

SZÉCHÉNYI MEMORIAL DAY

NSZL, 30TH APRIL, 2009



As in previous years, the traditional annual celebration was held in a friendly and informal atmosphere in the sixth floor lecture hall housing the *Beautiful Hungarian Map* 2008 exhibition. After singing the National Anthem together, General Director István Monok stated that this year the National Széchényi Library was able to meet its legally prescribed basic tasks, but would be unable to cope with further cutbacks. Meeting basic obligations is evident, but is far from taken for granted these days. All over Europe it seems that society does not appreciate our work. However, the high number of daily visitors and their satisfaction proves that librarianship has a future and does a valuable social service. Under the present conditions too, we have to make every effort at launching new professional programs and working hard rather than “turning inward.”

After the words of introduction, István Monok announced that following the death of Margit Busa the directors' college had decided to award the prestigious *Bibliothecarius Emeritus* title to Gabriella Somkuti. Because of her hospitalization, the awardee could not take the award in person, but the heavy applause indicated that the acknowledgement of a librarian's lifetime career as well as the financial support it is accompanied by are well-deserved and much needed.

Deciding on the Ferenc Széchényi memorial plaque was rather competitive this year. The medal carrying very high prestige within the institution was awarded to Katalin Plihál, the head of the Map Collection. Special collections director János Káldos emphasized in his laudation that the map is a type of time image, an imprint of the world's changes and a preservation of historical periods. Thus the history of the European map can be regarded as the story of European history. Cartography requires precision, patience and humility: In addition to her rich lifework, it is this professional dedication that we mostly value in the awardee's case. In expressing her thanks, Katalin Plihál stressed that in the same way as other fields of librarianship, the work of the map collection is done by

a team, and therefore the award is due to the community as a whole. In honour of the prize-winner, the national library's choir sang Zoltán Kodály's *Greeting on Saint John's Day*, after which Péter Dippold asked last year's Széchényi awardee, Borbála Korompay-Tóth to give her talk one year on, in line with the tradition for Széchényi



This year's nominee takes over the memorial medal

Award recipients. The highly accurate presentation mostly focused on introducing the legal framework for protecting cultural heritage and the history between 1967 and 1997 of acquiring protection for library documents, giving details of Law CXL/1997 (on the protection of cultural products and museum-value institutions) and its practical application in our days.

Péter Dippold chaired the intimate ceremony of handing

out awards to faithful employees.

Awards for ten years of service: László Boka, László Gertner, István Monok, Andrea Koncz, Péter Kelemen, Éva Kenyeres, Tímea Király, István Moldován, Szilvia Nick, Anita Renkecz, Kincso Tamás and Ildikó Trégelné Vincze.

Awards for twenty years of service: Erika Havasi, Ádám Horváth, Attiláné Nagy, Vera Ottinger, János Paizs, Györgyi Szoó Petényiné, Tiborné Szabó, Márta Szilasiné Szmrtnik, Józsefné Tóth, Ildikó Türmer and Gergely Vitányi.

Awards for twenty-five years of service: Cecília Jóssáné Tóth, Józsefné Kertész, Ágnes Marosán, Ágnes Pap, Lajos Sánta, Tamásné Schirilla, Orsolya Waigand and Irén Zádoczky.

Awards for thirty years of service : Andrásné Barnás, Zsófia Györgyné Borsa, Gábor Gellért Kis, Dalma Kónyáné Csúcs, Gáborné Kovács, Zsuzsanna Kovács and Rozália Szalai Gindl.

The celebration was closed by singing Vörösmarty's *Szózat* (“Appeal”) together.

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