonia club and the organizer of these pageants for the last eight years, my Mama.

Just the time that she puts into planning the order of the program or writing the opening speech with papers scattered in specific order all over the floor really show her dedication to the Club, and what she, along with other members are able to achieve. To me, this

show isn't just about Christmas, but about how the Pannonia Club can enrich the Hungarian culture in Fairfield. I, and hopefully many other participants, will look back on these pageants with fond memories, never forgetting the passion and dedication that the Pannonia Club had in preserving and displaying Hungary's culture.

Peti Deer is a Junior at Fairfield Warde High School

Photos by Tracy Deer-Mirak



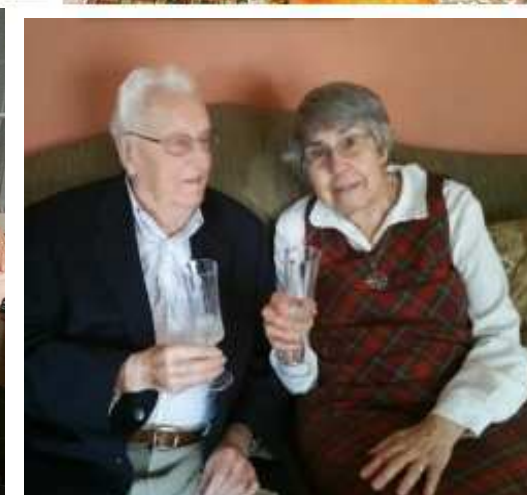
Rev. Király, David Deer, and participating children

Magyar Studies of America Christmas Party

The Hungarian School of Magyar Studies of America held their annual Christmas party at Fairfield Woods Middle School on December 14th. Here are some photos of the participants.



The Magyar News Online Editorial Board celebrated Christmas on December 13th. Hosted by Karolina Szabo



Széchenyi István Memorial Year – 1

In 2016, Hungary celebrates the 225th anniversary of the birth of Széchenyi István, whose reforms brought Hungary in line with the development experienced by western European countries for which Hungary had been a bastion of defense throughout history, and which did not have to endure centuries of foreign oppression. The reforms instituted by Széchenyi were so far-reaching and so important that we felt they could not be covered in the space of one article.

In this Memorial Year, then, Magyar News Online will consider a different aspect of Széchenyi's life each month. We start with a general introduction.

Erika Papp Faber

The devastating almost 180-year long Turkish occupation (1541 to 1718), the consequent subjugation of Hungary by Austria and stagnating social institutions caused Hungary's development in the economic, social as well as the political sphere to fall behind those of the rest of Europe. By the early 19th century, people began to speak of the need for "reform".

A leader soon emerged in the person of Count Széchenyi István (1791 – 1860), whose grasp of the broader picture and a wealth of constructive ideas brought him to the forefront of the reform movement. Having widely traveled abroad, he had first-hand experience of the political and social advancement of other nations, and his travels throughout Hungary allowed him to see the conditions of his native



land. These spurred him on to devote his efforts to the development of his own nation as a whole, without considering class distinctions. Yet he was fundamentally opposed to revolutionary methods, which put him at loggerheads with Kossuth Lajos, who regarded independence from Austria as the one and only solution to the nation's problems. Espousing economic change, Széchenyi believed that reform could be realized in collaboration with Austria, and that a break with Austria – independence as Kossuth envisioned it – would lead to national catastrophe.

Széchenyi recognized the injustices of the feudal system which bound the serfs to the land without giving them the opportunity to better themselves. He saw the great divide between the aristocracy and the large landowners on the one hand and the peasants who worked that land on the other. To weld the country into a unified whole, he proclaimed the need for the payment of taxes by the nobility also, and not merely by the serfs. Everyone, he also said, should have the opportunity to acquire land, and all strata of society should be equal before the law.

Such proposals were of course met with great consternation and opposition by the court of Vienna. The elimi-

nation of the nobility's privileges would endanger and undermine Austria's complete autocratic rule. A united Hungary would no longer be subservient to the Austrian policy of treating Hungary like a colony to be exploited. Consequently, those who stood up for Széchenyi's ideals were imprisoned on charges of treason.

Kossuth and Széchenyi both devoted their energies to the same goal, the betterment of their people; but whereas Széchenyi's temperament dictated a deliberate and careful pace of economic progress, in cooperation with Austria, Kossuth was a man of quick action who wanted a quick and drastic political solution – a revolution that would bring about independence. While Széchenyi even wrote a book attacking the ideas of Kossuth, it was the latter who called Széchenyi "the greatest Hungarian". Yet both of them played an important role in the shaping of the Hungarian nation during the 19th century.

Next month, we will look at Széchenyi's origin and early years.

Erika Papp Faber is Editor of Magyar News Online.



Ditrói Siklódy Lőrinc: Sculptor of Monuments

His statues and bas-reliefs honoring the valiant Magyar soldiers of World War I are found in many town squares throughout Hungary. To celebrate his life, carved grave markers (kopjafák) were erected this past year both in his birthplace of Ditró, Transylvania and in Budapest where he had created most of his works.

Erika Papp Faber

He was born in Ditró, County Csík in 1876, and died in Budapest in 1945, two days short of his 69th birthday. He studied at the Budapest School of Applied Arts, then under the well-known sculptor Stróbl Alajos. Acknowledging his accomplishments, his native Csík County awarded him a scholarship to study in München. He continued his studies under Rodin in Paris.

Returning home, Siklódy worked for a short while in his native Ditró, creating different sized decorative pieces from the various types of rock found in the Gyergyó area. (He later carved three statues of Carrara marble for the altar of the large new Catholic church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.) Today, the public school in Ditró is named for him.

From 1909 on, Siklódy regularly exhibited at the *Műcsarnok* in Budapest.

His World War I memorial statues and plaques are ubiquitous throughout Hungary (found in Gödöllő, Sopron, Tápiószentmárton, Balatonboglár, Izsák, etc.,

etc.) In Budapest, we may see his statue of Lieutenant Hanzély Pál who had saved a girl from drowning after she and her skating partner had broken through the ice at Szolnok.

He also created a bas-relief plaque of Petőfi Sándor, displayed above the entrance to the meeting room in the town hall of Kiskúnfélegyháza.

A monumental double statue honoring the Hungarian worker entitled "*Magyar munka*" was unveiled on Tisza Kálmán tér in Budapest in 1943. However, this, like some of his other works, such as the figure of a Boy Scout he made to commemorate the Gödöllő International Jamboree of 1933, was removed and destroyed due to the changes in political direction since that time.

Not quite as drastic was the fate of the Calvary grouping of Christ and the two thieves Siklódy created as a memorial for King Charles IV. It was originally erected at Tihany Abbey. However, the figures were removed in 1960, and taken to Sümeg. Copies are now being made to be set up again in Tihany.

But Siklódy did not confine himself to monumental works; he produced numerous smaller statuettes and busts as well. Apparently, these caught the eye of the jury at the Venice Biennale one year, but I have not been able to find more information about that.

My grandfather, dr. Papp Antal, was Siklódy's patron in his early years, paying the rent for his studio when it was located in Buda. In gratitude, Siklódy created a bronze bust of both my grandfather and grandmother

(now found in the little museum of the Armenian chapel in Buda). In addition, my grandmother was also his model for a white marble bust. My grandfather sitting in an armchair is the subject of a small bronze statuette on a red marble base, and there is also a small statue of a bowler from his hand.

According to his nephew Láng Péter, his uncle embodied what is most characteristic of the Székelys: "Deep faith, strength, perseverance, skill, talent and a lifetime affection for their native land and traditions."

One hundred and forty years have passed since ditrói Siklódy Lőrinc was born. This past year, woodcarving artist Petres Lajos was commissioned by both Ditró and Budapest to create *kopjafák* in Siklódy's honor. It is time that he became better known.

Erika Papp Faber is Editor of Magyar News Online.





*top: "Kopjafák" in Ditró and Budapest;
center: statue on Hanzély Pál's tomb; Firefighters' monument; World War I monument
bottom: statuette of dr.Papp Antal; bronze bust of Papp Antalné, Négler Hermin; The Bowler.*

Corn Husk Art in Hungary – with a Twist / Az oslii csuhé

In Osli, a small village 28 miles east of Sopron, people discovered that the inner corn leaves, when soaked in water, could easily be twisted and spun. Necessity inspired them to use the spun corn husks for creating footwear, satchels, doormats. Men prepared the leaves for spinning, and created the frames the women used to spin the corn husks.

Production was interrupted by World War II, and later by industrialization (which drew women to the cities), and by the establishment of cooperatives (which put women to work in the fields). By the end of the last century, the craft was dying out.

Then the author, an educator (now retired), decided to find some of the master corn husk crafters, and asked them to teach their craft in



schools. This has revived the craft, and has led to the expansion of the crafters' repertory. In addition to the original useful items, they now also create decorative pieces such as Nativity scenes, Easter bunnies, etc. (see the collage of photos). However, increased mechanization is making corn husks harder to get, and the crafters may soon be reduced to relying on small farmers growing corn in their back yards.

Corn Husk Art in Hungary – with a Twist / Az oslii csuhé

Rinner Jenőné

A Rábaközi kis faluban, Osliban, közel 100 éve jelen van a csuhézás. A magyar ember egyik jellemzője, a leleményesség, mutatkozik meg ennek a kismesterségnek a kialakulásában, no meg a falusi szegénység. Az oslii ember ugyanis kitalálta, hogy a kukoricacsövet elborító belső, szép leveleket ha bevizezi, megnedvesíti, remekül lehet sodorni. Már csak azt kellett eldönteni, hogy a hosszú, megpödört anyagból mit készítsen – ezt is kitalálta. A sok gyerek, a szűkös életkörülmények arra készítették, hogy lábbelit fonjon a csuhéból. Ha lábbeli volt, akkor iskolába is mehetett a gyerek. A kevés kis könyvet, vagy palatáblát pedig a „cekkerbe”, a csuhézatyorba rakták, s azzal indultak az iskolába. A hulladék és vastagabb levelekből meg, hogy az se vesszen kárba, lábtörlőt készítettek.

Az oslii házakban az őszi és téli hónapokban először a kukoricafosztás, majd a fonás volt a napi teendő. Az asszonyok és lányok – már 8-10 éves kortól – kezéből tavaszig ki sem került a (fából készült) ráma, amire megfonták a PAPUCS-ot, CEKKER-t, vagy a LÁBTÖRLŐ-t. A férfiak is besegítettek, majd elkészítették, majd felszögelték a rámaikat, előkészítették a kukoricale-

veleket, megáztatták, csúnya, vastag részeit levágták, a szépeket az asszonyok keze alá adták. Még az étkezésről is ők gondoskodtak. Ilyenkor ebéd nem igen volt, csak vacsora, mert a háziasszony akkor tette le a munkát. Napközben zsíros kenyér, esetleg szalonna csilapította éhségüket. A hosszú őszi és téli napokat, estéket ilyenkor a jókedv, a dalolás, a huncutkodás töltötte be, miközben az ügyes női kezekből tucatszám kerültek ki a csuhéportékák.

Csak a háború kitörése szakította félbe ezt a szép falusi idillt, és váltotta fel a vidámságot a szomorúság, aggodalom, félelem. A férfiak többségét behívták katonának, akik végigharcolták a háborút, aztán vagy hazajöttek, sokan megnyomorodva, vagy elestek valamelyik fronton. Ez alatt a magukra maradt nőkre hárult minden feladat. A csuhézás is háttérbe szorult, majd az 1950-es években újra fellendült. Akkor már nemcsak a családnak készítették a használati cikkeket, hanem eladásra is.

A csornai háziipari szövetkezet igényt tartott rá, és elég jól meg is fizették:

„2 forint a kukorica papucsok az ára,
karácsonyra összejön a négy ökor ára,
így lesz pajtás nemsokára
a babámnak hozományá”

– dalolták Osliban.

Szobákat töltöttek meg a cekkerek és papucsok, és ökrösszekér, majd lovas kocsival vitte a portékát a városba. Újabb hanyatlás állt be akkor, amikor a tsz-ek megalakultak, és a nők is munkát vállaltak, tavasztól ősziig a földeken, télen a zöldségfeldolgozóban és a kertészetekben. A városok üzemei is beszippantottak jó néhány falusi asszonyt. A csuhézásra már csak az idősebbeknek volt ideje, lehetősége. A múlt század végére, 2000 felé haladva alig akadt ház, ahol a kismesterség még működött.

Ekkor gondoltam én, a történelmet és a honismeretet tanító pedagógus, hogy lépnem kell, mielőtt kihalnak a mesterség tudói, s a fiatalok a régi házak lebontásakor a lim-lomokkal együtt tűzre dobják a ráamákat is.

Megkerestem a csuhézó mester asszonyokat, és megkértem őket, hogy az iskolában a honismereti

szakkör keretén belül tanítsanak meg bennünket erre a gyönyörű mesterségre.

Borsodi Jenőné és Marics Istvánné voltak az elsők, akik továbbadták tudásukat, többek közt nekem is, hisz én nem ezen a vidéken születtem.

A csuhézás lassan, de újra fellendült.

Ma megint gyűjtik ősszel a kukorica levelét néhány házban, s a ráamákat is újra szögelik – jelenleg két lelkes asszony – akik a mesterséget magas fokon művelik – segíti munkámat: Kapui Béláné Janka néni, aki a 80. évébe lépett, és a 75 éves Varga Gézané Irmus. Én még jelenleg is a tanítványuk vagyok. 10-12

éves közös munkánk eredménye, hogy szerte a Rábaközben, és azon is túl mutatjuk, tanítjuk a csuhézást. Óvodákban, iskolákban, művelődési házakban, nyári kézműves táborokban jártunk és járunk, bemutatókat, szakköröket szervezünk. Kiállításainkat láthatták már Kapuváron, Sopronban, Győrben, a fővárosban, Keszthelyen és a környező településeken.

Annyi változás állt be a múltbéli csuhézáshoz képest, hogy mára kibővült a repertoár: dísz tárgyak, dobozok, kosárcák, virágok is készülnek a mai igényekhez igazodva. Karácsony előtt angyalkák, betlehem, szent család, karácsonyfadíszek, húsvét előtt nyuszikák, tojástartó, tyúkocskák születnek a kukoricalevelekből.

Munkánkat, melyet nagy szeretettel végzünk, egy dolog nehezíti. A levelek, beszerzése egyre nehezebb. A modern mezőgazdaságban mindent gépesítettek, a kukoricaszedést is, ami a leveleket tönkreteszi. Lassan csak a kertekben ültetett kukoricák leveleire számíthatunk, ami sajnos egyre kevesebb. De nem adjuk fel!

Lejegyezte Rinner Jenőné, nyugdíjas pedagógus.



Captions: Csuhé fonó asszonyok bemutatója a hegykői Csipkeházban, asszony virágcsokorral, mintás lábasalátét, rőzseszedő asszony az unokájával, virágkavalkád, klasszikus osli papucs, gyűlekeznek a fecskék

New Year's Folklore

EPF

The turn of the year was surrounded by many superstitious practices that were believed to foretell the weather, predict whom a young girl would marry, or ensure good luck for the following 12 months.

For example, people would take 12 cloves of garlic, one for each month, and put a bit of salt on them. Those that would be wet in the morning would be expected to get much precipitation during the coming year.

*

There were many practices for foretelling who a girl's future husband would be. For example, girls of marriageable age would put the names of two or three eligible young men on separate slips of paper, which they would then put into dumplings. It was thought that whichever dumpling came to the surface of the boiling water first would contain the name of the man who would become her husband.

*

As for good luck, many of these practices involved food. In addition to eating pork on New Year's Day for good luck, lentils (which are round like coins) were popular because they were thought to bring money into the house.

Those living near rivers would eat fish to ensure good luck for the year, because its scales also resemble coins. But people in other areas thought that fish were to be avoided, because a person's luck might swim away with it. Should you still insist on eating fish on New Year's Day, you were advised to start eating it from the tail, so your luck would not swim away.

To ensure that there was plenty in your larder during the year, people would fill up all half-empty kitchen containers (the sugar bowl, salt shaker, flour bin, etc.)

*

On the principle that what you do on January 1st you would do the rest of

the year, going to the doctor was not recommended, since you would be sickly all year long. Neither should you lend anything then, because it would never come back.

*

It was considered important that the first visitor on New Year's morning be a man, because he would bring good luck. (A woman visitor would bring bad luck! How about that!)

This superstition was still alive and well in a modified form in New York as recently as 35-40 years ago, when on New Year's morning my husband would always have to call a certain lady (who was in her 90's by then) because she insisted that her first caller had to be a man!

Kalács Without Kneading

Here is a simplified version of kalács that does not require the physical labor of beating the dough – a boon to all Hungarian housewives!

By: Ilona Tima Osztrovski

3 ¼ cups flour
2 tsp yeast
1 cup milk
8 Tbsp. sugar
1/3 cup oil
½ tsp salt
3 Tbsp. cocoa powder
1 egg for brushing the loaves before baking

Warm up milk (don't make it hot), mix in yeast and sugar and let it rise. In a bowl, measure the flour, add salt. When the yeast has risen, mix in flour with the oil and make dough.

Divide dough into two parts. Mix the cocoa powder with 3 Tbsp. milk into one half.

Roll out each to the size of the baking dish. Put the white on the bottom, brush with oil, and cover with the dark dough. Roll it up, and let it rest for half an hour. Brush top with egg wash and bake on 325° until golden in color.

I make two batches of dough, one is all white, the other with the cocoa powder. I divide each into two. This way I'll get two nice loaves of kalács. Rolls can be filled with poppy seed or walnut, but leave out the cocoa powder.

This is not a beigli, it is an old-fashioned kalács.

Dagasztás nélküli kalács

60 dkg liszt
5 dkg élesztő
3 dl tej
8 ek kristály cukor
1 dl étolaj
½ kk só
3 ek kakaópor
1 tojás megkenni a tetejét

Az élesztőt a cukorral a langyos tejben felfuttatjuk. Egy tálba merjük a lisztet, belekeverjük a sót. Ha az élesztő feljött, a lisztbe keverjük az olajjal együtt. Összegyúrjuk, majd két részre osszuk. Az egyikbe 3 kanál kakaóport gyúrunk 3 ek tejjel.

Kisodorjuk, alulra tesszük a fehér tésztát, ezt olajjal megkenjük, és rátesszük a kakaós tésztát. Felcsavarjuk, majd ½ órát pihentetjük. Tojással a tetejét megkenjük és lassú tűzön (325° F) sütjük.

Én két adagot készítek, egyikbe teszem a kakaóport, akkor két szép kalács jön ki belőle.

Lehet mákkal vagy dióval is tölteni, akkor a kakaót kihagyjuk a tésztából. Ez nem beigli, ez egy régimódi kelt kalács.



Hungarian Crèches in K of C Exhibit

Half a dozen Hungarian Nativity scenes are among the 76 crèches from seven Central European countries exhibited in the Knights of Columbus Museum in New Haven. They are on loan from the Museo del Persepio (Museum of Crèches) in Rome and from Loyola University's Museum of Arts, Chicago. Represented beside Hungary are Austria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia.

viola vonfi

My sister was the one who always played with dolls (I was more of a tomboy), so I was a little hesitant when I was assigned to report on the Hungarian *crèches* at the Knights of Columbus Museum. I need not have worried – only one of the half dozen Hungarian *betlehem* on display was really like a doll collection. That one had been commissioned by Msgr. Brezanoczy Pál and was created by the Working Community of the Piarists in the early 20th century. The figures are made of wood and are dressed in colorful clothing.

There are two sets of Mary and Joseph figures with the Baby. Both are on loan from Loyola University. As the descriptive tags explain, one is of painted clay by artist Papp János, the other is porcelain, done by Papp Ágnes. (I wonder whether they were related?)

A set of two panels, framed and made of paper and wood, was created by an artist named Varga Imre. It is a more interesting and colorful presentation.

A late 19th century framed ceramic piece is larger and can be hung. The artist was anonymous. The most unusual, somewhat funky interpretation of the Nativity scene consists of cloth figures by an anonymous artist. What immediately drew my attention were the high crowns worn by the Three Kings which almost resembled leaves of a plant, or even antlers. As I say, rather funky.

An introductory panel explains that in Hungary, by the late 15th and early 16th centuries, Christ-

mas performances of Nativity plays in churches popularized the *crèche* in a theatrical form. Its sculptural origins are more difficult to trace. But in 1698, during demolition of a house in Léva (located in the Garam Valley in what was Upper Hungary), Nativity figures were found in a wall. The exact time of their creation is not known, but it is known that it was customary to carry in procession Nativity figures which were then placed upon the altar, amidst popular rejoicing.

The combination of the two traditions – the theatrical Nativity and the sculptural *crèches* – resulted in the folk custom of "betlehemezés", with a portable *crèche*. This could take the form of a church, a stable or a cabinet with curtains that, when drawn, revealed the figures. (For more about this custom, see the December 2012 issue of Magyar News Online.)

The exhibit is free, as is parking below the Museum, and is open until January 31st.

viola vonfi (sic!) writes from Stamford, CT.



Did you know...

... **that** the Hungarian equestrians were a great success in Morocco? The seven-day event was opened by a member of the royal family. Hungarian riders from Kecskemét and Hajdúszoboszló represented the Hungarian equestrians with 9 horses. They performed daily in front of 35,000 people. The highlight of the event was Nagy Gábor standing on two horses, driving five thoroughbreds. The Agricultural Minister of Morocco congratulated the Hungarian team.

Hungarians have a special relationship with horses; a thousand years ago they conquered the Carpathian Basin on horseback. There are many horse parks in Hungary, on the Great Plain, in Szigetköz, Zala County, even in Budapest (*Kincsem Park, where horseraces are held.) Horse racing was introduced in Hungary by Count István Széchenyi.

*See the September 2015 issue of www.magyarnews.org.

... **that** archaeologists believe they have finally found the long-lost remains of the tomb of Suleiman the Magnificent near the fortress of Szigetvár, located in southern Hungary, west of Pécs? In 1566, during the Ottoman conquest of Hungary, 100,000 Turkish troops laid siege to the fortress of Szigetvár, held off for a month (August 5th to September 8th) by the Croatian-Hungarian captain of the castle, the nobleman Zrinyi Miklós, with 2,500 men. Suleiman died during the siege, but his closest officers kept the fact a secret for 48 hours for fear that their troops would give up the fight. When it became obvious that the defenders could not hold out any longer, Zrinyi and his men rode out of the fortress in a final charge and were cut down. But it was a costly victory for the Turks, who had lost 20,000 men, and the chance to conquer Vienna at that time.

Only Suleiman's heart and internal organs are believed to have been buried in the tomb, while his body was returned to Constantinople for burial there.

Ruins of the purported tomb are in a former Turkish settlement known as Turbékpuszta that had been destroyed by the Austrians in the 1680's. It could be inferred from the name of the settlement that it was built over a Turkish tomb, since "*turbék*" is derived from the Turkish word "*turbeh*" meaning tomb.

Suleiman was the longest-reigning Turkish sultan, ruling for 46 years.

The announcement of the find was made early in December.

... **that** the Hungarian drama film "Son of Saul" was nominated for the 2016 Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film? The film was directed by Nemes László and won the Grand Prix Award at the 2015 Cannes Film Festival.

The plot of the film revolves around Saul Ausländer, a prisoner at Auschwitz who is helping to burn the bodies of Jews who had been killed, when he spots the body who he thinks was of his own son. Saul Ausländer is played by Géza Röhrig, a Hungarian-born poet, who lives in New York.

The 88th Academy Award ceremony will be held on February 28, 2016 in Hollywood, CA where the front runners of foreign films are:

1. "Son of Saul" (Hungary)
2. "Mustang" (France)
3. "Labyrinth of Lies" (Germany)

... **that** the first Hungarian lung transplant has been successfully made in Budapest just before Christmas? The recipient is a 53-year old man who had worked in a galvanizing plant and had smoked for 30 years.

... **that** Hungarian swimmers dominated the 2015 European Short Course Swimming Championship meet in Netanya, Israel, December 2-6? They won 11 gold, 3 silver and 1 bronze medals.

Hosszú Katinka again shone, winning 6 gold and 1 silver medal, and broke two world records and 6 championship records. On the men's side, Cseh László won 3 gold medals (one of them on his 30th birthday), and broke two European records.

