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Hungarian - Final Reports

Hungarian Saturday Classes, New Brunswick, New Jersey

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Introduction

The efforts of the Hungarian-Americans in transmitting the many aspects of their culture to their children have varied throughout the century, influenced by historical, environmental and personality factors during the years, but nonetheless conscious, organized work by members of the sporadic Hungarian communities sustained. This conscious transmission of culture still takes on many forms within the communities /festivals, programs, social events, language schools, scout organizations, etc./, and supplements the pivotal work which goes on in the home, within the structure of the family - a phenomenon not readily accessible to field-workers. But not only does language maintenance, transmission of knowledge about Hungarian folk art, history, literature and music exist within the home, the second generation's lives seem to be touched on a deeper, unconscious level, to the extent that they soon inadvertently live, think and partially become a part of the parents' culture - all within the framework of their lives within the United States. For this reason it is essential to take these dynamic movements of ethnic heritage maintenance into account, and view ~~it~~ them as an integral and positive force in our society.

The topic of this paper will be the most organized form of the conscious transmission of Hungarian culture: the ethnic language school. Many levels and types of Hungarian language instruction exist within the United States:

language courses, Saturday/Sunday schools, summer instruction, evening courses. Specifically, this paper will attempt to outline in short the history and current status of the Hungarian Alumni Association's Hungarian Saturday Classes located in New Brunswick, New Jersey, which is a Saturday school, now in its twenty-third year of existence. Hungarian instruction goes on for thirty-three Saturdays, four hours a week, from the Kindergarten, Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced levels to the course in Hungarian as a Foreign Language for English speaking students.

Pioneering Difficulties

To place the events preceding the establishment of this Hungarian school in New Brunswick in perspective, we must go back in time to the 1950's, specifically to the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, which brought 42,000[1] Hungarian immigrants to the United States, many of whom settled in the New Brunswick area. During the end of the decade, soon after their arrival, several young Hungarian students enrolled at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, and formed the association named Hungarian Students at Rutgers University. One of these students was Károly Nagy who soon became one of the founding fathers of the ethnic school in New Brunswick, and who plays a key role in the affairs of the Hungarian-American community to this very day. Dr. Nagy recalls that "...towards the end of the decade...in '58, '59, '60, we /Hungarian Students at Rutgers University/ began to feel that there are enough youngsters in...the New Brunswick area growing up in American schools with sufficient knowledge about their ancestry and heritage, and perhaps our organization ought to do something about that as well..." /ES82-SN-C6, I, 1, 66-74/.

By early 1960, this group of "fifty-sixers" who "...considered themselves to be the continuers, the maintainers of this revolutionary Hungarian tradition..." /ES82-SN-C6, I, 1, 96-98/, found a need for, and organized a Hungarian school in New Brunswick through their own

efforts and through "...support from the larger non-university Hungarian community..." /ES82-SN-C6, I, 1, 102-104/. Their decision was based on a "...feasibility study to see whether it would be a good idea to start somekind of organized Hungarian instruction...this...study consisted of a questionnaire which we sent out to the addresses that we gathered by that time through our cultural efforts.../and/ the response was quite overwhelming..." /ES82-SN-C6, I, 1, 106-118/.

The preliminary tasks of locating classrooms to house the Hungarian school, the abundance of administrative, detail work, and the initial pedagogical work was completed in the spring and summer, and on September 17, 1960 the Hungarian Saturday Classes opened its doors to forty-four Hungarian-American students. During the course of the first academic year, the school expanded by adding a Hungarian kindergarten on March 11, 1961, which is still in existence today.

Financially speaking, the Hungarian Alumni Association, which was an organization created to continue the work of Hungarian Students at Rutgers University, was chosen to be the sole supporter of the Hungarian Saturday Classes, and remained in that capacity throughout the history of the school. A Chairman of the School Board was chosen annually to take on the responsibility of the ethnic school, along with the Director of the Classes. At times the Director and the Chairman were one and the same person, although

generally these were considered two functions. In the school year 1968 - 1969 this prevailing structure was altered to include a Co-Chairman of the School Board, who was to be elected from the leadership of the Hungarian Scout Association, to assist in matters regarding the Hungarian school. This practice was not continued for very long, and one Chairman of the School Board remained, always elected from the membership of the Hungarian Alumni Association. Later on in the years, when circumstances required a helping hand, the positions of Administrator and Secretary were added to the Board.

During the initial year of Hungarian instruction, the faculty consisted of only four teachers: Mrs. Béla Schmidt /ES82-SN-Appendix IX, no. 19/ who taught Hungarian reading and writing to the elementary class, Dr. Károly Nagy taught Hungarian language and literature, and Dr. Béla Gyengő lectured on the most important features of Hungarian history in the Advanced Class. The Hungarian kindergarten was led by Mrs. András Rockenstein in the second semester /ES-82-SN-Appendix IX, no. 25/. Throughout the school years the number and constitution of the faculty and staff of the Hungarian school fluctuated, controlled primarily by the number of enrolled students for each academic year, and secondarily by the developments in the private lives of the voluntary instructors.

Certainly the most difficult of problems which surfaced at the outset were tne hardships posed by tne complete lack of teaching materials in the United States or elsewhere, designed for the unique needs of week-end instruction of the Hungarian language. These pedagogical difficulties were not overcome until the 1970's. Dr. Nagy recalls the faculty's experiences: "...We found that nothing was available for once a week teaching methodology, for Hungarian as a Second Language, nor for Hungarian as a First Language, which it was for many of the students who spoke fluent Hungarian, because they were sons and daughters of parents who came out four or five years ago from Hungary...but once a week methodology is quite difficult..." /ES82-SN-C6, I, 1, 153-159/. "...Of course, the material available from Hungary was so filled with propaganda, and was geared...for everyday teaching methodology, it was useless. We did two things: we as teachers, on one hand, had to put together, search, and find... and create our own teaching material, including books which were non-existent; on the other hand, we had to start a larger research to see whether there is similar Hungarian instruction anywhere else, outside of Hungary...What we frequently did, was try to purchase, ask, borrow, find, research all sorts of material for Hungarian children from Hungary, as well as anywhere else, and we started to select out of that available pool...photocopying it, writing it out...I remember Schmidt Panni's husband /Béla Schmidt: ES82-SN-

Appendix IX, no. 19/, who draws well...he drew the first sheets for teaching the youngsters the alphabet...Schmidt Panni was using those sheets...she was xeroxing them...I was also trying to research available material from all sorts of books from my own library, from the library of others, from old textbooks, children's books...I tried to put it together...and by the end of the year we had an awful lot of material..." /ES82-SN-C6, I, 1 223-260/.

Naturally, this was only a temporary solution for the problem of a lack of systematic materials suited and tailored for this special group of children, having a language proficiency in Hungarian as diverse as the number of students enrolled in the school. A much larger, and more comprehensive effort was needed to overcome this unique pedagogical situation.

I. The School Years Between 1960 and 1967

As we look back over the twenty-three years of the existence of the Hungarian Saturday Classes, we can classify the school years into four groups according to the upward or downward mobility of the number of enrolled students. These figures reflect important changes in the disposition of the Hungarian-American community toward the school, and mirrors the communication between the faculty, staff and the community at large. The enrollment statistics signal any number of occurences, for example an upheaval within the structure of the school board or faculty, such as personal or health problems resulting in the replacement of teachers, directors, or may even indicate a new "administration's" favorable or unfavorable work within the school and community.

The first "era" in the history of the Hungarian Saturday Classes is unquestionably characterized by strong upward mobility in the number of registered students /1960: 44 to 1966: 116/. These figures provide a basis for concluding that a marked increase in enrollments suggested that this Hungarian community truly realized the importance of maintaining a Hungarian school, and the value of systematic transmission of their culture to their children. The efforts and hard work of the teachers throughout these years must also be taken into account, for their success is an integral part of the success of the entire school.

Increased enrollments demanded a change in all aspects

of managing the school, and also modified the curriculum, altered the methodology used by the teachers. Initially, increased enrollments warranted the establishment of new classes and the restructuring of the old ones, which was dictated by the age and language proficiency of the student body. By the second year of the Hungarian Saturday Classes a new class was opened. These accomodations were made each year when a marked change formulated within the student body.

The location of the Hungarian school remained basically the same, all the buildings which gave a home to the school were located on the Rutgers campus in New Brunswick. The two main buildings used for the longest length of time were the Ballantine Building and Frelinghuysen Hall /ES82-SN5-1 and 2/.

Initiations always took place each school year to improve the curriculum and expand the programs offered by the school. These initiations were always positive in nature, although few of the programs did not survive along with the school.

The first small expansion of the staff took place in the second school year /1961-1962/, when two lecturers were invited to speak to the history class: Joseph Held and András Rockenstein. An organized series of monthly lectures were initiated in the 1963-1964 academic year named Széchenyi Seminar for the students of the Kossuth and Rákóczi Classes,

the advanced, older students. These university level lectures were given by Hungarian professors teaching at North American universities: Dr. András Alföldi, Dr. István Foltinyi and Dr. Miklós Harsányi - Princeton University; Dr. Károly Henkey - Montreal University; Dr. András Pogány - Seton Hall University; August J. Molnár - Rutgers University. The lectures involved specialized Hungarian subjects varying from the discussion of archaeology, history, music to literature.

A research project was launched in the 1963-1964 school year through the combined efforts of the American Hungarian Studies Foundation, the Hungarian Students at Rutgers University, and the Association of Hungarian University Students in North America to locate, contact and describe other Hungarian schools in the United States in the hope that later these schools would be able to get together, learn from and exchange experiences with one another. This research project was completed in 1965 by Károly Nagy, and published in The Slavic and East European Journal /9:4/ under the title "Hungarian Schools in the United States - A Survey" /ES82-SN-Appendix VIII, no. 1/ and /ES82-SN-C6, I, 1,300/. This study awoke the interests of many including the world-renowned Zoltán Kodály, Hungarian music theoretician and composer, founder of the Kodály Method, along with other great cultural leaders in Hungary. Kodály wrote about the

twenty-three Hungarian-American schools Nagy located, in one of his articles published in Magyar Hírek, a daily newspaper in Hungary on November 15, 1965. This was to lead to the seed planted in the 1960's which was to bear bittersweet fruit in the 1970's.

A four hundred dollar scholarship was also established in the 1963-1964 school year by the Hungarian Alumni Association for Hungarian-American students who complete the Hungarian Saturday Classes and pursue their university studies at Rutgers or Douglass University in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

The importance of parent-teacher meetings for the Saturday school was realized in the early years, and there were two or three PTA meetings held during a school year. The parents were always encouraged to take part in the classroom instruction and the final examinations to monitor the progress and quality of the material taught to their children. A good relationship between the children, teachers, parents and the community was always stressed.

In the 1964-1965 academic year a major concern surfaced which would be a continuous care for the staff and administrators of the Hungarian Saturday Classes throughout its history, and this was the realization that the Hungarian school, now established and flourishing, also needed to be maintained. Thus, the problem of student attrition and replacements became a central concern for the school and would have to be solved through conscious organizational and managerial efforts. The key to solving this difficulty was

perceived to be the kindergarten. These little ones would potentially become students of the Hungarian school throughout their youth and replace the older students who were by now leaving the school. By realizing this hardship fairly early in the school's history, and remedying the ailment with positive organizational work, the kindergarten reported an increase in the number of children attending during the 1964-1965 school year.

Many of the pedagogical and methodological problems remained as we near the end of the first era of the Hungarian Saturday Classes: the lack of adequate teaching materials, the diverse language proficiency of the students, and the lack of time to teach the children all that was considered pertinent. Nevertheless, growth, change and positive results characterized the beginning stage of this unique Hungarian school.

II. The School Years Between 1967-1974

The second era in the history of the Hungarian Saturday Classes may be described as the crucial years, brought on by the unfortunate medical problems of the members of the administration, and consequently the number of enrolled children dropped from 116 to only 62 in the 1967-1968 school year. Later, a growing opposition within the Hungarian - American community toward the school dwindled the registered students to 40 by 1974. The strength of the school was only maintained for two years during this period in 1968 and in 1970, when the students numbered 99 and 109 respectively.

During these years the structure of the Hungarian Saturday Classes essentially remained identical to the previous years', only fewer students were participating in Hungarian language learning. The location of the kindergarten was moved to Washington School /French Street, New Brunswick, New Jersey/ where it remained until the 1977-1978 school year. The school's choir, consisting of twenty-one students, was formed in 1969 under director Jenő Ádám.

The tenth anniversary of the Hungarian school was celebrated in 1969-1970. The number of youngsters had risen to 109, but this phenomenon was only ephemeral.

A new class was added to the school taught by Mrs. Joseph Orvos, which was the organized instruction of

folk art in theory and practice. Folk motifs were taught to the adult and younger students. The various stiches and patterns of embroidery characteristic of various regions of Hungary were also learned by the students.

The newly formed Literary Workshop, led by Dr. Károly Nagy, experimented with American and Hungarian poetry translation /ES82-SN-Appendix X , no. 4/.

Meanwhile during the late sixties, after the publication of the results of the above mentioned research project in the Slavic Journal /1965/ and several Hungarian journals, Dr. Nagy began organizing his efforts to bring about the badly needed conference of these Hungarian schools. Dr. Nagy recalls his work at that time: "...I have duplicated this published material and sent it to them /the other Hungarian-American schools/ to...organize a get together, a conference of sorts at Rutgers University. That conference never materialized because of the huge distances that these people would have to travel on their own monies...parallel to that, I have sent this material...to Hungarian leaders...cultural leaders in Hungary whom I knew, Zoltán Kodály, Mihály Váci and to Gyula Illyés, and they started to respond...First of all, we started a correspondence with Mihály Váci. I sent him all sorts of materials, he encouraged me...but they also started to work on the Hungarian...academe and professionals...because

I proposed to them: why don't they help us organize some kind of conference?...Finally, they have succeeded in pushing things so far, that in 1970 the first such conference was organized by a body of Hungarian scholars and officials at Lajos Kossuth University in Debrecen /Hungary/, and at that time this loose organization received the name of "Anyanyelvi Konferencia" - Native Language Conference - ...and that organization exists ever since..." /ES82-SN-C6, I, 1, 306-330/.

In turn opposition within the Hungarian-American community "...culminated in 1970 when the first Native Language Conference occurred..." /ES82-SN-C6, I, 2, 175-177/. In response "...a counter school /was established/ which we viewed as a partly desirable state of affairs because instead of having one Hungarian school, it is better to have two, no matter who starts /it/ and why..." /ES82-SN-C6, I, 2, 201-204/, explains Nagy.

The Native Language Conference took place in the summer of 1970 and "...it caught many people...by surprise. They didn't know quite what to make of it...the idea was new. The idea originated from our school /the Hungarian Saturday Classes/..." /ES82-SN-C6 II, 1, 316-319/.

At the week long conference Dr. Nagy proposed a program which included the cooperative writing of Hungarian language textbooks for American students. The proposal was accepted, and the Hungarian scholars proclaimed that they

would write the textbooks for the Hungarian schools, "...to which /Nagy/ vigorously protested and...barraged them with letters saying that we are just not going to teach those books that will be written by people sitting at their desks in Budapest. What we have to do absolutely is have the textbook writers see the medium, the population...survey the population for whom they are writing the textbooks..." /ES82-SN-C6, II, 1, 377-382/.

Dr. Nagy in turn provided another proposal on a method of overcoming the hardships of a program such as the one which followed, and soon enough the three textbook writers were here in the United States for two months.

They began their work immediately by visiting Hungarian-American schools in the New Jersey area, including the Passaic Catholic School which at that time had everyday Hungarian language instruction. They began taping the pronunciation patterns of the children, interviewing parents, teachers and collecting old and current curriculum materials. The writers also had the opportunity to visit American schools, since it was equally important to witness what the children were exposed to during the week. They visited an American public and private school interviewing teachers, taking notes and gathering American textbooks to learn more about the methodologies used to teach in this country. They went on to visit schools in Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Canada and from there flew back to Budapest to begin working on the Hungarian language textbooks designed for American children. /ES82-SN-C6, II, 2, 003-083/

Back in Budapest the textbook writers began working on the book for intermediate students. The format had been agreed upon earlier: the textbooks would be accompanied by workbooks, cassette tapes, along with teacher's manuals. There would initially be ~~four levels, that is~~ four sets of teaching materials. It had been stressed and agreed upon at the outset that the materials would not contain a bit of propaganda, and in the event that a trace of it would be found in the books, they would be rejected immediately.

The most unique and truly difficult phase of the work was the monitoring of the newly written material. The textbook writers sent out their manuscripts chapter by chapter to the Hungarian Saturday Classes. The material was then taken into the classrooms, put to test with the Hungarian - American children, commented on, revised and returned to Budapest through the mail. This tedious but rewarding task went on for a number of years until the books were completed, then published.

The books were put to use immediately at the Hungarian Saturday Classes. The so called "sister school" of the Hungarian Saturday Classes, the Passaic Hungarian School /New Jersey/ was also one of the first Hungarian - American schools to use the books prepared through the joint efforts of Dr. Nagy, the Hungarian School and the Native Language Conference. The books today are being used at more and more Hungarian-American schools.

III. The Academic Years Between 1974 and 1980

The fifteenth anniversary of the Hungarian Saturday Classes was coupled with the regeneration of the student body, and a revival was sensed within the school. The year began with the registration of fifty-four students and closed the anniversary celebration with ninety-nine Hungarian-American youngsters.

The positions of Director and Administrator were assumed by Susan and Miklós Csergő in the summer of 1974, and they ran the school until 1980. Susan Csergő felt that the key to their success during the years was the role of excellent personal relationships between the Hungarian-American community /parents, children and friends/ and the faculty and staff of the school. "...This is what transformed the school into a micro-community, a large family where everyone felt at home, and felt welcome... the children, the parents and the teachers...and the way to achieve this was by systematic organizational work throughout the year... /ES82-SN-C12, 1, 83-114/.

There were new teachers added to the faculty of the school: Magda Eszlári /ES82-SN-C11/, Mr. and Mrs. Somogyi /ES82-SN-Appendix IX, no. 63/, and Melinda Hoffmann /ES82-SN-Appendix IX, no. 64/ to name only a few. The core of the curriculum remained essentially the same, although the necessary adjustments were made to accomodate the expanding classes. Soon enough, the newly written and attractively prepared textbooks were beginning to make their way into the classrooms of

the Hungarian school, making instruction more systematic and efficient, alleviating some of the work of the teachers, and placing well-stuctured, well-written, colorful materials in the hands of Hungarian-American students.

These years, which were marked by the cohesion of the Hungarian Saturday Classes with the Hungarian ethnic community, brought progressive initiations to the school's program. The practice of PTA's and teachers' mini-conferences was continued to facilitate the work of the teachers and the school as a whole. These conferences soon expanded, and in 1976 the Hungarian school's faculty held a Teacher Conference at Rutgers University which brought together the teachers of Hungarian from the East Coast. The instructors shared their experiences and discussed the many hardships of keeping the Hungarian schools alive, and maintaining the Hungarian language. /ES82-SN-Appendix IV, no. 2 and 3/

In 1977 the faculty and staff of the Hungarian Saturday Classes visited the Passaic Hungarian School in Passaic, New Jersey /ES82-SN-Appendix VIII, no. 4/ to collectively discuss pedagogical and methodological difficulties. Furthermore, the third conference of the American Hungarian Educators' Association paid a visit to the Hungarian Saturday Classes in April, 1978. Hungarian language teacners from Chicago and Passaic demonstrated their teacning methods to tne faculty in the classrooms of the Hungarian school in New Brunswick.

Not only did the teachers and staff of the Hungarian Saturday Classes get the opportunity to participate in "extra-curricular" activities, but the students as well took part in field trips visiting Rutgers University's Alexander Library and the American Hungarian Studies Foundation to do research for their Saturday history class /ES82-SN-Appendix IX, no. 6 and 7/; the statue of Lajos Kossuth and the grave of Béla Bartók, both in New York, were also on the agenda to be visited /ES82-SN-Appendix IX, no. 5/. The annual Pontozó, a folk dance competition held in northern New Jersey, was the place to show off their talents in Hungarian folk dance. The large scale Hungarian Festival at the Garden State Arts Center in Holmdel, New Jersey was an elaborate event for all Hungarian-Americans in the area /ES82-SN-Appendix IX, no. 48 through 54/. These colorful and enjoyable events all made the concept of going to Hungarian school much more favorable for the students who gave up a substantial amount of their free time to participate in Hungarian language instruction.

By now, the Hungarian Saturday Classes of the Hungarian Alumni Association had become very well-known to interested Hungarians throughout the world, bringing professional educators, poets, writers, historians and journalists into the classrooms to witness ethnic history in the making here in New Brunswick. These professionals interested in the main-

tenance of Hungarian heritage and the science of teaching foreign languages came from many points in the United States and Europe. The impact was much more permanent than ever imagined: these writers, poets returned to their homes and homelands and recorded their impressions in novels, articles, poems which some sent back to the Hungarian Saturday Classes as a token of their appreciation for the experience they had by visiting the school, and as an expression of respect for the teachers, students and their parents who sacrificed much to maintain their heritage and language in the United States /ES82-SN- Appendix V, no. 1 and 2; X, no. 2/.

Puffery! quite concrete examples or drop.

Along with the hard work of learning Hungarian language, literature, history on Saturday mornings, there was room for educational entertainment: the programs put on by the student body in celebration of the Christmas holiday, Mother's Day and the graduation ceremonies. Susan Csergő recalls that this "...method was not employed before in the Hungarian Saturday Classes to this extent...and was implemented by her husband Miklós Csergő...The students were joyous about the Christmas holiday...and we passed on to them the Hungarian spirit of Christmas...This also became cultural education for the whole Hungarian community...Through these programs and plays they /the parents and friends/ enjoyed seeing the development and the knowledge of their children, and were all happy that the Christmas holiday was cele-

brated in a family spirit, bringing back their memories of chilhood. After the program all the students received a little present brought by the Baby Jesus, in Hungary He is the bearer of gifts,...and this concluded the ceremonies..." /ES82-SN-C12, 1, 117-147/.

One of the teachers who worked with the children for six years in preparing and practicing for these programs was Magda Eszlári. She explains the pedagogical benefits of such programs: "...Even though the children have to work very hard at overcoming /linguistic/ difficulties in preparing for a program, I feel that it is extremely useful...and even though it takes away much time from formal teaching, that which a child learns at this time will be remembered,...he has invested more work into /memorizing his parts/, especially when he experiences success... and because he is performing in front of an audience, he will remember /the poems, etc./ to a greater extent...There is Hungarian school every week, but there are only two - three programs a year..." /ES82-SN-C11, 1, 134 - 146/.

Several studies and smaller research projects have attempted to survey and record aspects of the phenomenon of the Hungarian ethnic school in the United States. A major task was to maintain an active list of Hungarian schools in the country, which in this area was kept up to date by Dr. Károly Nagy among others. /ES82-SN-Appendix VIII, no. 1 and 2/. Later, a comprehensive list was compiled by András

Sándor in 1982 who served as former director of the school for a number of years /ES82-SN-Appendix VIII, no. 3/. Furthermore, during the fifteenth anniversary year of the Hungarian Saturday Classes, a questionnaire /ES82-SN-Appendix VIII, no. 6/ was prepared and sent out by Dr. Károly Nagy to former students of this school inquiring about their use of the Hungarian language and maintenance of their heritage since the time they left the ethnic school. The goal of this survey was to better understand the attitudes and practice of former students in maintaining their heritage, and to incorporate these findings into the plans of the Hungarian school. It was not only important for the staff and faculty to work within the present situation, but it must be known what becomes of their efforts and what fruit their work bears in the future.

During the 1978-1979 school year Susan Nagy visited the Hungarian ethnic school to do her linguistic fieldwork for her doctoral dissertation by taking a Hungarian vocabulary survey of the Hungarian-American students. She had the opportunity to visit the school five times during that winter to complete the survey. The following spring the students and their parents filled out a comprehensive questionnaire directed at the modes and intensity of the Hungarian-American community's language and heritage maintenance. The results were incorporated in her dissertation entitled "The Teach-

ing of Hungarian as a Foreign Language in the United States on the Basis of the Contrastivity of the English and Hungarian Languages," 1980.

The work continued at the school from Saturday to Saturday, but at the closing of the 1979-1980 school year Susan and Miklós Csergő decided to resign from their positions as Director and Administrator of the Hungarian Saturday Classes. Susan Csergő explains that "...six years was a long time, and we became very exhausted. My husband's health problems were also a contributing factor. Furthermore, we felt that someone else would have a chance to continue this rewarding work. But from our standpoint: we became very tired - it was just too much..." About their future plans she contemplates: "...We would surely continue the work if our personal situation would allow us to do so, but at this point we have no positive plans..." /ES82-SN-C12, 2, 232-255/.

IV. The Academic Years from 1980 to the Present

The third decade of the Hungarian Saturday Classes promises to follow the tradition set during the 1960's and 1970's. Dr. Maria Tamás and Zsigmond Németh took over the task of running the school in 1980. The fifty enrolled students were visited by writers, actors and actresses from Hungary and Transylvania.

The twenty-second year of instruction /1981-1982/ was dedicated to the remembrance of the one hundredth anniversary of the death of the 19th century Hungarian poet, János Arany, coupled with the celebration of the one hundredth birthday of Zoltán Kodály.

The administrative work was done by Éva Fekete and Zsigmond Németh for the forty-four enrolled students last year. The Hungarian Saturday Classes continued to be held at Frelinghuysen Hall on the Rutgers campus.

The maintenance and transmission of Hungarian heritage demands dedication, sacrifice and a great deal of hard work. Zoltán Kodály reminds us that: "Culture is not hereditary. The culture of our ancestors evaporates all too quickly if each generation does not acquire it for itself." This assures us that the work of the Hungarian Saturday Classes will go on even when there remains but one child who feels the need to learn about his/her Hungarian heritage and the language of his/her ancestors.

The Curriculum of the Hungarian Saturday Classes

The curriculum, levels and methods of instruction in an ethnic school such as the Hungarian Saturday Classes is always predetermined in a sense by the composition of the voluntary student body. The variety of students, classified according to their language proficiency, in turn is influenced by historical, environmental and social factors. These features must also be taken into consideration when speaking about the curriculum of an ethnic school. Historically speaking for example, waves of emigration from countries tend to sway the number and quality of potential participants in an ethnic school program to include a larger percent of people with native language proficiency. This was the case in 1956 when the Hungarian Revolution "recharged" the pool of Hungarians living outside of Hungary. In New Brunswick this brought on the establishment of a Hungarian school and altered the composition of other Hungarian-American schools already in existence. In comparison, only sporadic low level immigration of Hungarians to the United States took place since that time, thus the level of students with a native language proficiency in Hungarian decreased. Today there are more and more Hungarian-American children enrolling in the school who do not speak a word of Hungarian. These factors must also be taken into consideration by the members of ethnic communities who partake in the preservation and transmission of their culture through an organized

effort such as a language school.

At the Hungarian Saturday Classes the number and variety of enrolled students fluctuates annually, directly influencing the levels of instruction and the material offered by the school. At the beginning of the school year, the Hungarian language proficiency of each student is assessed, and on the basis of his/her knowledge, age and occasionally personal considerations, the student is placed into the class most advantageous for his/her development. Susan Csergő elaborates: /The children were divided according to/ "their age and language proficiency...many times there were difficulties...for example a six year old child had the language proficiency of a nine year old...but the opposite also happened. We knew that children do not like to be in the same class with younger children...but sometimes a nine year old did have to be in the same class with six year olds. This in turn motivated the child to study a bit more to be able to progress to the higher class with his/her friends..." /ES82-SN-C12, 1, 248-261/.

Usually four levels of language and literature instruction are formed: the beginner, intermediate I and II, and the advanced level. Hungarian as a Foreign Language is taught on two levels: one course is designed for children, the other for adults. The kindergarten stands as a separate entity. Hungarian Folk Art is taught to the student body as a whole,

not necessarily distinguishing between the students according to age and language proficiency.

The subjects which were continuously taught at the Hungarian Saturday Classes are the following:

- the Basics of Hungarian Reading and Writing
- Hungarian Language I and II
- Hungarian Language and Literature
- Hungarian Geography
- Hungarian History
- Hungarian as a Foreign Language I and II
- Hungarian Folk Arts /song, dance, embroidery and woodcarving/.

The subjects are taught to all students, but on various levels, adjusted to the capabilities and previous knowledge of each class.

The teaching materials and textbooks used at the Hungarian Saturday Classes were created individually by the teachers in the early years. Textbooks published in the United States and Hungary were all used, depending upon the class, the material taught and the instructor. By the 1970's the Hungarian language and culture textbooks written for foreign students were implemented, and the need for supplementary teaching materials was left up to the instructor. Presently, the core of the curriculum taught at the Hungarian Saturday Classes is contained in the following textbooks:

- Tarka lepke
- Magyar szavak világa

please give translation of titles + explanations of what they are.

- Hogyan mondjuk helyesen?
- Beszéljünk magyarul
- Learn Hungarian.

The students of Hungarian study for four hours each Saturday from 9 o'clock to 1 o'clock, and are tested tnrougnout the school year. They receive report cards at their graduation ceremonies, but this practice generally serves as motivation for the students and is symbolic in nature /ES82-SN-Appendix V, 4/.

This section on curriculum needs to be expanded to include more detail (see comments in margins). It also may be incorporated into other parts of the paper, e.g. when you talk about the joint effort development of curriculum materials.

- already mentioned before, simply include into the earlier section.

Holidays

The Hungarian Saturday Classes celebrates and observes traditional and national holidays during the course of the academic year. The traditional holidays are celebrated by closing the school for vacation: Thanksgiving, Christmas and the Easter holidays. Christmas, Mother's Day and the Hungarian national holidays are marked by a special program prepared by the faculty and students of the school for the parents and friends in the ethnic community. Pamphlets and invitations are designed and distributed to inform the public about the upcoming events /Christmas: ES82-SN-Appendix II, no. 1/, /Mother's Day: ES82-SN-Appendix V, no. 1/ and /Hungarian National Holidays: ES82-SN-Appendix III, no. 1 and 2/.

The two Hungarian national holidays observed are October 23rd and March 15th. In autumn, the anniversary of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution is observed with a solemn program of relevant poems and excerpts from letters and historical documents. The 1848 Hungarian War for Freedom is commemorated in the spring with a literary and folk program. A large portion of the Hungarian ethnic community takes part in these observances.

Ethnic School Teachers

Volunteer teachers and instructors from an ethnic community are the individuals who pass on their knowledge about the culture and language of their ancestors in the setting of an ethnic school. These teachers may either be trained professionals or amateurs who speak the respective language and are familiar with the heritage of the ethnic community. The trained professionals have either received their diplomas in the country from which they emigrated, in this case Hungary, or in the country to which they immigrated - the United States. The most advantageous situation for the students is an instructor who is dually trained. The amateurs who take on the mission of teaching in an ethnic school may have a native language proficiency brought from their homelands, or might have acquired the knowledge to teach growing up in an ethnic community.

At the Hungarian Saturday Classes there were examples for all of the above mentioned possibilities, but the most important guideline was to maintain a high quality in staff as well as in teaching materials. Dr. Nagy emphasizes that "Right from the beginning...we wanted to establish the fact that this school was going to be a professional effort... We selected teachers who had their teaching diplomas from Hungary...We tried to maintain it so that our teachers indeed would be qualified teachers. In the subsequent years, some of these teachers had dual training..." /ES82-SN-C6, I,

1, 187-221/.

It must be noted that the textbooks described earlier and written in the 1970's for Hungarian-American students, were prepared with accompanying teacher's manuals keeping the issue of the professional and the dedicated novice teacher in mind. These manuals were of great assistance to the instructors using the new books, and will surely aid them in the future as well.

Administrative Work at the Hungarian Saturday Classes

The abundance of administrative, managerial and organizational work at the Saturday school is performed by the Director and Administrator of the Hungarian Saturday Classes. The individuals selected to assume these positions are members of the Hungarian Alumni Association predominantly. The work needs to be done all year round, and is extremely diverse in nature. The following outline will provide the reader with an overview of the four pertinent areas in which thorough, consistent and dedicated work must be done in order to run a healthy, growing school.

I. FINANCIAL WORK:

1. Accounting and bookkeeping
2. Fund raising
3. Bank, insurance, tax and related matters
4. Monthly financial reports to the Hungarian Alumni Association
5. Inventory

II. ORGANIZATIONAL WORK:

1. Student and personnel recruiting /actively taking part at all Hungarian-American social functions/
2. Telephone recruiting preceding all programs and activities of the school
3. Locating and renting classrooms and halls for the school and its various programs
4. Creating, organizing and monitoring of all plays and programs put on by the students

5. Organizing all aspects of successful dinner-dances, picnics, ceremonies, celebrations and outings the school is engaged in during the year
6. Organizing teacher conferences and all other events in which the school and staff participates / festivals, dance competitions, programs, conferences, etc./
7. Posting and distributing of fliers and posters throughout the area to advertise the ethnic school

III. MANAGERIAL WORK:

1. Setting up, managing and monitoring of classes, students and teachers along with the curriculum taught at the school
2. Examining, purchasing and distributing books, films, records and gifts /folk items/ for the school and students
3. Maintaining a list of students enrolled annually in the school, and an active list of students according to classes
4. Presiding over teacher and staff meetings and PTA's
5. Reporting on status and work of the school to the Hungarian Alumni Association at its monthly meetings
6. Public relations:
   -dealing with guests, visitors and the media
   -preparing and delivering speeches at various meetings, conferences within the ethnic community, outside of it, in the U.S. and abroad
   -writing informative articles about the school for publication in newspapers, journals, etc.
7. Dealing with all advisory and social work within the ethnic community which presents itself through the school during the year

IV. CLERICAL WORK:

1. Drafting, designing, preparing and printing of all letters, invitations, pampnlets, posters, yearbooks, report cards pertaining to school activities
2. Preparing and handling of all audio-visual materials /photos, sound recordings, etc./
3. Storage of all materials belonging to the school /books, notebooks, pamphlets, all letters, forms, recorders, projectors/
4. Setting up of schedules for the upcoming school year
5. Maintaining an active address file of patrons, students and participants of the ethnic school
6. Addressing and mailing of invitations, fund raising letters, etc. to members of the Hungarian-American community

Economic Considerations at the Hungarian Saturday Classes

The Hungarian Alumni Association, a non-profit organization, was chosen to be the sole supporter of the school at the time of establishment in 1960. This association continues to do so today. Unfortunately, as the years progressed the funds were not adequate to cover the rising expenses of keeping the school afloat. Susan Csergő explains some of the activities and methods of fund raising employed during the years 1974-1980: "...We did not receive financial help from anyone but the Hungarian Alumni Association. Our school expanded, and we had to develop a "financial aid" program of patrons. Our secondary source of help was from the parental contributions donated for the education of their children...Other sources of financial help were the donations given at the various programs, the raffles and other such activities...A more organized form of aid was the /above mentioned/ patron program of the Hungarian Saturday Classes. Fund raising letters /ES82-SN-Appendix IV, no. 5/ were sent out each March to our sustaining patrons...and usually five to six hundred families and individuals contributed regularly...those who felt the importance of keeping the school in existence, and considered it their duty to help the school... Another important source of aid, which was indirect, was the voluntary work offered by the staff, faculty and parents. My

husband and I contributed six years of voluntary work..." /ES82-SN-C12, 1, 304-370/.

"...if we would not have had to worry about the financial aspects of running the school it would have been alot easier! The great amount of time put into the administrative and fund raising work would all have had been saved...Many sleepless hours were spent worrying about the school's financial difficulties. A lot of time would have been saved..." recalls Susan Csergő /ES82-SN-C12, 2, 197-223/.

Parents and Children

The parents of the students attending an ethnic school come from a variety of backgrounds. They may be either recent immigrants, or members of the first, second or even third generation of an ethnic group. The parents are either of identical or of mixed heritage. The motivation for sending their children to an ethnic school varies from family to family. Their reasons could either be emotional and romantic, practical, or even social in nature, sometimes a combination of goals. Steven Jurcsek, who sends three of his children to the Hungarian Saturday Classes, elaborates on their specific case: "...At home the language is not really spoken, my wife is not Hungarian...Yet, I do want to have them share my belief for the Hungarian language, my love for the country where I was born and which I had to leave...I would like to pass something down to them...Therefore, I feel that even if they will not speak the language perfectly, they will learn about the language, history, and some Hungarian songs...I feel that the passing down of all these values will make them better Americans..." /ES82-SN-C4, 1, 25-51/.

A former director of the Hungarian school, Susan Csergő, expresses similar views about transmitting knowledge about her heritage. It is vital "...because you cannot be a good

American if you deny that which you once were..." Secondly, ".../doing so will give the child/ two cultures...The child will feel that he/she belongs somewhere, and will be able to identify his/her roots...it is also important in that the children will be able to understand their parents somewhat better, those people who cannot become fully American...and they will know a little about their heritage..." /ES82-SN-C12, 1, 166-193; 148-165/.

The more practical aspects of learning another language are expressed by Marianne Muszka: "You are as many people as the number of languages you know. We would like to have our children study other languages later on, not only Hungarian..." /ES82-SN-C9, 1, 193-197/. Magda Eszlári, a teacher at the Hungarian school, states that "My knowledge is at hand, and I feel that learning only makes a person more valuable... there are many gems in Hungarian literature, art and culture that are worth passing on..." /ES82-SN-C11, 1, 210-224/.

Deneice Oroszváry, an American woman married to a Hungarian and learning the language herself, feels that "...it is worthwhile to be connected to something...we do not fit in the American community anymore..." /ES82-SN-C7, 1, 187-200/.

The examples above reflect different angles and methods of interpreting the importance of transmitting and maintaining ethnic heritage and language, but all contribute positively

to the opinion that conscious transmission of one's heritage is useful and a must.

There are equally varied opinions supporting the practice of non-participation in an organized effort such as an ethnic language school, or other forms of ethnic activity. The shortage of time, energy is a primary cause of a lack of participation, as are personal, social, ideological reasons as well as disinterest. Marianne Muszka explains why she took her youngest daughter out of Hungarian school: "She had difficulty distinguishing between the two languages in first grade. We decided to take her out until she had the basics of English down, and was ready to accept formal instruction in Hungarian. She will be returning next year " /ES82-SN-C9, 1, 28-39/.

In any event, the active participation in conscious language and culture transmission requires time, dedication and financial commitments on the part of the parents and children involved. A free Saturday morning could very well be spent doing equally important activities such as sports, outings, other hobbies, even housework or just resting by young and old alike.

Many of the parents who do bring their children to Hungarian school manage to get some of their tasks done, but others stay at the school and speak with the teachers, directors and other parents coming to the school and utilize this time for social activity. Whatever the case, a por-

tion of each Saturday is dedicated to their children and their Hungarian heritage.

Finally, a few words from the students, the children who are the subjects of the whole program and issue of Hungarian heritage maintenance. They do not seem to mind giving up cartoons, sports activities, sleeping in on Saturday mornings in lieu of learning Hungarian. They soon become accustomed to sacrificing their leisure time during the week in order to read and study Hungarian with their parents. They also learned to make that extra effort to speak only in Hungarian in the home, and soon feel that "...It sounds 'weird' if I speak to my parents in English..." /ES82-SN-C5, 1, 118-120/. This continuous surplus effort and work will surely add to being a disciplined individual in the future.

Bernadette Muszka, a former student of the Hungarian school, left because she became interested in the many activities offered by the weekday school she was attending. She reflects on the years she did partake in Hungarian instruction: "...I like to say that I miss going there. It is an empty space when it comes to Saturday mornings..." /ES82-SN-C10, 1, 106-110/.

The students who do make an effort in their lives to come to an ethnic school to learn the language in a formal way, enjoy the luxuries of knowing another language: "...we can speak with our friends and no one will understand us..."

/ES82-SN-C5, 1, 68-92/. "...I feel good about myself,... and feel big that I know something my friends do not...and when I come home I have another life to live..." The children also have the valuable opportunity to make other friends, and acquire a true sense of belonging.

Esther Pigniczky sums up the essence of ethnic heritage and language maintenance: "...When I go to Hungarian Scouts, rignt away I have a million friends. We are all the same people, and all understand each other. We know two worlds and two languages..." /ES82-SN-C5, 1, 210-218/.

good quote

NOTES

[1] Fishman, Joshua A.: Hungarian Language Maintenance in the United States, Indiana University Publications, Volume 62 of the Uralic and Altaic Series, 1966, p. 14.

APPENDIX

ES82-SN-Appendix I

1. Student registration forms
2. Letter to parents announcing the coming school year
3. Pamphlets explaining the curriculum at the Hungarian Saturday Classes
4. Bilingual fliers advertising the Hungarian Saturday Classes used for posting and distribution

ES82-SN-Appendix II

1. Pamphlets announcing the students' Christmas program at the Hungarian Saturday Classes

ES82-SN-Appendix III

1. Invitation to the commemoration of October 23, the anniversary of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution
2. Invitations to programs commemorating the Hungarian War for Freedom of 1848. The national holiday is celebrated each year on March 15.

ES82-SN-Appendix IV

1. Letter announcing credited courses in Hungarian Studies at Middlesex County College
2. Letter announcing the April 10, 1976 Hungarian Teachers' Conference held at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey
3. Article about the American Hungarian Educators' Association's Conference from the New Yorki Napló, January 31, 1976
4. Miscellaneous letters for informative purposes
5. Fund raising letters
6. Fund raising dinner-dance invitations

ES82-SN-Appendix V

1. Yearbooks of the Hungarian Saturday Classes
2. Pamphlets announcing the graduation programs put on by the students of the Hungarian Saturday Classes
3. Invitations to the graduation ceremonies and final examinations
4. Report cards

ES82-SN-Appendix VI

Supplementary teaching materials

1. ABC picture-alphabet flash cards
2. Letter - Syllable - Word/Picture cut-outs
3. The Csokonai Class' final geography test /1982/
4. Paper written by the Zrínyi Class /1982/ concerning the 1956 Hungarian Revolution
5. Songbook of 150 Hungarian folksongs; Pamphlet containing pieces for recital

ES82-SN-Appendix VII

1. Articles published about the Hungarian Saturday Classes in various periodicals and newspapers
2. Nyelvünk és Kultúránk, 37: pedagogical periodical proposed by Dr. károly Nagy to provide a forum for Hungarian language teachers
3. Pamphlet advertising the summer camp held in Sárospatak, Hungary for 15 through 18 year old students from the West

ES82-SN-Appendix IX

1. Károly Nagy: Hungarian Schools in the United States, 1965
2. Károly Nagy: List of Hungarian Schools in the United States, 1981
3. András Sándor: Bulletin of Hungarian Schools, 1982:2

4. Pamphlet from the Hungarian School at Passaic, NJ

5. Letter from the Széchenyi Hungarian School, New Brunswick, NJ

6. Questionnaire prepared by Dr. Károly Nagy in 1975 to survey the maintenance and transmission of the Hungarian heritage of former students of the Hungarian Saturday Classes

ES82-SN-Appendix IX

1. Documentary photographs of the activities of the Hungarian Saturday Classes from the school years between 1960 and 1980

ES82-SN-Appendix X

1. Certificates of Merit awarded to Dr. Károly Nagy and Áaron Bőde by the directors of the Hungarian Saturday Classes, Susan and Miklós Csergő

2. A poem by Ágnes Nagy Nemes, a contemporary Hungarian poet dedicated to the Hungarian Saturday Classes

3. Open letter from Esther Fekete Howard, a former student and teacher, to the students of the Hungarian Saturday Classes

4. Translations of American and Hungarian poetry by the Kossuth Class

2)

HUNGARIAN SATURDAY CLASSES

New Brunswick, New Jersey

Final Report by Susan Mary Nagy

History of the Hungarian Saturday Classes, New Brunswick, New Jersey

The 1956 Hungarian Revolution brought some 42,000 Hungarian immigrants to the United States, many of whom settled in the area of New Brunswick, New Jersey. Soon after their arrival several young Hungarian students enrolled at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, later forming the association called Hungarian Students at Rutgers University. One student, Károly Nagy, became one of the founding fathers of the ethnic school in New Brunswick. He plays a key role in the affairs of the Hungarian-American community to this day. Dr. Nagy recalls that " . . . towards the end of the decade . . . in '58, '59, '60, we [Hungarian students at Rutgers University] began to feel that there are enough youngsters in . . . the New Brunswick area growing up in American schools with sufficient knowledge about their ancestry and heritage, and perhaps our organization ought to do something about that as well. . . ." (ES82-SN-C6, I, 1, 66-74)

By early 1960 this group of "fifty-sixers" who considered themselves to be bearers of the revolutionary Hungarian tradition organized a Hungarian school in New Brunswick, with the support of the larger non-university Hungarian community. Their decision was based on a " . . . feasibility study to see whether it would be a good idea to start some kind of organized Hungarian instruction. . . . This . . .

study consisted of a questionnaire, which we sent out to the addresses that we gathered by that time through our cultural efforts . . . . The response was overwhelming." (ES82-SN-C6, I, 1, 106-118).

The preliminary tasks of locating classrooms to house the Hungarian school and of handling a variety of administrative and pedagogical work was completed in the spring and summer. On September 17, 1960 the Hungarian Saturday Classes opened its doors to forty-four Hungarian-American students. During the course of the first academic year the school added a Hungarian kindergarten.

The Hungarian Alumni Association, an organization created to continue the work of the Hungarian Students at Rutgers University, was chosen to be the sole supporter of the Hungarian Saturday Classes, and continues in that role. Unfortunately, as the years progressed, the funds have not been adequate to cover the rising expenses of keeping the school afloat. As the school expanded its administrators had to develop a "financial aid" program of patrons. The program included donations from parents for the education of their children. Raffles and other fund-raising activities, such as fund-raising letters, helped raise money. By the period between 1974 and 1980 some five- to six-hundred families and individuals were contributing regularly to the school. Another important source of aid, while indirect, is the voluntary work offered by the staff, faculty, and parents.

During the initial year of Hungarian instruction the faculty consisted of only four teachers. Throughout the school years the number and constitution of the faculty and staff of the Hungarian school has fluctuated in response to the number of students enrolled for each academic year and developments in the private lives of the voluntary instructors.

Certainly the most difficult problem faced at the outset was the complete lack of teaching materials in the United States or elsewhere designed for the unique needs of weekend instruction of the Hungarian language. The difficulty was not overcome until the 1970s. Dr. Nagy recounts the faculty's experience of developing a curriculum as follows:

> We found that nothing was available for once-a-week teaching methodology, for Hungarian as a second language, nor for Hungarian as a first language, which it was for many of the students who spoke fluent Hungarian because they were sons and daughters of parents who came out four or five years ago from Hungary . . . but once-a-week methodology is quite difficult. (ES82-SN-C6, I, 1, 153/159)

Commenting further on this aspect of the school's history, Dr. Nagy relates:

> Of course, the material available from Hungary was so filled with propaganda, and was geared . . . for everyday teaching methodology—it was useless. We did two things: we as teachers, on one hand, had to put together, search, and find . . . and create our own teaching material, including books, which were non-existent; on the other hand, we had to start a larger research to see whether there is similar Hungarian instruction anywhere else, outside of Hungary. . . . What we frequently did was to try to

> purchase, ask, borrow, find, research all sorts of material for Hungarian children from Hungary, as well as anywhere else, and we started to select out of that available pool . . . photocopying it, writing it out . . . . I remember Schmidt Panni's husband, who draws well, . . . drew the first sheets for teaching the youngsters the alphabet. . . . Schmidt Panni was using those sheets . . . she was xeroxing them . . . . I was also trying to reasearch available material from all sorts of books from my own library, from the library of others, from old textbooks, children's books . . . . I tried to put it together, . . . and by the end of the year we had an awful lot of material . . . .
> (ES82-SN-C6, I, 1 223-260)

Naturally, this was only a temporary solution to the problem of lack of suitable materials for students with a language proficiency in Hungarian as varied as the number of students enrolled. A much larger and more comprehensive effort was needed to develop curriculum materials suited to this unique pedagogical situation.

The first "era" in the history of the Hungarian Saturday Classes (1960-1967) was characterized by a continuing increase in the number of registered students from forty-four in 1960 to one hundred and sixteen in 1967. The increase in enrollment suggests that the Hungarian community realized the importance of maintaining a Hungarian school and the value of the systematic transmission of Hungarian culture to their children.

Increased enrollments demanded a change in all aspects of managing the school, affected the curriculum, and altered the methodology used by the teachers. In the face of increased enrollments the school administrators established new classes and restructured the old ones,

grouping students by age and language proficiency. Such accommodation continued to be made each year when there was a significant change in the student body.

The location of the Hungarian school remained basically the same. All the buildings housing the school were located on the Rutgers campus in New Brunswick; the two main buildings used for the longest length of time were the Ballantine Building and Frelinghuysen Hall.

A research project was launched in the 1963-1964 school year through the combined efforts of the American Hungarian Studies Foundation and the Hungarian University students in North America. Its purpose was to locate, contact, and describe other Hungarian schools in the United States with the hope that the school administrators would be able to get together later, exchange experiences, and learn from one another. They completed the project in 1965 and published the results as "Hungarian Schools in the United States" in The Slavic and East European Journal. The study sparked the interest of many, including the renowned music theoretician and composer, Zoltán Kodály, founder of the Kodaly Method. Kodaly wrote about the twenty-three Hungarian-American schools Nagy located in an article published in Magyar Hírek, a daily newspaper in Hungary, on November 15, 1965.

A $400 scholarship was also established in the 1963-1964 school year by the Hungarian Alumni Association. It is for Hungarian-American students who complete the Hungarian Saturday Classes and pursue their university studies at Rutgers or Douglass University in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

During the 1964-1965 academic year a major concern surfaced which would be a continuous care for the staff and administrators of the school throughout its history--the loss of students and their replacement. Kindergarten was perceived as the key to assuring continued school attendance, since the little ones were liable to continue as students of the Hungarian school, replacing the older students who were leaving. By realizing the problem of student loss and applying positive organizational work, the kindergarten reported an increase in attendance during the 1964-1965 school year.

Between 1967 and 1974 the school weathered its crucial years, brought on by unfortunate medical problems experienced by members of the administration. Children enrolled dropped from one hundred and sixteen to sixty-two in the 1967-1968 school year. Later, a growing opposition within the Hungarian-American community towards the school caused the number of registered students to dwindle to forty by 1974. During these years the structure of the Hungarian Saturday Classes remained essentially identical to that in previous years, inspite of there being fewer students. The school was only maintained at full strength for two years during this period--in 1968 the enrollment numbered ninety-nine and totalled one hundred and nine in 1970.

The location of the kindergarten was moved to the Washington School on French Street in New Brunswick during this period, where it remained until the 1977-1978 school year. The school's choir, consisting of twenty-one students, was formed in 1969, under director Jenó Ádám. A new class was also added between 1967 and 1974--the organized instruction of folk art in theory and practice. The class instructs students on folk motifs, as well as the various stitches and patterns of embroidery characteristic of different regions of Hungary.

The fifteenth anniversary of the Hungarian Saturday Classes in 1974 coincided with the regeneration of the student body, and a revival was sensed within the school. The school began the year with fifty-four registered students and completed the year with ninety-nine Hungarian-American youngsters enrolled.

The third decade of Hungarian Saturday Classes promises to follow the tradition set during the 1960s and 1970s. The twenty-second year of instruction (1981-1982) was dedicated to the remembrance of the 100th anniversary of the death of the 19th-century Hungarian poet János Arany, coupled with the celebration of the 100th birthday of Zoltán Kodály.

Classes and Curriculum

During the 1960s, after the publication of the results of his research project on Hungarian schools in this country, Dr. Nagy began organizing his efforts to bring about a badly need conference of Hungarian schools. Recalling his work at that time, Dr. Nagy says:

> I have duplicated this published material and sent it to them [the other Hungarian-American schools] to . . . organize a get-together, a conference of sorts at Rutgers University. That conference never materialized because of the huge distances that these people would have to travel on their own monies . . . . Parallel to that, I have sent this material . . . to Hungarian leaders . . . cultural leaders in Hungary whom I know--Zoltán Kodály, Mihaly Vaci, and to Gyula Illyes—and they started to respond . . . . First of all, we started a correspondence with Mihaly Vaci. I sent him all sorts of materials; he encouraged me. . . . But they also started to work on the Hungarian . . . academe and professionals . . . because I proposed to them: why don't they help us organize some kind of conference? . . . Finally, they have succeeded in pushing things so far that in 1970 the first such conference was organized by a body of Hungarian scholars and officials at Lajos Kossuth University in Debrecen [Hungary], and at that time this loose organization received the name of Anyanyelvi Konferencia—Native Language Conference— . . . and that organization exists ever since. . . . (ES82-SN-C6, I, 1, 306-330)

Opposition within the Hungarian-American community disappeared in 1970, when the first Native Language Conference occurred, notes ---- A second school was established in response, "which we viewed as a partly desirable state of affairs because, instead of having one Hungarian school, it is better to have two, no matter who starts [it] and why," says Nagy. (ES82-SN-C6, I, 2, 202-204)

The Native Language Conference took place in the summer of 1970. It apparently caught many people unawares. "They didn't know quite what to make of it," says ------.

At the week-long conference Dr. Nagy proposed a program which included the cooperative writing of Hungarian-language textbooks for American students. The proposal was accepted, and the Hungarian scholars proclaimed that they would write the textbooks for the Hungarian schools, to which Nagy vigorously protested. "He barraged them with letters saying that we are just not going to teach those books that will be written by people sitting at their desks in Budapest. What we have to do absolutely is have the textbook writers see the medium, the population . . . survey the population for whom they are writing the textbooks," recalls ----. (ES82-SN-C6, II, 1, 377-382) Dr. Nagy countered with a proposal for overcoming the lack of exposure to American culture on the part of the proposed Hungarian writers, and soon enough the three textbook authors were in the United States for two months.

They began their work immediately by visiting Hungarian-American schools in the New Jersey area, including the Passaic Catholic School, which at that time offered Hungarian-language instruction everyday. They taped the pronunciation patterns of the children, interviewed parents and teachers, and collected old and new curriculum materials. The writers also visited American schools, since it was equally important to witness what the children were exposed to during the week. At American public and private schools they interviewed teachers,

took notes, and gathered American textbooks to learn more about the methodologies used to teach in this country. They visited schools in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and Canada before flying back to Budapest to begin working on the Hungarian-language textbooks designed for American children.

Back in Budapest the textbook writers began working on the book for intermediate students. The format had been agreed upon earlier—the textbooks would be accompanied by workbooks, cassette tapes, and teacher's manuals. There would be four levels or sets of teaching materials initially. It had been stressed and agreed upon at the outset that the materials would not contain a bit of propaganda: in the event that a trace of it were found in the books, they would be rejected immediately.

The most difficult phase of the work was introducing the newly written material. The textbook writers sent their manuscripts chapter by chapter to the Hungarian Saturday Classes. The material was then taken into the classrooms, put to the test with the Hungarian-American children, commented on, revised, and returned to Budapest through the mail. This tedious but rewarding task went on for a number of years, until the books were completed and published.

The books were put to use immediately at the Hungarian Saturday Classes. The Passaic Hungarian School in Passaic, New Jersey was also one of the first Hungarian-American schools to use the books prepared through the joint efforts of Dr. Nagy, the Hungarian school, and the

Native Language Conference. Today the books are being used at more and more Hungarian-American schools.

The curriculum, grade levels, and methods of instruction in an ethnic school such as the Hungarian Saturday Classes is predetermined, in a sense, by the composition of the student body. The variety of students, classified according to their language proficiency, in turn is influenced by historical, environmental, and social factors. The 1956 Hungarian Revolution "recharged" the pool of Hungarians living outside Hungary. In New Brunswick this brought on the establishment of a Hungarian school and altered the composition of other Hungarian-American schools already in existence. By comparison, only a low level immigration of Hungarians to the United States has taken place since that time, and the level of students with a native-language proficiency in Hungarian participating in the school program has decreased. Today there are more and more Hungarian-American children enrolling in the school who do not speak a word of Hungarian.

The number of students enrolled in the Hungarian Saturday Classes fluctuates annually, directly influencing the levels of instruction and material offered by the school. The Hungarian-language proficiency of each student is assessed at the beginning of the school year. On the basis of their knowledge of Hungarian, age, and other personal considerations, the students are placed into the classes most advantageous for their development. As Susan Csergó explains, the children were divided according to:

> their age and language proficiency . . . . Many times there were difficulties . . . for example, a six-year-old child had the language proficiency of a nine-year-old . . . but the opposite also happened. We knew that children do not like to be in the same class with younger children . . . but sometimes a nine-year-old did have to be in the same class with six-year-olds. This, in turn, motivated the child to study a bit more to be able to progress to the higher class with his or her friends . . . . (ES82-SN-C12, 1, 248-261)

Usually four levels of language and literature instruction are formed: the beginner, intermediate I and II, and advanced level. Hungarian is taught as a foreign language in a class for children and another for adults. The kindergarten stands as a separate entity. Hungarian folk art is taught to the student body as a whole.

The subjects which are continuously taught at the Hungarian Saturday Classes are:

Basics of Hungarian reading and writing

Hungarian language I and II

Hungarian language and literature

Hungarian geography

Hungarian history

Hungarian as a foreign language I and II

Hungarian folk arts (song, dance, embroidery, and woodcarving)

The subjects are taught to all students on various levels, adjusted to the capabilities and previous knowledge of each class.

Presently, the core of the curriculum taught at the Hungarian Saturday Classes is contained in the following textbooks:

Tarka lepke

Magyar szavak világa

Hogyan mondjuk helyesen?

Beszéljünk magyarul

Learn Hungarian

The students of Hungarian study for four hours each Saturday from 9 A.M. to 1 P.M., and are tested throughout the school year. They receive report cards at their graduation ceremonies. This practice generally serves as motivation for the students and is symbolic in nature.

The Hungarian Saturday Classes celebrates and observes traditional and national holidays during the course of the academic year. The traditional holidays are celebrated by closing the school for vacation for the Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter holidays. Christmas, Mother's Day, and the Hungarian national holidays are marked by a special program prepared by the faculty and students for their parents and friends in the ethnic community.

The Christmas program was instituted by Miklós Csergó. His wife Susan recalls:

> The students were joyous about the Christmas holiday . . . and we passed on to them the Hungarian spirit of Christmas . . . . This also became cultural education

> for the whole Hungarian community . . . . Through these programs and plays they [the parents and friends] enjoyed seeing the development and the knowledge of their children, and were all happy that the Christmas holiday was celebrated in a family spirit, bringing back their memories of childhood. After the program all the students received a little present brought by the baby Jesus. In Hungary he is the bearer of gifts . . . and this concluded the ceremonies. (ES82-SN-C12, 1, 117-147)

double space

The two Hungarian national holidays observed are October 23 and March 15. The anniversary of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution is observed in autumn with a solemn program of relevant poems and excerpts from letters and historical documents. The Hungarian War for Freedom in 1848 is commemorated in the spring with a literary and folk program. A large portion of the Hungarian ethnic community takes part in these observances. One of the teachers who worked with the children for six years in preparing and practicing for these programs is Magda Eszlári. She explains the pedagogical benefits of such programs:

> Even though the children have to work very hard at overcoming [linguistic] difficulties in preparing for a program, I feel that it is extremely useful . . . . And even though it takes away much time from formal teaching, that which a child learns at this time will be remembered . . . he has invested more work into [it], especially when he experiences success . . . . And because he is performing in front of an audience, he will remember [the poems, etc.] to a greater extent. . . . There is Hungarian school every week, but there are only two, three programs a year. (ES82-SN-C11, 1, 134-146)

Teachers

Volunteer teachers and instructors from the community pass on their knowledge of the culture and language of their ancestors at the Hungarian Saturday Classes. Some of the teachers are trained

professionals who speak Hungarian and are familiar with the heritage, of the ethnic community, and others are amateurs. The trained professionals received their diplomas either in Hungary or the United States. The most advantageous situation for the students, of course, is an instructor who is dually trained.

School administrators have made every effort to maintain a high quality in the staff, as well as in teaching materials. "Right from the beginning . . . we wanted to establish the fact that this school was going to be a professional effort . . . ," says Dr. Nagy. "We selected teachers who had their teaching diplomas from Hungary. . . . We tried to maintain it so that our teachers indeed would be qualified teachers. In the subsequent years, some of the teachers had dual training . . . ." (ES82-SN-C6, I, 1, 187-221)

During the school's first year the teaching staff included Mrs. Béla Schmidt, who taught Hungarian reading and writing to the elementary class. In addition, Dr. Károly Nagy taught Hungarian language and literature and Dr. Béla Gyengó lectured on the most important features of Hungarian history in the advanced class. The Hungarian kindergarten was led by Mrs. András Rockenstein during the second semester.

The first small expansion of the school program took place in the second school year (1961-1962), when two lecturers were invited to speak to the history class: Joseph Held and András Rockenstein. An organized series of monthly lectures, the Széchenyi Seminar, was

initiated for the students in the advanced classes during the 1963-1964 school year. These university-level lectures were presented by Hungarian professors teaching at North American universities: Dr. András Alföldi, Dr. István Foltinyi, and Dr. Miklós Harsányi from Princeton University; Dr. Károly Henkey from Montreal University; Dr. András Pogány of Seton Hall University; and August J. Molnár from Rutgers University. The lecturers discussed Hungarian archeology, history, music, and literature.

There were new teachers added to the faculty of the school in 1974, among them Magda Eszlári, Mr. and Mrs. Somogyi, and Melinda Hoffmann.

The years between 1974 and 1980 were marked in general by the cohesion of the Hungarian Saturday Classes with the Hungarian ethnic community and brought about developments such as mini-conferences between the teachers and the Parent Teachers Association (PTA). These conferences soon expanded. In 1976 the Hungarian school's faculty held a teacher conference at Rutgers University which brought together the teachers of Hungarian from the East Coast. The instructors shared their experiences and discussed the many hardships of keeping the Hungarian schools alive and maintaining the Hungarian language.

In 1977 the faculty and staff of the Hungarian Saturday Classes visited the Passaic Hungarian School in Passaic, New Jersey to discuss pedagogical and methodological issues. The third conference of the American Hungarian Educators' Association paid a visit to the

Hungarian Saturday Classes in April 1978, during which Hungarian language teachers from Chicago and Passaic demonstrated their teaching methods to the faculty in the classrooms of the Hungarian school in New Brunswick.

By the late 1970s the Hungarian Saturday Classes of the Hungarian Alumni Association had become very well known to interested Hungarians throughout the world. Professional educators, poets, writers, historians, and journalists visited the classrooms to witness ethnic history in the making in New Brunswick. Professionals interested in the maintenance of Hungarian heritage and the science of teaching foreign languages arrived at the school from many points in the United States and Europe, and their impact was much more permanent than ever imagined. Some writers and poets returned to their homes and recorded their impressions in novels, articles, and poems. Several sent copies back to the Hungarian Saturday Classes as a token of appreciation and expression of respect for the teachers, students, and parents who sacrifice so much to maintain their heritage and language in the United States.

School Administration

The administrative, managerial, and organizational work at the Hungarian school is performed by a director and administrator. The individuals selected to assume these positions are members of the Hungarian Alumni Association. The positions of school director and

administrator were assumed by Susan and Miklós Csergó in the summer of 1974. The Czergos continued their administration of the school until the end of the 1979-1980 school year. The administrative work was done by Eva Fekete and Zsigmond Nemeth for the forty-four students enrolled in 1981.

The work of administering the school needs to be done all year round and is extremely diverse. The following outline provides on overview of the four areas in which thorough, consistent, and dedicated work must be done to run a successful school.

I. FINANCIAL:	Accounting and bookkeeping Fund raising Bank, insurance, tax, and related matters Preparation of monthly financial reports to the Hungarian Alumni Association Inventory
II. ORGANIZATIONAL:	Student and personnel recruiting; taking part in all Hungarian-American social functions Telephone recruiting preceding all programs and activities of the school Locating and renting classrooms and halls for the school and its various programs Creating, organizing, and monitoring all plays and programs put on by the students Organizing all aspects of dinner-dances, picnics, ceremonies, celebrations, and outings Posting and distributing fliers and posters to advertise the school
III. MANAGERIAL:	Setting up, managing, and monitoring classes, students, and teachers, along with the curriculum Examining, purchasing, and distributing books, films, records, and graduation gifts Maintaining a list of enrolled students Presiding over teacher and staff meetings, as well as PTA meetings Reporting on the status of the school at the monthly meetings of the Hungarian Alumni

Association
Public relations:
-welcoming guests, visitors, and the media
-preparing and delivering speeches in the U.S. and abroad
-writing articles about the school for newspapers and journals
Conducting all advisory and social work undertaken by the school within the ethnic community

IV. CLERICAL:

Drafting, designing, preparing, and printing all letters, invitations, pamphlets, posters, yearbooks, and report cards
Preparing and handling all audio-visual materials, photos, and sound recordings
Storing all materials belong to the school--books, notebooks, pamphlets, letters, forms recorders, and projectors
Setting up schedules for the upcoming year
Maintaining an active address file of patrons, parents, and participants
Addressing and mailing invitations, fund-raising letters, and other correspondence

Susan Csergó feels that the key to the administrative success experienced by her and her husband was the excellent relationship between the Hungarian-American community and the parents, children, faculty, and staff of the school. "This is what transformed the school into a micro-community, a large family where everyone felt at home, and felt welcome . . . the childern, the parents, and the teachers, " she explains. "And the way to achieve this was by systematic organizational work throughout the year." (ES82-SN-C12, 1, 83-114)

After a six years of the responsibilities outlined above , however, both of them found themselves nearly exhausted. "If we would not have had to worry about the financial aspects of running the school it would have been a lot easier!" notes Mrs. Csergó. "The great amount

of time put into the administrative and fund-raising work would all have been saved . . . . Many sleepless hours were spent worrying about the school's financial difficulties. A lot of time would have been saved . . . ." (ES82-SN-C12, 2, 197-223)

Parents

The importance of parent-teacher meetings for the Hungarian school was realized in the early years, and there were two or three PTA meetings held each school year. The parents were always encouraged to take part in the classroom instruction and the final examinations, to monitor the progress of their children and the quality of material taught. A good relationship between the children, teachers, parents, and community has always been one of the school's goals.

The parents of the students attending an ethnic school come from a variety of backgrounds. They may be either recent immigrants or members of the first, second, or, in some cases, the third generation of their ethnic group. The motivation for sending their children to an ethnic school varies from family to family. Steven Jurcsek, who sends three of his children to the Hungarian Saturday Classes, elaborates on their specific case:

> At home the language is not really spoken. My wife is not Hungarian . . . . Yet, I do want to have them share my belief for the Hungarian language, my love for the country where I was born, and which I had to leave . . . . I would like to pass something down to them . . . .

> Therefore, I feel that even if they will not speak the language perfectly, they will learn about the language, history, and some Hungarian songs . . . . I feel that the passing down of all these values will make them better Americans . . . . (ES82-SN-C4, 1, 25-51)

Susan Csergó, former director of the school, expresses similar views about transmitting knowledge about her heritage. It is vital "because you cannot be a good American if you deny that which you once were . . . ." She continues,

> The child will feel that he or she belongs somewhere, and will be able to identity his or her roots . . . . It is also important in that the children will be able to understand their parents somewhat better, those people who cannot become fully American . . . and they will know a little about their heritage . . . . (ES82-SN-C12, 1, 166-193; 148-165)

The more practical aspects of learning another language are expressed by Marianne Muszka. "You are as many people as the number of languages you know. We would like to have our children study other languages later on, not only Hungarian." (ES82-SN-C9, 1, 193-197) Magda Eszlari, a teacher at the Hungarian school, feels "My knowledge is at hand, and I feel that learning only makes a person more valuable . . . there are many gems in Hungarian literature, art, and culture that are worth passing on." (ES82-SN-C11, 1, 210-224) Deneice Oroszvary, an American woman married to a Hungarian and learning the language herself, feels "it is worthwhile to be connected to something . . . we do not fit in the American community anymore . . . . " (ES82-SN-C7, 1, 187-200)

There are equally varied opinions regarding non-participation in an organized cultural effort, such as an ethnic language school, or in other forms of ethnic activity. The shortage of time and energy is a primary cause of non-participation; so too are personal, social, and ideological reasons, as well as general disinterest. Marianne Muszka she took her youngest daughter out of Hungarian school: "She had difficulty distinguishing between the two languages in first grade. We decided to take her out until she had the basics of English down and was ready to accept formal instruction in Hungarian. She will be returning next year." (ES82-SN-C9, 1, 28-39)

Active participation in the Hungarian Saturday Classes requires time, dedication, and financial commitments on the part of the parents and children involved. A free Saturday morning could very well be spent doing other important activities. Many parents who send their children to Hungarian school manage to get some of their tasks done on Saturday morning, but others stay at the school and speak with the teachers, directors, and other parents, utilizing this time for social activity. Whatever the case, a portion of each Saturday is dedicated to their children and their Hungarian heritage.

Students

Finally, a few words from the students, the children who are the subjects of the entire program directed towards Hungarian heritage maintenance. Most of them do seem to mind giving up cartoons, sports

activities, and sleeping in on Saturday morning to learn Hungarian. They seem to have become accustomed to sacrificing their leisure time on the weekend and during the week to learn Hungarian, however. Many have also learned to make an extra effort to speak only Hungarian in the home. As one youngster commented, "It sounds 'weird' if I speak to my parents in English." (ES82-SN-C5, 1, 118-120).

Bernadette Muszka, a former student at the school, left because she became interested in many of the activities offered by the weekday school she was attending. Reflecting on the years she did partake in Hungarian instruction she says, "I like to say that I miss going there. It is an empty space when it comes to Saturday mornings." (ES82-SN-C10, 1, 106-110)

The students who continue to make an effort to attend the school and learn the language formally enjoy the luxuries of knowing another language. "We can speak with our friends and no one will understand us," says one. (ES82-SN-C5, 1, 68-92). Another comments, "I feel good about myself . . . and feel big that I know something my friends do not. . . . And when I come home I have another life to live."

Another benefit the school offers is the opportunity to make other friends and acquire a true sense of belonging. As Esther Pigniczky says, "When I go to Hungarian Scouts, right away I have a million friends. We are all the same people and all understand each other. We know two worlds and two languages." (ES82-SN-C5, 1, 210-218

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HUNGARIAN SATURDAY CLASSES

New Brunswick, New Jersey

Final Report by Susan Mary Nagy

History of the Hungarian Saturday Classes, New Brunswick, New Jersey

The 1956 Hungarian Revolution brought some 42,000 Hungarian immigrants to the United States, many of whom settled in the area of New Brunswick, New Jersey. Soon after their arrival several young Hungarian students enrolled at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, later forming the association called Hungarian Students at Rutgers University. One student, Károly Nagy, became one of the founding fathers of the ethnic school in New Brunswick. He plays a key role in the affairs of the Hungarian-American community to this day. Dr. Nagy recalls that " . . . toward the end of the decade . . . in '58, '59, '60, we [Hungarian students at Rutgers University] began to feel that there are enough youngsters in . . . the New Brunswick area growing up in American schools with sufficient knowledge about their ancestry and heritage, and perhaps our organization ought to do something about that as well. . . ." (ES82-SN-C6, I, 1, 66-74)

By early 1960 this group of "fifty-sixers" who considered themselves to be bearers of the revolutionary Hungarian tradition organized a Hungarian school in New Brunswick, with the support of the larger non-university Hungarian community. Their decision was based on a " . . . feasibility study to see whether it would be a good idea to start some kind of organized Hungarian instruction. . . . This . . .

study consisted of a questionnaire, which we sent out to the addresses that we gathered by that time through our cultural efforts . . . . The response was overwhelming." (ES82-SN-C6, I, 1, 106-118).

The preliminary tasks of locating classrooms to house the Hungarian school and of handling a variety of administrative and pedagogical work was completed in the spring and summer. On September 17, 1960 the Hungarian Saturday Classes opened its doors to forty-four Hungarian-American students. During the course of the first academic year the school added a Hungarian kindergarten.

The Hungarian Alumni Association, an organization created to continue the work of the Hungarian Students at Rutgers University, was chosen to be the sole supporter of the Hungarian Saturday Classes, and continues in that role. Unfortunately, as the years progressed, the funds have not been adequate to cover the rising expenses of keeping the school afloat. As the school expanded its administrators had to develop a "financial aid" program of patrons. The program included donations from parents for the education of their children. Raffles and other fund-raising activities, such as fund-raising letters, helped raise money. By the period between 1974 and 1980 some five- to six-hundred families and individuals were contributing regularly to the school. Another important source of aid, while indirect, is the voluntary work offered by the staff, faculty, and parents.

During the initial year of Hungarian instruction the faculty consisted of only four teachers. Throughout the school years the number and constitution of the faculty and staff of the Hungarian school has fluctuated in response to the number of students enrolled for each academic year and developments in the private lives of the voluntary instructors.

Certainly the most difficult problem faced at the outset was the complete lack of teaching materials in the United States or elsewhere designed for the unique needs of weekend instruction of the Hungarian language. The difficulty was not overcome until the 1970s. Dr. Nagy recounts the faculty's experience of developing a curriculum as follows:

> We found that nothing was available for once-a-week teaching methodology, for Hungarian as a second language, nor for Hungarian as a first language, which it was for many of the students who spoke fluent Hungarian because they were sons and daughters of parents who came out four or five years ago from Hungary . . . but once-a-week methodology is quite difficult. (ES82-SN-C6, I, 1, 153-159)

Commenting further on this aspect of the school's history, Dr. Nagy relates:

> Of course, the material available from Hungary was so filled with propaganda, and was geared . . . for everyday teaching methodology--it was useless. We did two things: we as teachers, on one hand, had to put together, search, and find . . . and create our own teaching material, including books, which were non-existent; on the other hand, we had to start a larger research to see whether there is similar Hungarian instruction anywhere else, outside of Hungary. . . . What we frequently did was to try to

> purchase, ask, borrow, find, research all sorts of material for Hungarian children from Hungary, as well as anywhere else, and we started to select out of that available pool . . . photocopying it, writing it out . . . . I remember Schmidt Panni's husband, who draws well, . . . drew the first sheets for teaching the youngsters the alphabet. . . . Schmidt Panni was using those sheets . . . she was xeroxing them . . . . I was also trying to reasearch available material from all sorts of books from my own library, from the library of others, from old textbooks, children's books . . . . I tried to put it together, . . . and by the end of the year we had an awful lot of material . . . . (ES82-SN-C6, I, 1 223-260)

Naturally, this was only a temporary solution to the problem of lack of suitable materials for students with a language proficiency in Hungarian as varied as the number of students enrolled. A much larger and more comprehensive effort was needed to develop curriculum materials suited to this unique pedagogical situation.

The first "era" in the history of the Hungarian Saturday Classes (1960-1967) was characterized by a continuing increase in the number of registered students from forty-four in 1960 to one hundred and sixteen in 1967. The increase in enrollment suggests that the Hungarian community realized the importance of maintaining a Hungarian school and the value of the systematic transmission of Hungarian culture to their children.

Increased enrollments demanded a change in all aspects of managing the school, affected the curriculum, and altered the methodology used by the teachers. In the face of increased enrollments the school administrators established new classes and restructured the old ones,

grouping students by age and language proficiency. Such accommodation continued to be made each year when there was a significant change in the student body.

The location of the Hungarian school remained basically the same. All the buildings housing the school were located on the Rutgers campus in New Brunswick; the two main buildings used for the longest length of time were the Ballantine Building and Frelinghuysen Hall.

A research project was launched in the 1963-1964 school year through the combined efforts of the American Hungarian Studies Foundation and the Hungarian University students in North America. Its purpose was to locate, contact, and describe other Hungarian schools in the United States with the hope that the school administrators would be able to get together later, exchange experiences, and learn from one another. They completed the project in 1965 and published the results as "Hungarian Schools in the United States" in The Slavic and East European Journal. The study sparked the interest of many, including the renowned music theoretician and composer, Zoltán Kodály, founder of the Kodaly Method. Kodaly wrote about the twenty-three Hungarian-American schools Nagy located in an article published in Magyar Hírek, a daily newspaper in Hungary, on November 15, 1965.

A $400 scholarship was also established in the 1963-1964 school year by the Hungarian Alumni Association. It is for Hungarian-American students who complete the Hungarian Saturday Classes and pursue their university studies at Rutgers or Douglass University in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

During the 1964-1965 academic year a major concern surfaced which would be a continuous care for the staff and administrators of the school throughout its history--the loss of students and their replacement. Kindergarten was perceived as the key to assuring continued school attendance, since the little ones were liable to continue as students of the Hungarian school, replacing the older students who were leaving. By realizing the problem of student loss and applying positive organizational work, the kindergarten reported an increase in attendance during the 1964-1965 school year.

Between 1967 and 1974 the school weathered its crucial years, brought on by unfortunate medical problems experienced by members of the administration. Children enrolled dropped from one hundred and sixteen to sixty-two in the 1967-1968 school year. Later, a growing opposition within the Hungarian-American community toward the school caused the number of registered students to dwindle to forty by 1974. During these years the structure of the Hungarian Saturday Classes remained essentially identical to that in previous years, inspite of there being fewer students. The school was only maintained at full strength for two years during this period--in 1968 the enrollment numbered ninety-nine and totalled one hundred and nine in 1970.

The location of the kindergarten was moved to the Washington School on French Street in New Brunswick during this period, where it remained until the 1977-1978 school year. The school's choir, consisting of twenty-one students, was formed in 1969, under director Jenó Ádám. A new class was also added between 1967 and 1974--the organized instruction of folk art in theory and practice. The class instructs students on folk motifs, as well as the various stitches and patterns of embroidery characteristic of different regions of Hungary.

The fifteenth anniversary of the Hungarian Saturday Classes in 1974 coincided with the regeneration of the student body, and a revival was sensed within the school. The school began the year with fifty-four registered students and completed the year with ninety-nine Hungarian-American youngsters enrolled.

The third decade of Hungarian Saturday Classes promises to follow the tradition set during the 1960s and 1970s. The twenty-second year of instruction (1981-1982) was dedicated to the remembrance of the 100th anniversary of the death of the 19th-century Hungarian poet János Arany, coupled with the celebration of the 100th birthday of Zoltán Kodály.

Classes and Curriculum

During the 1960s, after the publication of the results of his research project on Hungarian schools in this country, Dr. Nagy began organizing his efforts to bring about a badly need conference of Hungarian schools. Recalling his work at that time, Dr. Nagy says:

> I have duplicated this published material and sent it to them [the other Hungarian-American schools] to . . . organize a get-together, a conference of sorts at Rutgers University. That conference never materialized because of the huge distances that these people would have to travel on their own monies . . . . Parallel to that, I have sent this material . . . to Hungarian leaders . . . cultural leaders in Hungary whom I know--Zoltan Kodaly, Mihaly Vaci, and to Gyula Illyes—and they started to respond . . . . First of all, we started a correspondence with Mihaly Vaci. I sent him all sorts of materials; he encouraged me. . . . But they also started to work on the Hungarian . . . academe and professionals . . . because I proposed to them: why don't they help us organize some kind of conference? . . . Finally, they have succeeded in pushing things so far that in 1970 the first such conference was organized by a body of Hungarian scholars and officials at Lajos Kossuth University in Debrecen [Hungary], and at that time this loose organization received the name of Anyanyelvi Konferencia--Native Language Conference-- . . . and that organization exists ever since. . . . (ES82-SN-C6, I, 1, 306-330)

Opposition within the Hungarian-American community disappeared in 1970, when the first Native Language Conference occurred, notes ---- A second school was established in response, "which we viewed as a partly desirable state of affairs because, instead of having one Hungarian school, it is better to have two, no matter who starts [it] and why," says Nagy. (ES82-SN-C6, I, 2, 202-204)

The Native Language Conference took place in the summer of 1970. It apparently caught many people unawares. "They didn't know quite what to make of it," says ------.

At the week-long conference Dr. Nagy proposed a program which included the cooperative writing of Hungarian-language textbooks for American students. The proposal was accepted, and the Hungarian scholars proclaimed that they would write the textbooks for the Hungarian schools, to which Nagy vigorously protested. "He barraged them with letters saying that we are just not going to teach those books that will be written by people sitting at their desks in Budapest. What we have to do absolutely is have the textbook writers see the medium, the population . . . survey the population for whom they are writing the textbooks," recalls ----. (ES82-SN-C6, II, 1, 377-382) Dr. Nagy countered with a proposal for overcoming the lack of exposure to American culture on the part of the proposed Hungarian writers, and soon enough the three textbook authors were in the United States for two months.

They began their work immediately by visiting Hungarian-American schools in the New Jersey area, including the Passaic Catholic School, which at that time offered instruction everyday in Hugarian. They taped the pronunciation patterns of the children, interviewed parents and teachers, and collected old and new curriculum materials. The writers also visited American schools, since it was equally important to witness what the children were exposed to during the week. At American public and private schools they interviewed teachers,

took notes, and gathered American textbooks to learn more about the methodologies used to teach in this country. They visited schools in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and Canada before flying back to Budapest to begin working on the Hungarian-language textbooks designed for American children.

Back in Budapest the textbook writers began working on the book for intermediate students. The format had been agreed upon earlier'-the textbooks would be accompanied by workbooks, cassette tapes, and teacher's manuals. There would be four levels or sets of teaching materials initially. It had been stressed and agreed upon at the outset that the materials would not contain a bit of propaganda: in the event that a trace of it were found in the books, they would be rejected immediately.

The most difficult phase of the work was introducing the newly written material. The textbook writers sent their manuscripts chapter by chapter to the Hungarian Saturday Classes. The material was then taken into the classrooms, put to the test with the Hungarian-American children, commented on, revised, and returned to Budapest through the mail. This tedious but rewarding task went on for a number of years, until the books were completed and published.

The books were put to use immediately at the Hungarian Saturday Classes. The Passaic Hungarian School in Passaic, New Jersey was also one of the first Hungarian-American schools to use the books prepared through the joint efforts of Dr. Nagy, the Hungarian school, and the

Native Language Conference. Today the books are being used at more and more Hungarian-American schools.

The curriculum, grade levels, and methods of instruction in an ethnic school such as the Hungarian Saturday Classes is predetermined, in a sense, by the composition of the student body. The variety of students, classified according to their language proficiency, in turn is influenced by historical, environmental, and social factors. The 1956 Hungarian Revolution "recharged" the pool of Hungarians living outside Hungary. In New Brunswick this brought on the establishment of a Hungarian school and altered the composition of other Hungarian-American schools already in existence. By comparison, only a low level immigration of Hungarians to the United States has taken place since that time, and the level of students with a native-language proficiency in Hungarian participating in the school program has decreased. Today there are more and more Hungarian-American children enrolling in the school who do not speak a word of Hungarian.

The number of students enrolled in the Hungarian Saturday Classes fluctuates annually, directly influencing the levels of instruction and material offered by the school. The Hungarian proficiency of each student is assessed at the beginning of the school year. On the basis of their knowledge of Hungarian, age, and other personal considerations, the students are placed into the classes most advantageous for their development. As Susan Csergo explains, the children were divided according to:

> their age and language proficiency . . . . Many times there were difficulties . . . for example, a six-year-old child had the language proficiency of a nine-year-old . . . but the opposite also happened. We knew that children do not like to be in the same class with younger children . . . but sometimes a nine-year-old did have to be in the same class with six-year-olds. This, in turn, motivated the child to study a bit more to be able to progress to the higher class with his or her friends . . . . (ES82-SN-C12, 1, 248-261)

Usually four levels of language and literature instruction are formed: the beginner, intermediate I and II, and advanced level. Hungarian is taught as a foreign language in a class for children and another for adults. The kindergarten stands as a separate entity. Hungarian folk art is taught to the student body as a whole.

The subjects which are continuously taught at the Hungarian Saturday Classes are:

Basics of Hungarian reading and writing

Hungarian language I and II

Hungarian language and literature

Hungarian geography

Hungarian history

Hungarian as a foreign language I and II

Hungarian folk arts (song, dance, embroidery, and woodcarving)

The subjects are taught to all students on various levels, adjusted to the capabilities and previous knowledge of each class.

Presently, the core of the curriculum taught at the Hungarian Saturday Classes is contained in the following textbooks:

Tarka lepke

Magyar szavak világa

Hogyan mondjuk helyesen?

Beszéljunk magyarul

Learn Hungarian

The students of Hungarian study for four hours each Saturday from 9 A.M. to 1 P.M., and are tested throughout the school year. They receive report cards at their graduation ceremonies. This practice generally serves as motivation for the students and is symbolic in nature.

The Hungarian Saturday Classes celebrates and observes traditional and national holidays during the course of the academic year. The traditional holidays are celebrated by closing the school for vacation for the Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter holidays. Christmas, Mother's Day, and the Hungarian national holidays are marked by a special program prepared by the faculty and students for their parents and friends in the ethnic community.

The Christmas program was instituted by Miklos Csergo. His wife Susan recalls:

> The students were joyous about the Christmas holiday . . . and we passed on to them the Hungarian spirit of Christmas . . . . This also became cultural education

> for the whole Hungarian community . . . . Through these programs and plays they [the parents and friends] enjoyed seeing the development and the knowledge of their children, and were all happy that the Christmas holiday was celebrated in a family spirit, bringing back their memories of childhood. After the program all the students received a little present brought by the baby Jesus. In Hungary he is the bearer of gifts . . . and this concluded the ceremonies. (ES82-SN-C12, 1, 117-147)

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The first small expansion of the school program took place in the second school year (1961-1962), when two lecturers were invited to speak to the history class: Joseph Held and András Rockenstein. An organized series of monthly lectures, the Széchenyi Seminar, was

initiated for the students in the advanced classes during the 1963-1964 school year. These university-level lectures were presented by Hungarian professors teaching at North American universities: Dr. András Alföldi, Dr. István Foltinyi, and Dr. Miklós Harsányi from Princeton University; Dr. Károly Henkey from Montreal University; Dr. András Pogány of Seton Hall University; and August J. Molnár from Rutgers University. The lecturers discussed Hungarian archeology, history, music, and literature.

There were new teachers added to the faculty of the school in 1974, among them Magda Eszlári, Mr. and Mrs. Somogyi, and Melinda Hoffmann.

The years between 1974 and 1980 were marked in general by the cohesion of the Hungarian Saturday Classes with the Hungarian ethnic community and brought about developments such as mini-conferences between the teachers and the Parent Teachers Association (PTA). These conferences soon expanded. In 1976 the Hungarian school's faculty held a teacher conference at Rutgers University which brought together the teachers of Hungarian from the East Coast. The instructors shared their experiences and discussed the many hardships of keeping the Hungarian schools alive and maintaining the Hungarian language.

In 1977 the faculty and staff of the Hungarian Saturday Classes visited the Passaic Hungarian School in Passaic, New Jersey to discuss pedagogical and methodological issues. The third conference of the American Hungarian Educators' Association paid a visit to the

Hungarian Saturday Classes in April 1978, during which Hungarian-language teachers from Chicago and Passaic demonstrated their teaching methods to the faculty in the classrooms of the Hungarian school in New Brunswick.

By the late 1970s the Hungarian Saturday Classes of the Hungarian Alumni Association had become very well known to interested Hungarians throughout the world. Professional educators, poets, writers, historians, and journalists visited the classrooms to witness ethnic history in the making in New Brunswick. Professionals interested in the maintenance of Hungarian heritage and the science of teaching foreign languages arrived at the school from many points in the United States and Europe, and their impact was much more permanent than ever imagined. Some writers and poets returned to their homes and recorded their impressions in novels, articles, and poems. Several sent copies back to the Hungarian Saturday Classes as a token of appreciation and expression of respect for the teachers, students, and parents who sacrifice so much to maintain their heritage and language in the United States.

School Administration

The administrative, managerial, and organizational work at the Hungarian school is performed by a director and administrator. The individuals selected to assume these positions are members of the Hungarian Alumni Association. The positions of school director and

administrator were assumed by Susan and Miklós Csergó in the summer of 1974. The Czergos continued their administration of the school until the end of the 1979-1980 school year. The administrative work was done by Eva Fekete and Zsigmond Nemeth for the forty-four students enrolled in 1981.

The work of administering the school needs to be done all year round and is extremely diverse. The following outline provides on overview of the four areas in which thorough, consistent, and dedicated work must be done to run a successful school.

I. FINANCIAL:	Accounting and bookkeeping Fund raising Bank, insurance, tax, and related matters Preparation of monthly financial reports to the Hungarian Alumni Association Inventory
II. ORGANIZATIONAL:	Student and personnel recruiting; taking part in all Hungarian-American social functions Telephone recruiting preceding all programs and activities of the school Locating and renting classrooms and halls for the school and its various programs Creating, organizing, and monitoring all plays and programs put on by the students Organizing all aspects of dinner-dances, picnics, ceremonies, celebrations, and outings Posting and distributing fliers and posters to advertise the school
III. MANAGERIAL:	Setting up, managing, and monitoring classes, students, and teachers, along with the curriculum Examining, purchasing, and distributing books, films, records, and graduation gifts Maintaining a list of enrolled students Presiding over teacher and staff meetings, as well as PTA meetings Reporting on the status of the school at the monthly meetings of the Hungarian Alumni

Association
Public relations:
-welcoming guests, visitors, and the media
-preparing and delivering speeches in the U.S. and abroad
-writing articles about the school for newspapers and journals
Conducting all advisory and social work undertaken by the school within the ethnic community

IV. CLERICAL:

Drafting, designing, preparing, and printing all letters, invitations, pamphlets, posters, yearbooks, and report cards
Preparing and handling all audio-visual materials, photos, and sound recordings
Storing all materials belong to the school--books, notebooks, pamphlets, letters, forms recorders, and projectors
Setting up schedules for the upcoming year
Maintaining an active address file of patrons, parents, and participants
Addressing and mailing invitations, fund-raising letters, and other correspondence

Susan Csergó feels that the key to the administrative success experienced by her and her husband was the excellent relationship between the Hungarian-American community and the parents, children, faculty, and staff of the school. "This is what transformed the school into a micro-community, a large family where everyone felt at home, and felt welcome . . . the childern, the parents, and the teachers, " she explains. "And the way to achieve this was by systematic organizational work throughout the year." (ES82-SN-C12, 1, 83-114)

After a six years of the responsibilities outlined above , however, both of them found themselves nearly exhausted. "If we would not have had to worry about the financial aspects of running the school it would have been a lot easier!" notes Mrs. Csergó. "The great amount

of time put into the administrative and fund-raising work would all have been saved . . . . Many sleepless hours were spent worrying about the school's financial difficulties. A lot of time would have been saved . . . ." (ES82-SN-C12, 2, 197-223)

Parents

The importance of parent-teacher meetings for the Hungarian school was realized in the early years, and there were two or three PTA meetings held each school year. The parents were always encouraged to take part in the classroom instruction and the final examinations, to monitor the progress of their children and the quality of material taught. A good relationship between the children, teachers, parents, and community has always been one of the school's goals.

The parents of the students attending an ethnic school come from a variety of backgrounds. They may be either recent immigrants or members of the first, second, or, in some cases, the third generation of their ethnic group. The motivation for sending their children to an ethnic school varies from family to family. Steven Jurcsek, who sends three of his children to the Hungarian Saturday Classes, elaborates on their specific case:

> At home the language is not really spoken. My wife is not Hungarian . . . . Yet, I do want to have them share my belief for the Hungarian language, my love for the country where I was born, and which I had to leave . . . . I would like to pass something down to them . . . .

> Therefore, I feel that even if they will not speak the language perfectly, they will learn about the language, history, and some Hungarian songs . . . . I feel that the passing down of all these values will make them better Americans . . . . (ES82-SN-C4, 1, 25-51)

Susan Csergó, former director of the school, expresses similar views about transmitting knowledge about her heritage. It is vital "because you cannot be a good American if you deny that which you once were . . . ". She continues,

> The child will feel that he or she belongs somewhere, and will be able to identity his or her roots . . . . It is also important in that the children will be able to understand their parents somewhat better, those people who cannot become fully American . . . and they will know a little about their heritage . . . . (ES82-SN-C12, 1, 166-193; 148-165)

The more practical aspects of learning another language are expressed by Marianne Muszka. "You are as many people as the number of languages you know. We would like to have our children study other languages later on, not only Hungarian." (ES82-SN-C9, 1, 193-197) Magda Eszlari, a teacher at the Hungarian school, feels "My knowledge is at hand, and I feel that learning only makes a person more valuable . . . there are many gems in Hungarian literature, art, and culture that are worth passing on." (ES82-SN-C11, 1, 210-224) Deneice Oroszvary, an American woman married to a Hungarian and learning the language herself, feels "it is worthwhile to be connected to something . . . we do not fit in the American community anymore . . . . " (ES82-SN-C7, 1, 187-200)

There are equally varied opinions regarding non-participation in an organized cultural effort, such as an ethnic language school, or in other forms of ethnic activity. The shortage of time and energy is a primary cause of non-participation; so too are personal, social, and ideological reasons, as well as general disinterest. Marianne Muszka she took her youngest daughter out of Hungarian school: "She had difficulty distinguishing between the two languages in first grade. We decided to take her out until she had the basics of English down and was ready to accept formal instruction in Hungarian. She will be returning next year." (ES82-SN-C9, 1, 28-39)

Active participation in the Hungarian Saturday Classes requires time, dedication, and financial commitments on the part of the parents and children involved. A free Saturday morning could very well be spent doing other important activities. Many parents who send their children to Hungarian school manage to get some of their tasks done on Saturday morning, but others stay at the school and speak with the teachers, directors, and other parents, utilizing this time for social activity. Whatever the case, a portion of each Saturday is dedicated to their children and their Hungarian heritage.

Students

Finally, a few words from the students, the children who are the subjects of the entire program directed toward Hungarian heritage maintenance. Most of them do seem to mind giving up cartoons, sports

activities, and sleeping in on Saturday morning to learn Hungarian. They seem to have become accustomed to sacrificing their leisure time on the weekend and during the week to learn Hungarian, however. Many have also learned to make an extra effort to speak only Hungarian in the home. As one youngster commented, "It sounds 'weird' if I speak to my parents in English." (ES82-SN-C5, 1, 118-120).

Bernadette Muszka, a former student at the school, left because she became interested in many of the activities offered by the weekday school she was attending. Reflecting on the years she did partake in Hungarian instruction she says, "I like to say that I miss going thee. It is an empty space when it comes to Saturday mornings." (ES82-SN-C10, 1, 106-110)

The students who continue to make an effort to attend the school and learn the language formally enjoy the luxuries of knowing another language. "We can speak with our friends and no one will understand us," says one. (ES82-SN-C5, 1, 68-92). Another comments, "I feel good about myself . . . and feel big that I know something my friends do not. . . . And when I come home I have another life to live."

Another benefit the school offers is the opportunity to make other friends and acquire a true sense of belonging. As Esther Pigniczky says, "When I go tg Hungarian Scouts, right away I have a million friends.English." (ES82-SN-C5, 1, 118-120).

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