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Dear Friends,

MKCsBK Newsletter #39, July, 2017

It is nearly ten years ago that I accepted the request from the few remaining local gendarmes to be the central director of the MKCsBK. A great deal has transpired since then. At the time, our website was still very much in its infancy, with just 150 photographs and a five-book bibliography. I remember when we placed our first complete book, Dr. Béla Rektor's seminal work on the gendarmerie, onto our site, and what a great accomplishment we felt it was. Gendarme books are hard to find since very few copies survived, and those that did, are scattered in a few libraries and private collections throughout the world. There are many we know existed but have yet to find a copy to digitalize. Nevertheless, we now have over 350 books on our site. We are indebted to Dr. József Parádi who was instrumental in securing access to libraries in Hungary and secured the services of Nándi Simon, who photographed for us the many volumes located. We also have more than 2,700 photographs arranged in 40 categories, close to 80 gendarme biographies, all of the laws and regulations affecting the gendarmerie, numerous personal accounts, articles, audio-visuals, and much more. All of these reflect the excellent service of these dedicated gendarmes, and the suffering they endured at the hands of the communist regime.

The site has grown to be the largest source of correct information on the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie in the world. This vast accumulated body of reference material is available everywhere via the internet, and may be downloaded

**The little barefooted boy on the left is
Sebestyén Németh, who became a
gendarme garrison commander, and his
baby sister became the mother of the wife
of Sebestyén's best friend,
gendarme Sgt. Maj. János Hangodi.**



free of charge. Only by putting forth the original documents can the lies of the communist era be disproved. There have been over 62,000 visits to the site, which must be making a significant impact.

We have also been instrumental in the publication of several books on the gendarmerie, and have provided a scholarship for a doctoral student whose thesis will be on the gendarmerie. One of our photographs was picked for the cover of a well-known Hungarian history periodical, *Rubicon*. We are so grateful for God's blessing on our work and what has already been accomplished. We have answered numerous letters, made friends, and read many, often heart-breaking, tragic accounts of the fate of former gendarmes. Unfortunately, during this same ten years we have lost nearly all our dear gendarmes. I very much regret that they cannot witness all that has transpired in our quest to right a great wrong and to restore their well-deserved honor.

This vast amount of information is not only for the historians, but also for all those seeking information on a former gendarme relative. It has been instrumental in helping them better understand the service of the gendarmes, and for some, it has been a life-changing event. Because only my family and I are responsible for the ongoing work on the site, we are not able to do research on individual gendarmes. But because of the volume of material available and the search feature of the website, interested individuals likely will find useful information if they invest their time. The *Zsebkönyvek* and *Csendőrségi Lapok* are especially helpful in this regard.

Above and beyond all of this, the first permanent gendarme exhibit opened in the form of a garrison room at the Ópusztaszer National Historical Park (ÓNTE), in August of last year. The financing of the exhibit was made possible with a large anonymous donation by way of the SZBMRTT (Szemere Bertalan Magyar Renvédelem-történelmi Tudományos Társaság), and many donations through the MKCsBK. Of the 1,121,000 Ft MKCsBK donations, 26 families gave 735 000 Ft via the designated ÓNTE bank account, and 15 families contributed 386 000 Ft in dollar contributions via the MKCsBK. Two third of this amount has now been used to establish the room. The rest, along with any additional funds, will be used to further the exhibit, and for a teaching program directed at middle and high school students. We hope this will further our efforts to give a true depiction of the gendarmerie for the upcoming generation to replace the still prevalent false picture. For this reason we ask our readers to continue their support of this important work. (Forint donations to ÓNTE OTP bank account number 11735005-21034221 with designation to "support of the csendőr garrison room," or dollar donations through us).

My wife and I are planning to visit Hungary this August. One of our primary plans is to visit ÓNTE and see for ourselves the gendarme garrison exhibit. We will be meeting with Gábor Vincze, ÓNTE historian, to discuss further plans. We will also be taking with us several documents that were required to be posted in the garrisons, and also some maps and books printed for the exhibit.

During communism's half-century, they successfully spread many lies about the gendarmerie. One of them was that the gendarmes were recruited from among the wealthy in order to protect the rich against the poor. The truth is the direct opposite: most of the gendarmes came from poor peasant families, not able to receive further education due to their circumstances. For these bright, patriotic, honest, and diligent young men, becoming a gendarme was a step up in society, would earn them respect and provide financial security. Because of their peasant background, they could easily take part in the animal husbandry and gardening of the self-supporting garrisons. In addition, they were very familiar with life in the village, and gained the respect and confidence of the villagers, which was a great help in

carrying out their responsibilities in the prevention of crime and the apprehension of law-breakers.

The other ingredient of their impressively successful law-enforcement service (over 90% crime-solving) was their continuous training. After completion of the gendarme school, their training continued at the garrisons, where they received two hours of instruction every day, generally by the garrison commander. Because most of the men had only a very limited education, they were also instructed in reading, writing, math, history, and other topics to round out their education. We are taking a copy of a gendarme's daily schedule and a workbook for the ÓNTE garrison room to let visitors see the extent and importance the gendarmerie placed on ongoing education.

One of the gendarmerie's tools for training was the *Csendőrségi Lapok* (their newspaper), which not only increased their professional knowledge, but also broadened their general education, provided them with useful entertainment, and also personal information about individual gendarmes. For many years, Kálmán Beöthy, gendarme colonel edited the newspaper. His son, living in the US, recounts the many times his father talked about "his gendarmes" with loving care. A section of the newspaper was always devoted to accounts of successful criminal investigations, with a few instructive points following. Colonel Kálmán Beöthy's son compiled a number of these instructive investigations for us, and we will be taking this in a book format with us in August for the garrison exhibit. The visitors will be able to peruse these investigations along with copies of a few complete *Csendőrségi Lapok*, and witness firsthand what excellent training the gendarmes had received, making the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie one the world's most effective law-enforcement corps.

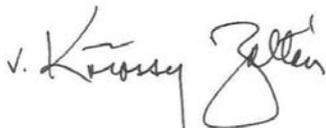
We thankfully acknowledge Mrs. István Serényi for her continued financial support of the gendarme exhibit.

As always, it is my sad duty to report our recent loss: Lóránt v. Ferenczy, artillery officer, March 15, Buenos Aires, Argentina. I extend our deepest condolences to his family.

Please let us know if your address or email address has changed. We usually receive at least one returned envelope each mailing with resident no longer living there. Without an email or current address, we can no longer send our Newsletter.

We wish you a pleasant summer,

Best regards,



Zoltán v. Kőrössy
MKCsBK Central Director

Híven, becsülettel, vitézül