



***We wish all our kind readers a very blessed Christmas!  
Áldott karácsonyi ünnepeket kívánunk  
minden kedves Olvasónknak!***

### **Karácsonyi pásztorének**

Medriczky Andor

Betlehemi kis jászolban  
Isten fia jött közénk,  
Meváltani minden embert  
Gazdagot és a szegényt.  
Szeretetet áraszt már is:  
Kis kezét nyújtja felénk.

Betlehemi kis jászolhoz  
Jöttek szegény pásztorok,  
Angyalszózat hívta őket  
Az istálló ragyogott.  
S hoztak ami tellett tőlük:  
Báránykát, juhászbót.

Később jöttek a királyok  
Ajándékkal gazdagon,  
Tömjén, mirha és aranykincs  
Csillog-villog a napon.  
Mert király Ő, a kis Jézus,  
Övé minden hatalom.

Most mi jöttünk, hazátlanok,  
Legszegényebb hívei,  
Vándorúton. Kincsek nélkül  
Szívünket kiönteni.  
Kicsi Jézus segíts minket  
Hinni, túrni, küzdeni...

1951

Obviously written by a post-World War II emigré (the date is the giveaway), the ending of this poem reflects the hopeless outlook of that group of refugees at the time.

### **My Most Unusual Christmas - 1956 / A legkülönösebb karácsonyom – 1956**

Kissné Tóth Gabriella

*This article was published in the 2010 issue of Nagykőrösi Kalendárium.*

It happened in Szeged, on December 26<sup>th</sup>, 1956.

Such thick snowfall is rarely seen as there was that afternoon. Everything was dressed in white: the sky, the earth, the houses and the trees.

I looked at our small Christmas tree in the after-dinner silence. It had no decorations, only a few tissue-wrapped *szaloncukor*. Those who can recall those days know that you could buy mostly red-wrapped ones. There was also pink, but white or pale blue were considered rarities. You had to hunt for those. We were successful hunters.

Our tiny tree reminded me of a grave in Rókus Cemetery, one that was scarcely two months old. There was a pine tree barely a hand's span tall, with a few pink-wrapped *szaloncukor* on it. It was on the grave of Schwarcz Lajos, who was shot to death during a peaceful march in the Takaréktár utca on October 25<sup>th</sup>.

On December 5<sup>th</sup>, Vilma's day, we had taken flowers to my grandma's grave which was close to that of the young victim. It was not advisable to look at it much (the authorities were watching), still I had seen the tiny pine tree with the pink *szaloncukor*.

Advent had been sad, and so was Christmas. On the second day of the holiday (Christmas in Hungary is always a 2-day holiday. Ed.) in that thick snowfall, I secretly slipped out to the grave of Schwarcz Lajos, with two white *szaloncukor* in my pocket. You couldn't see ten steps ahead. I stealthily put my two candies onto the tiny white tree. I never dared to tell anyone about it.

What could the family have thought when they saw the two white *szaloncukor* among the pink? Did it provide them a bit of consolation?

If anyone of that family is still alive, I send them this message: it was done by the then 8<sup>th</sup> grader Tóth Gabriella, who by now is a retired schoolteacher and religious educator of the Reformed Church at Nagykőrös.

## A legkülönösebb karácsonyom – 1956

Kissné Tóth Gabriella

Szegeden történt 1956. december 26.-án.

Olyan sűrű hóesést ritkán lát az ember, mint aznap délután volt. Minden fehérbe öltözött: az ég, a föld, a házak és a fák.

Az ebéd utáni csendben néztem a kicsi karácsonyfánkat. Nem voltak rajta díszek, csak kevés selyempapíros szaloncukor. Akik vissza tudnak emlékezni arra az időre tudják, hogy leginkább pirosat lehetett kapni. Volt még rózsaszín is, de fehér vagy világoskék ritkaság-számba ment. Azt vadászni kellett. Mi eredményes vadászok voltunk.

A mi kis fácskánk eszembe juttatta a Rókusi temető alig két hónapos sírját. Azon is állott egy alig araszos fenyő, s rajta néhány rózsaszín szaloncukor. Schwarcz Lajos sírján volt az, akit békés felvonulás közben október 25.-én lőttek le a Takaréktár utcában.

December 5.-én, Vilma napján virágot vittünk nagymamám sírjára, amely közel volt a fiatal áldozatéhoz. Nem volt tanácsos nagyon odanézni (figyelte a hatóság), mégis megláttam a pici fenyőfát a rózsaszín szaloncukrokkal.

Szomorú volt az advent, meg a karácsony is. Ünnepe másnapján abban a sűrű hóesésben – zsebemben két fehér szaloncukorral – titkon kiosontam Schwarcz Lajos sírjához. Tíz lépésre se lehetett látni. Ráloptam a fehér fácskára az én két cukromat. Senki-nek, sohase mertem elmondani.

Vajon mire gondolhatott a család, amikor a két fehér szaloncukrot meglátta a rózsaszíneket



*Az illusztrációt a szerző készítette*

között? Nyújtott-e némi vigasztalást nekik?

Ha még él a családból valaki, akkor üzenem nekik: az akkor 8. osztályos Tóth Gabriella tette azt, aki most már nyugdíjas tanárnő és református hitoktató Nagykőrösön.

## Santa Lucia, Martyr or Witch?

Karolina Tima Szabo

*Many folk customs are attached to St. Lucy's Day, December 13<sup>th</sup>. Here is a look at some of them in Hungary and elsewhere.*

Lucia was born in 283 to a noble family in the city of Siracusa, Sicily. Her father was a Roman, he died when she was 5 years old. Her mother, Eutychia was of Greek origin. When Lucia's mother became ill, she went on a pilgrimage with her mother, in 300, to Catania, to St. Agatha's tomb to seek a cure for her.

Her mother was cured, and when Lucia saw this, she became a Christian, and took a vow of virginity, vowed her life to Christ, and gave away her dowry to the poor. Her mother, not aware of Lucy's vow, offered her hand in marriage to a pagan young man. The

groom became offended when Lucia turned him down, and took his case to Paschasius, the Governor of Siracusa, claiming Lucia was a witch. Paschasius tried to convince her to marry her groom, but she refused. Then he ordered her to be carried to a brothel, but she became so heavy that even oxen could not move her. Later she was tarred, put on the stake to be burned to death, her eyes were removed by the executioner, and she was stabbed with a dagger, yet she did not die. When the priest was called, she finally took her last breath.

(Another legend says she plucked out her own eyes because a suitor admired them.)

Other than that, not much is known about her life. She believed in God and she died for her beliefs. In the 6th century, she was declared a saint, patroness of the blind and those with eye trouble.

Her name comes of the Latin word *lux*, which means light; therefore she is also remembered as a "bearer of light". That is why her feast day was placed on December 13th, which at the time was the shortest day of the year.

(With the change of calendars from the Julian to the Gregorian in 1582, several days were added, so that the solstice now occurs on December 21st or 22nd).

Was Lucy a martyr or a witch? We re-





member both, but in Hungary and in nearby countries, she is considered mostly a witch.

In Hungary, many superstitions and beliefs are linked to her name. One that many of us know about is "Lucia's chair" (*Luca széke*). The chair has to be made of nine different kinds of wood, has to be a certain shape, and only one thing can be done on it each day. It has to be started on December 13th and has to be ready by December 24th. Because making it takes so long, there is a saying when something is progressing slowly, that it is "like Luca's chair".

On Christmas Eve, during Midnight Mass, the maker of the chair has to stand upon it and will see which of the women is a witch. Then he has to run out of the church and has to throw poppy seeds behind him so the witch cannot catch him. Because a witch cannot pass without picking up the poppy seeds, one by one.

Another tradition is that a woman sows wheat seeds in a bowl of soil on Lucia's Day. She has to water it until Christmas, and the taller it grows the better the wheat season will be next year. It also symbolizes life after death. The wheat is then carried to the manger as the symbol of Christ in the Eucharist.

In some areas of Hungary, young boys visit the neighbors with a bundle of stolen straw (*kotyolás*). They sit on the straw and start to sing songs to encourage a better grain harvest next year. They also say, "*Luca, Luca, kitty, kotty, kitty, kotty, ha nem adnak szalonnát, betöröm a gerendát*" (Lucy, Lucy, cluck, cluck, if you don't give me bacon, I will break the beam.) When the woman comes out of the house, she sprinkles water and throws corn on the boys. When the boys leave, she feeds the goose and chicken with the corn and throws the straw under the chicken.

On St. Lucia's Day, single girls write the names of 12 boys on pieces of paper and fold them. Each day they

throw one of the papers into the fire. The last one would be the name of their fiancés. The papers can also be rolled into a dumpling, and the one that boils up to the top of the water first will be the one!

Another Lucia's Day custom was for a young girl to cut a piece of a cherry branch and put it in water. If it sprouted leaves by Christmas, that meant she would get married the fol-

lowing year.

On December 13th, the women had to sit a lot to make sure that next year the hens would lay lots of eggs. That day it was forbidden to knit, sew, bake bread, wash clothes; if one ignored this prohibition, she could be turned into stone. *Ajá!*!! Brooms were hidden so that the witch could not grab them and fly away. It was recommended to hang garlic to chase away evil spirits.



Top left: *Eutychia and Lucia at the tomb of Saint Agatha* by Jacobello del Fiore; top right: *Lucia's chair (Luca széke)*; bottom: *Lucia before the judge* by Lorenzo Lotto (1523-1532)

While in Hungary Luca is a witch, other countries consider her as a martyr.

In Siracusa, Italy, each year there is a procession on St. Lucy's Day. In some countries, other traditions are tied to St. Lucia's name. In Sweden, St. Lucia is the bearer of light. The Christmas season starts with the Festival of Lights. The oldest girl in the family wakes up early on December 13th, dresses in Sankta Lucia's white gown with red sash, and a green wreath with lighted candles on her head, and serves coffee and pastry to the family, symbolizing that the town was saved from starvation by St. Lucy. On the day of December 13th, when the day was the shortest, St. Lucy appeared with candles on her head to lead a ship full of grain to the dock.

In England, St. Lucia was celebrated as a martyr in the Middle Ages; St. Lucia's Festival was celebrated from the 6th century until the Reformation. In the Philippines, celebration starts nine days before St. Lucia's Day. A procession honoring the saint is held every morning, songs are sung to her, followed by a Mass.

In Omaha, Nebraska, Santa Lucia is celebrated in the summer by the Italian community. A procession goes through the city carrying the statue of St. Lucy.

Martyr or witch, St. Lucia still lives in our traditions and many artists have immortalized her in paintings for us to enjoy.

## Év utolján

*Arany János*

Kifelé az évnek a szekere rúdja,  
Pályáját a nap is csak robotban futja,  
Csak azért jó fel, hogy gondját kivesse,  
A hol a reggel van, ott a dél, az este.

Mehetsz, mehetsz jó év! a mit hoztál, vidd el,  
Megelégedtem már sovány böjtjeiddel;  
Egy szó nem sok, azzal sem marasztlak téged:  
Kivánok jó utat és jó egészséget.

Mi örömet adtál? Mi emléket hagytál?  
Annyit se nekem, mint a tavalyi naptár,  
Mely hiába mondja, hogy: csötörtök, péntek,  
Ha egyszer ledobtam, belé sem tekintek.

Menj! Hadd tudjalak a többi után sorba,  
Legalább nem esett életemen csorba:  
A kopár sivatag, hol nem látni zöldet,  
Legalább nem hagyja lyukasan a földet.

1852

*In this poem, Arany echoes the sentiments of many who are happy to see the old year end.*

## Beigli squares

At Christmas time, every Hungarian housewife makes beigli. Here is a variation on the traditional shape, which also sounds simpler to make.

### Dough:

2 ¾ cups flour  
1 stick and 1 Tbsp butter  
1½ tsp yeast  
Pinch of salt  
2/3 cup milk  
1 whole egg  
1/3 cup sugar  
1 egg yolk to brush dough

### Poppy seed filling:

2 cups ground poppy seeds  
1 cup sugar  
¾ cup water  
Juice and grated zest of half a lemon  
1 tsp vanilla sugar  
1 tsp butter  
2 Tbsp apricot preserves

### Instructions for dough:



Mix yeast in half cup of warm milk until dissolved.  
Work butter into flour.  
Mix egg, salt and sugar, then add to flour and butter mixture. Work together well and fast, so the yeast doesn't start to rise. More milk or flour can be added if needed.  
Divide dough into three portions, and form into balls.  
Put dough on a tray, cover with plastic foil and refrigerate for 3 hours.

Make **filling** in the meantime.  
Boil water with the sugar, add ground

poppy seeds, mix and cook for 2 minutes.

Let it cool; while still warm, mix in only butter and lemon juice and grated peel.

When totally cooled, mix in apricot preserves.

(Can also be made with walnuts.)

Preheat oven to 350 °F (180 °C).

Cover 9" x 11" baking pan with parchment paper.

Roll out one ball on a floured board, put it in baking pan.

Cover it with half of the filling.

Roll out the second ball and put it on top of filling.

Spread the remaining filling on top and cover with the remaining dough. Brush top with egg yolk, and pierce it with a fork all the way to the bottom to let the steam evaporate.

Bake for 15 minutes, and then lower the temperature to 340 °F (167-170 °C). Bake another 15-20 minutes.

Remove from oven and cool on rack. Slice only when totally cooled.



# Count Széchenyi István – Reformer with a Lasting Legacy

Erika Papp Faber

That Budapest became “the pearl of the Danube” is due to a great extent to the vision of Count Széchenyi István, the 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary of whose birth we have been celebrating this past year. Implementing his all-encompassing ideas for reform put Hungary on the fast track for economic and social development in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, helping the country to catch up to its European neighbors. His imprint can be found all over the Hungarian capital to this day. Here is the last in our series on this outstanding statesman, closing out this anniversary year.

Budapest’s present-day cityscape owes much to the life and accomplishments of “the great reformer”, Count Széchenyi István. Perhaps the best known landmark connected with his name is the Chain Bridge (*Lánchíd*), the first to connect Buda and Pest. With it, he intended to unite not only the separate cities, but also to take a small step towards uniting the populace by imposing a toll on all, regardless of social status. This idea was considered revolutionary in his time, since the nobility clung to their tax-exempt status; but Széchenyi prevailed, and the *Lánchíd* was given over to traffic in 1849.

The *Lánchíd* also symbolized that unity of the capital which Széchenyi had hoped to achieve, but which became a reality only in 1873, after his death.

On the Pest side of the *Lánchíd* is the Széchenyi tér (Square), which is part of the Danube Embankment World Heritage Site.

The Danube Embankment (*rakpart*), essential for the loading and unloading of cargo carried by River traffic, owes its existence to Széchenyi’s efforts to regulate the River. In consultation with the engineer Vásárhelyi Pál, the River’s passage was eased by dredging to eliminate obstacles that caused periodic flooding, especially on the Pest side, as the ice would break up in the spring. At the same time, the banks of the River were transformed into loading areas to facilitate the handling of cargo. It is therefore fitting that part of the Embankment is named for him.

But Széchenyi was not content with improving navigation of the Danube around Budapest. He wanted to make the River navigable as far as the Black

Sea, opening up a trade route to Constantinople. Following Vásárhelyi’s plan, the huge rocks obstructing the *Vaskapu* (Iron Gates) were blown up, thus opening up that end of the

Danube to shipping. The increased trade improved the Magyar economy.

Today’s tourist and excursion boats docking at Budapest are the modern-



Top: Széchenyi lookout tower; Széchenyi Baths, 2nd row: Bust of Széchenyi at Széchenyi hegy; National Theater; 3rd row: National Academy of Science; Széchenyi statue at Széchenyi tér, 4th row: Chain Bridge

day descendents of the First Danube Steamship Shipping Company of which Széchenyi was a stockholder, and later a member of its Board of Directors.

A bit further down the Danube, on its left bank, is the *Magyar Tudományos Akadémia* (the Hungarian Academy of Sciences) which was given its impetus in 1825, by Széchenyi's very generous offer, in the Diet, of one year's income. The Academy helped to unleash, for the past century and a half, the Hungarian genius in every field of intellectual endeavor. The building was originally located where the Gresham Palace is today.

Another Budapest landmark connected to Széchenyi is located on the Buda (right) side of the Danube: it is the *Krisztinavárosi templom*, the church where Széchenyi and Countess Crescence Seilern-Aspang, the love of his life and unflinching support, pledged their troth in February of 1836. She provided inspiration for him, and stood by him faithfully even in his darkest moments, when he was confined to the mental clinic at Döbling, Austria. (She mourned him for 15 years, until her own death.)

One of the hills of Buda was named *Széchenyi hegy* after his death, and the plateau there, by the name of *Széchenyihegy* (one word) has become part of Budapest's 12<sup>th</sup> District. The *Széchenyi kilátó* (observation tower) is located there.

Kincsem Horseracing Park today, in the 10<sup>th</sup> District, had its distant roots in Széchenyi's initiative to introduce horse racing on the British model. The first horse race was held in the outer reaches of Üllői út, in Pest, in 1827. He wrote a book, "*Lovakról*" (sic!) – About Horses – to raise the standards of horse keeping, training and racing, trying to popularize the sport. After almost two centuries, it is still the "bible" of the horsey set.

He also wrote a treatise on the theater (*A magyar játékszínről* (sic!) – 1832), offering plans for building a national theater, to be financed by issuing



stocks. The original *Nemzeti Színház* was erected opposite the Astoria Hotel (1837). (Its second incarnation was located at the Blaha Lujza tér.) The current National Theater building is located in Budapest's 9<sup>th</sup> District, staging performances since 2002.

Although opened only in 1913, over 50 years after his death, the largest bathing complex in all of Europe is located in Budapest, and was named *Széchenyi fürdő* (Thermal Baths) in his honor.

There have been other great Hungarian statesmen throughout history, but Count Széchenyi István is unique in his many-faceted interests and accomplishments. The great reformer's far-reaching impact on commerce, social life, the arts and sciences, as well as on agricultural life (through the *Országos Magyar Gazdasági Egyesület* – the Hungarian National Agricultural Association which he founded), is evidenced by his many footprints in the Hungarian capital.

As Denis Sinor says of **Count Szechenyi István, "To no one since before the Turkish occupation does Hungary owe more than to him."** (*History of Hungary*, p. 251)

*Erika Papp Faber is Editor of Magyar News Online*

## A Forgotten Story of World War I

*Tóth Barna, as excerpted by EPF*

Most of the estimated 80,000 – 100,000 Hungarians who became prisoners of war in Russia in the First World War returned home when they were released. It is not commonly known, however, that some opted to stay, including three men from Nagykőrös. Here is the story of one of them who returned only much later, as related by his son. It has been culled from Tóth Barna's interview, as it appeared in the *Nagykőrös Kalendárium* of 2010.

Erdős Sándor of Nagykőrös had been drafted in 1914, and became a prisoner of war in Russia the following year. On his release in 1923, he stayed on and married a local Byelorussian woman.

His son, also named Sándor, was born in 1928 in a village not far from Stavropol in the North Caucasian area.

The elder Sándor knew how to tan hides. He worked with another ex-p.o.w. from Kőrös who was a shoemaker, and together they produced shoes and boots as well as tanned hides to trade for wheat, raw hides, sea salt, or animals – oxen, sheep, goats and pigs, even camels. The younger Sándor often accompanied his father on these trading expeditions. When the *kolkhoz* (collective farm) was introduced in Russia, the elder Sándor received a house with a tile roof and ten *hold* (one *hold* is roughly 1.2 acres) to cultivate. As the younger Sándor recalled, life was good, and the Hungarians were respected because they did good work.

In 1937, the Soviet government ordered them either to accept Russian citizenship or to leave the country. The elder Sándor decided to leave. He quickly sold the house, and the family, together with the shoemaker and his family, returned to Hungary.

The people of Nagykőrös gave them a



rousing welcome. For the celebration, the younger Sándor had to learn a poem to recite – *“Magyar vagyok, Magyarinak születtem, Magyarul dalolt a dajka fölöttem...”* (I'm Hungarian, I was born Hungarian, My nurse sang over me in Hungarian). He said of course none of that was true, and he had to be tutored to recite it, since he spoke no Hungarian at all at that time.

The townspeople provided them with a lot of food, clothing, and even some money. But that soon ran out, and the elder Sándor had no work. The Church gave him some land to cultivate as a sharecropper, but he had no tools with which to do so. According to his son, they were worse off than they had been in Russia. They later received a couple of small loans to help them get on their feet.

Since they spoke only Russian, the boy Sándor, his younger brother and their mother had a hard time. But the boys adjusted to life in Nagykőrös by and by, and he ended up speaking in the distinct Kőrös dialect. The mother died of cancer in 1944.

When the Russians occupied Hungary in 1945, the younger Sándor was taken on as an interpreter. However, because his Russian was so good (after all, it was his mother tongue!) he was accused of being a deserter and a traitor. He was arrested and interrogated. Once he related his life story, he was given a horse and an automatic rifle, to patrol the border and round up deserters from the Russian army. At the same time, the Hungarians didn't trust him either, thinking he was betraying them. After two years as an interpreter, he was happy to see his role come to an end.

He had married in 1945, and had two sons. His wife died of a heart condition in 1979, as did one of the two boys. Trained as a tractor operator, he then worked on a collective farm in Hungary. He did not take part in the Hungarian Revolution. Later, he qualified as a heavy machine operator. A stroke finally sent him into retirement.

P.S. By the time the third man from Kőrös returned from Russia, only his

sister was still alive to recognize him. Decades later, his Russian descendants came to Kőrös, to see where their ancestor had come from.

## Did you know

... **that** once again we have an assortment of some very interesting stories? (We are indebted to Daily News Hungary for the first two items.)

... **that** the largest Nativity scene in Hungary is located in the village of Vörs (Somogy County) ? It covers an area of 50 square meters, and – except for the human and animal figures which are made of plaster of Paris – is reconstructed from natural materials inside Szent Márton Church every year. Forty crates of moss, 35 pine trees and one and a half cubic meters of planks, lath, and beams are used, donated by the people of Vörs and neighboring settlements. Even the pond has real water. Some 30 people work on it annually. About 40,000

visitors come every year from far and near to admire the monumental scene, said to be largest church Nativity scene in Europe.

Its history goes back to 1948, when a much smaller Nativity scene was erected. Then, in the 1950s, the Sacred Heart altar was demolished, and a larger Nativity scene was created in its place. It kept growing with time until it achieved its present dimensions. However, there is no more space within the church building for it to spread, so this is as large as it can be.

... **that** a Hungarian chocolate creation won the prestigious International Chocolate Award in London? Created by Mészáros Gábor's ChocoMe, it consists of hazelnuts covered with ground Ethiopian Harrar coffee and hazelnut-flavored milk chocolate. It is called Raffinée Piemonte. The award is the second gold medal for Budapest-based Mészáros.



... **that** Benedictine Fr. Oloffson Placid, who spent 10 years in the Soviet gulags, will be celebrating his 100th birthday on December 23rd? We of Magyar News Online ask God's choicest blessings on Fr. Oloffson! May he continue to be a shining example of fidelity and joy for all of us!

... **that** Budapest has been voted the world's second most beautiful city? It was narrowly surpassed by Florence, as rated by the readers of Condé Nast Traveler magazine.

... **that** 64 year old Kocsis Zoltán, who since 1997 had been Chief Musical Director of the *Nemzeti Filharmónikus Zenekar* (the National Philharmonic Orchestra) died on November 6th following another heart surgery? An outstanding piano virtuoso, composer and conductor, he had been awarded the Liszt Ferenc Prize at age 21 (in 1973) and the Kossuth Prize twice (1978 and 2005). Together with Fischer Iván, Kocsis founded the Budapest Festival Orchestra in 1983.

He had performed with the Berlin, New York and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra; the Staatskapelle of Dresden; and the Philharmonia Orchestra of London. He had recorded Bartók's complete solo piano works and works for piano and orchestra. His first American concert tour took place in 1971. The income from his birthday concerts he always donated to the Child Rescue Service.

A memorial concert in memory of Kocsis Zoltán will be given in cooperation of the *Nemzeti Filharmónikusok* with the *Művészek Palotája (Múpa)* on December 10th. May he rest in peace!

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## Benefit Dinner for the 1956 Memorial in New York City



**The 1956 Memorial in New York City is about to be completed.**

**However, the Hungarian American Memorial Committee still has some financial obligations to the City.**

**Ambassador Dr. Ferenc Kumin, Consul General of Hungary and Ms. Viktória Kumin together with Dr. Ernő Holló and Ms. Irén Holló**

request the pleasure of your company at

**a Benefit Dinner for the 1956 Memorial in New York City on Wednesday, December 7, 2016 6:30 p.m.**

at the Consulate General of Hungary  
227 East 52nd Street, New York City  
(between 2nd and 3rd Avenues)

It will be a feast of Hungarian delicacies including Mangalica Pork.  
Wine Presentation by Vitéz Pablo Nyárády

**Suggested minimum donation: \$500 per person**  
Business attire

Please advise of any dietary restrictions.

Since seating is limited, kindly

**R.S.V.P. by December 2, 2016: [rsvp.nyf@mfa.gov.hu](mailto:rsvp.nyf@mfa.gov.hu)**

You are kindly requested to support the Committee's efforts.

**By mail:**

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Please make checks payable to: Hungary 1956 Commemoration

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## It's a small world / Kicsi a világ

Judith Calman

*Nationality, identity; we all have one. Those born and raised in one nation, never leaving to start a new life anywhere else, can have no choice when considering their nationality. But for those like myself, who left the country of their birth to become citizens of another land, the choice exists. Am I Australian, which is the nationality on my passport, or am I Hungarian, the land of my birth?*

An encounter with a stranger revealed to me just who I think I am. Unable to decide on a fine bottle of wine to take to a dinner party, I asked the man behind the counter of the liquor store for advice. As he began to speak, his accent gave away his origins. Every vowel in each syllable being given equal emphasis produces the unmistakable sound of the Hungarian speaker of English.

I asked him if he was Hungarian and without a second's hesitation he said, "Isn't everybody?" I had to laugh and replied, "You may be right, as I certainly am!"

There it was - I am Hungarian. Despite the fact that I have lived in Australia since I was five years old, my automatic response was instant; I am Hungarian.

The gentleman in the liquor store may not be completely correct, however, even if not *everyone* on the planet is actually Hungarian; there are enough Hungarians scattered throughout the world to ensure that they are well represented in just about every field of human endeavor. Whether in the sciences, arts or even high fi-

nance, a Hungarian name inevitably appears. The prevalence of Hungarians who have achieved extremely well in their chosen field is quite disproportionate to the population of that small nation. Normally, the population of Hungary doesn't much exceed 9 or 10 million souls, depending on whichever conflict has been reducing their numbers!

Despite being ravaged by tumultuous events of varying magnitude from the inception of their nation over eleven hundred years ago, despite being subjected to invasions and occupations, the Hungarians have prevailed as a distinct nation. I am proud to be one of them.

*Judith Calman is a retired teacher in Australia and a cousin of our Assistant Webmaster Zsuzsa Lengyel. Even though her bio is longer than what we usually publish, we felt that it is a less well-known type of emigration story. This is what she told us about herself:*

*In late 1944, when I was six months old, my parents fled Hungary as the Russian army advanced. My father had no choice, he had been in the Kénelhárító (Counter-intelligence) Division of the Hungarian Air Force, which meant that he would have been arrested and possibly executed if the Russians occupied Hungary. We were part of a huge exodus which proceeded to cross the Austrian Alps by whatever means possible, in vehicles, horse and cart or on foot. The German military were also retreating and the lines of refugees had to flatten themselves against the cliff sides to make way for the Germans whenever they came racing past in their trucks, cars and motor-*

*bikes. They would not stop for anyone who happened to be in their path.*

*The journey across the Alps took four weeks, in freezing weather. My mother could not breast feed my infant self and had to cook a baby formula on a small kerosene stove whenever the convoy stopped. The order to move on often came as the food was still cooking. She washed my nappies in whatever creeks or rivers ran close to the road. The icy water left her hands chafed, the skin splitting. The nappies were dried by her placing them under her clothes, against her body.*

*But we survived and finally found our way to a Red Cross Displaced Person's Camp in Bavaria. From there we moved to other camps, until, after four years we emigrated to Australia, arriving in September, 1949.*



## Feast of St. Emery, at St. Emery Church in Fairfield, CT, on 11/6/16



*Top: Knights of Columbus leading the procession; Msgr. Thomas W. Powers, Vicar General of the Diocese of Bridgeport giving the homily*

*Center: Children of the Religious Education program posing after the Mass; children in the procession*

*Bottom: Keg of wine and loaf of bread brought up at the Offertory; big brother with little sister*



# **Szilveszter**

**Nyitás: 7:30**



***Fenél: Dj Andris***

**SVÉDASZTALOS VACSORA**

**BELÉPŐ: \$70**

**CÍM: 901 KINGS HIGHWAY  
FAIRFIELD CT 06825**

**INFORMÁCIÓÉRT HÍVD: PREVITZER ERIKA  
203-449-0578**

See out the Old Year and see in the New! The Calvin United Church of Christ of Fairfield, CT is having a New Year's Eve celebration, starting at 7:30 PM. Buffet and DJ provided. Tickets: \$70. Have fun!