

“Justice for Hungary”

As once again we remember the fateful 1920 Treaty of Trianon on June 4th, we point out the very thorough “Classic” article below, which lays out the facts and presents the injustice in detail. At the same time, let us recall a Hungarian-American initiative to call the world’s attention to the dismemberment of Hungary

That was the slogan painted on the side of the Lockheed-Sirius airplane that left Harbour-Grace, Newfoundland, on July 15, 1931 on a non-stop trans-atlantic flight to Budapest. Piloted by Endresz György, a World War I flyer in the Austro-Hungarian army, with Magyar Sándor, his pupil, as navigator, the flight took 25 hours and 20 minutes, six hours less than



Lindbergh’s flight four years earlier. It was the first time a transatlantic flight had radio contact with both the starting and landing aerodromes.

Magyar Sándor had originated the idea of a transatlantic flight, and the American Hungarian Federation took charge of organizing the venture, hoping to call international attention to the dismemberment of Hungary by the Treaty of Trianon. They intended to cover expenses by the sale of postcards at one dollar each.

By June 1930, some \$5,000 had been collected in the US and Canada, but only \$45 in Hungary. This was not sufficient to order the plane. Then a Hungarian sausage maker from Flint, MI, Emil Szalay, stepped into the breach: he mortgaged his salami factory for \$20,000 and offered it to the

cause. Now the plane could be ordered.

In February of 1930, Lord Rothermere, the British newspaper tycoon, offered \$10,000 to the Hungarian pilot who would, for the first time, cross the Atlantic from New York to Budapest. It was he who suggested “Justice for Hungary” as its slogan.

By July, everything was ready. The flying duo broke a record covering the first leg of the trip – they reached Ireland in 13 hours and 50 minutes. But the rest of the trip was not as speedy. Due to worsened weather conditions, they were unable to land at the planned site of Mátyásföld, the first permanent airfield in the Budapest area, where thousands were ready to welcome them. Instead, they were forced to land 25 kilometers

short, in a cornfield near Bicske, in northern Fejér County. A modest memorial column, with a white marble plaque in the middle of a field, marks the spot today.

The flight was a spectacular success, as newspapers around the world reported it on their front page, and the pilots were received as heroes in Budapest. Lord Rothermere promptly tele-

graphed the money to Hungarian Premier Bethlen, to be handed over to the flyers.

Endresz continued to work as a pilot, but Magyar returned to America and, thanks to his fame, was able to find a job in the aviation industry.

The following year, Endresz and Magyar were invited to Italy, to a meeting of transatlantic pilots. At the last moment, Endresz and Magyar had a major falling out, and Magyar declined to go. Bittay István, a wireless operator, took his place. As they approached the Rome airport, they encountered turbulence, and the plane crashed, killing both Endresz and Bittay. They were buried in Hungary, with a huge crowd attending the services.

Erika Papp Faber is Editor of Magyar News Online.

Mi a magyar?

Reményik Sándor verse

Magyarok voltak Magyarország nélkül,
Magyarok vannak Magyarország nélkül,
Magyarok lesznek Magyarország nélkül.
Mert az országnál mélyebb a magyarság,
Mert test az ország és lélek a nép –
Keret az ország, s az ország-keretben
A magyarság a fejedelmi Kép ...
Két évtizedig* idegen keretben
A Kép, a lényeg alig változott,
Oltárképpé magasztosult talán,
Bár nyomta a kereszt, az átkozott.
A régi, rokon, ismerős keretben
Ne felejtjük: ez is csak foglalat –
Jobban hat a neki való keretben,
De mégis csak a Kép az, aki hat!
Csikoroghat az államgépezet,
Mert minden állam test és csikorog –
De Arany János dallama örök,
S Petőfin nem fognak ki divatok!
Vannak bolondjai a szerelemnek,
S örültjei a honfi-láznak is –
De néha nagyon is hamar kiszül,
Hogy mindez múltó, balga és hamis.
Vannak korszakos szörnyű tévedések
És vad politikai divatok –
De néha egy-egy költő mondja el
Joggal: az állam mostan én vagyok.
Két évtizedes idegen keretben
Mi megláttuk az örök lényegét –
Országokat lehet szétdarabolni:
Nem lehet legyilkolni lelkeket!

Kolozsvár, 1941 május 15

* Written in 1941, the “two decades” refers to the time since the 1920 treaty of Trianon



Reményik Sándor szülőháza



Now that Hungarians have the opportunity to acquire dual citizenship, the question posed by Végvári – pseudonym for Kolozsvár-born Reményik Sándor /1890–1941/ – is an appropriate one to ask. Reményik's purpose in writing his poetry was to revive drooping Hungarian spirits in Transylvania, and to rekindle hope in the future.

Did you know...

...that beginning with the mid-12th century, ordeals by fire or by water were held in the name of St. László, who reigned as king of Hungary from 1077 to 1095? (An “ordeal” was a trial by which

the accused was exposed to physical danger - such as walking on fiery coals or being thrown into water - from which he was supposed to be divinely protected if he was innocent.) Various documents mention that oaths were taken by his head relic

(herma), a masterpiece of Hungarian medieval goldsmiths' art. It can be seen in the Héderváry Chapel of Győr Cathedral.

The feast of St. László is observed in Hungary on June 27th.

Hussar Hero: Michael Kovats, Father of the U.S. Cavalry

Gwen Solyom

Benjamin Franklin received a letter, written in Latin, dated January 13, 1777. It began, "Most Illustrious Sir: Golden freedom cannot be purchased with yellow gold." The writer went on to identify himself as a "nobleman" offering his services to the American cause of freedom. He signed it with the phrase "faithful unto death." Michael Kovats de Fabricy, soldier on horseback, would become an American Revolutionary hero far from his hometown of Karcag, Hungary.

Michael's father, Imre and mother, Sara, lived in Karcag, a market town on Hungary's Great Plains, where horses and horsemanship were prized. The town had been devastated by the Ottoman invasion and 160-year occupation.

Born in August 1724, Kovats grew up to be well educated, versed in Latin and German. He later described himself as a nobleman. His wife, Franciska Merse of Szinye, would build a chapel in his honor after his death.

His Experience

Like other Hungarian volunteers, as well as the many other foreigners and immigrants who aided the cause of American freedom, Kovats brought years of previous military experience to the forces of General George Washington. A cavalryman by age 20, he already served in the Hapsburg army during the war against Prussia, then in the French army, and also in the Austro-Hungarian army.

After 18 years of military service, he retired around 1776 as a hussar, or light cavalry, major and lived in Upper Hungary (present-day Slovakia). There he trained troops who were organizing for Polish inde-

pendence. He met and trained a young Casimir Pulaski, who would go on to become his superior in the American army.



Founding Father of the U.S. Cavalry
Col. Com. Michael Kovats de Fabricy

The Letter

In his 1777 letter to Franklin, written while in Bordeaux, France, Kovats offered his services to the cause of American freedom. "I am now here, of my own free will, having taken all the horrible hardships and bothers of this journey, and I am willing to sacrifice myself wholly and faithfully as it is expected of an honest soldier facing the hazards and great dangers of the war....for the freedom of your great Congress."

Kovats' letter was not immediately forwarded to America. Nevertheless, Kovats set sail aboard the ship

Catharina of Dartmouth on February 26, 1777.

Making His Mark

Thanks to a letter of introduction from Major General Joseph Spencer of Rhode Island, Kovats met Washington at his headquarters in Philadelphia. His initial application for service was rejected because of translation difficulties.

However, Kovats eventually joined the newly formed military unit of the German community of Philadelphia. He soon met Brigadier General Pulaski, whom Washington had charged with the establishment of a cavalry. Kovats became the cavalry's training officer in January 1778, teaching them Hungarian hussar tricks.

In February 1778, Pulaski recommended that Kovats become commander of a permanent legion. On April 18, 1778, Congress appointed Kovats colonel of the Cavalry Legion, to be headquartered in Baltimore. He thus was the first commander of what would eventually become the U.S. Cavalry.

For the rest of the year, the cavalry served successfully in numerous battles along the East Coast. In February 1779, the legion was ordered south to the defense of Charleston, S.C. Despite losing some horsemen to smallpox along the way, the legion arrived to meet up with General Benjamin Lincoln on May 8, 1779. On the battlefield, riding ahead of his troops, Kovats and his horse were both mortally



Photos by Paul Schipul

wounded and died on May 11, 1779. They were buried where they fell.

Hometown Accolades

Today Karcag, Hungary, is a town of about 23,000. The community, which contains a natural thermal bath, is located near the United Nations World Heritage Site – the nature preserve Hortobágy National Park.

Residents are proud of their connection with America and their hero, Kovats. In 1992 the elementary-middle school was named in his honor. The American flag and the Hungarian flag hang side by side in the entrance hall, and children learn about the role Kovats played in the American Revolution in history class. There is also a symbolic house gate at the site of the house where he was born. Both of these places were dedicated after the fall of Communism in 1990.

Kovats' sacrifice is honored in commemoration ceremonies in America and Hungary every May 11th, the anniversary of his death. On October 11, 2003, a statue titled "Fidelissimus ad Mortem", or "Faithful Unto Death", was dedicated on the grounds of the Hungarian Embassy in Washington, D.C.

The life-size statue depicts the moment Kovats and his horse gave their lives for American independence. A smaller replica of the statue was presented in Karcag on May 11, 2004. The Citadel Military Academy in Charleston honors him with a plaque and a field named after the hussar hero.

Gwen Solyom is Chapter Historian of the John Lynch Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Lynchburg, VA.

A „virágok királynőjéről”

Karolina Szabo

Többször hallottuk már, hogy a rózsa a virágok királynője. A mohamedán vallásnak szent növénye a rózsa. Hitük szerint Mohamed proféta izzadságából is rózsa fakadt. A biblia is többször említi a rózsát. Mózesnek az Úr az égő csipkebokorból szólalt meg. A történelemben számtalanszor fordul elő; Néró, a római császár, 200,000 rózsával díszítette fel palotáját. A magyar legendák szerint Szent Erzsébet kötényében a szegényeknek szánt alamizsna rózsává változott.

Szobrászok, festők, költők műveiben is megjelenik a rózsa. Petőfi Sándor, a mi szeretett költőnk nem egy versében olvassuk a rózsát. Az egyik nagyon szép népdalszerű költeményét így kezdi:

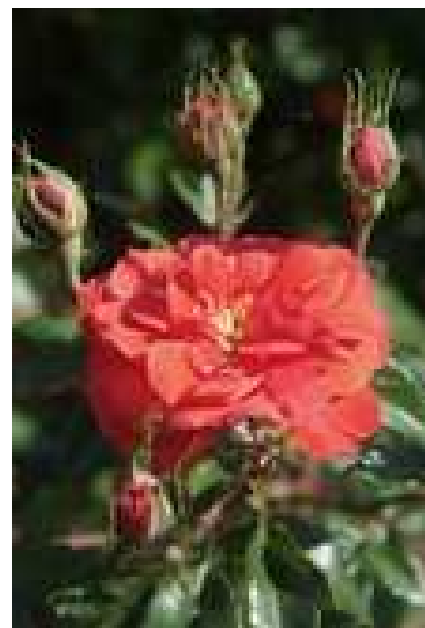
*Rózsabokor a domb oldalon,
Borulj a vállamra angyalom ...*

A korai keresztyén vallás először tiltakozott a rózsa ellen, mert pogánynak tartotta, de a későbbiek során a középkorban a legtöbb Mária képen megtalálható a rózsa.

Anyáknapiján édesanyagnak a legkedvesebb virága. Szent Valentine napon a szerelmet jelképezi. De nincs is szebb virág nála; bársonyos, harmatos, enyhén kellemes illatát semmi sem múlja fenn.

Magyarországon nincs párja a Márk György által kitermesztett rózsáknak. Történelmünk nagy alakjairól, híres színészekről nevezte el őket; fehér, sárga, piros, és azoknak minden árnyalata megtalálható. A mellékelt képeken láthatjuk a Blaha Lujzát, Báthory Istvánt és Esztergomot. De a legszebb az, ami Nagy Imréről van elnevezve.

A júniusi menyasszonyoknak bőven van miből válogatni csokorjukhoz a szebbnél szebb és illatosabb rózsák közül.



Báthory István



"Blaha Lujza" és "Esztergom"



Nagy Imre

Life on the Danube—in the ‘Thirties

Remy P. Papp

On a trip down Memory Lane, Remy Papp (no relation to László) recalls an almost forgotten Danube River sport: rowing.

Some of the most pleasant memories of this old guy center around the Danube River around Budapest during the 1930's and early 40's. You should be aware that in those days the Duna was very different from what it is today.

On my recent (last twenty years or so) visits to Budapest and points north of the City, I was painfully struck by the lack of any life on that beloved river. There are no boats on the water, there are no tents on those shores, the river appears to be abandoned – nobody appears to want to enjoy a life-style which was so prevalent in the old days. And what a loss it is for the modern youth (and the not so young) who miss out on a vast experience of joy, sport, fellowship and enjoyment of Nature!



Morning exercise with Dad

Some seventy years later, I still think back with great fondness and marvel at one scene we encountered coming back from a weekend of boating to the boat-house at *Római Fürdő* in the North of the City. After a day of cloud cover – and even rain – we reached the end of Szentendre Island with the wide and combined river. Budapest lay ahead of us, *Római Fürdő* downriver to our right, and there was a beautiful rainbow above and across the City, the after-rain sun shining in what became a brilliant spring afternoon. It was an indescribable experience and I still draw life and hope from its memory.

The boats on the Danube were varied, of different length, carrying different numbers of oarsmen, some with, some without a coxwain: but they were all what is called “pull-boats”, boats with sliding seats, outriggers holding the oars, of lapstreak construction. The lines of these boats were rather similar in

form to the racing shells most are familiar with. The “wild rowers” (*vadevezős*) boats were much sturdier, much more stable. These were not boats with thin plywood skin; the lapstreak planks were about one cm thick, the beam or width of the boats was roughly between 70 and 90 cm wide, as opposed to 35 to 40 cm width of the racing shell. These were not boats to race, these were boats to go on trips with. First thing my parents did after we got our boat (yes, a used one) was to send the boat up by ship to Regensburg, Germany. They followed by ship or rail, retrieved the boat from the “*stég*” (ship’s landing), got into it and floated/rowed down to Budapest on a two-week vacation, tenting all along the Danube. More modest endeavors were common practice among the “*vadak*” (the wild ones) as they were called, such as circumnavigating Szentendre or Csepel island on a two or three day trip, camping on the shores.

Camping on the shores was easy and permissible. In the Hungary of those days, people and the government were clear about the vagaries of rivers, the varying cycles of ebb and flood, aware that a river needs room about it to spread out during high-water and recede to the middle of its stream during dry weather. As a result, wide strips of land on either side of the river were kept free and in the public domain so that people did not have to suffer from the ravages of floods. When it receded one had to be very aware of the shallow spots being exposed along the entire run of the river, threatening even the very shallow draft of these boats in the most unexpected places, even in the very middle of it.

To aid the rowers, the radios aired reports as a matter of course every morning after the weather news. There was a wide audience (especially on and before weekends), listening in on the water levels being reported at all major cities on the Danube, from Passau down as far as Bulgaria. I remember, there were – they may still be there – two nasty rocks just offshore not quite a kilometer down from our summer house on the Danube, which were quite high, sometimes barely covered with water and therefore invisible, yet dangerous. As soon as I listened to the morning flood-stage report, I knew right away, could we row over them or do we have to make a wide circle around them. This was not an idle exercise, with my parents rowing and me steering, they would let me know in no uncertain terms if I took them out unnecessarily into the rough current where rowing was two to three times as hard as when hugging the shoreline.

As I indicated, there was a thriving life on the Danube. This meant that on a normal summer weekend there were hundreds and hundreds of boats on the water in every direction you looked – at least around the cities. In the scene I had described at the beginning, you have to picture us having been surrounded by a whole fleet of boats similar to ours in the middle of the river, with the exception of those who were rowing upstream and therefore hugging the shores.

I mentioned circumnavigating the islands. We did this once, the Csepel Island tour. We started downstream from *Római Fürdő* – the wrong way to start – past the City, past Lágymányos. We camped for the night not too far up from the end of the island in the main branch of the Danube. You had to have slept in a tent at least some time in your life to appreciate the hardships along with the pleasures of such an experience. Next morning, we rounded the island and started up river in the small – the Soroksár – branch. Since that is dammed off at the north end of Csepel Island, the water in that branch is not running, rowing is easier going “upstream”. This trip could have been nice, but (unbeknownst to any of us) I had unfortunately contracted rubella (German measles) and ran a high fever for most of the trip. My Mother was worried out of her mind, but there were not many options on the open river and no major centers of any appreciable size within reach, so the only thing to do was to continue and try to get back to the City as soon as possible.

We spent the night in the tent once more at Ráckeve, a little more than halfway up the branch. Then we reached the north end of the branch, the

lock through the dam. For me that was a first, going into that high-walled chamber. As soon as we got in, the “gate-keeper” came to us and reached down with a long stick, to the end of which was attached a purse similar to the one they used to reach around for collection in church. Yes, it was a “toll lock”, just as they all are around the world. I watched with great curiosity as we were lifted up by the incoming water, until the gates opened in front of us and we were free to enter the strong facing current flowing through Budapest.

Most of our trips, however, were heading up in the big branch of the Danube around Szentendre Island, to Szigetmonostor, or to Vác, or Zebegény. First, of course we had to round the south end of the Island and proceed along its shores on the east side. I remember that this trip was somewhat dark and oppressive; the south end of the Island is full of wells that provide the drinking water for Budapest.

The shores are forbidding, there are strict rules keeping boats from landing there, the wells are (or were) of conical stone masonry a few meters high. The combination of those sinister-looking cones with the lifeless shores gave one the shivers.

I must mention one little family restaurant just at the upper end of Szigetmonostor called “Hell’s Inn” (*Pokol Csárda*), at the Island end of the Vác ferry. It is still there, but the shoreline has changed very much. In the olden days, you could pull up to a clean sandy beach under the Inn, in fact you were encouraged to do so. You pulled up the boat so as not to lose it to the waves created by some big passenger ships whizzing by, mounted a flight of wooden stairs and got seated under some trees and overlooking the river in the simple restaurant, one which had some great and tasty Hungarian food. I have a picture in my album of such a meal with some friends whom we met on the river. Today, the sandy beach is gone, the whole shore is overgrown with reeds and an ugly rusty barge is tied up in front of the Inn, in a seemingly permanent manner.

On revisiting Visegrad citadel a few years ago, we had a clean view of the north end of this Island. I remembered it as always being full of tents and great parties of young people – now it was empty; there was not a soul, nobody. It was a very depressing sight. How I wish young people would once again pick up the spirit of the “wild” – rowing, that is!

Remy P. Papp is a Civil Engineer with his own consulting firm, specializing in marine construction design. He spent his youth in Hungary and completed his education in the United States.



Another Folk Custom: *Pünkösdi királyság*

An old folk custom that became a common saying is tied to the feast of Pentecost

Translated literally as “Pentecost kingship”, the custom meant choosing a “king” from among the young men at Pentecost. Usually, this involved some form of competition, most often a horse race. The men had to ride the horse bareback, and they had to surmount obstacles before reaching their goal. The victor was crowned “king” by the young girls, with a crown of flowers they themselves had made. Great festivities followed the crowning.

This custom was so widespread in the Middle Ages, that even the Church accepted the entertainments that accompanied it, even though they were often tinged with somewhat pagan elements.

This “kingship”, however, was of short duration, lasting merely a day. The term *pünkösdi királyság* therefore is used to refer to some very uncertain rule that lasts for a very short time. It was used in this sense as early as the 16th century.

Its meaning was apparently taken very seriously in the Austrian court. When after the Compromise of 1867 it came time for the crowning of Francis Joseph as king of Hungary, the ceremony was originally planned for the Monday of Pentecost. Someone in charge of the festivities realized its import, and postponed the coronation to another day. Perhaps that is why Francis Joseph ruled for such a long time!

EPF



Emperor Franz Joseph

Finom körte leves

A meleg idő bejövetelével mindenki szívesen fogyasztja ezt a könnyen készíthető, hűsítő levest. Az izletes magyar gyümölcs leves változata.

Hozzávalók:

1 liter (kb 16 oz) körte befőtt saját levében
1 doboz vanília pudding
2 pohár (fél liter) tej
Csipetnyi só,
Cukor

Feltesszük a körtét lévvvel együtt főni
A puddingot kikeverjük a tejjel, tegyük bele a sót, majd a forrásban lévő körtéhez öntjük. Újra felforraljuk, levesszük a tűzről, izlés szerinti mennyiségű cukrot adunk hozzá.

Tálaláskor egy mentha levéllel díszítjük.

Melegen, langyosan és hidegen is fogyasztható.

Ha a krém levest szeretjük, akkor főzés nélküli (instant) puddingot használunk és csak másfél (1 ½) pohár tejet. Az összeset turmixoljuk és hidegen fogyasztjuk. Mandula aromával izesíthejük.

Kicsi a világ

Paul Soos

One of our contributing editors, Eliz Kakas, was wintering in Florida. There she met an 84 year old gentleman, Karoly Kovacs, who upon learning that Eliz was from Connecticut began inquiring about a very dear friend of his. His friend was a member of St Ladislaus Church in South Norwalk. Could Eliz possibly provide any contact information for Antal Nemcsis and his wife Eleonore?

Eliz, knowing that I was active at Saint Ladislaus, e-mailed this information to me and asked if I could perhaps find any information on this couple. I immediately replied that Eleonore was my godmother!

Sadly, I had to report that Eleonore passed away 4 years ago and Antál two years ago. I added that their only daughter had three children of her own and forwarded her e-mail address.

After receiving my reply and thanking me for the information, Eliz wrote, “Ez jól bele illene a Kicsi a Világba.” (This is well suited for ‘It’s a Small World’.)



Paul Soos, Antal Nemcsis and daughter at St Ladislaus búcsú 2008



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