



Magyar Királyi Csendőr Bajtársi Közösség

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Dear Friends,

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Recently a car sideswiped my daughter's and my car late at night in front of our home, causing considerable damage. The driver left without notifying us. We reported it to the police by phone, but they only assigned us a number for their report. They did not come out to our home to assess the situation, nor did they plan any further action, since they felt it was a useless effort and did not merit their time. They said the insurance company would handle it. I thought about how differently this would have been handled by the gendarmes, for whom there was no case too small, and unresolved cases were not filed away and retired with time. The only way a case ever was closed if it was solved.

In preparation for the ÓNTE (Opusztaszer National Heritage Park) exhibit, we were looking into the details of the original MKCsBK collection/museum which had been located in Toronto in the home of a former gendarme captain. It was transferred to the Hungarian Cultural Center (Magyar Ház) in Toronto in 1984 with the stipulation that all the artifacts would be properly exhibited, and would only be transferred to Hungary when Hungary would again become a free sovereign nation. Accordingly, the collection was eventually sent to the Hungarian Military Museum in 1999. At the time, there was some discussion with ÓNTE about placing that material into a gendarme garrison building in the Park, but ÓNTE requested that MKCsBK finance the construction cost of such a building, which was not a viable option, so the matter was dropped.

To clarify some of the details of the transfer of the collection to Hungary, we were referred to Emőke Jordán in Toronto, who worked at the

Colonel Kálmán Beöthy was the editor of the Gendarmerie's Newspaper, the Csendőrségi Lapok, 1939-1942. His son is now compiling interesting gendarme investigations from that Newspaper for the ÓNTE Gendarme exhibit.



Hungarian Center at the time. During our conversation, we were surprised to learn that some uniforms and other artifacts had been left behind during the transfer, and the Center no longer wished to store these items. As this material originally was the property of the MKCsBK, the material was sent back to us after the necessary steps were taken. The uniforms were not original, but fabrications for the purpose of allowing former gendarmes to don uniforms for special occasions. Although these are not museum pieces, they will become a part of the ÓNTE exhibit, where no original items are displayed due to the interactive nature of the exhibit. We hope to deliver these items next spring when we are planning our next visit home. (The room is now closed for the winter, as there is no heating in the buildings, and it will open again on March 1).

We are planning to make a number of improvements together with Gábor Vincze, ÓNTE's historian, during the time the exhibit is closed. Regulation dark green curtains have been made and already sent home for the windows. The small table in the exhibit will be replaced with a larger table, as it was at these tables that reports were written, meals taken together, and daily instructions conducted by the senior enlisted. We also prepared three volumes of the 1927 *Szut. (Szervezeti és Szolgálati Utasítások a M. Kir. Csendőrség Számára/ Organization and Service Orders for the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie)* that will be set out for tourists to peruse. We chose the *Szut.* because it detailed all the regulations by which the gendarmes had to conduct their work and lives. Each gendarme owned a copy and knew most of it by heart. The gendarmes were well known for doing everything according to the rules, so no book is more appropriate to learn about them.

Visitors will be able to skim copies of the *Szut.* at the table along with some copies of the Gendarmerie's Newspaper (Csendőrségi Lapok). There will also be available accounts of some actual gendarme investigations as found in those newspapers. Kálmán Beöthy, whose father was an editor of the Newspaper 1939-1942, has graciously volunteered to select a few of the more interesting cases for us. We are also looking at other possible improvements.

We cannot overemphasize the importance of this exhibit, where for the first time in 72 years we can place before all visitors the truth about the gendarmerie: how they lived, how they worked, how they conducted themselves, that they considered their work as a way of life, rather than just a job. For this reason, we ask those members who have not yet contributed to this project, which unfortunately is the larger percentage, to financially support this significant endeavor. No contribution is too great or too small. Forints may be directed to ÓNTE OTP 11735005-21034271, earmarked for support of the gendarme garrison room. Dollar donations may be sent to us directly, designated for the exhibit.

We want to thank those who have partnered with us in support of the gendarme room and the work of the MKCsBK. Kálmán Beöthy, Péter Aradi-Beöthy, Emese Kerkay Maczky, and Judit Domonkos (in memory of her father László Domonkos gendarme major) have made financial contributions. Kálmán Beöthy is also compiling case reports, and Emese Kerkay Maczky researched biographies of gendarmes and contributed many photographs to the website.

With the exhibit, we hope to counter many of the lies that were circulated by the communist regime in their efforts to discredit the gendarmerie, the moral pillar of civil society, in order to secure their communist rule. First, they abolished the gendarmerie physically; then, with many lies, morally. To this end, they destroyed all the material related to the gendarmerie, so no one could refute their lies. Now, we have our website containing all the still-available gendarme material, and we have the exhibit to show the truth. But the lies are deeply ingrained in the minds of people, and there are individuals such as a historian and professor Judit Molnár who continue to disseminate these distortions even today. A compilation of our refuting arguments can be found on our website in response to her recent article that

attacks the gendarmerie (as well as us, personally). We also plan to counter these untruths one-by-one in future issues of our Newsletter.

Maybe the most prevailing lie regarding the gendarmerie is that it was dissolved in 1945 for its role in the Jewish deportations. Communist propaganda so effectively embedded this in people's minds that even those who otherwise seek to present the truth about the gendarmerie may also still believe this lie as truth. This misconception was stated, for example, in an otherwise excellent short film about the gendarmerie that was aired on Duna TV on November 24th titled, "The Law is behind you, also keep it before you – The Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie" (Mögötted a törvény, előtted is az legyen – Magyar Királyi Csendőrség). No wonder that the vehemently anti-gendarme Hungarian Wikipedia article on the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie highlighted the "fact" that the gendarmerie was dissolved in 1945 because of their role in the deportations. They even referred the reader to the abolishing 1.690/1945 M.E. government order as their reference source.


But one needs to look no further for the unquestionable truth in this regard, than in this 1.690/1945 M.E. government order itself, collectively claiming the gendarmerie for its political support of the previous Horthy regime, which, in their view, made the gendarmes the enemy of the peasantry and the proletariat. (This accusation is ludicrous since most of the gendarmes came from a poor peasant background). In it, there is no mention of the deportations or Jews. When we contacted Wikipedia to inform them that the quoted reference source made no mention of Jews, they were forced to expunge the lie. The correction was made but in no way did it diminish their anti-gendarme tone, as it was obviously not based on facts.

Now, it is a simple matter to verify the government order 1.690/1945 M.E., as it can also be found on our website. The fact that it makes no mention of the deportations is especially important, as it shows that at the time the order was written (December 1944 – April 1945), even the communists did not consider the gendarmerie's involvement in the deportations important enough to mention, even though they were grabbing any possible accusations against them and, in lack of those, fabricating them. The gendarmerie did participate in the deportations under orders, along with all the other relevant agencies (police, finance officers, various government departments and offices, railways, etc.), but in the political milieu and according to the contemporary knowledge of the time that participation was not considered objectionable even in the eyes of the gendarmerie's fiercest enemy. Only after the war, when the horrific news of the death camps became known, did the communists see this as an excellent opportunity to accuse collectively the gendarmerie of deportation war crimes. This charge was used before the world to justify their inhumane treatment of the gendarmes. Eventually, this became the major charge and, in some cases, the sole charge, against the gendarmerie.

Again it is my sad duty to report a recent loss of one of our members: Mrs. Márton Seregélyes passed away in October of this year. We extend our deep condolences to the family in their loss.

Please, let me know of any news that is an interest to our members, or of any change of address (postal or email).

We wish you all a blessed and prosperous New Year. With best regards,


Zoltan v. Korossy

MKCsBK Central Director

Híven, becsülettel, vitézül