

**Magyar Királyi Csendőr Bajtársi Közösség: MKCsBK**  
**Alternative English names\* :**  
**The Hungarian Royal Gendarme Veterans' Association**  
**Veterans' Association of the Former Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie**  
**World Federation of Royal Hungarian Gendarmerie**

**The roots of MKCsBK: The Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie**

The MKCsBK was established in 1947 as the community of the gendarmes, the depositary of the moral values and vocational spirit of the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie.<sup>1</sup>

The Hungarian parliament created the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie with a law sanctioned on February 14, 1881.<sup>2</sup> This day became the official „gendarme day” in 1936.<sup>3</sup>

The Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie was a militarily organized corps<sup>4</sup> for the public safety in the rural parts of Hungary, which covered 90% of the land.

With a regional-divisional-chapter-garrison structure it had a relatively short chain of command. The essence of the gendarmerie were the garrisons of 5-15 gendarmes, scattered on the countryside, and therefore they performed their duties quite independently, although strictly according to detailed regulations, issued by a special division under the authority of the Department of Interior. At the same time, the members of the gendarmerie personally were under the jurisdiction of the Department of Defense.

Every gendarme owned and was very familiar with the so-called Service Regulations book (Szut.), which was written based on the laws and regulations affecting their service. Both enlisted and officer gendarmes were expected to continually further their knowledge and improve themselves, not only regarding their vocation, but all-around as well. They actively participated in various sports (they even had members on the Olympic team),<sup>5</sup> had a small library collection at each garrisons, which the villagers also could use, and reading and studying was a regular part of their daily routine. They also placed an emphasis on character training to become reliable, fair, moral, incorruptible, impartial, and unbiased, in addition to be able to make fast, wise and firm decisions. There was a great emphasis on the respect of authority, and the love of their country, their countrymen, and their corps.<sup>6</sup> They were expected to live their lives in every respect according to the gendarme oath,<sup>7</sup> the “gendarme ten commandments,” and their motto of “faithfully, honorably, valiantly,” (“Híven, becsülettel, vitézül”). Being a gendarme was not an occupation, but a call, even a way of life for them. The guarding of public safety and peace in the villages, as well as crime prevention and criminal investigations were exclusively the job of the enlisted gendarmes, while the officers were responsible for training, supervision, and communication with other authorities.

The Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie achieved international recognition<sup>8</sup> for their exceptional effectiveness in crime prevention and investigation. They solved over 90% of petty thefts and small crimes, while nearly 100% of the major ones.<sup>9</sup> For them, “cold

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\* There is no official English name given to the MKCsBK, as it was registered in all the involved countries under its Hungarian name. The various English names reflect the translated preferences of Central Directors (or, Central Commanders, as the title, Központi vezető, also was only official in Hungarian)

cases” did not exist. This allowed Hungary to achieve a previously unprecedented national development lifting the previously feudal Hungary to a European level.<sup>10</sup> Delegations from other countries visited to learn from them.<sup>11</sup>

The unprecedented effectiveness of the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie could be attributed to several reasons. In addition to the excellent organization of the corps and the requirement for continuous training and self-education of all its members, the gendarmes were selected from the villages, so they were quite familiar with the ways of the people and also had their trust and respect. The excellence of their work is even more remarkable considering that most gendarmes were selected from the poor families of the villages, who had good character but only a few years of elementary education. Their daily training in the garrisons included not only job-related knowledge, but general subjects as well as, to make them well-rounded people.

The gendarmes had their daily duty to guard the safety and peace of the countryside, but they could also be called upon for various specific tasks at the request of other legal authorities.<sup>12</sup> The service-requesting authority was responsible for the content of the request, while the gendarmes’ responsibility was to carry it out precisely according to the set laws and regulations.<sup>13</sup> The gendarme had no right to critique the orders.<sup>14</sup>

During the 64 years of existence of the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie, several governments were in power. The gendarmes fulfilled their vocation to guard the public safety under each government, whether it was the Hungarian-Austrian Monarchy, the short-lived 1918-19 communist dictatorship<sup>†</sup>, the Horthy era, or the German occupation.<sup>‡</sup>

Partly as a result of their faithful work to protect all lawful Hungarian citizens regardless of their ethnicity or religion, Hungary was the safest place for the Mid-European Jews until Hungary’s German occupation in March 1944. As local and state agencies were also authorized to utilize the services of the gendarmes, they had a mixed role of both protecting Jews and Jewish interests,<sup>15</sup> as well as taking part in their deportations and the securing of Jewish properties for the government. The communist propaganda seized the latter activity to destroy the gendarmerie’s good name while totally ignoring the corps’ service to the country, even to the Jews, prior to the German invasion.

Along with the Soviet occupation of Hungary, the communist party arrived from Moscow with a set plan to seize political power. They aimed to abolish the previous regime, so they had to eradicate first of all its most loyal and powerful support, the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, in December of 1944, among its first acts, the Temporary National Cabinet issued a “ruling” to abolish the lawful Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie,<sup>17</sup> claiming it collectively guilty of “brutal acts against the proletariat and peasantry” of Hungary in the previous decades. Of course, this political reason for the disbandment and ruthless persecution of a lawfully established corps would not have

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<sup>†</sup> The communist regime of 1918-1919 officially dissolved the gendarmerie and created the Red Guard in its place, but it had no time to carry out the reorganization, especially in the rural areas. Therefore, most gendarme garrisons continued their established daily routine of crime prevention and protection of peace and order.

<sup>‡</sup> The German occupation cleverly left the existing law-enforcement agencies in place, thus forcing its members into an activity for which they were not originally created. They were to protect the laws of the lawful Hungarian government, but the chaotic and fast-changing times of the near-end of war did not allow the establishment of adequate and appropriate response of the gendarmerie to the German occupation and its demands.

been acceptable in the eyes of the Allies, so the communists had to find a better excuse for it. They found the perfect excuse for the collective and brutal maltreatment of all gendarmes in the gendarmerie's involvement in the deportation of the Jews. In order to sell this accusation though, they had to overemphasize some aspects of it, suppress others, and add overt lies.<sup>18</sup> They also destroyed all the documents relating to the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie, so there would be no way to check on the truthfulness (or falsehood) of their words. As a result of 65 years of their systematic propaganda both toward the West and in the education of the new generations of Hungary, the gendarmes are now blamed not only for the deportation of the Jews, but for the very holocaust itself, even though Hungary had no concentration camps, and it is quite proven that the gendarmes could have no knowledge of the existence of the death camps at the time, as the Jewish Council of Budapest only informed Admiral Horthy of their existence in the second part of June, 1944, by which time most of the deportations had already taken place (with the exception of the Jews of Budapest, who were saved by Horthy with the support of the gendarmes).<sup>19</sup> But the gendarmerie's participation, even though in the cities mainly the police and other authorities were involved, has been exaggerated, and became the only factor considered in their evaluation, ignoring their internationally acclaimed excellence in crime control of the previous six decades.

The collective persecution of the gendarmerie had severe consequences to its members. Thousands of them were killed, tortured, beaten to death, imprisoned, sent to work camps famous for brutal treatments, and at best, became marginalized in society, not finding work, nor receiving any state benefits (health care, retirement benefits, etc.). Even their children were barred from higher education.<sup>20</sup> The few cases of claimed mistreatment of the Jews at the hands of the gendarmes cannot be compared to the brutality with which the AVO treated the gendarmes; and the AVO did that not only by occasional misuse of power, but in every case and by order. Persecution was the fate of *all* gendarmes, even those who had already been retired before the war began, and those who were at the front-lines, never having anything to do with the deportations, and even those who themselves were known to have helped the Jews. Only occasional gendarmes were able to serve under the communist government for a while, but eventually they, too, were executed.<sup>21</sup> After the 1989 fall of the communism, the Constitutional Court judged the collective verdict against the gendarmerie unconstitutional, and against modern law to persecute any person who himself did not participate in any criminal acts. The Court also found the verdict of 1945 unconstitutional because it dissolved an organization which was *not* created for the purpose of causing harm to others (like the SS was, for example), but rather to protect and aid the safety of others, a task which they indeed excellently carried out for over six decades.

According to the *1944 Gendarmerie's Handbook*, 969 officers and 22,000 enlisted gendarmes served during WWII. Less than half survived the war: about 360 officers and 10,000 enlisted gendarmes. About 5000 died by the hand of the communists, about 3000 were sent to Soviet work camps, and about 1500 ended up escaping to the West.<sup>22</sup> In 1971, about 3,000 gendarmes were still living in Hungary, and around 1,100 in emigration, scattered worldwide. Only a few hundred survived to see the rehabilitation of their beloved corps. For all the gendarmes, their rehabilitation occurred half-a-century too late.

The Hungarian government legally rehabilitated the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie in 1991,<sup>23</sup> but the damage of the half-a-century propaganda against them is not easily repaired. The media is still strongly anti-gendarme, the written documents of the gendarmerie is still not available, and Hungary still does not have a museum or permanent exhibit dedicated to the gendarmes in spite of the fact that the MKCsBK provided the exhibit material in 2000.

In the prisoner of war camps of the West, the Allies used the gendarmes to protect safety in the camps; they even got their weapons back, for they were well known for their reliable, fair, and experienced service. At the end of the war, the Americans sent the Hungarian prisoners-of-war back to Hungary, including the gendarmes, for whom brutal persecution awaited. Therefore, many escaped from the American camps into the British or French displaced persons' camps, and eventually found a new life in various countries scattered over all the continents. They have earned the respect of the communities<sup>24</sup> wherever they went, as they were used to serve faithfully, work honestly, improve themselves constantly, propagate the common good, and think resourcefully. They even contributed to the furthering of law enforcement in the recipient countries.<sup>25</sup>

## **The formation of MKCsBK; central directors**

The gendarmes never accepted the illegal dissolution of the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie, so they considered themselves gendarmes for the rest of their lives (“out-of-duty gendarmes”). continued to considered themselves gendarmes, although out-of-duty. Their strong belonging and corporate sense remained for the rest of their lives. On June 21, 1947, Pál Jegenyés, Sergeant Major and former garrison commander, with six fellow gendarmes established the Magyar Csendőő Bajtársi Asztaltársaság (Royal Hungarian Gendarmerie Veterans Table Organization) in Graz, Austria. In 1948 they began to publish the *Bajtársi Levél*, the official newsletter of the organization. In 1949, the name of the organization was changed to Magyar Királyi Csendőő Bajtársi Közösség (MKCsBK, Hungarian Royal Gendarme Veterans Association). They chose from among themselves one person to be the central director, who was responsible for the publication of the *Bajtársi Levél*, and for all activities of the organization. Lt. General and former Commandant Lajos Folkusházy served as central director from 1950 to 1958, and made a strong effort to contact the Hungarian gendarmes worldwide to encouraged them to go on with their lives under new circumstances, but still according to their oath and motto, “Faithfully, honorably, valiantly” (“Híven, becsülettel, vitézül”).

Several gendarmes, both officers and enlisted, provided the leadership to the organization over the decades, as their circumstances allowed, supporting each other in the work (therefore, there are overlaps in the years they served). The central director's home address also served as the address of the organization itself, so the MKCsBK's address has changed over the decades from country to country, even continent to continent. The central directors, in chronological order, were:

Sergeant-Major Pál Jegenyés, 1947-48, Graz, Austria

Col. vitéz Jenő Karsay, 1948-49, Graz, Austria

Lt. General and former Commandant Lajos Folkusházy, 1950-58, Salzburg, Austria

Col. vitéz Gyula Király, 1958-64, Sao Paulo, Brazil

Capt. vitéz Károly Kövendy, aka. Károly Szathmáry, 1964-74, Toronto, Canada, who also established the Gendarme Guest House and Museum near Toronto. (After his death, the collection was eventually given to the War-museum in Budapest in the early 1990's)

Col. vitéz Ferenc Vattay, 1972-74, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Col. Aladár Pintér, 1974, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Sergeant-Major László Enyedy, 1974-75, Toronto, Canada

Capt. vitéz barancsi Endre Tamáska, 1974-83, FL, USA

Sergeant-Major vitéz Lajos Keresztes, 1975-78, Calgary, Canada

Capt. Dr. Gyula Kiss, 1978-94, Calgary, Canada

1<sup>st</sup> Lt. vitéz Gábor Kiss, 1995-2001, FL, USA

2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. vitéz Béla Viczián, 2001-2007, WI, USA

vitéz Zoltán Kőrössy, son of Capt. Dr. vitéz Zoltán Kőrössy, 2007-present, MD, USA

## **MKCsBK branches and publications**

The membership of the MKCsBK initially were only gendarmes, but later they added so-called honorary gendarmes, as well as anyone who sympathized with them and supported their goals.<sup>26</sup> They never had membership dues, only solicited voluntary contribution to help with the printing costs of their publications and to help their fellow gendarmes in need. The MKCsBK is an officially registered non-profit organization in Canada and in the USA.<sup>27</sup>

The MKCsBK had 48 branches in 40 countries by 1950. Their leaders kept a close contact with the central director. Gendarme Major János Borgoy started one of the largest and most active US group in 1958, in Cleveland, Ohio, under the name of Hungarian Gendarme Family Association (Magyar Csendőrök Családi Közössége). Captain István Molnár led this group from 1978 until his death in 2011. They published their own local quarterly newsletter, *Egyesületi értesítő* until 1975.

Gendarme Captain v. barancsi Endre Tamaska published a personal gendarme newsletter in Florida between 1982 and 2004, and some of the other groups also had their own local newsletter for a period of time.

The MKCsBK also presented a radio program in February of 1955, 1956, and 1957, to commemorate the Gendarme Day. Gendarme Captain dr. v. Zoltan Korossy delivered a speech in 1956, which can be read or heard through the library of the website (<http://csendor.com/konyvtar/iratok/irasok/magyar/>).

The main connection and informational source has been though their regular newsletter, called *Bajtársi Levél*, which was published continuously between 1948 and 2005. Its chief editors most often were the central director at-the time, and therefore the address of the newsletter, as well as its character changed accordingly:

- Starting on Sep. 20, 1948, Sergeant-Major Pál Jegenyés (Graz, Ausztria), and from May 12, 1951, Col. vitéz Jenő Karsay (Bergenz, Dreibergen, majd Utrecht): 1-2 issues a month as a copied 4-10 pages letter, with a gendarme hat and a Hungarian coat-of-arm in its letterhead, which was changed on the August 1952 issue to the picture of the gendarme martyrs' statue that used to stand on the yard of the Gendarme Officer Training School (Böszörményi út).

- From October 1, 1964. Capt. vitéz Károly Kövendy (Szathmáry), (Islington, Ontario, Kanada, majd Etobicoke, Toronto, Kanada), and from July 1, 1975. Capt. Dr. Gyula Kiss (Calgary, Alberta, Kanada): between 1964 and 1981, twice-a-year light-green covered, 20-150 pages, professionally printed and bound book, with the picture of the gendarme martyrs' statue with the MKCsBK emblem at its base. The cover-picture was changed to the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary composite picture with the October 31, 1980, issue.
- From January 1, 1982, Capt. vitéz baranchi Endre Tamáska (Sarasota, Florida) and from June 1, 1983, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Sandor Domokos (Kanada): 50-100 letter-size pages, copied, stapled, with the same cover as before. In the August 23, 1994 supposed „last issue” they proposed either the discontinuation of the Newsletter, or borrowing two pages from the newsletter of a sister organization, MHBK (World Federation of Hungarian Veterans).
- As the above plans did not work out, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. vitéz Gabor Kiss published the newsletter himself, starting in March, 1995, as a smaller-size, 8-26 pages, copied and stapled booklet, with various gendarme pictures on its front.
- Between 2001 and 2005, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. vitéz Bela Viczian sent out the newsletter with fewer and fewer pages as his health declined. The December 2005 issue (Volume 57. number2) was the final issue.
- In 2006-2007, a few letter kept the gendarmes in touch.
- Since January 2008, a quarterly Newsletter with a new letterhead of gendarme hat and Hungarian coat-of-arm is sent out, both in English and in Hungarian, via mail or email, according to any member's preference. It is also archived in the website's library.



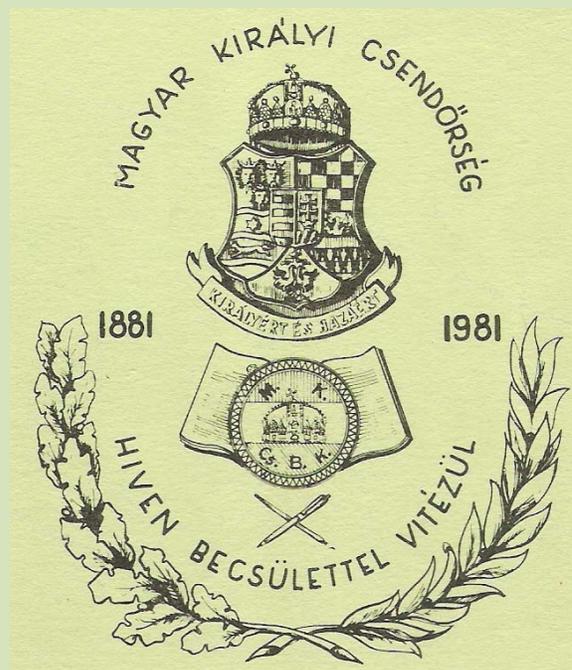
*Bajtársi Levél* letterhead  
between summers of  
1949 and 1952.

Letterhead of *Bajtársi Levél*  
from August 1952.





The cover of *Bajtársi Levél* between 1964 and 1980 (without the MKCsBK pin after 1975)



The cover of *Bajtársi Levél* between October 1980 and 1995



MKCsBK Newsletter's letterhead after January 2008.

1984-ben dr. Kiss Gyula 50 oldalas összefoglalót készített az In 1984, at the request of the Hungarian-consciousness Movement, Capt. Dr. Gyula Kiss prepared a 50 pages document for a Hungarian Lexicon on the history of the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie as well as MKCsBK, and brief bibliographies of many of their members. (It was published as *Encyclopedia Hungarica 1994*. Főszerk. Bagossy László, Magyarságtudat Alapítvány, Friesen Nyomdavidallalat, Altona, Canada.) It is also posted in our website's Library, among the manuscripts of the Bibliography.

As a “farewell and last will,”<sup>28</sup> a collection of yet-untold stories of the still-living gendarmes were collected and published in two books, compiled by Gyula Szalay, *A világháró csendőr*, and by v. Gabor Kiss, *Híven, becsülettel, vitézül* (also see them in the Bibliography of our website).

## **The goals and achievements of MKCsBK**

### **1945-1960: helping each other**

In their early years, the MKCsBK gave substantial assistance (money and care packages) to the gendarmes and their families in Hungary, who were stripped of their pension and livelihood. They also provided manifold support to the gendarmes trying to establish a new existence in an unfamiliar country, needing to learn a new trade, a new language, and new customs, while being severed from all their roots. The generous donations of the members as well as fund-raising ceremonies and events provided the financial support for these activities.

### **1960-1989: remembering and collecting memorabilia**

Capt. vitéz Károly Kövendy (Szathmáry), the central director between 1964 and 1974, asked the gendarmes to donate any gendarme memorabilia they might had to establish a museum. Soon, a large number of items and publications arrived from all over the world, and in 1970, the MKCsBK’s “Hungarian Royal Gendarme and Knighthood Museum” was established and placed into an MKCsBK-financed six-room apartment in Etobicoke, Toronto, Canada, which also served as Capt. Kövendy (Szathmáry)’s home, and a guestroom for the museum’s gendarme visitors. The exhibition was presented in a video, made in 1980 and 1984, which is now posted in the *Museum* of our website<sup>29</sup>.

Near the end of 1984, the declining health of Capt. Kövendy (Szathmáry) and the steady reduction of funds (due to the gendarmes’ aging and dying out), the MKCsBK no longer could maintain the collection adequately, so it was transferred to the Hungarian House of Toronto.<sup>30</sup> The MKCsBK only requested that the material be sent to Hungary after the fall of the communist regime. The museum was renamed to “Museum of the Royal Hungarian Armed Forces,” as the “gendarme” name had to be removed from its title in order to gain the substantial financial support of the Canadian government<sup>31</sup>. It functioned under the direction of a “museum committee,” a few members of which belonged to the MKCsBK. After the fall of communism in Hungary, the MKCsBK’s desire was to transfer the collection to the Ópusztaszer Historical Memorial Park, where it would be housed in a two-room gendarme garrison. The Szemere Bertalan Hungarian History of Law Enforcement Academic Society (Dr. József Parádi, president) won a grant for the purpose of transferring the museum’s material from Canada to Hungary. They, and v. Gabor Kiss made an agreement to this effect with the responsible Ferenc Móra Museum of Szeged<sup>32</sup>. While the Hungarian authorities were open to this plan, they were not ready to finance it, so they requested the MKCsBK to take on the monetary responsibility as well – in addition to already providing all the exhibit material. The MKCsBK started a collection campaign to this end, but it fell too short by the due date, so this door closed. In spite of the strong opposition of the MKCsBK, the museum committee was only willing to transfer the material to the Hungarian Military Museum in Budapest. Dr. Paradi transferred the grant, which was used for the travel expenses Dr.

József Lugosi with four other experts from Hungarian Military Museum to Canada. The grant money thus wasted, it took the MALEV's gratis service to transport the material to Hungary, at the personal request of Dr. Sándor Szakály. As the Military Museum does not have any permanent exhibits, the gendarme material is still in storage, totally unavailable to the public, except for two short and partial exhibits in 2000 and in 2011. Also, its items are placed into the inventory individually, rather than as a collection, thus the recognition of their origin from the donating gendarmes is now lost.

v. Zoltán Kőrössy, an honorary gendarme, had also been collecting gendarme memorabilia on his own, including photographs, objects, documents, and books. Therefore, after the Canadian museum was transferred to the Toronto Hungarian House, the MKCsBK asked its members in 1985 to send any material still in their possession to him for safekeeping and preservation for the future.<sup>33</sup> His material is planned to stay in the USA until the Hungarian government finds it important to establish a museum or a permanent exhibit devoted to the true representation of the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie.

With the number of the gendarmes decreasing, Károly Kövendy (Szathmáry) recommended to establish a *honorary gendarme* title for those individuals who showed the most effort in the furthering of their work. v. baranchi Endre Tamáska bestowed that rank on its first recipient, v. Zoltán Kőrössy, in 1976. Honorary gendarmes also given the right to wear the official pin of the MKCsBK:



In 1973, the MKCsBK issued a medal to commemorate the 25-year anniversary of the MKCsBK, in silver and a bronz, with two crossing swords on the ribbon for gendarmes, and without it for supporters. Miniatures were also available for immediate relatives.



In 1981, they commemorated the 100<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of the establishment of the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie with a special medal. The gendarmes received it with crossing swords and the holy crown on its ribbon. Miniatures and a lapel-pin version were also made available for immediate relatives.



**1990-2005: establishing relationship with groups in Hungary to facilitate the gendarmerie's rehabilitation (transfer of the museum, memorial plaque), collecting material for the farewell publication.**

Starting in the 1980's, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. vitéz Gábor Kiss initiated several efforts to rehabilitate the gendarmerie in Hungary. After the fall of communism intensive collaboration developed between the MKCsBK and various organizations in Hungary.

1<sup>st</sup> Lt. vitéz Gábor Kiss also strongly supported the Hungarian Gendarme Fraternal Society (Magyar Csendőő Bajtársi Egyesület, MCSBE; Pál Ságvári, president), whose main purpose is to keep the gendarme traditions alive.

In order to acquaint the public with the true history of the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie and to correct the many distortions about them,<sup>34</sup> v. Gábor Kiss organized a yearly Gendarme Day Historical Conferences in Florida (1994-2010), and developed a close cooperation with the (Szemere Bertalan Hungarian History of Law Enforcement Academic Society (Szemere Bertalan Magyar Rendvédelem-történeti Tudományos Társaság, SZBMRTT; Dr. József Parádi, president). They mutually attended each other's conferences, and also developed the seed of a gendarme bibliography, as most written material was either destroyed by the communists, or secluded in a few libraries, or scattered abroad by the exiled gendarmes. The members of MKCsBK also had sent a written material on the Gendarmerie to the National Széchényi Library, and v. Zoltán Kőrössy lent exhibit material to the newly opened Criminal and Law Enforcement Museum of Budapest in 1999.

In 1995, 50 years after the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie was disbanded by the communist regime, the MKCsBK established the "Order of Gendarmerie", and bestowed its "Gendarme Cross of Merit" on such individuals, who faithfully work on establishing the historical truth about the gendarmerie, and thus help to clear its name of the profound and numerous lies the communist propaganda attached to them. In 1999, they also established its higher form with a wreath on its ribbon. The central shield's outline was black at first, but later was changed to gold for technical reasons. (All the medals were made by Sandor Zeidler, in Hungary).



One of the great achievements of the collaboration with the SZBMRTT was the placing of a commemorative plaque in the courtyard of the Hungarian Military Museum (Budapest), in October 1999. It reads: “To the memory of Hungarian Royal Gendarmes who died a heroic death in WWI and WWII.” Since then, various Hungarian groups participate in a wreath-laying ceremony at the plaque on each 14<sup>th</sup> of February, on *Gendarme Day*. They issued a special commemorative medal for this historical achievement, to honor those, who contributed the most to these rehabilitation efforts.<sup>35, 36</sup> A commemorative coin was also issued for everyone who participated in any form in the event.



Commemorative medal and coin, 1999.

### Steps toward internet presence

The MKCsBK wanted to take advantage of the internet to let the world know their true story in 1997,<sup>37</sup> and again in 1998. There was also an effort to post Béla Rektor’s seminal book on the internet, but these plans eventually fell through. There was also an unrealized hope of developing the repertory of the *Csendőrségi Lapok* and the *Bajtársi levél* and posting it on the website of one of the supporters.<sup>38</sup>

The breakthrough occurred, when a young honorary gendarme, László Kőrössy, created a website for the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie at the suggestion of another honorary gendarme, Péter Czink. The website, [www.csendor.com](http://www.csendor.com), was adopted by the MKCsBK as their own, in February of 2004. László Kőrössy continues to be the webmaster of the site. Another honorary gendarme, Z. István Kőrössy maintains it on the internet and expands it as its content requires. The content itself is provided by v. Zoltán Kőrössy, who became the central director in November 2007. So today, we have a website, which does not only contain the aforementioned book, but also hundreds of others (all can be read in their entirety on the website or downloaded, free of charge), along with all the *Csendőrségi lapok* and *Bajtársi levél* and other publications, over two thousand photographs of gendarmes, gendarme objects and documents, as well as sound and video materials.

**2007-future: to make available the still existent material of the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie, so their true historical evaluation may finally become possible**

In 1968, 95% of the members were still gendarmes. Their number dropped to 30% by 1999 (about 100-150 persons), and to less than 10% by 2010 (24 gendarmes). The number of honorary gendarmes, most of them living in Hungary, has reached 100 by 1999. With the aging and dying out of the gendarmes, the membership of the MKCsBK now mainly consists of descendents and friends of the gendarmes. Accordingly, in 1955 a 21-member gendarme committee provided the leadership under the central director, while the leadership was reduced to a single gendarme by 1985, and in 2007 there was no gendarme living able to carry out that task. Therefore in November 2007, three still-living gendarme officers elected the MKCsBK's first central director who himself was not a gendarme, but the son of one, v. Zoltán Kőrössy. As the prior central directors became ill and died, no transfer of material (list of names, or document archives) occurred. So, the current "archives" only consists of those documents he personally obtained over the years. With the loss of gendarmes and no official dues, the financial support of the organization has also declined, and now mainly relies on the personal support of a few.

In place of the *Bajtársi levél*, a quarterly *Newsletter* is sent out both via mail and email, both in Hungarian and English, to keep the connection among the members and to let all interested people know of new developments. The *Newsletter* can also be found in the Library of the website.

The MKCsBK's goal has also changed with the passage of time. The communist regime destroyed all gendarmerie related material. They only preserved a few copies of certain publications kept under lock in a few libraries, unavailable to the public. The families of gendarmes also destroyed everything related to the gendarmerie, as their possession would have meant serious consequences for the family. A small portion of books, objects, documents, and photographs survived as they were carried out of the country as a personal possession of the gendarmes who were forced to leave the country at the end of the war. In the absence of the written documents, the communists were free to paint a picture of the gendarmerie as they liked, as there was no objective way of countering their lies.

After the fall of the communism in 1989, the locked-away material was "freed" and now anyone may look at them. But their small number, scattered distribution, and age-related brittleness that prohibits photocopying makes them practically still unavailable to the public and to those desiring historical research. Therefore, the MKCsBK's goal has become the digitization of all original material related to the gendarmerie, to make it available to everyone interested through the internet. Therefore, a collaboration started between the MKCsBK and the Szemere Bertalan Hungarian History of Law Enforcement Academic Society (Szemere Bertalan Magyar Rendvédelem-történeti Tudományos Társaság). They developed a core bibliography containing about 150 books they were aware of. Since then, with the expert direction of the Society's president, Dr. József Parádi, **the bibliography** is now vastly extended to over 350 books, which is the only such compilation of all gendarme books worldwide. Unfortunately, a significant number of these are forever lost, thanks to the communist purging.

After a year-and-a-half of hard work, all the laws and regulations from 1881 through 1945, which directed the work of the gendarmerie to the smallest detail, were

made available on the website. The gendarmerie is the first Hungarian law-enforcement agency, past or present, which has **all its legal material** posted on the internet.

The digitalization of the books are also mostly finished. With the kind co-operation of the Hungarian War History Institute's Library, the National Széchényi Library, the Országközi Könyvtár (the Hungarian Library of Congress), and several private collectors, all the still existing gendarmerie books are now copied and posted in their entirety in our website's Library. These books are marked with a small gendarmehat icon in the Bibliography, and can be read there or downloaded by anyone, free of charge. Where it is appropriate, a separate list of contents is also prepared for each book to further aid in the search of this vast material. The The National Széchényi Library has also posted some of these books in their prestigious Hungarian Electronic Library (MEK), and the Hungarian War Institute also placed them onto their computers to facilitate their search. Our website's Library also includes a large number of writings about the gendarmerie, mainly in Hungarian, but some are in English.

All issues of the two most significant gendarme publications, the *Csendőrségi Lapok* and the *Gendarme Handbooks* are also now on the website. These are the most excellent sources of information on individual gendarmes. Many families have already found information about their lost gendarme relatives.

A **biographical section** was added in 2011 to the website's Library. It contains personal biographies as well as historian Dr. Sándor Szakály's scholarly compilations of biographical data, and eventually it will host 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. György Perjési's substantial material, representing his life-time collection of biographical tid-bits on individual gendarmes. Many families and historians are now also contributing to the fast-expanding *Biography* section.

In addition, in the Museum section of the website, there are pictures of original **documents**, artifacts, weapons, and **over 2000 photographs** depicting gendarmes and their service.

We also plan to expand the website's **English material**.

Thus, the website can not only serve as a research library for laymen and historians, but will also serve as a virtual museum, which the Hungarian nation still lacks, to provide a source for people all over the world to learn the truth about the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie, not available anywhere else. With these, finally it will be possible to counter the severe distortions and overt lies the communist regime propagated and still propagate against the gendarmerie, and to restore the deserved good reputation and honor of the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie, worldwide.

v. Zoltán Kőrössy and dr. Katalin Soltész Kőrössy,  
Kensington, Maryland, USA  
2010 (refreshed in August, 2014)

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<sup>1</sup> Kiss Gyula: „Magyar Királyi Csendőr Bajtársi Közösség mint a volt Magyar Királyi Csendőrség jogutódjának ismertetése a Hungarian Ethnic Lexicon Foundation/Magyarságtudat Lexikon Alapítvány részére.” (The Hungarian Royal Gendarme Veterans Association, the Successor of the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie). 1984, Calgary, Kanada. Kézirat. <http://csendor.com/konyvtar/konyvek/KissGyulaMKCsBK/>  
<sup>2</sup> 1881/II. law of codicil of the body of gendarmerie; 1881/III. law regarding the organization of a service for public safety. All laws regarding the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie are posted of the MKCsBK website's Library: <http://www.csendor.com/konyvtar/jogsza/>

<sup>3</sup> - 45.022/1933.Eln. VII-c.Order of Department of Interior, posted in *Csendőrségi közlöny* XVIII. évf. 3. szám, 1933. Feb. 4.

- in Hungary, first names are celebrated as, or even more than, birthdays, each name having an official day on which it is celebrated. So, the gendarmes were officially given a day to celebrate.

<sup>4</sup> *Szervezeti és szolgálati utasítás a m. kir. csendőrség számára (Szut.)* (Organizational and Operational Regulations for the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie) Budapest, 1941, Stadium. 13. p.

<sup>5</sup> v. Thassy-Plávenczky Ferenc, in Dr. Kiss Gyula: „Magyar Királyi Csendőr Bajtársi Közösség mint a volt Magyar Királyi Csendőrség szellemi jogutódjának ismertetése a Magyarságtudat Lexikon részére.” 1984, Calgary, Kanada. Manuscript. In the archives of MKCsBK, and also in its website’s Library.

<sup>6</sup> ENDRÓDY Géza: *Alapvetés a csendőr erkölcsi neveléséhez.* (Laying the Grounds for the Moral Development of the Gendarmes) Budapest. 1902, Kaufman. 6 p.

<sup>7</sup> in the “library” of the website: <http://www.csendor.com/site/konyvtar-m.html#parancs>

<sup>8</sup> - *A magyar királyi csendőrség története.* (The History of the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie) Különlenyomat a Csendőrségi lapok 1933. évi számából. Budapest, 1933. Stádium. 21. p.

- PRESZLY Lóránd: *A m. kir. csendőrség története.* (The History of the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie) Budapest. 1920, Honvédelmi Sajtó.vállalat. 6. p.

- After the defeat of the Hungarian Communist Coup in 1919, the ENTENTE’s Hungarian military committee at the recommendation of General Harry HILL BANDHOLTZ requested General Halsey E. YATES, previous US attaché to Romania, to reorganize the Hungarian public safety. He supported the efforts of the new Hungarian government to re-establish the gendarmerie after the defeat of the Red Rule, and re-armed them with weapons purchased from Austria: in Ferenc KAISER: *A Magyar Királyi Csendőrség története a két világháború között.* (The History of the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie Between the Two World Wars). Pécs, 2002, Pro Pannónia Kiadói Alapítvány. 22-24.p. /Pannónia Könyvek./

<sup>9</sup> Béla REKTOR: *A Magyar Királyi Csendőrség oknyomozó története.* (An Investigative History of the Royal Hungarian Gendarmerie) The Cleveland, Ohio, USA, 1980, Árpád Könyvkiadó Vállalat. 433. p.

<sup>10</sup> - PARÁDI József et al. (szerk.): *A magyar rendvédelem története.* (The history of Hungarian Law Enforcement) Budapest, 1996<sup>2</sup>, Osiris, 21-23. p.

- ÖRY Károly: *A Maréchaussée-től a Gendarmerie Nationale-ig. A francia csendőrség történeti előzményei.* (From the Maréchaussée to the National Gendarmerie, The historical preceding to the French gendarmerie) *Rendvédelem-történeti Füzetek (Acta Historiae Praesidii Ordinis)*, VII.évf. (1997) 8.sz. 75-77.p.

<sup>11</sup> In the thirties a delegation of The Canadian Royal Gendarmerie visited the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie in Kiskunhalas to study their training of mounted gendarmes. In 1937, a Polish gendarme delegation visited them for study purposes: in LÉVAY Jenő: *Fekete könyv.* Budapest, 1946, Officiána

<sup>12</sup> *Szervezeti és szolgálati utasítás a m. kir. csendőrség számára (Szut.).* 15. p.

<sup>13</sup> *Utasítások a m. kir. csendőrség számára.* Budapest, 1912. 7. p.

<sup>14</sup> *Szervezeti és szolgálati utasítás a m. kir. csendőrség számára (Szut.)* 16. p.

<sup>15</sup> - The gendarmerie’s workload was greatly increased to ward off and investigate attacks on Jewish residents and their homes by anti-Semite citizens.

- A gendarme detachment, led by Capt. Kun and Ferenc Simon, guarded the Swedish embassy (Wallenberg) and had to repel several attacks of the SS-sympathizers, once with an armed encounter, according to Gabor Kiss, in *Bajtársi levél* 1998. Jan. 1. 10-11. p.

- When Horthy found out the fate of the deported Jews in June of 1944, he ordered to turn back the deporting trains, which were already on their way toward Germany, but still on Hungarian soil: in (<http://www.holokausztmagyarorszag.hu> – „The Jews of Budapest and the last deportations” – accessed 2010. Nov. 26). This order, was carried out by the gendarmes as a part of their ordinary duty (Gendarme Capt. Lullay led the action, according to the diary of Istvan Horthy’s widow, in *Bajtársi levél* 53. évf. 2. szám, 2001. June 13. p.)

- Horthy, double-crossing the Germans, ordered a gendarme company to gather in Budapest to block, with force if necessary, the German-planned deportation of Jews from Budapest. In: Schmidt Mária: *Kollaboráció vagy kooperáció?* Minerva, Budapest, 1990. 86-94 p. (also available in English on the MKCsBK website: <ftp://korossy.org/csendor.com/konyvtar/iratok/irasok/zsidóságEnglish/>

<sup>16</sup> After a statement to this effect in v. baranchi Endre Tamáska’s Gendarme Day presentation in February, 2010, in Venice, Florida, v. Zoltan Korossy, central director, interviewed the other gendarme officers (dr. Andre László, v. baranchi Tamáska Endre, Molnár László, Döme Károly) – all of them agreed that it was a “common knowledge” among the gendarmes that the Soviet decision was made after the defeat of the

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Communist Revolution of 1918-19 in Hungary, to destroy the gendarmerie the first chance they have. This was the reason the gendarmes saw the approach of the Russian army not only as a threat to their homeland but to their own existence as well.

- Tamáska Endre wrote in a book-review: “according to the 1937 edict of the Komintern, if the time comes for the communist to take power in Hungary, the liquidation of the gendarmerie has to be their first act”  
<http://csendor.com/konyvtar/iratok/irasok/magyar/Tam%e1ska%20Szak%e1ly%20T%e1bori%20csend%f6rs%e9g%20k%f6nyv%e9r%f6l.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> 1690/1945. ME. Order: „1 § (1) The Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie loyally served the previous anti-people regimes, harshly repressed the democratic movements, and committed numerous violation against the proletariat and the peasantry, therefore in accordance with the unified judgment of the Hungarian people the Transient National Government declares the guiltiness of the gendarmerie as a whole, dissolves its corps and all its establishments. (2) All people who served the gendarmerie are dismissed from their jobs. (3) The pension and all aids to all the members and their families is discontinued...”, in KAISER Ferenc: *A Magyar Királyi Csendőrség története a két világháború között*. (The History of the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie Between the Two World Wars), Pécs, 2002, Pro Pannónia Kiadói Alapítvány. /Pannonia;

- the whole order may be read on the website: <http://www.csendor.com/konyvtar/jogszab/>

<sup>18</sup> They singled out the gendarmerie, even though all other law enforcement agencies and several government agencies were also involved. They, to this day, do not even mention that the gendarmerie, as the whole of the nation, including the Jews, did not know the fate waiting for the deported Jews after they left the Hungarian soil. And they created lies, presented to this day even on the website created for school children to learn about the holocaust (<http://www.holokausztmagyarorszagon.hu>). One of these is the claim that the gendarmes gathered in Budapest in June 1944 to carry out the deportation of the Jews of the capital, if necessary, by force and against Horthy’s will. The truth according to many well established sources was the direct opposite. Even the testimony of Samu Stern, published in 1990, details Horthy’s plan in cooperation with the Jewish leaders to bring up gendarmes into the capital to *prevent* the deportations, if the Germans would try to carry it out in spite of Horthy’s ban. See details of this testimony in: Mária SCHMIDT: *Kollaboráció vagy kooperáció?* Minerva, Budapest, 1990. 86-94 p., also available in English on the MKCsBK website at

<http://www.csendor.com/konyvtar/irasok/jews/The%20role%20of%20the%20Jewish%20Council%20of%20Budapest%20-%20Schmidt.pdf> (The role of the Jewish Council of Budapest)

<sup>19</sup> Mária SCHMIDT 86-94 p.

<sup>20</sup> Béla REKTOR 496 p.

<sup>21</sup> BARÁTOSSY György: De hogy keveredett Apátok „ezek” közé? Korondi Béla útja a kommunisták akasztófájához: <http://csendor.com/konyvtar/iratok/irasok/magyar/Korondi%20B%e9la%20utja%20.pdf>  
<sup>21</sup> Bagossy László (szerk): *Encyclopedia Hungarica 1994*. Magyarságtudat Alapítvány. Kanada, Altona, Canada, 1994, Friesen Nyomdavidálat.

<sup>22</sup> Gábor KISS „Introduction of the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie on the Internet” *Bajtársi levél* 1998. Jan 1, 6 p.

<sup>23</sup> - „A m. kir. csendőrség rehabilitálásának kérdése a rendszerváltást után” (The question of the rehabilitation of the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie after the change of power)

[http://www.rubicon.hu/magyar/oldalak/a\\_m\\_kir\\_csendorseg\\_rehabitalasanak\\_kerdese\\_a\\_rendszervaltast\\_utan/](http://www.rubicon.hu/magyar/oldalak/a_m_kir_csendorseg_rehabitalasanak_kerdese_a_rendszervaltast_utan/)

- all the legal material is posted at: <http://www.csendor.com/konyvtar/jogszab/> and

<http://www.csendor.com/konyvtar/rendeletek/>

- ZLINSZKY János: Kollektív felelősség. *Rubicon*, XX. évf. (2010) 202.sz. 53-56 p. (Collective blame)

<sup>24</sup> KISS op. cit. 24. p.

<sup>25</sup> Gábor KISS honorary sheriff in Sanford County, Florida; Béla REKTOR, professor of law-enforcement at the University of Arizona.

<sup>26</sup> Statement on the inside cover of all issues of the *Bajtársi levél* published between 1995 and 2005.

<sup>27</sup> The MKCsBK 501(c) (3) was a non-profit organization registered under the American Hungarian Friendship and International Care Association until 2010. New registration is pending.

<sup>28</sup> vitéz Gábor KISS: *Híven, becsülettel, vitézül. Dióhéjban a volt Magyar Királyi Csendőrségről a drága utókornak*. 2009. Venice, Florida. Saját kiadás.

<sup>29</sup> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HxjEF5-wNkQ>

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<sup>30</sup> *Bajtársi levél XXXVIII./Number 1, 1985. April 30, pp 43-52, <http://csendor.com/konyvtar/konyvek/BL/>*

NOTE: All *Bajtársi levél* are posted at this web address

<sup>31</sup> - Gyula KISS

- Gábor KISS central director's report, *Bajtársi levél*, 2000. May 25. 8 p.

<sup>32</sup> Gábor KISS központi vezetői jelentése. *Bajtársi levél* 1999. Nov. 1, 1 p.

<sup>33</sup> Gyula KISSközponti vezető: „Bajtársi hírek” *Bajtársi levél* 1985. Apr. 30, 3-4 p.

<sup>34</sup> As stated on the inside covers of *Bajtársi levél* between 1995 and 2005.

<sup>35</sup> KISS Gábor : „Beszámoló a rendvédelmi konferenciáról.” *Bajtársi levél* 1996. March , 6-7 p.

<sup>36</sup> Gábor KISS: „Áll a csendőr hősi halottak emléktáblája.” *Bajtársi levél* 1999. Nov. 1, 5 p.

<sup>37</sup> -Gábor KISS „Introduction of the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie on the Internet” *Bajtársi levél* 1998. Jan 1, 4-6 p.

- Gábor KISS: „Emlékeztető.” *Bajtársi levél* 1998. March 24. 1 p.

<sup>38</sup> Gábor KISS: „Emlékeztető.” *Bajtársi levél* 1998. March 24. 8 p.