

## Novemberben

The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 was successful for a few days in October, but November brought back the Russian tanks and the total suppression of hard-won freedom. This poem deals with the somberness of the month.

### Novemberben

Zas (Szász) Lóránt

1938 – 2011

Novemberben sírnak az utcák,  
novemberben sírnak az emberek.  
Novemberben Budán és Pesten  
nevetni nem lehet.

Novemberben a Farkasréten  
halottak napi mise-csend fogad.  
Novemberben fehér virággal  
fedik a sírokat.

Novemberben égnak a gyertyák.  
Kicsinyek, teltek, véznák és nagyok.  
Novemberben földig hajolnak  
a sötét kalapok.

Novemberben csend van és béke.  
Temető, fejfa, virág és kereszt.  
Novemberben könnyek köszöntik  
az elesetteket.

Novemberben géppuskák szórtak,  
tankok tapostak. A föld remegett.  
Novemberben gyilkoltak, öltek.  
Novemberben temetett.

Novemberben itt esküt szegtek,  
gyaláztak törvényt, tiportak jogot.  
Novemberben vörössel, vérrel  
a máglya lobogott.

Novemberben erőszak vágott,  
gumibot tépett, börtön kacagott.  
Novemberben a homlokunkra  
égettek csillagot.

Novemberben öklök szorulnak  
és felbizserregnek a tenyerek.  
Novemberben élők a holtak.  
November fenyegét.

2003. október 31.

*Born in Budapest, Zás Lóránt took part in the Revolution and was imprisoned as a result. On his release, he obtained a degree in production engineering. He published 13 volumes of poetry, an additional cycle of poems and three volumes of prose. With his wife, he escaped to Yugoslavia in 1967, then came to the United States. He died in California in 2011*



*Zás Lóránt*

### New '56 Memorial in New York

viola vonfi

*Memorials honoring the Freedom Fighters of 1956 have been erected in many cities. But until now, there has not been one in what some people consider the center of the world, New York City. One has finally been presented to the public on Sunday, October 23rd, 2016.*

It has not been an easy task. In 2005, a committee was formed to plan a worthy 50th anniversary observance of the Revolution for 2006. At that time, they organized a memorial concert at Carnegie Hall, a Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral, and services at the Hungarian Reformed Church and at the Park East Synagogue. After the observance, the committee morphed into the Hungarian American Memorial Committee "to fulfill our ultimate dream: a permanent 1956 memorial in New York City", recalls László Papp, President.

But it's not easy to set up a new monument in the Big Apple nowadays.

Finding a suitable location was one of the difficulties, as Papp explains. Then, with the initial support of former New York State Governor George E. Pataki, who himself has Hungarian roots, the City agreed to allow the erection of a monument on Riverside Drive next to the Kossuth Lajos statue, which was erected there in 1928.



The next obstacle to be overcome was the very strict set of norms laid down by the municipality: the memorial had to be non-political, abstract and symbolic. No waving of weapons by teen-age revolutionaries!

A competition was announced, and an impartial jury of six art professionals from the US and Canada unanimously voted for the design of Nagy Tamás, Architect and Professor at Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design in Budapest. He envisioned "an extension of the plaza by the Kosuth Statue, to include a memorial wall and a cylindrical block of granite, with its top depicting the star constellation visible above Budapest on the night of October 23rd, 1956. Those stars express with moving symbolism an oppressed people's hope in the advent of a future society, free and just, rising from the ashes of a corrupt dictatorship. Below the image is the memorial text: CONSTITUTION OF STARS, AS SYMBOLS OF HOPE, VISIBLE IN THE NIGHT SKY ABOVE BUDAPEST ON OCTOBER 23, 1956, WHEN THE FIRST SHOTS OF THE REVOLUTION WERE FIRED." (taken from the memorial booklet).

As is common knowledge, projected construction everywhere must navigate through a time-consuming bureaucratic labyrinth, and it took the Committee three years to receive all the required permits and approvals. So thanks to the unrelentingly persistent efforts of László Papp and the Hungarian American Memorial Committee, the 10-year project has been finally realized, and the Memorial to the Heroes and Martyrs of the Hungarian Revolution was presented to the public on October 23rd, 2016. Not quite finished, and still closed off by a wire fence, it is close to completion, with only the stone seats and landscaping yet to be put in place.

*Top: Chief Consul Kumin Ferenc. Enikő Szatai, Secretary; Szakács Imre, Consul; Nagy Tamás, Designer of the Monument; László Papp, President, Hungarian American Memorial Committee; John Herrold, President and Administrator, Riverside Park.  
Center: Man with Hungarian and Polish flags, signifying solidarity; Hungarian Scouts.  
Bottom: Virtual rendering of the Memorial*

Present at the ceremony was Chief Consul Kumin Ferenc; Leading Consul Király Zsuzsanna; László Papp, Dr. István Lakatos and George Lovas, Founding Presidents of the Memorial Committee; Vice Presidents Michael Szarvasy (who was also the emcee), Barbara Bollok and Dr. Balázs Somogyi; Secretary Enikő Szatai; Comptrollers Viktor Fischer and Tibor Varganyi; and Treasurer Judit Tandari Apatini.

Ferenc Kumin read a message from Orbán Viktor, Prime Minister of Hungary, in which he stated that "the Hungarian nation showed its most beautiful face on October 23rd, 1956, forcing the previously considered invincible Red Army to retreat, while behind broken storefronts the goods and donations collected in open boxes remained untouched, proclaiming the purity of the Revolution on the streets." He thanked those who had gathered for having realized a fitting memorial place for this 60th anniversary.

Many generous donors have made the Memorial possible. However, the City also requires a maintenance fund of \$250,000. So far, only half that amount has been collected, so fundraising efforts continue. Donations may be sent to: Hungary 1956 Commemoration, Hungarian House, 213 East 82nd St., New York, NY 10028.

Official dedication of the 1956 Memorial will be on March 15th, 2017.

In the afternoon, following the presentation of the new Memorial, the Hungarian National Dance Ensemble offered a stupendous program at John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Entitled "Spirit of Hungary – Revolution and Roots in Dance and Music", the first part was called "Spirit of Freedom", a modern interpretation in dance and song of the Revolution and Emigration. The second part, "Spirit of the Soul", presented a series of folk dances.



The authentic women's costumes were dazzling, but even more dazzling was the performance of the young men. Their virtuosity and speed in the men's dances gave a whole new meaning to the term "shake a leg"! Despite a grueling 10-day tour (covering East Brunswick, NJ; Buffalo, NY; Toronto, Canada; Dayton and Toledo, OH; Chicago, IL; Dearborn, MI; West Mifflin, PA; and Arlington, VA), they were just as fresh and obviously enjoying themselves at the fourth encore as they were at the first! It was definitely a performance to remember!

And a wonderful way to honor the heroes of 1956.

## 60th Anniversary Observances of 1956 Here and There

*By: EPF*

Around the world, Hungarians observed with special feeling the 60th anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution and Freedom Fight. Here we describe a few of them held in the US.

### Los Angeles

Sixty Hungarian flags were set up on the beach in commemoration of October 23rd.

### Wallingford, CT

On the morning of the 23rd, the Hungarians of Wallingford laid a wreath at the 1956 Memorial. Dr. Balázs Somogyi said a few words about the importance of the day, then they sang the Himnusz and God Bless America before boarding the bus to New York. On the way, the bus stopped at Fairfield United Church of Christ to pick up more passengers headed for the presentation of the new 1956 Memorial in New York.

### Fairfield, CT

The annual observance was held on Saturday, the 22nd this year, to allow people who wanted to attend the unveiling of the new memorial in New York to be able to do so on the 23rd.

For the first time in several years, the annual observance sponsored by Magyar Studies of America at Fairfield,

CT began under umbrellas. As we sang the National Anthem, only a few souls had braved the raindrops to gather by the plaque at Town Hall to hear the invocation by Rev. Alexander Havadtoy. But by the time the program began in the nearby Fairfield Museum, the auditorium was full.

Livvy Szabo led us in the National Anthem, followed by First Selectman Michael Tetreau's greeting. Oliver Valu sang "*Álmódó Tiszapart*", followed by the address of Leading Consul dr. Király Zsuzsanna. Dömötör Zsuzsa read Kónya Lajos' poem "*A magyarokhoz*", and Tünde Csonka sang several songs. Moderator Zsuzsa Lengyel read a poem about three students (*Három diák*) by an unknown author, and Erika Papp Faber offered Claire Kenneth's poem "*Anyu, tüntetni meggyek!*" that left no dry eye among the audience.

The program concluded with Allyson Szabo playing on the flute Járdányi Pál's "*Szonáta*" and the Transylvanian anthem which the audience joined.



*Leading Consul Király Zsuzsanna with Consulate's wreath added to the Fairfield plaque*

**Below is the speech given by Leading Consul Király Zsuzsanna at the Fairfield Museum.**

My dear Compatriots, dear Hungarian Friends!

I greet everyone who is honoring our national holiday and celebrates with us today with his presence.

I wish to open our celebration with a few thoughts of commemoration.

60 years ago, the 23<sup>rd</sup> of October fell on Tuesday. My mother, then 11 years old, arrived home from her ballet class finding that her parents, contrary to their usual routine, were not home. They came in several hours later, all excited, telling her

that a revolution had broken out in Budapest.

People in the streets marched, happily singing, in huge groups, toward Kossuth tér, in front of the Parliament, where the crowd sang the National Anthem ("*Himnusz*") in a trance, with tears in their eyes. One of the greatest actors of the nation recited the "*Szózat*" by the poet Vörösmarty. The spirited people demanded the resignation of the government and the Russians leaving the country. Then the enormous crowd, augmented by pedestrians

joining them, started off to the Rádió to air to the world the news of the outbreak of the revolt and the takeover of national power. However, at the Rádió the demonstrating crowd was met with a shower of bullets by the ÁVO. My mother's parents arrived home late at night, fortunately unharmed. This is how the loveliest, most heroic phase of 20<sup>th</sup> century Hungarian history had started.

Our Revolution erupted not only against the internal Communist terror but developed into a brief but more bloody, more determined Freedom Fight against the Soviet troops stationing in our homeland and the ones entering to crush the Revolution. This fight united the whole na-

tion: from 12-14 year-old youngsters through university students to old folks. Soon, well-known pearls of literature were born: "The Blood is Red in the Streets of Pest": **"..you tiny country, no one alive shall forget that freedom was born by blood falling in the streets of Pest."**

Naturally, a small country like ours could not win against a superpower which, with her gigantic superior force, suppressed our heroic battle in a bloody manner. Yet, we do know – what other nations' historians established as well – that our struggle was of international significance, having cracked a rift in the untouchability of one of the world powers in the two-pole world of the time. It also made clear to the world that the Eastern half of Europe was ruled by an inhuman power whose days were numbered.

The crushing of the Revolution and Freedom Fight was followed by retaliations: nearly 400 revolutionaries and their sympathizer Prime Minister, Nagy Imre, were executed by the forces of Kádár. 200,000 emigrated from the country.

A further 30 years had to pass before that world system's final collapse, to which the first historic step was made by our little nation.

It would be difficult to enumerate the sufferings of our people during the hard, then soft dictatorship. But this is not our task today!

Today we would like to celebrate, and to hope for the beginning of a better world, in which the nations of Europe would be free and stay free. Up to now we, Hungarians had to fight in the European Union, in the token of liberty, for our compatriots left outside our borders in eight countries. Yet, before we could get results in that, history became con-



Top: Zsuzsa Lengyel, President, Magyar Studies of America; Király Zsuzsanna, Leading Consul; Livvy Szabo. 2nd row: Allyson Szabo; Zsuzsa Dömötör. 3rd row: Olivér Valu; Wallingford Memorial, with Dr. Balázs Somogyi; Tünde Csonka, Bottom: 60 flags at Los Angeles beach



densed and Magyars were granted a new mission! As Hamlet felt he was destined to right disturbed times, we seem to have the task to awaken the world to Europe being in danger! Even today we, Hungarians, along with the "Visegrád 4" are fighting a freedom fight for our homeland and for Europe - fortunately by means of argument and example - when we proclaim the necessity of stopping the flood of migration and we exercise it with prophetic foresight!

Who in the world and Europe would know this better than we, Hungarians who had fought for freedom like no other people in Europe, in every century. And who would know better what Christian devastation was a result of Muslim ideology in our country in the Middle Ages, than the Magyars whose population dwindled down from being Europe's highest to one of the lowest during the 150-year Turkish occupation. Thus we have to realize that we have a mission in the world even today, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century!

The 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our 20<sup>th</sup> century Revolution reminds us that even small nations can have great tasks in world history! We may call it our own sacred task to battle for national independence and freedom as well as for the conservation of Christian Europe! This sacred charge will succeed because we have a celestial ally: Hungary is the country of the Virgin Mary! On his deathbed, our first holy king offered our homeland into her protection. Our survival of over a thousand years proves her help, even though our nation hasn't been without carrying the cross either. But we Christians know that the joy and glory of salvation can come only after the way of the Cross!

**I thank you for your kind patience, attention and am wishing you a further high-spirited celebration!**

## Dallas-Fort Worth Hungarians Commemorate 1956 Revolution

*László Tibor Laky*

*As in most Hungarian communities, the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1956 Revolution was remembered by festivities in Texas too.*

The members of the Hungarian community of Dallas-Ft. Worth gathered in Irving, Texas at the Cistercian Abbey's Chapel to celebrate a Hungarian Mass of Remembrance of the 1956 Revolution and Freedom Fight. Fr. Julius Leloczky, O. Cist., officiated at the Mass held in the medieval design limestone block church. Their special guest was Mr. Phillip Aronoff, the Honorary Consul of Hungary from Houston and his wife Lynn.

Frank Holly, one of the survivors of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, offered a violin presentation of Schubert's Ave Maria. After the church service, a wreath was laid at the 1956-ers Kopjafa Monument. This monument was carved by artisans in Transylvania, brought over to Texas in four instalments by four families (on airplanes), and erected in front of the Abbey for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Revolution by the late Imre Gazda, and his Hungarian friends. A short tribute was read by Béla Márton, also a 56-er, and one of the four who brought the pieces of the memorial here. This part of the commemoration concluded with the singing of the Hungarian National Anthem.

After this, the crowd walked to the Gymnasium, where the festivities continued. On the tables the colorful and delicious appetizer plates were prepared for the guests by Beáta Tóth Nascu ([cuttingedgesdishes@gmail.com](mailto:cuttingedgesdishes@gmail.com)). There were centerpieces of three flags: that of the United States, Texas, and the Hungarian flag, with a distinctive hole cut in the middle, where the Soviet symbol used to be.

The history of the Uprising was presented in Hungarian by Péter Váli, Vice President of the Metroplex Magyar Cultural Circle, while the Eng-



*Lynette and László Laky*

lish version of the slide presentation was projected on a giant screen on the wall, created by Pesti Ilona.

There was a special honorary table set for the 16 Hungarians who shared their memoirs in the bilingual book, "The Courage for Freedom, 56-ers Remember from Texas", collected, compiled and edited by Éva Beluska, and published by the MMCC. As they were introduced one by one, their pictures and a quotation from their stories were projected on the giant screen, and each hero was toasted with fine Hungarian plum and apricot brandy. Then a toast with fine Hungarian wines was made to the collective body of heroes who had endured so much.

The 16 book heroes are Frank J. Holly PhD., FFAO, Kázmér Mészáros, Ödön Pál Takács, László Hertelendy, Elemér Engel, Professor Emeritus Joseph Nagyváry, Jenő E. Muller, Gábor Nagy, Jenő Lukácsy, Béla Szovák, Father Ber-



*Top: Éva Beluska; Fr. Julius Leloczký. Center: Dr. Emery Huber OD with his Mother Klára and wife Stacey; book cover. Bottom: Fr. Julius at Mass; dance group.*

Julius Leloczký, O.Cist., Magda Sándor, Béla Márton, and Beatrix Zsuzsánna Mányai.

The program then featured classical musical selections for the dinner guests to enjoy, played by a chamber trio consisting of Antonia Paláncz, Enikő Walter, and Gábor Simonfalvi. As the guests sipped slivovitz, brandy and fine Magyar wines, they exchanged stories of times past. Then, a poem written by Lt. Zoltán Kárpáti of the Hungarian Army entitled "Hungarian October" was recited with great emotion by Edina Balogh (reminiscent of the style of my Mom Anikó Laky, who every year recited Petőfi's "Nemzeti dal" at the annual Magyar reunions at the Cistercians.)

"Hungarian October" was written during a battle on October 30<sup>th</sup> and gave all the guests a unique insight to the battles and emotions of a loyal Magyar soldier who lived the Revolution at its bitter core.

Each of the honorees, including all the 56-ers, were given a carnation by a younger fellow Hungarian as a symbol of appreciation, and toasted with a glass of wine from Eger provided by [www.nimrodwines.com](http://www.nimrodwines.com). The dinner, prepared by a new local caterer, Toni Ciulea of Smart Food Solutions ([www.smartfoodsolutions.org](http://www.smartfoodsolutions.org)), was magnificent and reminiscent of a feast at a Budapest sidewalk café. Then the dessert! Ah, no Magyar event is complete without a fine dessert unique to

the great bakers of Magyarország. And this was no different today, as we were presented with a delightful Cacao Cream Cake by Éva Lakatos.

And then..... it got Magyar Crazy!!! The Music started and the Csárdás Hungarian Dancers of Austin ([www.aifd.cc/csardas](http://www.aifd.cc/csardas)) took to the dance floor with folk dancing that got faster and louder and faster and louder until I was almost dizzy trying to keep up with the boot slapping, jumping, stomping fun. I worked up a sweat just watching the traditional dances of our native Hungary. The event was attended by more than 200 guests from the DFW area and other towns of North Texas.

As all the pageantry drew to a close, we got a special treat: we were able to purchase the bilingual book, "*Bátorság A Szabadságért, Texasi 56-osok Em-lékeznek, The Courage for Freedom, 56-ers Remember from Texas*" and have it dedicated by the author of each memoir.

This great event was a fitting honorarium to the great heroes who gave their lives in the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, whose blood was spilled so that the scourge of Communism would eventually be toppled and our beloved Hungary could again be free from tyranny. Dr. Emery Huber OD said it best when he told me: "Their revolt was not in vain. This ignited the spark that brought the collapse of Communism 33 years later."

The event was sponsored by the Metroplex Magyar Cultural Circle, (MMCC), Hungarian Initiatives Foundation (HIF) and by the Cistercian Abbey, Our Lady of Dallas. It was videotaped by Bob Vincent of Reel Heroes Media.

*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.*

nard Marton, Csaba Gyula Finta, Father

## Iron Curtain Memorial

*This past summer, our Webmaster, Karolina Tima Szabo visited the Iron Curtain Memorial at Hegykő. The visitor can see a guard tower that had been manned 24/7, and the barbed wire which had sealed off Hungary from the West for 41 years. Here we have transcribed the four English explanatory tablets set up for visitors to the site.*

These four English-language explanatory tablets have been set up for visitors at the site.

### Dear Visitor,

Now you are standing at a place which fortunately is already history. We believe (the Hungarian tablet uses the word "trust" here. Ed.) countries and people will never again be separated from each other with minefields, wires, technical locks.

With the establishment of the Iron Curtain Memorial Place we – free of politics – would like to raise a monument to the memory of all those who managed to flee across the border (desert the country) during the course of 41 years; of all those who were caught in the attempt to escape, and sentenced to jail for 2-3 years and confiscation of property; of all those who were injured or shot to death during their attempt to escape.

Furthermore, we have to remember all the border guard soldiers who in compliance with their pledge, protected the state border, night and day, in rain, in mud, in freezing weather; who were injured, became handicapped for good or lost their lives while on duty (the Hungarian text adds "while they were removing the mines". Ed.)

The usage of the the term "Iron Curtain" became known throughout the world when Winston Churchill, on March 5th, 1946 said in his speech in

Fulton, Missouri: "From Stettin to the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic an iron curtain has descended across the Continent."

Therefore, the Iron Curtain, as an expression, began its tour around the world as a figure of speech which further on became The Iron Curtain spread along 365 km (228 mi.) at the western border of the country, between 1948 and 1989. At first, the border was closed with a barbed wire fence and minefields. By the mid-1960s, as a result of the easing of the international situation, the raising of mines and the construction of the electric signalling system were begun, completed in 1971. At the Memorial Place, we faithfully present these three periods, with the use of mostly original materials.

Dear Guests,  
In so far as any of you have information, experiences, photos or other objects which relate to the Iron Curtain, we would be honored if you would share them with us. Please notify the local government.

Thank you for visiting the memorial.  
Local Government of Hegykő, 2008.

### First Period September 20th, 1948-1956

The Council of Ministers made a decision on the "strengthening" of the western border in May 1948. The



technical lock, the barbed wire entanglements and the laying of minefields started this year. Along the Austrian border, a 356 km (228 mi.) long, and along the Yugoslav border a 630 km (c. 394 mi.) long barbed wire entanglement was constructed.

In order to enhance the obstacle character of the border, minefields were laid from 1949 at the western border, and from 1950 at the southern border. By the end of 1950, a 1,000 km (625 mi.) long barbed wire entangle-



ment was built, out of which 871 km (over 544 mi.) were mined. In the minefield, cylindrical wooden pillars were set up at every third meter (every nine feet), 2 meters (6 feet) wide. Barbed wire was pulled on the pillars horizontally and diagonally, by 25 cm (10 in). On this area of 6 square meters, six mines were laid: three made of hardwood, and three of cast iron.

A picket was pounded into the ground in the middle of the minefield, then it was tied to the mines with a wire. They were called stumble wires. People usually tried to escape at night, when in the dark they could not see the wire. They stumbled on them, setting off the mines.

It was difficult to get through in the day too, because the minefield was not mowed and the high-grown vegetation concealed the wires.

As a result of the political easing starting in 1953 (after Stalin died. Ed.), sealing the frontiers was started in October 1955. The border guards and the technical team of the Hungarian People's Army carried out removal of the mines, which they finished by October 20th, 1956. During the work, they also deployed flail tanks, which was hardly successful; therefore, deactivation was performed by human effort, during which two persons unfortunately were killed, 17 suffered serious injuries and 20 people were slightly injured.

Subsequent to October 23, 1956, nearly 300,000 people deserted the country, that is, they illegally left the country through the mine-free border.

## **Second Period 1956-1965**

The political easing that started in 1953 ended with the suppression of the Revolution in 1956. Our opposition to the West was again pushed to the extreme. March 2nd, 1957, the government ordered the western border of the country to be blocked with technical locks once more. The Iron Curtain was closed again.

The area was re-mined from April 1957 to June 30th, 1957. A 350 km (c. 219 mi.) double-row barbed wire fence was built as was a 243 km (almost 152 mi.) minefield in four rows, and a 107 km (c. 67 mi.) minefield in five rows, to guard against infantry, incorporating 800,000 landmines (this number is given in the Hungarian text; the English text mentions only 800! Ed.) During this work, one person died, 10 suffered serious injuries and 5 people suffered minor injuries.

Modernization of the Austrian border was finished by 1963. A 282 km (c. 176 mi.) new technical lock (barbed wire entanglement) was constructed, and 1,124,900 mines were planted.

The minefield was broadened from 6 feet to 12-15 feet, wooden pillars were replaced by concrete pillars, and the mines were made of bakelite, not metal, laid 50 cm (a foot and a half) distance from each other, similarly to the placement of chess pieces on a chess board. The mines made of bakelite were set off by a minimum load of 40 kg (i.e., 88 lbs.) Based on known data, of 1,000 people trying to cross the border illegally (attempting to escape), 995 were either caught or became victims of the minefield.

Closure of the border was not finished with completion of the above works, but was continued with the closure work of the border guards. This was necessary because the condition of the barbed wire entanglements was constantly deteriorating, the mines became less effective with the passage of time, and the mines lost to escape attempts had to be replaced.

The so-called trace zone, which was harrowed weekly, was located along the minefield. A patrol road was built along this trace zone, from which it was monitored. The concrete pillars exhibited here are original; we managed to get them from the Iron Curtain Museum in Felsőcsatár.

## **Third Period 1965 – 1989**

In 1964, a political decision was made on the domestic introduction of the Soviet SZ-100 signalling system. Among its advantages was listed that it signalled every movement, making the border more securely guardable.

Its disadvantage was the high installation cost (350,000HUF per kilometer, i.e., 6 tenths of a mile), and it did not effect any savings in manpower.

As an experiment, it was first installed in the areas of Csorna and Szombathely, in a 50 km (a little more than 31 miles) stretch, which was connected to the border control area at 3:17 PM on December 15th, 1956. The installation was finalized along the entire length of 246 km (about 154 mi.), in 1971. Construction was extremely complicated, manifold and dangerous work. The mine blockades and barbed wire entanglements had to be removed entirely, great expanses of forest had to be cleared, and signalling as well as wild game snare fences had to be constructed.

The peculiarity and interest of the system was that it was built not exactly along the border, but some 500-2,000 meters inland, as the conditions of the terrain allowed.

The signalling system was a single-row wire system, operated with 24-volt current. When two wires connected or were cut, the system immediately signalled the surveillance system at the nearest observation outpost.

At the outpost, the system was divided into numbered sections for easier identification of the location. Each outpost was responsible for only a few sectors, so that even the furthest sector could be reached within 4-5 minutes with a jeep.

When the system signalled, the border guards split into two groups: the end group closed the border line at the indicated sector; the search party went to search the area for the people violating the border.

The soldiers of the neighboring outposts executed a side-lock and isolated

the people violating the border. By the traces left in the trace zone, the border guards would be able to judge whether the border violation was oriented inwards or outwards, and how

many people were violating the border.

On February 20, 1989, the government decided to terminate the signalling sys-

tem. In August 1989, the greater part of the system was removed, so that the Iron Curtain ceased to exist in fact.

## Call for Help – Árpádhon Hungarian Settlement

*This community near Baton Rouge, Louisiana suffered a devastating flood in mid-August. The call for help did not reach us until mid-October, but help is still needed for restoration of their facility. They are most grateful for any assistance.*

This community near Baton Rouge, Louisiana suffered a devastating flood in mid-August. Their Cultural Association building was hard hit and they lost furnishings and office supplies. In addition, they had to cancel their big annual fall festival, which draws people from near and far, and is their main fundraiser.

The call for help did not reach us until mid-October, but help is still needed for restoration of their facility. They are most grateful for any assistance.

If you can help, please send your donations to:

Árpádhon Hungarian Settlement Cultural Association (AHSCA)  
P.O. Box 10  
Albany, LA 70711

OR

ÁrpádhonFund  
Hungarian Human  
Rights Foundation  
P.O. Box J  
Gracie Station  
New York, NY 10028



Thank you.

## Invitation to St. Emery's Feast

*In Fairfield, CT, at St. Emery's Church on Kings Highway East, his feast day will be observed this year on November 6th. Please help celebrate!*

Fairfield, CT, at St. Emery's Church on Kings Highway East, his feast day will be observed this year on November 6th. The Slovenian Pastor, Fr. Milan Dimic, is urging everyone to come to the one combined English and Hungarian Mass which will be celebrated at 10 AM by the diocese's Vicar General, since the Bishop is not available due to Confirmations.

Let us support him, making this day special by turning out in full force, wearing our embroidered vests and blouses and dresses.

**Please note that the Mass will be 10 AM, not at the usual time.**

**(And remember to set your clocks back.)**

*Photo courtesy of Carroll Fencil*



# Széchenyi: Sad End of the Great Visionary

Erika Papp Faber

*In this, the tenth article on Count Széchenyi István, commemorating the 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth, we look at the end of his political career, his confinement to a mental institution, and the circumstances of his death. Next month we will conclude our series with an overview of his life and work.*

Following the events of March 1848, when Petőfi's "Talpra, magyar!" stirred the ember of independence into flame, a Hungarian government was formed, independent of Austria. Count Batthyány Lajos, who agreed with most of Széchenyi's ideas, was leader of the Opposition Party in the Upper House, and became the first Prime Minister of the new Hungarian government. At the same time, Kossuth was the Opposition leader in the Lower House, and Batthyány began to lean towards Kossuth's idea of independence.

It was Batthyány who appointed Széchenyi to be Minister of Transportation. This seemed to be a natural culmination of Széchenyi's monumental projects to develop and improve navigation and rail transport throughout the country.

Although Széchenyi was fundamentally opposed to Kossuth's radical idea of total independence from Austrian rule and had great reservations about accepting the appointment, he did so nevertheless (March 23rd, 1848) for the sake of presenting a united front. But he noted in his diary that he had thereby signed his own death sentence, that he was sure to be hung, together with Kossuth. Because he feared that Kossuth's policy would bring national disaster: "I clearly see outlined before me the most complete dissolution of all the elements of Hungarian life", he wrote in his diary on July 5th.

He had always considered working with the Habsburgs the only way to achieve viable progress, and so he still spoke out in the new parliament against a break with the empire, but he did not prevail. By this time, Kossuth's ideas of total independence



*Széchenyi at Döbling*

had become the heady inspiration of the people, while Széchenyi's ideas were no longer fashionable.

As the Viennese Court began to backtrack on its initial acceptance of certain reforms, Széchenyi endured increasingly serious pangs of conscience, reproaching himself with causing the ruin of the nation by his ideas that had opened the way for this liberal, and what he regarded as a dangerous and destructive, process. "There has never been anyone who has brought greater chaos into this world than I ! O my God, have mercy on me!"

So after five months, in September 1848, he resigned as Minister of Transportation. And had a nervous breakdown.

His doctor took him to the neurological Goergen Clinic in Döbling, on the outskirts of Vienna, Austria, which he would never leave again. His wife

Crescence (see the June 2016 issue of Magyar News Online) moved to Vienna to be near him, and they were in constant contact. She would visit him, bringing him personal items he requested, and in the letters they exchanged almost daily, they discussed their sons Béla and Ödön. Neither of them was willing, or able, to continue their father's zealous commitment to service for the betterment of their native land. They were both a sore disappointment to Széchenyi.

His condition improved with the treatment provided at the Clinic. After a while he was able to receive visitors, many of whom also had the welfare of Hungary at heart, and who came seeking his advice. He even helped some of them to publish their writings. He also began writing again, revising his "*Pesti por és sár*" (Dust and Mud of Pest), and "*Hunnia*", and starting a new book titled "*Önismeret*" (Self-knowledge, expounding on different pedagogical themes), but these were never published.

More important, and having fatal consequences, was his rebuttal of an "anonymous" work entitled "*Rückblick*" ("A Backward Glance"), which attempted to justify the Austrian Minister of the Interior, Alexander Bach's repressive terrorist measures applied in Hungary. Popular opinion guessed that the author had been Bach himself. Széchenyi entitled his response "*Ein Blick*" ("A Glance"), making Bach and his politics a laughing stock through ridicule and puns. It was published in London in 1859, and became known as "The Yellow Book". It caused the fall of the Bach regime, but also Széchenyi's death.

On March 3rd, 1860, the Viennese police carried out a house search in Széchenyi's quarters at the Goergen Clinic, and seized his writings, on the basis of which they presumed to discover a wide political conspiracy. They told him that he could not stay at the Clinic any longer. He feared they would take him away by force.

On Easter Sunday, April 7th, 1860, Count Széchenyi István was found dead in his suite of rooms at the Goergen Clinic in Döbling, with a pistol on his left thigh.

### Suicide or assassination?

While historians tend to accept Széchenyi's death as a suicide, there seems to be sufficient circumstantial evidence for his having been murdered by Austrian decree. Details supporting this view were provided by dr. Kacziány Géza in his book "*Széchenyi meggyilkoltatása*" (The Assassination of Széchenyi), originally published in 1931, and reprinted in 2000.

Széchenyi had sometimes received visitors who were served a meal from the Clinic's kitchen. One such visitor was Baron Jósika Samu, Chancellor of Transylvania and a strong proponent of the Empire among the Hungarians. On the day of his latest visit, the main dish was truffles, which Széchenyi was fond of, and it was very likely that he would eat a good portion of it. However, he had digestive problems that day, and did not take any. His guest, on the other hand, had several helpings. On arriving home, Jósika became sick, and they called the Court doctor who diagnosed intestinal cramps and treated him for them. Twelve days later, the Baron, who had a strong physique, was dead. It is worth noting that, while Jósika was sick, no one from the Court inquired about his health!

It is also interesting to note that Széchenyi himself had asked Dr. Goldberg whether it might be possible that, for 20,000 forints, an assistant doctor would mix poison into a patient's food? The doctor objected, horrified, whereupon Széchenyi remarked, "For that much anyone would do it." Dr.

Goldberg left, highly insulted.

When the investigating magistrate examined Count Széchenyi's corpse, he found him sitting in an easychair, both arms resting on his thighs, with the discharged pistol on his left thigh. The left side of the head was totally smashed, the skullbone several steps away on the floor. The bird shot found in his brain could not have had such a violent effect. There was no blood spattered anywhere.

It is obvious from this report that the shot that killed Széchenyi came from the left side. Now the Count was not left-handed! And it is not likely that the hand that pulled the suicidal trigger would fall on his thigh, together with the pistol that he used. It would rather have fallen by his side, and the pistol to the floor! It is thus more than probable that the body's position had been tampered with.

Dr. Goldberg testified that Széchenyi was often thinking about suicide and the immortality of the soul. True, this was one of the recurring topics in his diary. But the day before his demise he played chess with Count Zichy, some game with two servants, and chess again with his secretary Kiss until 10 o'clock.

The old servant Brach, who locked the door at 10 o'clock every night, testified that he knocked on the Count's door at 7 in the morning, and getting no answer, sent for assistant doctor Goldberg, and then stepped into the room with him. He said they found him in the easychair with the discharged pistol in his **right** hand. – Presumably this was not the first time the servant received no answer to his knock. Why did he right away send for the assistant doctor only on this particular morning? He probably knew about what was to happen the previous night and to whom he had given the key. A week later Brach too was dead.

Dr. Goldberg blew out his own brains, and his suicide was never explained. Széchenyi's old valet Grosz became seriously depressed and died within a short

time. Kiss, the last person to see Széchenyi alive, locked himself into his own room when he heard the horrendous news, and when Széchenyi's son Béla came looking for him to discuss funeral arrangements, yelled that he wouldn't let himself be murdered like his master, and attacked Béla with a dagger. He had to be subdued by force and also died soon thereafter.

The investigation into Széchenyi's death revealed that Dr. Goergen, owner of the Clinic, had been an informer for the Vienna police, reporting on Széchenyi's doings and on his visitors. He had requested earlier that he be relieved of "this dangerous patient". He even asked Széchenyi's relatives to move him somewhere else. But the family did not want to disturb Széchenyi, to deprive him of the comfort of the five-room suite he enjoyed at Döbling. And so he stayed. (In a work entitled "Gróf Széchenyi István intelmei Béla fiához" - Admonitions of Count Széchenyi István to his Son - Fenyő Ervin asserts that Dr. Goergen was censured for not supervising better Széchenyi's visitors, and for the fact that Széchenyi had a pistol in his possession. He survived Széchenyi only by a few months, and whereas Kacziány states that the circumstances of his death were never disclosed, Fenyő claims he died of peritonitis that same October.)

Although no suicide note was found, the last entry in his diary was, "I can't save myself." Count Széchenyi István is buried in the family mausoleum at Nagycenk.

*Erika Papp Faber is Editor of Magyar News Online.*



*Széchenyi's work desk at Döbling Clinic*

# The Hungarian State Theatre of Kolozsvár

*Charles Bálintt, Jr.*

*Under the Habsburg regime, only German language theatrical performances were permitted in Hungary. With the awakening of national consciousness towards the end of the 18th century, traveling theatre companies sprang up, offering amateur productions, but in the language of the people. (Petőfi had joined one such troupe for a while.)*

*In Kolozsvár, Transylvania, a German theater company was established in 1788, even though Germans accounted for a mere 10 percent of the population. So it was an important step when, in 1792, the Hungarian State Theatre of Kolozsvár was formed. Here is its story.*



*Rhédey Palace*

While President George Washington was winning his re-election bid (unlike today, it was basically unopposed), over 4,750 miles away the first Hungarian language theatre in all of Transylvania was opening in the city of Kolozsvár.

The Hungarian State Theatre of Kolozsvár (Kolozsvári Állami Magyar Színház) was formed in late 1792. Its first home was in the Rhédey Palace from 1792 to 1821, with the performances taking place in the palace ballroom. The theatre company moved into its own building in 1821. The Farkas Street Theatre (Farkas utcai színház) would be their home until 1906. This was also the first stone theatre (kőszínház) in all of Hungary.

The city of Kolozsvár had a large majority of Hungarians in 1850 (about 62.8%). It would be over a hundred years before the Romanians would outnumber Hungarians in this city. Meanwhile the Saxon (szász, German) population was less than 10% and would decline to 4.8% by 1880. However, due the uprising of 1848, for a time beginning on April 1, 1850 only a German company of ac-

tors was allowed to perform at the theatre. The Hungarian company could only take the stage in November of that year. On November 25, 1850 the "Theaterordnung" (Theatre Order/law) was issued, which restricted the types of plays that could be performed. It also involved censorship of anything Hungarian that appeared to be overtly nationalistic.

In 1906, they moved to a new building, the Hunyadi Square National Theatre (Hunyadi téri Nemzeti Színház), which was one of the most modern theatres in the entire empire and had been designed by the famous Austrian architects, Fellner & Helmer. This was their home until 1919, and again from 1940 to 1945. This building is still utilized today as a Romanian theatre: the Lucian Blaga National Theatre.

Due to the aftermath of WWI and the eventual infamous Treaty of Trianon, the Hunyadi Square National Theatre held its last performance on September 30, 1919. This was a performance of Shakespeare's Hamlet. However, due to the beginning of political censorship, only the first line of Hamlet's soliloquy was allowed to be spoken: "To be, or not to be—that is the question".

Unfortunately, from here on, the Hungarians in Transylvania would "suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune", but could no longer "take arms against a sea of troubles", they could not even speak of them.

At the end of the September 30th performance, the actors received a huge ovation. There was seemingly unending applause and then no one wanted to leave the theatre, neither the audience nor the actors. They

eventually had to be escorted from the building by the police. Another Hungarian performance would not be held in this building until 1940.

Performances from 1919 to 1940 and from 1945 to the present day have been held at the Sétatéri Színház. This building was renovated in 1961 and again in 2008. It has a main theatre with 862 seats and a total stage area of 306 square meters with a main stage that is 20 meters wide and 10 meters deep. There is also a 36 square meter orchestra pit. The theatre is shared with the Hungarian State Opera of Kolozsvár. There is also a studio room (10 by 16 meters), which seats 80 to 90 people for more intimate performances.

In the last 224 years, the theatre has had many directors. In the beginning, Kótsi Patkó János was the director for 14 years (1794-1808). Since then most of the directors have only served for a few years each, with the exception of Janovics Jenő (1905-1930) and Bisztrai Mária (1969-1985). But the current director has now become the longest serving director in the history of the theatre. Tompa Gábor has been the artistic director and manager of the theatre since 1990.

Today the theatre has wide ranging performances, from classic playwrights such as Shakespeare, Marlowe, Ibsen, Chekov, Moliere and Euripides to modern and sometimes controversial dramatists such as Heiner Müller, Sarah Ruhl, Thomas Bernhard and Marie Jones. They have also performed famous Hungarian plays, notably The Tragedy of Man (*Az ember tragédiája*) by Madách Imre. So they seem to have some-

thing for everyone's taste. This may be one reason why they have lasted for such a long time.

The theatre is currently funded by the Romanian Ministry of Culture. And in recent years the Hungarian Theatre of Kolozsvár has been recognized for its outstanding work. They have won the UNITER (Union of Romanian Theatres) Award for Best Performance of the Year a number of times for such productions as "Bus Stop" in 1990, "The Venetian Twins" in 1998, "The Cherry Orchard" in 1999, "Woyzeck" in 2005, and Anton Chekhov's "Uncle Vanya" in 2007. This does not include many other individual awards for acting, directing, etc. ..

During its 215<sup>th</sup> anniversary year in 2007, the theatre hosted the 1<sup>st</sup> "Interferences International Theatre Festival", which featured 12 productions from 7 countries. It may have also been partly due to the success of this event that in 2008, they became full members of the "Union of the Theatres of Europe". The festival was the brain child of Tompa Gábor. By the 4<sup>th</sup> festival, which was held from November 26<sup>th</sup> to December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2014, the event had grown to 23 productions from 14 countries.

Kolozsvár is also a special place for me, since my father was born there in 1911. He had tremendous ups and downs in his life, and he overcame unbelievable obstacles to live for over a century. It is a true testament to the perseverance of Transylvanian Hungarians that this theatre company has overcome its own share of unimaginable hindrances to survive for well over two centuries.



*Farkas Street Theatre; Hunyadi Square National Theatre; Sétatéri Színház*

## Kicsi a világ! It's a Small World!

The real *lingua franca* today is Hungarian!

*Ili Osztrovzski*

I visited my sister and her family in the US in September. At the airport in New York, we somehow missed each other - she waited on the right, I was standing on the left. A man bumped into me and said, "Bocsánat!" (pardon me). I looked at him and I said, "Nincs semmi baj!" (no problem).

I was waiting some more, and I really worried about my sister and hoped she didn't have a car accident coming to the airport. I heard a couple speaking Hungarian close to me. My cell phone from Hungary wasn't working so I asked the lady if she would try to call my sister, and she was very helpful and called her. Finally we were connected.

How happy I was to hear Hungarian, since I do not speak a word of English!

(Editor: she obviously did not need to know English - because it's a small - Hungarian - world!)

*Ili Osztrovzski is the sister of our Webmaster, Karolina Tima Szabo.*

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# CERBERUS, THE WATCH CAT

Olga Vállay Szokolay

*Though the spooks and goblins of Halloween are gone, a black cat was still found lurking in the cherished memories of decades long past.*

The elevator wasn't working again. As a teenager I didn't so much mind climbing the 168 steps up to our apartment in Budapest but it felt good to stop to check what was in one of the windows of the semi-circular staircase.

It was something black that started to stretch its back up tall as I got closer. It was a large tomcat. A tomcat, all black with just as much white on his neck as the collar of a clergyman. Of course, I stopped to say hello.

Waking from his sleep he muttered some greeting too and, as I gingerly started to stroke him, he slowly opened his eyes fully. I started some conversation. He wanted to know where I lived. We agreed he could follow me home, knowing that my mother was always hospitable to most four-legged creatures.

Right I was. Opening the door, Mom uttered a cry of surprised welcome, akin to seeing some long lost friend. Indeed, she invited my new pal inside the kitchen and promptly offered him some milk. In those days there was a popular belief that cats should not drink water. The guest very much appreciated the fact that we subscribed to that myth. We managed to find some table scraps that my new feline buddy deemed gourmet quality. After licking every crumb off his chin and whiskers, he collected his best vocabulary to express his appreciation and didn't even seem to mind that he was not ushered in to the room where the canary lived.

In fact, he excused himself for leaving right after the meal and readily walked out to the staircase. But he didn't go too far. As it turned out, he found a safe hiding place under the stairs to



the roof, right across our entrance door.

We fed him regularly and he decided to work for his keep. Whenever anyone came and rang our doorbell, he snuck out from his new abode and uttered some sounds most resembling a *bark*. My boyfriend said that the cat protected our door like the mythical dog Cerberus guarded the underworld...The name stuck. We called him Cerby (pron. *Tsairbee*).

One day a friend came bringing a huge load of goodies from a pig-kill in the country. Choice cuts of pork, a variety of bacon, sausages and other delicacies for us and for family and friends. The tempting scents quickly filled the area where the loot was unloaded onto the kitchen table. Inside, Mom wasted no time serving



usual beverage: espresso. We chatted with the friend, exchanged the daily gossip and rumors. About half an hour must have passed before she had to leave. We saw her out, then quickly went to the kitchen to sample the goodies. And, opening the door, we both almost fainted... There, on the kitchen floor sat, at attention, our watch-cat, Cerby! Neither of us had any idea how he had snuck in. Rapidly we checked all the packages and – lo and behold – not a bite was missing! This cat had integrity. He knew we gave him unconditional love and he wanted to pay back by earning our trust. Indeed, we rewarded him plentifully.

However, Cerby exercised his self-control upon us only.

Rumors started that so-and-so on the fourth floor, for lack of a refrigerator, placed a nice cut of veal in their kitchen window that faced the open corridor, to keep it cool overnight. By morning it was gone. Some claimed having seen a scavenging large black cat around. Others also found certain consumables missing and, food often being sparse, soon blood-money was set for his capture and / or execution. The word got around that the mysterious fugitive feline was sheltered by us and fellow tenants were giving us unwelcome glances in the elevator.

Actually, Cerby was now even hiding from us. He must have felt guilty and did not want us to get involved. He just disappeared. We never found out if he managed to escape into freedom or met his destiny as an outlaw. Cerby seemed to fit into the day's "Selective Morality", an unwritten doctrine which sanctioned stealing from the Communist government since it was just getting back what was taken from us. Whatever his principle, his ideology - may he rest in peace forever in Kitty-Heaven...

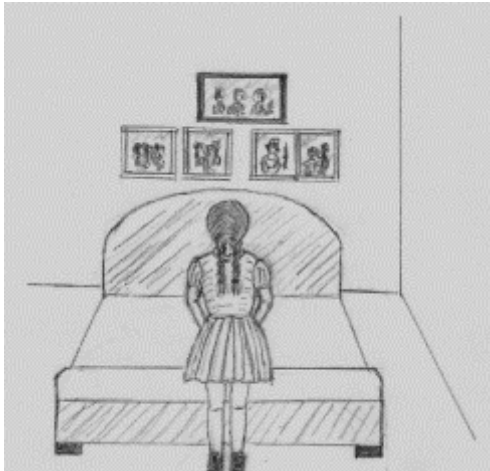
*Olga Vállay Szokolay is an architect and educator., she is Professor Emerita of Norwalk Community College and s a member of the Editorial Board of Magyar News Online.*

## Looking at Photographs...

*Erika Papp Faber*

*November is a time to remember – especially those whom we held near and dear. Here are some of my thoughts during this season.*

From the time I was a little girl, I had



to get used to knowing relatives only from photographs. At five or six years old, during our Sunday visits to my grandparents, I would find a way to sneak into the "boys' room", where my two uncles had lived at one time. There, standing on tiptoe, I would study my godfather's photo above the bed. By then he was living in far away England. (Why, I learned only much later.) I don't remember the other uncle either from those days.

Why didn't I meet them in person at that time? Well, my godfather's wife was Jewish, but it seems his department head at the National Bank had foresight and was a humane person, because he had sent my uncle to England in the middle of the thirties, thereby saving the life of his wife. (Unfortunately, his in-laws were not as fortunate – they became victims of the Hungarian Nazis.) I got to know my godfather only 17 years later, when we could already fly to England from America. I was 23 by then.

I didn't know my other uncle, the diplomat, during my childhood because he was on assignment abroad. Then in 1943, in a careless moment, he made an off-hand remark, saying that the

Germans had already lost the war. For that reason, when the Germans occupied Hungary the following year, he was among the first to be shipped to the concentration camp of Dachau. Somehow he survived, and managed to walk home in that exhausted and worn-out condition! When he rang the doorbell in their old apartment in Buda, the family did not recognize him. Him I met only 21 years later, during my first visit back to Hungary. He never spoke of his experiences at Dachau; even his son – my cousin – learned it from me, over 60 years later, that his father had been in a concentration camp.

Several years after his return home, this same uncle found himself on the Alföld, deported to internal exile by the Communist government, with his wife and young son. There, among other things, he was draining swamps and digging coal. So I should not have been surprised when, in 1965, he told me what a wonderful job he then had: writing on the back of picture postcards – in three languages – what the sights were. But I wanted to cry!

There were eight of us cousins on my mother's side. After we arrived in the States in 1949, not only the distance but especially the Iron Curtain separated us from our relatives. Here, Mom put photographs of the eight of us into a picture frame. This is what I would study in New York when, as a teenager, I would be overcome by the painful reality that I didn't know my relatives. During later visits I was able to make up for this lack, meeting my cousins, aunts and uncles by marriage, with the exception of one particularly attractive and smart cousin who, by the time of our first visit back, had already died under tragic circumstances.

And now – once again – I'm just looking at photographs: those of my husband, my parents, my brother, my sister-in-law. They have all gone, farther than behind the Iron Curtain. And instead of the living, once again all I have left is photographs...

*Erika Papp Faber is Editor of Magyar News Online.*

## Nézem a fényképeket ...

*Papp Faber Erika*

Már kisgyerek koromban meg kellett szokjam, hogy rokonokat csak fényképről ismerjek. Öt-hat évesen, vasárnaponkénti látogatások alatt a nagyszüleimnél Budapesten mindig találtam alkalmat arra, hogy beosonjak a „fiúszobába”, ahol valamikor a két nagybátyám lakott. Ott, lábújjhegyen állva, tanulmányoztam a keresztapám fényképét az ágy fölött. Ő akkor már a távoli Angliában élt. (Csak sokkal később tudtam meg, hogy miért.) A másik nagybátyámra se emlékszem akkortól.

Hogy miért nem találkoztam velük személyesen abban az időben? A keresztapám felesége zsidó volt, de úgy látszik előrelátó és emberséges főnöke lehetett a Nemzeti Banknál, mert a harmincas évek közepén kiküldte őt Angliába, és ezzel megmentette felesége életét. (Sajnos az anyósa és apósa nem volt ilyen szerencsés – ők a nyilasok áldozatai lettek.) Tizenhét év múlva ismertem csak meg a keresztapámat, amikor már Amerikából át tudtunk repülni Angliába. Huszonhárom éves voltam.

A másik nagybátyámat, a diplomatát, azért nem ismertem gyerekkoromban, mert kiküldetésben volt külföldön. Aztán 1943.-ban, egy óvatlan pillanatban kijelentette, hogy a németek már elvesztették a háborút. Ezért, mikor a következő évben a németek megszállták Magyarországot, az elsők között toloncolták Dachaubá, a koncentrációs táborba. Hogy, hogy nem, túlélte, és abban a lerongyolt állapotban hazagyalogolt! Mikor Budán becsöngetett a régi lakásba, a család nem ismert rá. Vele csak 21 évvel később találkoztam az első hazalátogatásom alkalmával. A dachauai élményeiről soha sem beszélt, még a fia – az unokatestvérem – is csak tőlem tudta meg, hatvanegynéhány évvel később, hogy az apja koncentrációs táborban volt.

Néhány évvel hazaérkezése után, ugyanez a nagybátyám az Alföldön találta magát, feleségestül és kisgyerekestül, kitelepítésben, a kommunista rendszer jóvoltából. Ott többek között lápot csapolt és szemet fejtett. Tehát nem



kellett volna meglepődjek, amikor 1965-ben nekem nagy örömmel mesélte, hogy milyen remek munkát kapott: a képes levelezőlapokra írta fel három nyelven hogy mit ábrázolnak. Sírni szerettem volna!

Édesanyám részéről nyolcan voltunk unokatestvérek. Miután Amerikába érkeztünk 1949-ben, nem csak a távol-ság, de főleg a vasfüggöny szakított el a rokonságtól. Itt Anyuka képkeretbe foglalta a nyolcunk képét. Azt tanulmányoztam New Yorkban, amikor tizenéves koromban nagyon fájt, hogy valóban nem ismertem a rokonaimat. Későbbi látogatások során pótoltam ezt a hiányt, megismertem a közeli család tagjait, kivéve egy kimondottam szép és okos unokanővéremet aki, mire először hazalátogattunk, már tragikus körülmények között meghalt.

És most – megint csak nézek fényképeket: a férjemét, a szüleimét, bátyámét, sógor-nómét. Már mind elmentek, messzebbre mint a vasfüggöny mögé, és az itt élők helyett nekem megint csak fényképek maradtak...

## St. Imre's Fair in our Town

*Dora Tima Irma*

*Although almost totally faded away by now, fairs had been the highlights of village life. Karolina's sister recalls the fairs of her youth.*

Before describing the event, I have to clarify two concepts: I would first talk about St. Emery (Imre), then about the concept of "búcsú", or feastday fair.

Saint Imre was the only surviving son of St. Stephen. His mother was Blessed Gizella. He was born at Székesfehérvár, between the year 1000 and 1007. His tomb is also there.

His father ardently loved the young prince, and encouraged him to live a saintly life. Prince Imre had a natural tendency to piety, and would often withdraw to pray and sing psalms. He

kept his vow of chastity even in his marriage. He is therefore also depicted with lilies.

Many miracles have been attributed to him, and people would seek out his tomb in droves. He died young, during a hunt in Bihar County, in 1031. In 1930, a statue of St. Imre, created by Kisfaludi Strobl Zsigmond, was erected at the Móricz Zsigmond körtér in Budapest. (It was renovated in 2015.)

The village fairs were usually tied to the feastday of the saint to whom the local church was dedicated. The word "búcsú" is of old Turkic origin, meaning release, remission of sins for the participants. It was the Catholic Church that called for pilgrimages, so it was a religious holiday. Some famous pilgrimage sites evolved, such as Andocs, Szeged, Csíksomlyó (in Transylvania); in Transdanubia there was Csorna, Kapuvár, Celldömölk.

The pilgrims would start out on foot, with banners, singing sacred songs. They received lodging and food practically for nothing from the populace. The holidays were taken over by the Protestants too. The "pilgrims" set up an open-air market and a carousel around the church.

Eventually, the "búcsú" became a folk custom. In the olden days, seasonal workers would exchange experiences, tools, work methods at the búcsú. People sold produce, wheat, new wine, etc. On such occasions, relatives would come from several communities, at times from entire counties. This is where material and spiritual goods were shared, exchanged.

By fair time, the harvests had provided stuffing for the geese, so fair fare included fattened geese, hens, as well as kalács, pretzels and "kráfli" (baked goods made with lard). On that day, the swineherd did not drive out his charges to pasture, but went through the village, blowing his horn, and expecting the farmers to provide his measure of wine and a kalács or pretzel. (In our area, boiled and beaten pretzels are still popular.)

The fairs of our childhood no longer had many religious overtones, because the majority of the village was Protestant. So the St. Imre Fair was held in our village on the Sunday and Monday closest to his feastday (November 5th).

As children, we were greatly looking forward to the búcsú, because our mother cooked a delicious dinner, and the relatives were expected to provide "búcsú money" that we could spend ourselves. While nationwide, búcsú usually lasted three days, it was only a two-day affair in our village. In the morning, everyone went to church; in the afternoon, the relatives, adults talked, while we children would be on the look-out for the pupeteers, and was there a carousel? In the afternoon, no money was left in our pockets. In those days, ten or twenty forints were a lot of money, but we could spend it to the last fillér. We shrieked on the carousel, and often would walk to find at the fair the presents we yearned for. These could be candy, gingerbread, a toy...

When we became older, we would go to the "búcsú bál" (fair ball) with our mother. Actually, this was the place where the young people of the village would meet. Several fair ball meetings ended in marriage. In the evening, there was a break, during which the gypsy musicians would get their supper. We were so excited we couldn't even eat, because we couldn't wait to get back to dancing. We hurried back to the ball.

I want to mention that in those days no girl could attend the ball by herself, only if she was accompanied by her mother. Our mother was proud that her daughters were quickly asked to dance. There was beautiful gypsy music, they played not only songs, but also contemporary dance music. And we danced the tango, the swing to the tune of the beautiful old songs. We lasted until dawn, slept a little and couldn't wait to continue the ball on Monday night.

A week later was the "kisbúcsú", the "little fair". Hardly any outsiders took

part in that, it was attended only by the locals, by couples who had found each other, newlyweds, people from our village. I remember there were times when a fight would break out, even knifings occurred, over a girl. Then the young men would go out to the yard to settle their differences. If a girl did not accept a young man's attentions, he would have her run out by the music which would not stop until she left.

Today, the beautiful folk custom of the *búcsú* has been replaced by the disco. The vendors pump out of the kids as much as they want. In our area, it is on the wane, there is no longer interest in the *búcsú*, which I'm not surprised at, because the disco booms every Saturday, it can be heard almost half a mile away. We can say farewell to the fair.

*Dora Tima Irma is one of five girls, a former elementary school teacher and principal in Celldömölk. She is the sister of our Webmaster Karolina Tima Szabo.*

## A búcsú

*Doráné Tima Irma*

Mielőtt az eseményt leírnám, két fogalmat kell tisztáznom! Az egyik a névadóról, Szent Imre hercegről szólnék, utána a búcsú fogalmáról.



*Eszt, 2nd sister on the ringlispil*

Szent Imre Szent István egyetlen élve maradt fia volt. Édesanyja Boldog Gizella. Székesfehérváron született, pontosan az idejét nem tudjuk, de kb. 1000 és 1007 között; sírja is Fehérváron van.

A fiatal herceget édesapja rajongva szerette, bátorította a szent életre. Imre herceg hajlott is erre, sokszor elvonult, magányosan zsoldárokat énekelt, imádkozott! Szüzességi fogadalmát házasságban is megtartotta. Ezért "liliomos" hercegnek is hívták. 1031-ben, Bihar megyében egy vadászat alkalmával fiatalon halt meg. Sok csodát tulajdonítanak neki, sírjához ezért tömegesen zárandokoltak.

1930-ban Budapesten, a Móricz Zsigmond körtéren, felállították Kisfaludi Strobl Alajos Szent Imre szobrát. A szobrot 2015-ben felújították.

A falusi búcsúkat, egy-egy szent névnapjához kötötték. A búcsú szó, ótörök eredetű, ami "felmentést, bűnbocsánatot" jelent a résztvevőknek. A katolikus egyház hirdette meg a búcsújárást, így tehát vallási ünnep volt.

Híres búcsújáró helyek alakultak ki, így például Andocs, Szeged, Csíksomlyó (Erdélyben); a Dunántúlon Csorna, Kapuvár, Celldömölk. Gyalog indultak a zárandokok, zászlókkal, szent énekeket énekelve. Szállást, kosztot szinte ingyen kaptak a lakosságtól. Az ünnepeket átvették a protestánsok is. A templom körül kirakodó vásárt, körhintát állítottak a "búcsúsok".

A búcsú népszokássá vált. Régen, időszakos munkások új munkaeszközöket, tapasztalatokat, munkamódszereket gyűjtöttek, amit a búcsúban cseréltek ki egymással. Terményeket árultak, bűzát, új bort stb... Ilyenkor, több községből jöttek rokonok is, néha egész megyéből, itt történt tehát az anyagi-, és szellemi javak megosztása, cseréje.

A búcsúi ételek, mivel már volt mivel megtömni a libákat, hízott liba, tyúk, kalács, perec, kráfli (hájás tészta) volt. Ezen a napon nem hajtott ki a kanász, hanem a falut végig túlkölve várta a gazdaktól az egy pint bort, és

a kalácsot, vagy peracet. (A mi vidékünkön, még most is divat a főtt, és vert perec.)

Gyerekkorunk búcsúi már nemigen hordoztak vallási tartalmakat, mivel a falu zöme református volt. Itt kapcsolódik Szent Imre herceg nevéhez az Imre-napi búcsú, amit a mi falunkban a névnapjához legközelebb eső vasárnapon, és hétfőn rendeztek meg.

Nagyon vártuk mi gyerekek a búcsút, mert finom ebédet főzött az édesanyánk, a rokonoktól "kijárt" a búcsúi pénz, amivel mi magunk gazdálkodhattunk. Míg országszerte három naposak voltak a búcsúk, nálunk két napos volt. Délelőtt mindenki templomba ment, délután a rokonok, felnőttek beszélgettek, de mi már lestük, hogy megjöttek-e a "bábosok", van-e ringlis (körhinta)? Délután aztán pénz nem maradt a zsebben. Akkor tíz, húsz forint nagy pénz volt, de el tudtuk költeni az utolsó fillérig. Visítottunk a ringlispilen, dagasztottuk sokszor a sarat, hogy megeljük az áhított "vásárfiát". Volt cukorkás, mézeskalácsos, játékos, stb...

Amikor már nagyobbak lettünk, édesanyánkkal mentünk a búcsúi bálba. Tulajdonképpen, ez a falusi fiatalok ismerkedési helye is volt. Több ismeretségből házasság lett. Este volt a vacsoraszünet, ilyenkor a cigányzenészek vacsorát kaptak. Mi az izgalomtól enni sem tudtunk, mert égett a talpunk alatt a talaj. Siettünk volna vissza a bálba.

Megemlíteném, hogy akkor egy lány sem mehetett egyedül a bálba, csak anyai kísérettel. Drága édesanyánk büszke volt, ha hamar "elkeltek" a lányai, vagyis táncba vittek bennünket. Szép cigányzene volt, nemcsak nótákat, de korabeli tánczenét is játszottak a cigányok. Mi még a régi, szép nótákra táncoltunk tangót, szvinget, stb... Hajnalig bírtuk, kicsit aludtunk, de alig vártuk, hogy folytathassuk a bált hétfő este.

Egy hét múlva volt a kisbúcsú. Ott

már nemigen voltak idegenek, csak a helybeli, egymásra talált párok, fiatal házások, a mi falunkbeliek mulattak.

Emlékszem, hogy bizony előfordult verekedés, sőt késelés is, egy-egy lány miatt. Olyankor kimentek az udvarra a legények, hogy ott rendezzék el a nézeteltéréseket. Ha egy lány nem fogadta el a fiú közeledését, akkor a fiú kimuzsikáltatta. Addig nem állt le a zene, amíg a lány el nem távozott.

Manapság ennek a szép népszokásnak átvette a helyét a disco. Az árusok annyit csinálnak ki a gyerekektől, amennyit akarnak. Itt nálunk megszűnőfélben van, nincs érdeklődés, amit nem is csodálok, mert minden szombaton döng a disco, fél kilométerre is hallani.

Búcsut mondhatunk a búcsúnak!

## Did you know ...

... **that** the first book was printed in Hungary in 1473? It was the *Chronica Hungarorum* (Chronicle of the Hungarians, also known as the Buda Chronicle), printed in the workshop of Hess András, a German craftsman who had learned his trade in Rome and came to Buda at the invitation of King Mátyás' vice-chancellor. His printshop was the first one in Hungary, and produced at least one other volume which contained two works: "*De legendis poetis*" (On reading poetry), authored by St. Basil the Great, and Xenophon's "*Apologia*", which was Socrates' defense.

... **that** the Transylvanian *kürtöskalács* (chimney cake) is spreading around the world? In the US, Anikó Gulyás started a wholesale business in Sarasota, FL, supplying the popular pastry to restaurants,

markets and fairs. In addition to the traditional cakes coated with sugar and ground almonds, she also offers savoury ones, made with pumpkin, bacon or cheese.

In Canada, Éva's Original Chimneys, established in 2015, sells its wares from a food truck on the streets of Toronto. Done on a rotisserie grill, they also make Chimney Cones, filled with ice cream, with a selection of toppings. They also offer savoury options.

See our recipe this month for the makings of *kürtös kalács*.

... **that** Szőke Gábor, creator of the "Fradi eagle" – symbol of the Ferencvárosi soccer team of Budapest – has been chosen to create the statue of a falcon for the opening of the new football stadium in Atlanta next year? At over 58 feet wide and 39 feet high, it will be the largest statue of a bird, and will hold a football in its talons. The bird will be made of stainless steel triangles and trapezoid shapes, while the football will be made of bronze. The stadium will be home to the Atlanta Falcons football team

and to the United FC of Major League Soccer. To be created in Szőke's studio in Budapest, it will be disassembled and shipped to Atlanta next January.

... **that** the *Tokaj-hegyaljai dukát* has become the fourth officially recognized local currency within Hungary? Its value is on a par with the forint, but is intended solely for use within the 27 communities of the area, so that people using it as payment will thus further the local economy. It follows the Kékfrank of Sopron (see the July 2012 issue of Magyar News Online), the Bocskai Korona of Hajdunánás, and the Balatoni Korona.

...**that** the International Swimming Hall of Fame (ISHOF), has announced that **TEAM HUNGARY** will become the first team in the history of the Hall to be recognized as an Honoree? During a ten-year period, from 1998 to 2008, the Hungarian **water polo** team dominated international water polo like no other team in history, winning back-to-back Olympic titles in 2000, 2004 and 2008.



## Kürtőskalács – a Transylvanian wedding pastry

*This traditional pastry, translated as "chimney cake", has become very popular not only in Hungary, but also in the United States (see the "Did you know..." section of this issue). Here is a recipe taken from Péter Jánosné Süteménykönyve.*

This very special dessert is baked over glowing embers. You need a 3 1/2" diameter and 10" long cylinder-shaped wooden rolling pin, with a metal rod through the middle. The rod is 4" longer than the wood on one end. At the other end, the rod is about 2 feet longer and has a metal turning handle.

### Ingredients:

2 lb flour  
1 whole egg  
3 egg yolks  
5 Tbsp confectioners' sugar  
1 stick butter  
2 cubes fresh yeast or 2 tsp dry yeast  
2 1/2 cups milk  
Pinch of salt

**To sprinkle:** 1 cup confectioners' sugar, 1 cup chopped walnuts or almonds

**to brush:** 1 1/2 stick butter

From the ingredients make yeast dough, a bit heavier than usual. Cover with a cloth and let it rise for an hour. During that time, start the fire to produce wood embers. Ready the sugar and nuts for sprinkling. Brush the "rolling pin" with butter.

Take about 5 oz of the dough; with your hand, roll it out on a floured board to make a 1/2" thick "snake" (it will look like a thick and long pencil). Wrap this like a spiral on the wooden "rolling pin". Press it with your finger to make it flat and place the "rolling pin" over the embers, turning it slowly with the handle. When the color starts to change, brush it with butter and sprinkle sugar on all sides, which during further baking creates a caramel crust. Baking time is a total of about 10-15 minutes.

When done, stand the cylinder vertically over a board and shake to have the pastry slide off. Let the "rolling pin" cool after each portion of pastry is done.

Pastry maybe covered with chopped almonds or walnuts. In that case, you have to brush the pastry with egg whites and roll it in the sugared walnuts before baking. Because walnuts burn fast, you have to bake it slower. Best if served hot.

## Kürtőskalács - erdélyi lakodalmos sütemény

Péter Jánosné Süteménykönyvéből  
Ezt a rendkívüli kedvelt tásztát megfelelő eszközökkel, parázs fölött süthetjük. A kürtőskalács sütő egy kb. 10 cm átmérőjű és 35 cm hosszú fahenger, amelynek közepén áthalad egy vékony vasrúd, egyik végén egy 10 cm hosszú támasztó-, a másikon egy 60 cm hosszú forgatóvas van.

### Hozzávalók:

1 kg liszt  
1 egész tojás  
3 tojás sárgája  
5 evőkanál porcukor  
10 dkg vaj  
3 dkg élesztő  
8 dl tej  
Pici só

**Beszóráshoz** 15 dkg cukor, 10 dkg vágott dió  
**kenéshez** 15 dkg vaj

Az anyagokból nagyon jól kidolgozott kelt tésztát készítünk, a megszokott keménységnél keményebbet. Ruhával letakarva 1 órát kelesztjük. Ezalatt faparázzsal ellátjuk a tűzhelyet. A sütőfát bavajazzuk, és a szórásra való cukrot, diót elkészítjük.

A tésztából kb. 15 dkg-os adagokat kiveszünk, lisztezett deszkán ujjnyi széles hengert sodrunk belőle, és megszakítás nélkül, csigavonalban, hézagosan a fára csavarjuk. Ujjunkkal lelapítjuk, és a sütőfát a parázs fölé, állandó forgatás mellett nem túl gyorsan sütjük a tésztát. Ha már egyenesen pirulni kezd, kenőtollal olvasztott vajat kenetünk rá, és porcukorral mindegyik oldalát beszőr-

jük. A cukor további sütes folyamán megpirul és a tészta szép karamell-bevonatot kap. A sütesi idő kb. 10-15 perc.

Amikor már egyenesen világosbarnára sült, a sütőfát függőlegesen tartjuk, és a deszkán lerázzuk a tésztát. Egyenesen álló kürtőt kapunk. Sütés után a sütőfát pár percig hűtjük, közben a következő tésztát nyújtjuk. A tetejét beszőrhatjuk cukrozott dióval vagy mandulával. Ez esetben a tésztát sütés előtt tojásfehérjével megkenjük és cukros dióba forgatjuk. Sütés közben vajjal vagy zsírral gyakran locsoljuk. Lassabban sütjük, mint az előbbit, mert a dió hamar megbarnul.

Frissen fogyasztva a legjobb.

