



*\*The red star, hated symbol of Communism, was the first thing toppled by the Hungarian people during the Revolution of 1956. This commemorative monument, entitled Star Toppling, was erected in the town of Tököl. While the form is basically that of a star, it also looks like a deformed human being. The artist was Szórádi Zsigmond. Used by permission of Ocsovai András, who posted the photo.*

## A Hungarian Mother's Farewell to Her Son at the End of October 1956

### Csikós Zoltán

Itt állok hát a nyitott koporsónál,  
Még nem szegezték rá a fődelet  
Tizenhat évig szemem fénye voltál  
S itt hagysz örökre most, Laci gyerek.  
Búcsúzzunk hát, a búcsúszó nem könnyű,  
Attól, akit szerettünk s elhagyott,  
De számomra, Úristen, jaj de szörnyű,  
Mert úgy érzem, a gyilkosod vagyok.

Másfél tizedje múlt el az éveknek,  
Mikor apádtól búcsút vettem én,  
Mert menni kell Kovácsy őrmesternek,  
Indul az ezred egy nap reggelén.  
Virágot tűztem a sapkájára  
S búcsút intett az induló vonat  
A Don felé, vigyáznia a Hazára,  
Hogy el ne öntse piszkos áradat.  
A nagyvezűst elküldötte nékem  
És jöttek a tábori levelek.  
Majd jött az írás - legszörnyűbb emlékem:  
Egy hős magyarral ismét kevesebb.

Hiába halt Kovácsy törzsőrmester,  
Tábornok, őrnagy és a közbaka.  
Győzött az árulás és a gőzhenger,  
Elért a sátán martalóc hada.  
Az ős-paraszti portánk szertedülva,  
Kivert kutyaként futottunk tova,  
Legjobbaink bitón vagy vérbefúlva,  
Vérgőzben tombolt sátán-lakoma.  
A nővérednek hogy mi lett a sorsa,  
Sosem tudtad meg, kis Laci gyerek.  
És jöttek, jöttek a gaztettek sorra  
Bilincsbe vertek így hős nemzetet.

Tíz év után a jármot már nem bírta,  
Az ősi virtus új életre kelt.  
Vér és aranybetűkkel van megírva:  
Zsarnok-kolosszus vérében hevert.

Két napja tombolt már a harc az utcán,  
S Te mondottad: "Anyám, én most megyek,  
Apám nincs már, így én vagyok az útján,

A többi srácok már lent küzdenek."  
Az Úristen legyen tanúm nékem,  
Hogy vissza akartalak tartani  
A falon függő nagyvezűstre néztem.

S apámnak hangját véltem hallani:  
"Kovácsyknak helye ott a sorban,  
Haza, Szabadság, hogyha harcba hív!"  
Már nem anya, csupán magyar nő voltam,  
Mikor mondtam: "Menjél hát Laci!"  
Rohantál már is, géppisztoly kezében.  
Honnan szerezted, máig sem tudom.  
Kilőtt tank mellett álltál, fény a szemedben,  
S én néztelek a szétlőtt ablakon.  
Davaj! ordítva jött a vörös horda  
És kattogott már géppisztolyod,  
A martalócok ott dőltek halomra,  
S futott a többi is, ki még futhatott.  
A szemben álló háznak ablakából  
Ávos tiszt lép ki, csak egy pillanat,  
Egy sortűz a fegyvered torkából,  
S a véreb átlőtt fejjel dőlt hanyatt.  
És láttam arcodon mosolyt suhanva  
Nem volt az gúnykacaj s nem gyermeké.  
Egy férfinak győztes diadala,  
Gyermekeiből akkor nőttél férfivé.  
Majd jött a páncélszörny tüzet okádvá,  
Repült kezedből a benzinüveg.  
A szörny megtorpant, füstölt, lángban állva  
Égő fátylaként hulltak az emberek.  
Morajlott messziről és száll az akna -  
Halálmadárként vijjogva suhan -  
Láttam, hogy dőlsz el, a szívedhez kapva  
...És tudtam már, hogy nincs Laci fiam.

Búcsúzzunk hát, a koporsó már földve,  
Gyermekested rejti a fedél  
Nyugodni tér az édes anyaföldbe,  
És férfilelked fenn az gben száll,  
És tudom, hogy a Nemzet nem veszett el,  
Mert rája ott fenn két férfi vigyáz:  
Vitéz Kovácsy László törzsőrmester,  
S ifjabb Kovácsy Laci, pesti srác.

### Utóhang

Ötvenhatban történelemformáló  
Nagy tettek hívtak maroknyi magyart  
Keresztet és szabadságot legázoló  
Bősz zsarnokot ki leverni akart.  
Nyugattól kért egy kis segítséget,  
Segítség helyett jöttek szép szavak.  
Az árulás vagy piszkos üzlet-érdek,  
Melyik nagyobb, bűnlista tudja csak.  
Tudjátok meg, itt nincs excuse vagy par-  
don,  
Bűnös agyatok bármit kieszel:  
Miért halt hiába értetek a harcos  
Kovácsy Laci annyi sok ezer?

Forrás: Szittyakürt. 2006. március



# The Legacy of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution

Géza Jeszenszky

*Entitled "From the Warsaw Pact to NATO: The Legacy of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution", the then Hungarian Ambassador to the United States wrote this piece in October of 1999, ten years after the ouster of the Communist regime.*

The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 ended on October 30 with full victory: the old Communist system crumbled and was gone, the Soviet troops withdrew from Budapest and started to leave the country, multi-party democracy was restored and Prime Minister Imre Nagy formed a coalition based on the parties of the 1945-47 Parliament. Two days later that government decided to leave the Warsaw Pact, the political and military instrument of Soviet domination in Central and Eastern Europe, and, in a desperate attempt to forestall a new Soviet intervention, proclaimed the neutrality of Hungary.

The Soviet Red Army attacked Hungary on November 4, 1956, and crushed the legitimate government. Thousands of Hungarians were killed during the fighting, or in judicial murders carried out by the puppet government of János Kádár. For more than thirty years the Kádár regime tried to break the backbone of the nation, ruled by repression and mismanaged the economy. Facing total bankruptcy, in the summer of 1989 the Communist government surrendered and agreed to start round-table discussions with the opposition parties. The agreement on the peaceful transformation of the system was signed at the end of September.

On October 23, 1989, a democratic republic was proclaimed from the balcony of the Parliament, where thirty-three years earlier a revolutionary crowd demanded independence and the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary. With free elections held five months later, the process was completed; Hungary became a western-type parliamentary democracy. The bloodless revolution of 1989 in Poland and Hungary, unopposed by



*Korvin Köz*

the Gorbachev leadership in the Soviet Union, the breakthrough of the Iron Curtain by 800 East Germans on the Austrian-Hungarian border and the subsequent opening of the border by Hungary in September led to the collapse of the East German regime and the fall of the Berlin Wall. That in turn inspired the "Velvet Revolution" in Czechoslovakia, followed by the uprising in Romania at Christmas, and the surrender of the Communist leadership in Bulgaria and Albania. By the end of 1991, the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union itself was dissolved and all the captive nations of the Soviet Empire became free.

We, Hungarians have every reason to be proud of the historic role we played in 1956 and 1989. We should not allow it to be forgotten or overshadowed. In the last ten years we showed that with independence restored and with a democratic constitution, Hungary became a stable, increasingly prosperous country, a good

partner for other countries, while helping three million fellow-Hungarians in the neighboring states; a member of NATO and a reliable ally of the United States, while moving rapidly towards meeting all the conditions for membership in the European Union. The centuries characterized by ill-fate and misjudgments are over, the Hungarian state enters the second millennium with bright perspectives; with perseverance Hungarians have a good chance to realize their age-old aspirations.

*Géza Jeszenszky served as the Minister of Foreign Affairs after the first post-Communist parliamentary elections. He was Hungarian Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the United States from 1998 to 2002, and Ambassador to Norway and Iceland from 2011 to 2014.*

## Magyar News Online

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## October 23rd

Erika Papp Faber

*Some thoughts on the anniversary of the outbreak of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution. Hail to the defeated!*

Like a rainbow, the name of John Capistrano arches over Hungarian history – a symbol of hope and freedom. This Italian Franciscan, whose California Mission welcomes back swallows in the spring, brought the welcome spring of liberation to Hungary twice in 500 years. In 1456, joining the forces of Hunyadi János, he helped, with religious fervor and leadership, to beat back the overwhelming forces of Turkish invasion and preserve the country's liberty. In 1956, Capistrano once again stepped into the breach, this time only in spirit, as the Hungarian Revolution for freedom broke out on the precise 500th anniversary of his death.

This too was a struggle of David vs. Goliath, of desperate people with primitive weapons fighting for their homeland, fighting back a well-equipped, superior military juggernaut. In contrast to the very active role played by John Capistrano in 1456, the rapid-fire speed of events in 1956 restricted Cardinal



*Statue of John Capistrano in the Castle District of Buda*



*Cardinal Mindszenty blessed this plaque at San Juan Capistrano Mission, CA during his visit to the US in 1974*

Mindszenty József, head of the Catholic Church in Hungary and released from Communist prison by Freedom Fighters, to a muted spiritual leadership within the confines of the American embassy where he had taken refuge.

Unlike 1456, the freedom achieved in 1956 was short-lived, yet its spiritual victory is emblazoned across the sky like a rainbow for all to see.

Gloria Victis!

## The Martyrs of Arad - Marking the 170th Anniversary

EPF

*On October 6th, a plaque honoring the 13 Martyrs of Arad will be unveiled and blessed at Nagysándor János utca in Pest, marking the 170th anniversary of their execution by the Austrians.*

On October 6th, a plaque honoring the 13 Martyrs of Arad will be unveiled and blessed at Nagysándor János utca in Pest, marking the 170th anniversary of their execution by the Austrians. The memorial plaque is the work of Matl Péter,

sculptor from Munkács, perhaps best known for his monument to the Conquest at Verecke Pass.

The ceremony will be conducted by Mons. Fodor József of Nagyvárád, representing Bishop Böcskei László. Following the blessing of the plaque, the Mayor of the 20th District will lay a wreath, as will the President of the local Armenian community to honor the two generals of Armenian descent who were among the 13. Bene Ferenc will play the tárogató (a Hungarian double-reed instrument). Then a Mass will be celebrated at nearby Szt. Erzsébet Church, with several commemorative inserts.



*Nagysándor János*

Credit for the initiative belongs to Horváth Zoltán György, owner of the publishing house Romanika Kiadó. His son Árpád recently wrote a prize-winning thesis about the various memorials to the "Arad 13" in the Pesterzsébet section of Budapest.

Nagysándor János, a *honvéd* general during the Revolution and Freedom Fight of 1848-49, was one of the 13. He was born in Nagyvárád, reason for the Celebrant coming from that city for the occasion.

The other generals commemorated on October 6th are Aulich Lajos, Damjanich János (about whom there is a separate article, written by a descendant, in this issue), Dessewffy Arisztid, Kiss Ernő, Knezić Károly, Lahner György, Lázár Vilmos, Leininger-Westerburg Károly, Poeltenberg Ernő, Schweidel József, Török Ignác and Vécsey Károly.

## Zsuzsa Lengyel Recognized for Nurturing Heritage

EPF

*At the seventh gathering of AMIT (Amerikai Magyar Iskolák Találkozója – American Hungarian School Meeting) in New York, the Hungarian Consul General István Pásztor presented our Associate Webmaster Zsuzsa Palócz Lengyel with a Certificate of Honor in recognition of her "dedication and commitment" to "preserving and nurturing the values of Hungarian cultural heritage in the United States of America".*

On September 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>, the Hungarian General Consulate on 52<sup>nd</sup> Street, New York was the scene of the seventh meeting of educators involved in American Hungarian schools across North America. For the first time, representatives from Canada also took part in the two-day affair which drew participants from Los Angeles, Minneapolis, Dallas, Orlando, Durham (NC), Boston, as well as Vancouver and Ottawa.



*Memorial of the 13 Martyrs of Arad at Salgótarján, by ifj. Szabó István. Posted by András on kozterkep.hu and used by permission.*

The Saturday program began with the awarding of Certificates of Honor to three individuals outstanding in their dedication to the furthering of Hungarian culture and the education of children in weekend classes. Our Associate Webmaster, Palócz Lengyel Zsuzsa had taught in the Fairfield (CT) Hungarian School before becoming, in 2003, Director of Magyar Studies of America which operates the School. Under her leadership, the School has expanded from offering Hungarian language classes only to adults, to teaching children as well in two venues: at Fairfield and Danbury.

Furthermore, Zsuzsa has been involved in the Danbury Hungarian Club since its inception in the 1970s, and with a small core group worked very hard and persistently to achieve the Club's goal of building a condo complex. Their perseverance paid off: the 13 condos of Pannonia Village were completed in 2000.

As President of Magyar Studies of America, Zsuzsa presided over the dedication of the 1956 memorial plaque by Fairfield Town Hall in 2003, and organizes the annual October 23rd commemoration there.

The Angel of Freedom statue in Kaposvár – the first in Hungary to com-

memorate the Revolution of 1956 – and realized through donations by Hungarians in the diaspora, had been the dream of Gyula Egervári, founder of Magyar Studies. He then entrusted the administrative details of the project to Zsuzsa Lengyel. That statue was unveiled for the 50th anniversary in 2006.

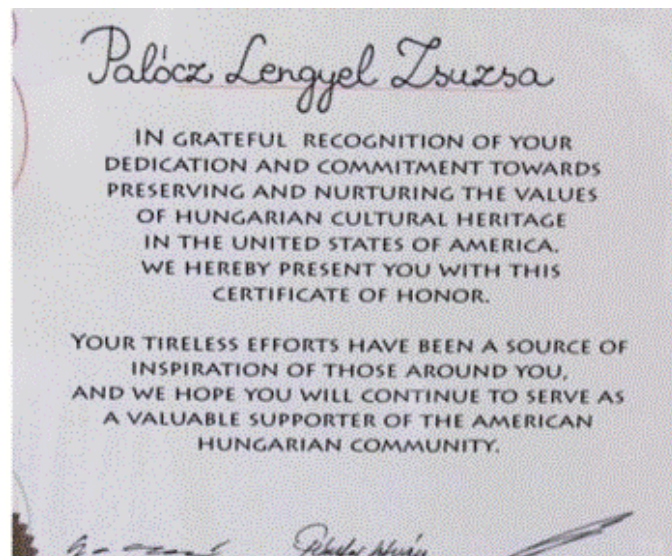


*Consul General István Pásztor and Zsuzsa Lengyel, Associate Webmaster of MNO*

Referring to Zsuzsa's achievements, the Certificate pointed out that "Your

tireless efforts have been a source of inspiration to those around you, and we hope you will continue to serve as a valuable supporter of the American Hungarian community." It was signed by the Consul General István Pásztor.

Proud that we have such an illustrious member on the Magyar News Online staff, we offer our congratulations to Zsuzsa on her well-deserved recognition!



*Top: Panel showcasing the work of Magyar Studies of America schools in CT; Marshall Tamás, AMIT Director of Teaching and Learning- B. Nagy Péter, Consul, Counselor of National Cohesion - Tóthné Koller Katalin, from San Francisco- Lengyel Zsuzsa, President of Magyar Studies of America- Kerekes Judit, Founder and Co-President of AMIT- Consul General Pásztor István- Petreczky Katalin, AMIT Co-President; Bottom Left: participants of the conference; Bottom Right: text of Zsuzsa`s citation*

## **Borsos tokány (Peppered stew)**

*As the weather turns cooler, this substantial dish will become a favorite.*

1 3/4 lbs beef flank  
1 large onion, finely chopped  
2 1/2 Tbs oil  
Salt and pepper  
1 clove garlic, crushed  
1/4 cup dry white wine (optional)  
Tomato paste

Cut the beef into strips of 1/4 inch thickness, and 2 inches long.

Sauté the onion in the oil until golden. Add the meat and brown on all sides. Season with salt and pepper. Add the garlic and the wine, then cover with a lid and simmer over low heat. Pour in a little water if necessary.

Add the tomato paste when the meat is half cooked. Add a little more water if required, and continue cooking until the meat is done. Let the liquid reduce as much as possible.

This dish has a smooth, brown sauce. It goes well with boiled or mashed potatoes, rice, or polenta.

# A Musical Dynasty and a Hungarian Mozart?

Olga Vállay Szokolay

*Is musical talent inheritable? Is it nature or nurture? Maybe both? Find out from the saga of this musical dynasty.*

On September 16, 2019, 23-year-old pianist *Szokolay Ádám Zsolt* won the Bartók World Competition.

His family name is far from unknown in the music world. Looking back several generations, almost everyone in his family has been a musician.

Grandpa *orosházi Szokolay Sándor* was a world-renowned composer. He was born in 1931 at Kunágota, Békés County in Hungary. His grandfather and father were amateur musicians who played several instruments and founded a choir.

At his local music school where he graduated in 1950, Sándor became acquainted with the world of Bartók and Kodály, rooted in folk music. Those influences defined his whole life's creative attitude. There he even met Kodály in person whose mentality powerfully fostered his musical thinking and credo.

He continued his education at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music in Budapest. As a student, he taught at the Academy and won awards in composition in 1955, 1957 and 1959. His work "Allegro de Concerto" won a prize in Warsaw's Wienawski Competition. After obtaining his degree from the Academy in 1957, he started working at the Hungarian Radio, then the Hungarian Television. From 1959 to his retirement, he was Professor



*Szokolay Ádám Zsolt*

of Composition at the Academy. Szokolay Sándor was active on the boards of a multitude of musical associations, receiving their awards over the years. In 1966, he was the recipient of the prestigious Kossuth Prize for his opera "Vér-nász" (Blood Wedding) which earned him world recognition. It was performed in 15 languages. He composed six more works in the same genre.

Sándor composed nearly 500 pieces: seven operas, five ballets, four fairy-tale operas, seven oratorios, three symphonies, eight concertos, 14 orchestral works, 200 choral works, two string quartets, 40 solo works and 120 chamber music works.

In search of peaceful creativity, in 1994 he moved from Budapest to Sopron, in Western Hungary. It was there, at age 82, on December 8, 2013 that his very active life ended. His achievements had earned him innumerable awards and he received the keys of Orosháza, Sopron, Solymár and his birthplace Kunágota.

Sándor and my husband, ér-

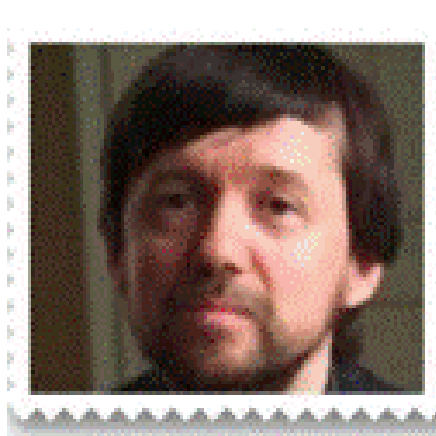
*sekujvári Szokolay Dénes* were from different branches of the same family. Because we left Hungary in 1956, we never had the opportunity to meet Sándor. It was several decades later, after Dénes passed away that I became connected with *Sándor's sons*, three of whom are – you guessed it! - professional musicians.

It was one of these sons, *Gergely*, a professional pianist in Toronto, who somehow contacted me about an upcoming New York concert by his brother *Balázs* at Carnegie Hall, around 2006. I had great interest in attending the event but was struggling with a stubborn cold at the time. How can you attend a piano concert with bouts of insuppressible coughing? Thus, I never met those distant relatives.

*Balázs* just about covered the globe with his concerts in more than 30 countries and, in keeping with the Szokolay Family's tradition, garnered a multitude of awards and prizes. He has been a piano professor at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music in Budapest since 1987 and was guest professor in South Korea, in Montclair, New Jersey and in Graz, Austria.

Their parents wanted *Ádám* to become a violinist but he was not interested. Initially, he too started the piano, until one day on television he saw and heard the FLUTE whose sound intrigued him. He started playing the instrument and, after attaining his degree at the Academy of Music, he played in orchestras and began teaching. *He is the proud father of our young Hungarian Mozart, Szokolay Ádám Zsolt.*

*Ádám Zsolt* was born on April 18, 1996, in Budapest. His choice of profession was never in doubt. At home, hearing his mother's piano lessons, he fell in love with the piano.



*Szokolay Sándor, Szokolay Balázs, Szokolay Gergely*

Not unlike Mozart, he started playing the PIANO at age four, guided by his mother, Pásztor Edina. A year later he was the winner of four Hungarian nationwide piano competitions. The minimum age for admission to the music school was seven years, thus an exception had to be made to admit him at age six. He finished the first two grades in one year and, once there, he even entered and won two competitions ...

The family moved from Eger to Budapest, where Ádám Zsolt was home-schooled. He continued his piano studies at the Tóth Aladár Music School, under Aszalós Tünde's instruction. At age eight, he applied to the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music, where he started at age nine in the class of unusually talented kids. As the youngest in the institution's history, he was running up and down, releasing his youthful energy on the corridors of the historic building.

In 2009, at age 13, the young gentleman gave his first solo concert at the Budapest Spring Festival, followed by domestic and international performances. He kept winning piano competitions, including the *München Klavierpodium in 2012, where he received seven prizes!*

He invested the stipends of his

awards into learning foreign languages. Thus, from 2015 he studied at *New York Bard College* under *Peter Serkin*. There he organized his own orchestra with his fellow students in 2017. Since 2018, he has been attending the Weimar Franz Liszt Music Academy, studying under Grigory Gruzman. His uncle, pianist Szokolay Balázs is teaching at that institution.

Ádám Zsolt practices four-five hours daily and enjoys it. He is a good competitor, likes challenges and is inspired by audiences. The list of his instructors and mentors includes a seemingly endless "who's who" in the groves of music. His composing days, if any, are still in the future. Besides Bartók, he plays works by Liszt, Debussy, Haydn, Dohnányi. With his Bard College orchestra he even played Gershwin.

Once in a while, the family gets together to play music. At Sukoró, a village near Velencei tó, Hungary, the acoustics and ambience of the local church are excellent. The Szokolay Clan, including Balázs and sons Patrik and Dominik, enjoy the rare occasions to play there.

If I seem to be an intruder in this incredible dynasty of talented musicians, perhaps I will be excused for joining, by tooting the family HORN

...

*Olga Váally Szokolay is an architect and Professor Emerita of Norwalk Community College, CT after three decades of teaching. She is a member of the Editorial Board of Magyar News Online.*

## **Damjanich János**

*Ilona Jeszenszky Etlényi*

*Damjanich János was one of the heroes of the 1848 Hungarian uprising against Habsburg rule. On October 6<sup>th</sup>, 1849 he paid for his bravery by giving his life for the cause, along with 12 other Hungarian officers.*

*Damjanich János married Emilia Csernovics, my great-aunt, in 1847. Following the death of her husband, she devoted her life to charitable work and lived in Budapest\*. After the death of her sister-in-law in 1872, her brother asked that she help him with his two orphaned daughters. Thus, 18-year-old Roxanne and 8-year-old Lara went to live with their aunt in Budapest. Lara Csernovics was my grandmother and she lived with her aunt until her own marriage in 1895.*

*The following reminiscences of Damjanich János' life were related by Emilia and recorded in beautiful longhand in a notebook by my grandmother.*

Emilia and János met in 1844 at a cousin's home and soon fell in love. Her mother opposed the marriage because he was 16 years older, was known to live a carefree life wherever he was posted, and his escapades were famous. He assured his future mother-in-law that he was a changed man and that he would soon be promoted to be Commander of the Fort of Arad.

As a young boy, Damjanich was very independent. He left home at the age of 16 to join a troop of soldiers on their way to Italy. The commanding officer took the young boy under his wing, and following years at a military academy, Damjanich became an officer in the Austro-Hungarian army.

At the time of their courtship, Damjanich was posted to Italy, and Emilia's mother also objected to having her join him there. Damjanich soon succeeded in being assigned to Temesvár in the Bánát region of Hungary and they were married in August 1847. His wedding present to her was a silver and green crystal traveling toiletry set from Vienna. (This set was given to my mother at her wedding and is now in the Damjanich Museum in Szolnok.)

Damjanich took his wife home to Temesvár by coach. There they began their happy life together. They enjoyed entertaining relatives and friends. General Julius von Haynau, his commanding officer, was a frequent guest.

Even though Damjanich was born of Serbian parents, he was an ardent Magyar. Before their marriage, he asked his wife that they should speak only Hungarian and Emilia gladly complied. (At that time, German was the language of society; Hungarian was spoken by the country folk.)

After eight months an incident



*Damjanich János*

ended this peaceful scene. In the spring of 1848, as the Hungarian uprising against Austria was on the rise, General Haynau, using abusive language, declared that the Hungarians were traitors to the Empire, that they were acting dishonorably. When Damjanich heard this, he declared that he was Hungarian and requested an official apology from his commanding officer. Instead of an apology, he received orders for immediate transfer to his previous post in Verona, Italy. Emilia was heartbroken since she was unable to accompany him. Damjanich assured his wife that this separation would not last and that he would return soon.

He returned shortly indeed, not by order of Haynau, but by orders of the Hungarian Secretary of War. Damjanich was promoted to the rank of Major and was to lead Hungarian forces against the Austrians. He would not allow his wife to join him close to the front but arranged for her to stay with friends near Szolnok. Among his many victories, the battle of Szolnok was a decisive victory for the Hungarian army and made him a legend among the troops.

An unfortunate accident prevented him from further active duty. As he attempted to rein in a pair of run-away horses, he was thrown off the wagon and broke his ankle in several places. He was taken to Buda to the best doctors, but recovery was slow and painful. Emilia joined him there. They rented an apartment and many friends visited them, including general Görgey, the leader of the Hungarian Revolutionary forces. Since his injuries were slow in healing, it was apparent that he would not be able to return to active duty soon. He was promoted to the rank of General and named Commander of the Fortress of Arad, headquarters of the Revolutionary forces.

Damjanich and his wife traveled by ship (a grain barge) down the Danube, Tisza and Maros Rivers to Arad. It was a long and painful journey and he suffered from the heat and infections. For a while it seemed that the Revolution could be won, but in 1849 Russia came to the aid of Austria to defeat the "rebels". Kossuth Lajos, the leader of the Revolution, was ready to flee and Damjanich lent him his carriage and horses to enable him to do so. (Emilia noted that neither the coachman, nor the coach, nor the horses were ever returned.)

General Görgey advised that they should lay down their arms, and did so at Világos. Damjanich was enraged and thought that freedom could still be won. He was fiercely against surrender. Yet, in the end, to save his men and his beloved Arad, he did surrender, but not to the Austrians. He was transported to Gyula to lay down his arms to the Russians. However, the Russians handed him over to the Austrians. He, along with 12 other officers, was incarcerated at the Fort of Arad.

The prisoners' wives usually had difficulty in getting permission even





*Emilia Damjanich and her biography recorded by her niece Lara*

for a short visit. Then suddenly on October 5<sup>th</sup>, 1849, the wives received permission to visit. By then, however, the prisoners were already in cells for the condemned. They themselves had to tell their wives of the verdict. Issued by General Julius von Haynau, the verdict was death, by firing squad or by hanging, the following day, October 6<sup>th</sup>, 1849.

Damjanich consoled his wife, asked her to be strong. He asked her that later, when the pain had lessened, she should marry again. "I swear that I never will!" was her answer. She never did and outlived him by 60 years.

Emilia's story falters at this point. She remembered little of the following days. She did not hear Damjanich's last words: "Long live Hungary! My poor Emilia!"

The day after the execution, Emilia's uncle, Csernovics Péter, bribed the executioner with several gold *korona* to have the bodies of Damjanich and that of György Lahner, another of the Hungarian Generals, smuggled from Arad to his castle at Mácsa during the night. They were buried there in a distant corner of the park, but no

stone marked the place.

Emilia and her widowed mother were now homeless. They lost everything. Some good friends took them into their home where they stayed for the next year. After years of hardship and persecution, their life improved, they were able to secure an apartment in the nearby town of Makó and eventually moved to Budapest.

My grandmother, Lara Csernovics who became orphaned at age eight, lived with her aunt, Emilia Damjanich from 1872. When she grew older, she assisted her aunt in her various charity activities. After she married my grandfather, Imre Jeszenszky in 1895, she often visited her. My father, who was born in 1898, vividly remembered "Emmy Tante" and told us many of these stories.

*\*The unification of Buda and Pest occurred on November 17<sup>th</sup>, 1873. Ilona Jeszenszky Etlényi has been a Stamford, CT resident for the past 60 years. After retiring from General Telephone and Electronics, she has been spending her time traveling and doing ancestry research.*

## Did you know ...

*...that we have a technological invention that will benefit all who take medicines, as well as a clarification of a historic event, and a true fish story?*

**... that** a new application has been developed by 21-year old Karda Edith which indicates the interaction of over 11,000 medicines? Called Medinfo, the invention also shows their interaction with different foods and drink items, not just alcohol. Edith developed the app as part of her Mathematics and Computer Science state exam at the Babes-Bolyai University of Kolozsvár. So far, Medinfo exists only in English, and does not yet have an online web page.

She had seen the number of medications her grandmother has to take, and her mother, who is a doctor, encouraged her to look into such a project which would be useful not only for the patient, but also for pharmacies.

Edith has received very positive feedback on her invention, and hopes to keep developing it as a start-up. She has spoken with various firms, but so far has not signed any kind of contract.

**... that** King Louis II did NOT drown in Csele Brook as he fled the battlefield of Mohács in 1526? This is what Hungarian students have been taught (for probably centuries!) And something that made all of them shake their head: NO ONE drowns in a shallow brook! This "fact" also helped to fuel the suspicion that the Austrians were behind the king's demise.

Now researchers have intensely studied the area of the battlefield, consulting ancient maps and other written sources, and us-

ing archeological resources, have determined that 500 years ago there was a 5 km long side arm of the Danube which has since silted up. The ruler had crossed Csele Brook in his flight, and was headed for that sidearm of the Danube, which was about 50 meters wide at that point. He probably met his death at its muddy west bank. The puzzle has finally been solved. It's time to correct the textbooks!

... **that** a catfish weighing 55 kilos was caught in the Danube near Baja by an angler on September 21st? Csili Péter said the fish was 2 meters long. It took him two attempts to lift it into the boat. After weighing it, Péter gave it a kiss, and returned it into the river.



*Csili Péter with the huge harcsa (catfish) which he caught*

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## Folksong: A szegedi utca jaj de sáros

*Before regulation of the Tisza River envisioned and begun by Széchenyi István, Szeged was frequently inundated, most notably in 1879, as mentioned in the above article. That will explain the reason for this folksong.*

*Folksongs provide many clues not only about the culture, but also about the language. While this one refers to the state of the streets in Szeged before the end of the 1800's, when the streets were finally paved (see "The Slippers of Szeged" in the October 2011 issue of Magyar News Online), it can also serve to point out some of the intricacies of the Hungarian language.*

### O How Muddy Are the Streets of Szeged

A szegedi utca  
jaj, de sáros  
Végig menni rajta  
nem tanácsos,  
Mert megfognak engemet,  
megkötik a kezemet  
a zsandárok  
sej-haj a zsandárok.

The street(s) of Szeged (**Notice: singular for plural**)  
(is) o, so muddy. (**Notice: no verb!**)  
Going along it  
is not advisable,  
because they will catch me,  
they will tie my hands,  
the gendarmes,  
hey-hey, the gendarmes.

De én könyörögni  
nagyon jól tudok.  
Meggérem a híres  
zsandár urakat  
engedjék el a karom.  
a babámat akarom  
megölelni,  
sej-haj megcsókolni.

But I know very well  
how to plead (beg).  
I will ask the famous  
sir gendarmes:  
let them release my arm(s),  
my sweetheart I want  
to embrace,  
hey-heey, to kiss.

**Szeged** is an ancient city already mentioned in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD. It is located in southeastern Hungary, and is the third largest Hungarian city. Known for its production of **paprika**, brought here in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. It straddles the Tisza River, near its confluence with the Maros River. In Turkish times, it was the property of the sultan, which meant it had certain privileges. (The making of slippers was taken over from the Turks at that time - *szegedi papucs*.)

Szeged was almost totally destroyed by the devastating flood of 1879. The people then vowed to build a church, which was completed only after WWI, in 1930. Called the *Fogadalmi templom* (Votive Church), it can accommodate 5,000 people. Its organ is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest in Europe, and its tower clock the largest in Hungary.

The city was rebuilt in the Art Nouveau style, which gives it a coherent look. Nobel Prize winner Szent-Györgyi Albert did his research on Vitamin C here.

The first two lines ("*A szegedi utca jaj, de sáros*") illustrate the principle that in Hungarian, the various forms of the **verb "to be" often** can be skipped: here, for example, the verb "is" is **understood**.

Hol (van) a gyerek? Where (is) the child?

To which one might answer: *Ott*. Over there.

Similarly, **prefixes can be used as an answer:**

Elment már? Has he/she gone (away) yet?

To which one could reply: *El*. (Or: *Elment*. Or: *Igen*.)

Kivitted a szemetet? Did you take out the garbage? (kivinni - take out)

Answer: *Kí*.

Beengeded a macskát? Will you let the cat in? (beengedni - let in)

Answer: *Be*. (**Present tense can also express future action**).

Megette az egészet? Did he/she eat it all?

Answer: *Meg*.

Túladtál rajta? Have you passed it on?

Answer: *Túl*.

**zsandár**- phonetic spelling of the French word "gendarme", which was taken over by the Austrians

**Engedjék el a karom** - let them release my arm (singular)

**Parts of the body are usually referred to in the singular:**

a kezem - my hand(s)

a lábam - my foot (feet)

a fülem - my ear(s)

a szemem - my eye(s)

az ujjam - my finger(s)

When we speak of one arm, or one leg, (which is half of two), we say:

**fél lábbal** – lit. with half a foot -

Fél lábbal már kinn volt. - He already had one foot outside.

**fél kézzel** – lit.with half a hand –

Megfogtam a macskát fél kézzel. – I caught the cat with one hand.

**fél füllel** – lit.with half an ear

Fél füllel hallottam . – I heard it with one ear. (I barely heard it. I wasn't paying attention.)

## Snapshots: A Small Portrait of the City of Szeged

Charles Bálintitt Jr.

*Not many people know that the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 actually began in Szeged, where Hungarian students first stood in solidarity with the students of Poland who were demonstrating against the Polish Communist government. That is why we are presenting this item in this particular issue. But before messengers could announce the news in Budapest, a peaceful demonstration began in the capital as well. When the secret police fired on the crowd later on that day, the Revolution began.*



*Town Hall of Szeged*



*Captions:*

*Statue of Deák de Kehida Ferenc (1803 – 1876), who was a Hungarian statesman and the Minister of Justice of Hungary for just over ½ of the revolutionary year of 1848, beginning just 8 days after the outbreak on March 15<sup>th</sup>. He was also called the "Wise Man of the Nation" (A haza bölcse).*

*Statue of Dankó Pista (1858 – 1903), a Hungarian gypsy composer and band leader. Among his many compositions was the still very popular song at all Hungarian dances called: "Az a szép, az a szép" (That's the beautiful, that's the beautiful). As a matter of fact, I danced many a csárdás to that very tune.*

*This is the Votive Church and Cathedral of Our Lady (Szegei dóm or Fogadalmi templom), which was completed in 1932. It was dedicated to the Holy Virgin Mary following a pledge by the citizens of Szeged after the great flood of 1879. It is the central focus of Dóm Square.*

*Just in front of the cathedral is Dömötör Tower, which was built in 3 stages beginning in the 11<sup>th</sup> century and completed in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The upper portion was rebuilt in 1926 from the original stones. This is the oldest building in Szeged.*

*This is just one of the many areas to enjoy a fine pastry in the Virág Cukrászda outdoors in the heart of town.*

*This text recalls the City's March 12<sup>th</sup>, 1879 destructive flood, the rebuilding and flood defense. The actual Memorial for the great flood of 1879 by the Tisza riverside walkway. That year the flood waters covered almost the entire city of Szeged.*

I have to begin by saying that I've only been to the city of Szeged, Hungary once in my life. This was due to the kindness of my cousin, Dr. Nagy Tibor, who drove me, along with his aunt and uncle. We only stopped there briefly for lunch a little over 20 years ago as we were on the way to seeing the famous *Feszty Körkép* (the famous cyclorama of the Conquest) located about 19 miles north of there at the National Memorial Park in Ópusztaszer.

Other than my short visit there, the only thing that sticks in my mind is my father telling me that the wisest man he ever met in his life lived in Szeged. My father was an intellectual and had met many very well educated people in his life. But many years ago, when he talked about Dr. Szabó József (*Jóska bácsi* to me), he compared him to that of 20 of my college professors combined. *Jóska bácsi* would write letters to my father back in the 60's, 70's and 80's, that reminded me of the ones Thomas Jefferson had written to friends and protégés about such things as books to read to attain proper knowledge. For example, *Jóska bácsi* once wrote that my father should read Arnold Toynbee's "A Study of History" in the full 12 volumes because the 2 volume abridgement left out too many important details. Of course, *Jóska bácsi* had read both.

Dr. Szabó József had been a professor and department chair at the University of Szeged. He was a legal scholar, historian, philosopher, political scientist and linguist among other things. Interestingly enough, he met my father in a Hungarian Communist prison in 1950. They had both been sentenced to 3-year prison terms around the same time for separately trying to flee the country. My father had always maintained that he would not have given up his 3 years in prison because he had gained a lot of wisdom there from some of the most interesting people he had ever met.

Here are a few pictures taken by my MNO colleague, Lengyel Zsuzsa, of the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest city in Hungary, Szeged. This is just a small glimpse into a city that you should include on your next trip to Hungary. I will certainly plan to make a second visit, but the next time will definitely be for more than just a few hours. Now since the most important spice in Hungarian cooking is paprika and Szeged is in competition with Kalocsa for the title of paprika capital of the world, this may be a good place to visit for the food alone.

*Charles Bálintt Jr. is a working Customs Broker in Lawrence, NY and a member of the Magyar News Online Editorial Board.*