

Great Ladies

Ella Bitskey

February 22nd is George Washington's birthday. This year, Magyar News Online will remember the distaff side, with a Hungarian parallel

These two "great ladies" were far removed from each other in time and space. Over a hundred years and the Atlantic Ocean divided them. Then how do the 17th century borosjenői Bornemissza Anna, wife of Transylvanian Prince Apafi Mihály I, and 18th century Martha Washington, wife of the first President of the United States get together? This is accounted for by several common characteristics and facts. First of all, both of them stood beside their husband – each according to her personality – in the battles fought for their homeland. The very determined Bornemissza Anna strongly influenced her husband who vacillated between the Turks and the Hapsburgs in Transylvania's struggles to restore independence. Martha Washington remained in the background, but as wife, mother and hostess identified herself with her strong husband in the struggles against British rule.

There is, however, a more peaceful sphere where the activity of the two women converges. This is the "battlefield" of the good hostess, the not-to-be-disdained sphere of cooking and hospitality which plays an important role in diplomatic life as well. We have written documents of both famous hostesses from the era of exquisite aromas. One bears the name of the Prince's wife, and is entitled "Bornemissza Anna szakácskönyve" (The cookbook of Bornemissza Anna), the other, referring to the wife of the President, is called "The Martha Washington Cook Book". That there is a bit of roguishness behind both volumes makes these ever-popular documents even more interesting: Neither of them is the original



Martha Washington



Bornemissza Anna

work of the person for whom it is named. The one named after Bornemissza Anna is only a translation. The collection made by the court chef of the Elector of Mainz, Marcus Rumpolt (1581), had been translated by Keszei János serving at the court of Apafi Mihály, in 1680. Martha Washington's has a much shorter past. It was written down by the mother of her first husband, Frances Parke Custis, who gave it to her young daughter-in-law as a present. Full of good advice, "A Booke (sic!) of Cookery" and "A Booke of Sweetmeats" helped the mistress of Mount Vernon, the wife of the first President of the United States, for over fifty years. (These two works were introduced by Marie Kimball in 1940, under the title "The Martha Washington Cook Book". The sixth edition was published in 2005.) It is interesting to note that both great ladies cast a "watchful eye" abroad. In Transylvania, in addition to Hungarian dishes, German, Spanish, Italian and French delicacies were the fashion, while Martha looked for helpful hints from the East, particularly from France.

They say hospitality in "Olde England" was considered scant if the guest was not stuffed to the gills. This rule must have

applied in both cases, although at the table of Bornemissza Anna, only three courses were served on feast as well as on fast days. But the first course consisted of 27, the second of 30, and the third of 28 different dishes, ranging from the well prepared marmot and guinea pig to the green frog flavored with gooseberry juice.

Martha Washington did not fall behind. Although they mention only two courses, these consisted of so many different dishes that the huge table groaned. (All the dishes that made up one course were served at the same time.) Perhaps they would not have minded, in Transylvania, even the capon stuffed with oysters, or the lamb shank braised in orange juice, but they would have been surprised to see the suckling pig without its crisp skin, or to find out that the basic ingredient of the stew's nose-tickling aroma was nothing else but a flock of dust-scratching sparrows.

Ella Bitskey is a journalist with a regular column in the Catholic monthly Életünk, published in Munich, Germany. She worked for Radio Free Europe for many years, and now lives in Florida.

Recipes of these two Great Ladies

It is interesting to note the contrast: Martha's has precise measurements, while Anna's has no measurements at all. Also interesting in Anna's is the archaic language used .

From "Martha Washington's Cook Book":

Stewed Calves' Feet

4 to 6 calves' feet
1 tablespoon vinegar
1 teaspoon sugar
3 tablespoons currants
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon mace
3/4 cup water
butter

Wipe the calves' feet, put in boiling salted water, and boil one-half hour. Remove and skin them. Place in a pan with water, vinegar, sugar, spices and currants, and simmer until tender. Add a good-sized piece of butter, about two tablespoons, and serve.

From "Bornemissza Anna szakácskönyve":

Calves' feet cooked – Bornyúláb főve

Főzd meg vízben s tisztítsd meg. Szűrd tehénhúslevet réjáj. Fűszerszámozd meg, pergelj lisztet belé. Tölts ecetet réjáj, tégy írósvajat s metélt sós citromot réjáj. Hadd főjjön együtt, s fejéren marad az írósvajtul. Zöld füvet (fűszert) is metélj rá.

Boil in water and clean. Strain beef broth over it. Season it, twirl in flour. Pour vinegar on it, add butter (that has some whey in it) and place sliced, salted lemon on it. Let it boil together, and the butter will keep it white. Also chop some herbs on it. Because this is so different, it deserves to be presented here:

Cooking smoked calves' feet – Füstölt borjúlábot főzni

Metéld le az bornyúlábot mind szőröstül. Sózd bé tehénhúslevével együtt, úgy szép piros leve lészen. Főzd meg oztán az bornyúlábot

24 óráig. Vedd ki és akaszd a füstre. Ha megfüstölődött, főzd meg míg a szőre lemégyen. Tisztítsd meg, főzd meg tehénhúslevben, petrezse-lyemmel.

Cut off the calves' feet, with the hair. Salt them down, together with beef broth, to give a nice red juice. Then boil the calves' feet for 24 hours. Take them out, and hang up to smoke. Once smoked, boil until the hair comes off. Clean them, and boil in beef broth, with parsley.

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"Local Boy Makes Good": Dayton Horvath

The following excerpts about Dayton Horvath from Newtown, CT were taken from the article "IN OUR SCHOOLS: Newtown student serves as inspiring lesson", by Eileen FitzGerald, published in the Danbury (CT) News-Times of January 19, 2011.



Dayton Horvath was a stellar science student at [Newtown High School](#) who, at the age of 16, competed at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair in New Mexico against 1,511 students from 51 countries.

He won a third award of \$1,000 in Environment Science and the [U.S. Air Force](#) first award of \$3,000.

Horvath entered UConn's Honors Program for intellectually gifted and highly motivated students, and was accepted to work in a research lab as a freshman, a rare opportunity.

Last summer, after his sophomore year, he was among 45 students, including 29 in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, awarded Summer [Undergraduate Research](#) Fellowships.

Horvath was among eight to receive \$4,000 awards from the [College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Dean's Fund](#) for his research related to using light to address air pollution.

Now Horvath is among 30 second-semester juniors and seniors named this year as university scholars.

They can craft individual plans of study for their last three semesters and will complete a high-level [scholarship](#) project.

Graduating as a university scholar is the highest academic honor the university bestows on undergraduate students.

Horvath's name is on four research papers being considered for publication and he wants to spend a semester next year in Hungary, his parents' homeland, to learn chemistry from a different perspective.

He speaks the language and is a dual citizen, so it won't be a problem.

UConn professor [Steven Suib](#), Horvath's research adviser, said UConn welcomes students to its state-of-the-art labs and draws graduate students from around the world.

"One of the things about Dayton is that he has a lot of ideas. He's very creative. It's something that's missing in a lot of people and it's hard to teach," Suib said.

"He's a hard worker. He's enthusiastic, he doesn't give up," the professor said. "He's learning skills and with these skills, you can go a long way."

Gratulálunk a kitűnő teljesítményeidhez! Sok-sok további sikert kívánunk!

Congratulations, Dayton! May you go far in your chosen field!

Hungarian-Americans in the Garage Business

Robert Kranyik

Bridgeport, Connecticut's large Hungarian population around the turn of the 19th century soon began spreading out to the neighboring towns of Fairfield, Shelton, Trumbull, Easton, and Weston. A new generation of Hungarian-Americans began to emerge and build their own lives in this part of Southwestern Connecticut.

By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, many Hungarians were moving from the West End of Bridgeport to the small neighboring towns. Fairfield was the favored place for many, since it was close by the local factories which provided jobs for many of the immigrants. It was a town where developers offered small plots of land that could be purchased and paid for through time payments. Karoly Park and Villa Park were two of the best known developments to which Hungarian immigrants flocked. North of Villa Park was a development called Lenox Heights, in the section of town called Tunxis Hill. In the early part of the last century it was a place of farms, woods, and meadows soon to be broken up into lots for first-time home builders. Unlike Karoly Park and Villa Park, Lenox Heights was a bit more cosmopolitan in the sense that the place became inhabited by not only Hungarian immigrants, but those of Italian, Polish and other mostly Central European immigrants. My father's family purchased property in the Tunxis Hill area of Fairfield about the year 1910.

The younger generation of Hungarian Americans, including my father and his brothers, while born in the West End, attended schools in Fairfield. As they completed school or left before finishing, they began moving into the workplace in a variety of professions and trades.

My grandfather passed on prematurely, and my father, being the oldest, had to leave school. A Hungarian immi-

grant, who worked in a local auto agency was able to help my father to get a job where he began to learn how to diagnose and repair automobiles. The interest in automobiles was developed in the rest of the brothers. Eventually they opened the "Kranyik Brothers Garage" in a four-bay structure located behind the family residence on Greenfield Street, about 1920. The accompanying photo shows three Kranyik brothers posing in front of their four-bay garage, in which they repaired the automobiles of many of the business and industrial elite of Bridgeport, as well as the cars of those neighbors who could afford to own one. In the photograph, my father, James, is on the left. To his right is Michael, who followed in his brother's footsteps. Furthest right is Joseph, who was the youngest Kranyik brother. Missing is brother Julius, who also worked in the business. Interestingly, their birth names were Imre, Mihály, József and Gyula.

The sign on the Spare Tire Cover says "Kranyik Brothers Auto Repairing, 13 Greenfield Street, Tunxis Hill." The garage was still there when I was growing up in the same house, where my paternal grandmother saw to it that I became bilingual at a very early age. This ability to speak Hungarian has stayed with me throughout life, a wonderful legacy from a lady who left her family behind in Borsod County (now part of

Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén, in northeast Hungary) to seek a new life in America.

Things went well for these sons of Hungarian immigrants, who built a thriving business. The Great Depression of 1929 diminished the business as many of the customers lost their fortunes and their businesses. My father, James, maintained an interest in and a fascination for automobiles, although he left to become a policeman. He later became the first Chief of Police in Connecticut to be of Hungarian descent and served as a policeman for 29 years.

Michael Kranyik, an outstanding mechanic, joined the Fairfield Fire Department, and rose to become Superintendent of Maintenance. Joseph, the youngest in the photograph, on the right, stayed in the business, and operated his own auto repair and service station at the bottom of Tunxis Hill where he was assisted by brother Julius. Uncle Mike also appeared on the scene from time to time to help. This writer worked at the Kranyik's Service Station while attending Fairfield Prep. It was a great lesson in life for a teenager who learned to do basic mechanical work and when he became old enough to drive, ran errands for parts in the old 1930 model A truck which belonged to the business.

So, the sons of Hungarian immigrants, born in the West End of Bridgeport, moved into the business life of Fairfield, and made their way toward the American dream. Yet, they never forgot their Hungarian roots, and I have fond memories of the joking and the serious discussion which took place whenever the brothers were together. Sometimes they spoke in English; at other times in Hungarian. It was a time and a place that I treasure even today.

Robert Kranyik is a retired dean and professor, University of Bridgeport, and a member of the editorial board of Magyar News Online



Jászberény

EPF

An easy drive from Budapest is a fascinating and beautiful small town you may want to visit on your next trip.

Located 50 miles east of Budapest, Jászberény lies on the banks of Zagyva River, which is a tributary of the Tisza. It is the center of the *Jászság*, a transitional region between the Great Plain (*Alföld*) and the *Mátra* Mountains some 25 miles to the north. Following the devastation of the country by the Mongolians (*tatárok*) in what is known as the *tatárjárás* or *tatárdúlás* of 1241-42, King Béla IV invited the *jászok* (Jazygians), together with the *kúnok* (Cumanians), to settle in the area.

The *jász* and *kún* people were granted special privileges by the king, in return for which they were to provide troops for him. For centuries, *Jászság*, *Kúnság* and *Nagykúnság* were independent counties, with Jászberény as the administrative, cultural and religious center of the region. When the Turkish occupation of Hungary ended in the late 17th and early 18th centuries, the Austrian emperor Leopold I sold these three counties to the Teutonic Knights. This marked the end of the privileged status of the region, as its people were reduced to serfdom.

But the *jász* and *kún* people did not resign themselves to being serfs. In a unique move, they managed to raise enough money to "redeem" themselves, and the empress Maria Theresia restored their previous privileges. *Jászberény* celebrated the 250th anniversary of the "redemption" in 1995, giving impetus to an annual summer festival. Each year they organize an international folk dance and music camp, which together with the Csángó Festival, has become the core of the summer events. In addition, there is an international Honey Fair and Beekeepers' reunion. Parades, exhibits, concerts by various local and visiting choirs, as well as offerings of pop and classical music enliven the summer. There are sports competitions for children and family programs.

A number of famous people called

Jászberény their birthplace. Among them was the actress Déryné Széppataki Róza, who fought for the establishment of a national theater in the early 19th century (the cultural center in town is named after her); Székely Mihály, world famous opera singer, etc.

The locals believe that Attila's grave is located in *Jászberény*. And visitors can see, in the museum, Lehel's Horn, which has become the emblem of the city (see article "Lehel's Horn – "Lehel kürtje" elsewhere in this issue).



*Jászberény
World War I memorial*



Jászberény

A februári hó dalol

Áprily Lajos verse

Fehér testem fagyban feszül,
hajnal körül jegesre hűl.

A róka-talp, a nyúl-köröm
megcsúszik sima bőrömön.

De dermedt testem érzi már,
hogy egyszer eljön egy sugár.

Ezer sugár jön, millió,
s dalolni kezdek én, a hó!

Ma még erecskét csörgetek,
de holnap rönköt görgetek.

A vízmosáson, szirtközön
lerontok, mint zúgó özön.

Reszkess, te part, hőkenny, te gát,
szárguldok már a síkon át.

Tengerré nő folyó, patak,
s a vészharangok konganak

The "Horn of Lehel" – "Lehel kürtje"



The carved ivory horn exhibited in the Jász Museum of Jászberény (about 40 miles east of Budapest) interweaves history and legend, fact and fiction. Can the two be separated?

It is a fact that horns such as this were used by the early Hungarians, partly as drinking vessels, and partly as signaling devices. This one seems to be of Byzantine origin, estimated from the 10th or 11th century. That would not be an obstacle to having belonged to Lehel, since the Magyars had also made expeditions to Byzantium.

It is also a fact that the Hungarian tribes, after they had entered the Carpathian Basin at the end of the 9th century, continued strafing expeditions to the West. Their horsemen galloped through Europe, as far as Spain, driving fear into the inhabitants of Germany, Italy, Switzerland, and France. Their swift strikes caused an invocation to be inserted into their litanies: "From the arrows of the Magyars deliver us, o Lord!"

Serious historians tell us that these expeditions were not so much for loot, as "to insure their own safety and to further political alliances with their reluctant neighbors", according to Dominic Kosary in his "History of Hungary". Eventually, they were halted by the King of Saxony at Merseburg in 933, and again at Augsburg in 955. The "Horn of Lehel" has been connected

with the defeat at Augsburg, where most of the 40,000-man Hungarian cavalry was destroyed. Two leaders, Lehel and Bulcsu, were taken captive, together with a few of their men, and executed.

This is where legend takes over. Accordingly, the story goes, Lehel was brought before Duke Konrad, and asked, as a last wish before being executed, to be allowed to blow his beloved horn. The wish was granted. After he had played a melancholy farewell song, Lehel jumped in front of the duke, shouting, "You will be my slave in the next world!" With that, he brought down the horn on the duke's head with such force that the duke fell down dead. This is given as an explanation for the chip that may be seen in the horn's rim. (Lehel was then hung on a gallows.)

The connection between this horn and Lehel was first made in 1788; until then, it was known simply as a "jászkürt", or "Jazygian horn". (The Jazygians, or some say Ossetians, were settled in Hungary in the 13th century, and came to the aid of King Béla IV.) Earlier, the Benedictine Abbey of Melk in Austria had a large ox-horn they claimed was the "Horn of Lehel".

The novelist Jókai wrote that not one man in a hundred is able to blow "Lehel's Horn". It took a shepherd from Dévaványa actually to blow the Jászberény "Horn of Lehel" in the 1950's, and his performance was recorded. It would be interesting to hear it.

Kicsi a világ!

The lady from the Hungarian travel agency in Fairfield (she did not want us to use her name, but allowed us to describe her this way) related the following story:

She always wears heels, not necessarily high heels, but heels nevertheless, and never wears sneakers, not even when sightseeing. Many years ago, she and her husband were traveling in Greece. As they were climbing up steep steps to the Acropolis in Athens, she heard a woman's voice right behind her, saying in Hungarian: "Nézd ezt a nőt, magassarku cipőt hord!" ("Look at this woman, she's wearing high heels!")

The travel agent lady recognized the voice even before she turned around to see – it was her "benchmate" – the student with whom she had shared a school-bench for four years back in Újpest! She was not upset by the remark; rather, she was excited and happy to hear the voice of someone she had not seen for over 20 years!

What a small world this is! *Kicsi a világ!*



Did you know...

...that Gen. Ralph Monclar, one of the more charismatic figures of the Korean War, had a Hungarian background? He was born in Budapest in 1892, and died in Paris, 1964.

"Monclar was a *nom-de-guerre*. His real name was Margin-Vernerey. He was the son of a Hungarian nobleman and a Frenchwoman, and was only 16 when he enlisted in the French Foreign Legion, lying about his age. He was a sergeant when he entered St. Cyr, the French 'West Point' and graduated in 1914, just in time for WWI. He served with distinction then, and again in WWII, when he led a Foreign Legion armoured unit in North Africa. In his career he had been wounded at least 13 times, walked with a limp, and used a walking stick.

By 1950, he was a three-star general and, when France decided to send a battalion to Korea under the UN flag, he asked for the command, taking a reduction in rank to Lt. Col. His superiors thought him too old, but he felt a man was never too old to fight in a cause in which he believed. He led with zest and exuberance and thought the French, some five years into their war in Indochina, were lucky to be fighting Communism, even if it was in a far-off place like Korea..."

This story was sent to us by our Washington Correspondent, Dick Nemeth, who recently finished reading the book "The Coldest Winter - America and the Korean War" by David Halberstam. He writes: "Since I graduated from high school in 1949, Korea should have been 'my war', since it began in

1950. I wanted to refresh my memories of what has been called 'The Forgotten War.'" The above is an excerpt from the book, about the Battle of Chipyongni.



Gen. Ralph (Raul) Mon-

Book Review: The Essential Guide to Being Hungarian

Martha Matus Schipul

Martha Matus Schipul tells us that "there's more to being Hungarian than eating paprikás csirke and dancing the csárdás." This book might help fill in some of the gaps in your knowledge of your Hungarian background.

At first glance, the problem with the title seems to be that it is a subject in which only Hungarians would be interested, and we already know how to be Hungarian. We've been Hungarian every day of our lives! Why do we need a guide? Well, this compendium of all things Magyar by the Balint Balassi Institute in Budapest demonstrates there's more to being Hungarian than eating *paprikás csirke* and dancing the *csárdás*.

Written in Hungarian and translated into English by Paul Olchváry, this book covers a broad range of topics including the history and political ramifications of the journeys of St. Stephen's Crown, which I found fascinating, to famous sports figures like the soccer player, Puskás Ferenc, and the indomitable

race horse, Kincsem.

As a third generation Hungarian, I have a dearth of real knowledge about the Old Country. *The Essential Guide* fills in many of the gaps in my knowledge, but because it has to cover so many facets of "Hungarianness," it tends to be rather general. If you want to know about some of these topics in more depth, you'll have to go to the internet or library for further research — which is not a bad thing.

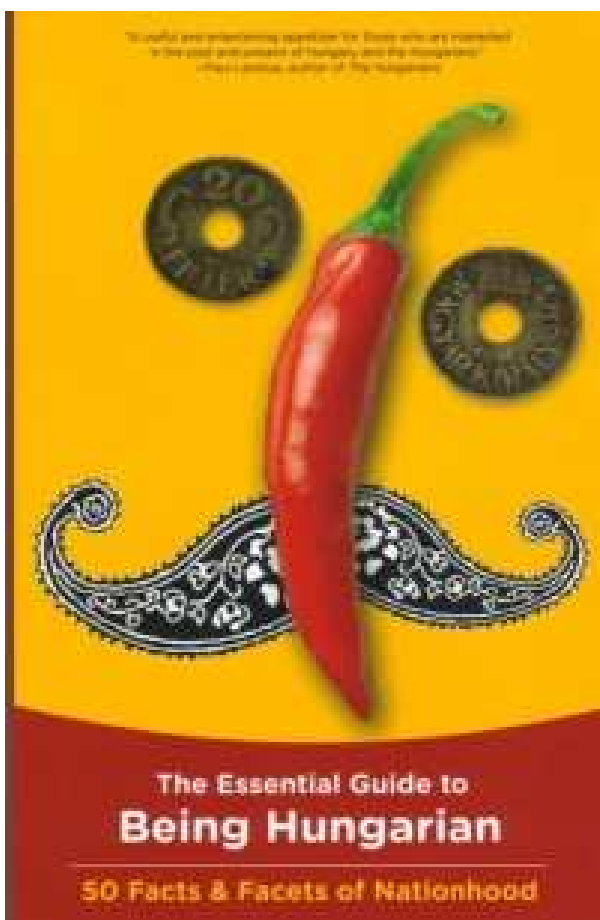
There are frustrating organizational problems with the book. The chapters are not numbered, and if you want to look up some topic in the index at the back of the book, everything is referred to by chapter number instead of page number. Another problem is that there are several chapters grouped together

on one topic, and the information is repeated from one to the other. For example, under the topic of music there are five chapters, all rather generalized, and all giving overlapping lists of the same musicians. The editor could have assigned chapters to his staff concentrating on one musician: a chapter on Bartók, a chapter on Liszt, a chapter on Kodály, etc.

The reader will find that he might read a chapter and notice that one of his favorite figures is omitted. When reading the section on literary figures, I find no mention of my favorites, Jolán Földes and the children's author, Kate Serédy, or in the section on musicians, operetta soprano Márta Eggerth or the contemporary, Sebestyén Márta and *Muzsikás*. (For some reason, I

don't like it when Márta are ignored.) That kind of problem is probably unavoidable in a collection like this because what is culturally significant to one Magyar may not be to another.

Despite these minor problems, this collection is well worth the reading simply for the sheer breadth of topics it covers. It would be an essential resource in the library of any Hungarian or Hungarian wanna-be. You could, for example, after absorbing all the knowledge the book has to offer to, let's say, pass yourself off as a Hungarian countess, much like Eliza Doolittle at the garden party in *My Fair Lady*.



Some chapters are more memorable than others. My favorite is "Scientists" by Gábor Vaderna: "Four Hungarian physicists are playing poker in the United States of America in the early 1950's. All four were raised in Budapest in the first decades of the twentieth century, all four studied to be engineers, all four earned their doctoral degrees in Ger-

many, and all four — owing to their Jewish descent — wound up in America. Without these four men, modern life would not be what it is.

"The youngest (is) Edward Teller (1908-2003)... (t)he oldest, Leo Szilárd, (1898-1964)... Eugene Wigner (1902-1995) ... John von Neumann (1903-1957)..."

"Leo Szilárd is the father of countless patents. His idea for the neutron chain reaction (1934)... theoretically opened the door to the making of an atomic weapon. Later he and Albert Einstein wrote a letter to Franklin Delano Roosevelt, calling the President's attention to the importance of developing such a weapon. After Germany's surrender, he tried desperately to halt its use ... Szilárd showed that atomic energy could be used for purposes other than weaponry..."

In collaboration with Enrico Fermi, Szilárd is credited with developing the atomic power plant. While Wigner and Neumann also opposed the use of the atomic bomb, they didn't stand in the way of arsenal building, whereas for his part, Edward Teller actually helped further the whole process. He "... later became the lead scientist for America's atomic weapons development program. As he saw it, world peace could be guaranteed only if both sides had a weapons arsenal of the same size; for as soon as one side would achieve superiority, it would use its weapons..."

Teller would become known as the "Father of the hydrogen bomb."

"Eugene Wigner ... develop(ed) the foundations of quantum mechanics, for which he received the Nobel Prize in 1963. During World War II, he designed so-called Hanford reactors, which produced plutonium for the atomic bombs..."

"... von Neumann ... developed the

mathematically sound axiomatic foundation of quantum mechanics ... and ... designed and built computers that not only stored data but could also be programmed to perform operations. Without the first of these, modern physics could not exist; without the second, there would be no modern mathematics; and without the third, there would be no computer age..."

During the 1950's, there were so many other noted scientists of Hungarian origin in the US that

"... a rumor spread: these brilliant minds who speak English with a singular accent and communicate with each other in an alien tongue probably arrived straight from Mars..." And how did that poker game end? You'll just have to get the book to find out!

If you would like to purchase this book online, please go to

<http://shop.neweuropebooks.com/The-Essential-Guide-to-Being-Hungarian-1.htm>

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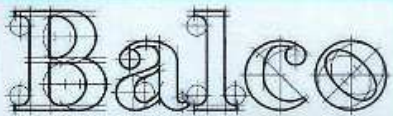
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