Shoes on the Danube Promenade

Schuhe am Donauufer
Memorial in Budapest

documents, witnesses, letters about 8. January 1945
154 rescued persons

Ebook

Tamas Szabo
2012 Munich
Contact: dbforum@online.de
Acknowledgments

A statement of gratitude for assistance in producing this work. To all the outstanding people who have motivated me through e-mail, phone, interviews I owe an everlasting debt of thanks to:

Dr. Erwin K. Koranyi professor emeritus at the University Ottawa
witness in his Book „Chronicle of a Life”, 2006

Tibor Farkas, Melbourne, journalist, research about Pal Szalai

Jacov Steiner professor emeritus at the Hebrew University Jerusalem witness in letters to Yad Vashem

Dr. Eva Löw and her sister Dr. Anna Klaber in Basel, witness

Maria Ember, journalist and researcher in Budapest, interviews in newsletter and her book 1990, 1992

Gabor Forgacs, Budapest, witness, archives, list of persons in Wallenbergs central office

Dr. George Kende, journalist in Jerusalem, witness in newspapers in Jerusalem, letters to Yad Vashem

Professor Szabolcs Szita director Holocaust Museum in Budapest,
letters and interviews in Jerusalem, Yad Vashem

Professor Laszlo Karsai University Szeged, Hungary, letters and interviews in Jerusalem, Yad Vashem

Fabienne Regard Docteur en science politique, historienne, Expert au Conseil de l’Europe Strasbourg

Dr. Jozsef Korn lawyer in Budapest, thanks for contacts

Wallenberg Family Archives, Marie Dupuy (Marie von Dardel) niece of Raoul Wallenberg,
documents from the years 1940 - 1948 and internet sources

Professor Tibor Vamos, former director from „The Computer and Automation Research Institute, Hungarian Academy of Sciences”, my employer in the years 2004 – 2006. Tibor Vamos is the founder of the Holocaust Museum in Budapest, thanks for contacts
Jewish-Hungarian family stood on the evening of 8 January 1945 for the Danube in Budapest, with the faces to water. Each moment can shots slam. The man with the leather coat (Karoly Szabo) had appeared with a special brigade of the Hungarian police prevented he assassinating hundred seventy.
Mr. Károly Szabó  
Clerk, Royal Swedish Embassy

Budapest

We gladly using the opportunity, to express our gratitude for your unforgettable services, you kindly gave to the endangered Jews of Budapest starting from first days of December previous year. As witnesses of those times, we aware, that the numbers of human lives you helped to save are simply unaccountable, during those times when to save Jews was real danger. We point it out in this of our letter, that you did all this for no personal gain and voluntarily, to be on our side during the greatest danger.

Please accept our gratitude for your help, you gave at January 8th 1945, when from the Royal Swedish Embassy's building, Üllői street 4, 154 persons, including Mr. Lajos Stöckler, leading member of the Jewish Community and eight of his family members were abducted, together with Mr. Szalai Imre, police emergency car and armed policemen hasted to the save this group condemned to execution. We repeat, as witnesses of those times, that your act was dangerous to your own live, and the minimum we can do is to express the gratitude of the tortured people.

Budapest, February 26th 1945.

Sincerely
Undersigned: Lajos Stöckler

5 years unsolved case of Karoly Szabo at Righteous Among the Nations Department, director Irena Steinfeldt

Irena Steinfeldt incorrect about rescue action January 8. 1945 ".... Stoeckler, but his statement, written immediately after the war, is the expression of thanks in general terms and does not contain any description of what it was exactly that Szabo did"

Exactly the rescoue action,
exact date,
exact rescued 154 persons with 8 Stoeckler family members,
and the act was dangerous to Szabo-s own live.
Dear Mr. Szabo: -

Please accept my apologies for the delay in answering your letter from Nov.30/09 without delay, but in the interim period I had an eye surgery and even now my eyesight is limited. This is why I correspond with you in English, for my computer is not set up to write in Hungarian.

Your letter of your heroic father touched me deeply. It soon will be sixty-six years that I seen him very briefly, yet, I remember him vividly, in his leather coat, arm in hand, facing the bunch of Arrowcross murderers, saving hundreds of lives, minutes before our execution! How could I forget the fortitude of that brave man confronting those fully armed killers in a burning city, house-to-house fights between the Soviet and Nazi forces in the final chapter of World War Two. If Karoly Szabo would not have risked his life on that fateful dawn together with Raul Wallenberg, I certainly would not write this letter now. I surely could not let him out from my autobiography: Dreams & Tears - chronicle of a life.

I wish I would know more of the life of your brave father!

It will interest you, that my wife at that time, was also saved by your father. She is a physician and lives in Stockholm: Dr. Alice Breuer, Döbelsgatan 15/II, Stockholm 11140 - her telephone number: 468-215-868. Surely, she would like to hear from you.

With my very best regards:

Erwin K. Koranyi
ERWIN K. KORANYI, MD, FRCP

Professor Emeritus, Psychiatry, University of Ottawa, Royal Ottawa Hospital
Professeur émérite, psychiatrie, Université d'Ottawa, Hôpital Royal Ottawa

Ottawa, February 1st, 2010

To the YAD VASHEM committee,
Jerusalem, Israel

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen of the Committee:

I am 86 years old retired physician, a survivor of the Shoah and I live in Canada. I turn to you with the request to give your kind re-consideration posthumously to a Mr. Mihály Szabo, a close coworker of Raul Wallenberg in Budapest, 1944-45.

As a young man, myself and my ex-wife had been surrounded with death at every moment between March 19, 1944 - January 18, 1945. For a few weeks we lived at the Jokai street 1, a Swedish Satellite Embassy until the tragic day when the entire population of the building had been herded to the shore of the Danube and executed. A few of us succeeded to hide and thus survive the incident. But nowhere else to go, on January 8, 1945, we went to another Swedish Satellite Embassy at the Ólisi street. Only a few hours later the Arrowcross killers appeared there, and a portion of the basement's population was taken to the Arrowcross Headquarter at the Teréz Körút 41 (?) There they already begun to take away our clothing, and it was clear that they are going to execute us at the shore of the nearby Danube river.

At the last moment a group of policemen appeared led by two police officers: PAUL SZAFLAY and KAROLY SZABO, holding revolvers in their hands and took us back to the Ólisi street Satellite Embassy. My contact with Karoly Szabo (whom I believed then to be a police officer) was very short but I recall vividly in his black leather coat, standing up against the Nazi killers, risking his life and saving all of us from sure death. I knew only few people in our group, as we just arrived there but I seen Laszlo Stockler, member of the Jewish Council, who’s life has been also saved. Later I heard other heroic stories about Karoly Szabo, but this has been a direct experience of mine and of my ex-wife, Dr. Alice Breuer.

I described the event in details in my Autobiography: “Dreams and Tears - chronicle of a life” in 2006 (pages: 88, 89, 90) and I am sure that my book is available in the Yad Vashem. Just to be sure, I include a copy of it.

As to myself: I left Hungary by crossing the Iron Curtain in 1948, and never been back. I live in Canada since 1952; married in 1959. I was in private practice and taught at McGill; was invited as full professor by the University of Ottawa, lectured in Haifa, Jerusalem and Beer Sheva. In 1983 I went to Israel, worked at a tent-hospital in Mahanaim, in Kyriat Smona and in the Rambam.

You may obtain references from former Israeli Ambassadors of Canada: Amb. David & Adina Sultan (2-581-8298); Amb. Jitzchak & Malka Shelef 137-010-16424); Amb. Alan & Dalia Baker (2-534-0006) or from Prof. Emanuel & Nahama Guttman (4-337-473). My Rabbi is: Dr. Reuven Bulka (Machzikai Hadash 613-521-970; my ex-wife: Dr. Alice Breuer (418-215-868) Dobelnsagatan 15/III Stockholm 11140).

Sincerely yours,

Erwin K. Koranyi

1406 - 20 DRIVEWAY • OTTAWA • ONTARIO • K2P 1C8 • TEL: (613) 236-6553
New, York September 28, 2010

Mrs. Irena Steinfeldt
Director
Righteous Among the Nations Department
Yad Vashem
P.O.Box 3477
Jerusalem 91034, ISRAEL

Dear Mrs. Steinfeldt:

Ref.: Karoly SZABO – Hungary

Mr. Tamas Szabo, the son of Karoly Szabo, as well as Professor Erwin S. Koranyi, have recently written to us with regard to the rescue activities of Karoly Szabo, in Budapest, during the Holocaust period. They have enclosed copies of correspondence with your department, including your announcement from 2008 declining the Righteous title to Szabo.

With reference to this point, I wish to draw your attention to the testimony by Prof. Erwin S. Koranyi, of 1 February 2010, that constitutes a direct and personal account of his rescue at the hands of Karoly Szabo – a person clearly identified by Koranyi as his rescuer. We were told that this testimony was also sent to your office. You also have the testimonies of Tibor Klaber (21.2.2008), of Anna Klaber-Low (23.5.2006), and Eva Low (22.5.2008) – as well as a statement by Lajos Stockler, on behalf of the Budapest Jewish community, dated 8 January 1945, with regard to Karoly Szabo’s help to Jews on the verge of being shot by members of the Arrow Cross. Taking all these documents in consideration it is clear that there are no doubts with regard to the identity of the rescuer, and the rescue acts performed by him on the streets of Budapest during the turbulent period of Arrow Cross rule. If you want us to send you copies of the aforementioned testimonies, please let us know, and we shall gladly comply.

In addition, I wish to include references of a 1948 book by the esteemed historian of the Holocaust in Hungary, Jenő Levai, on Raoul Wallenberg, where Karoly Szabo is mentioned on several occasions as involved in the rescue of Jews, as part of the team of persons assigned to Raoul Wallenberg. I believe this book has not been presented to you within the original petition to recognize Mr. Szabo. Please note that Levai’s book is replete with first-hand documents that he compiled immediately after the war. It cannot therefore be classified as part of current literature on this subject that, understandably, is not acceptable as first-hand evidence by Yad Vashem, but should rather be considered as credible first-hand account by a reputed historian (you may check Jenő Levai’s reputation with historians on the Holocaust in Hungary).
As we have been approached on this matter by those rescued by Karoly Szabo, and in view of the documentation presented to us, we felt an obligation to write to you with a request to reconsider the Commission’s previous negative decision, and reopen this case for a renewed consideration.

With thanks and appreciation to your important work in the area of Righteous Among the Nations and in the hope that this case will soon be resolved in a positive manner.

Sincerely yours,

Baruch Tenenbaum
Founder and International Chairman

Encl: Excerpts from Jeno Levai’s 1948 study of Raoul Wallenberg

Cc: Mr. Tamas Szabo
Prof. Erwin Koranyi
Abschrift:

Dr. med. Eva Löw
Spezialärztin FMH für Psychiatrie und Psychotherapie

4059 Basel, 22.5.06
Unt. Batterieweg 162
Tel.: 35 77 81

ATTEST


Eva Löw
5 years unsolved case of Karoly Szabo at Righteous Among the Nations Department, director Irena Steinfeldt

Irena Steinfeldt - incorrect statement:

"very difficult, especially the identification of the person(s) who was (were) responsible for their rescue. For obvious reasons under these circumstances no introductions were made, and therefore the survivors could only hear the name of their rescuer after the war."

Karoly Szabo was introduced by Wallenberg to the survivors exactly December 24, 1944, the rescue was January 8, 1945, Irena Steinfeldt has the exact witness Eva Löw from this introduction since Summer 2006 and Anna Klaber ..... 

Irena Steinfeldt can read german text from Dr. Eva Löw in original, without translations.

Six years after witness letter Dr. Eva Löw in Summer 2006 – October 29, 2012

The Righteous Among the Nations Karoly Szabo
http://db.yadvashem.org/righteous/righteousName.html?language=en&itemId=5932612
Anna Klaber - Löw  
Zum wisse Segel 18  
4144 Arlesheim

Ergänzende Angaben zum Attest vom 23.5.2006

Angaben zur Zeugin:

Name: Anna Klaber - Löw  
Geburtsdatum: 4.5.1924  
Jetztige Adresse: Zum wisse Segel 18, CH-4144 Arlesheim  
Beruf: Kaufmännische Angestellte, Hausfrau, Rentnerin

Wohnort zur Zeit des 2. Weltkrieges: Budapest (Ungarn)

Lebenslauf zur Zeit des Krieges:
Gymnasiastin; ich wohnte mit meiner verwitweten Mutter und der älteren Schwester.
Nachdem die ungarischen Pfeilkreuzer die Macht übernommen hatten (Mitte Oktober 1944) Flucht in die schwedische Gesandschaft nach Ofen (Buda). Später von Wallenberg übersiedelt in ein schwedisches Schutzhaus auf der Pester Seite.

Wohnadresse zur Zeit des 2. Weltkrieges: Budapest: Margit körút 2-4; Hollán utca 9  
Schwedische Gesandschaft: Tigris utca 6  
Schwedisches Schutzhaus: Uellöi ut 2 -4

Angaben über den Retter:

Name: Szabo Károly  
Alter: ca. 30 J.  
Beschäftigung: Mechaniker  
Der Kontakt zwischen Retter und Geretteten entstand via Raoul Wallenberg.
Was zur Rettung führte: s. Attest vom 23.5.2006

Aussage zur Motivation des Retters:

Szabo hat seine Tat selbstlos getan, ohne Erwartung eines Entgeltes. Es wurden ihm weder Zahlungen, Belohnungen noch Vorrechte versprochen. Er hat sich mit seiner Tat in Lebensgefahr begeben, weil es unberechenbar war, wie die Pfeilkreuzer reagieren würden.

Arlesheim, den 7. September 2006

Anna Klaber - Löw

[Signature]
Dr. med. Tibor Klaber
Facharzt FMH für Psychiatrie und Psychotherapie
Austrasse 79, 4051 Basel  Tel.: 061 272 10 30

Frau
Irena Steinfeldt
Director
Righteous Among the Nations Departement
Yad Vashem
Jerusalem

21. Februar 2008

Ref: Szabo Karoly – Hungary (11226)

Sehr geehrte Frau Steinfeldt,
sehr geehrte Mitglieder der Kommission,


Die Wirkung auf meine Angehörigen ist demütigend und beschämend: Nicht nur mussten sie in ihrem Leben mehr als einmal um ihr Überleben kämpfen – jetzt soll es für die Ehren ihres Retters auch noch darum gehen, ob dieser 10 Meter vom Schwedischen Schutzhäus oder 10 Meter von der Donau entfernt aufgetaucht sei.


Solche traumatischen Erinnerungen bleiben scharf und haben eine grosse Evidenz, was ich Ihnen auch als Psychoanalytiker sagen möchte.

Wir sind sehr erstaunt darüber, dass es die Kommission nicht für nötig befunden hat, mit den Überlebenden die offenen Fragen zu klären. Ich bitte Sie deshalb, auf Ihren Entscheid zurückzukommen und die Fragen zu stellen, deren Beantwortung erst zu einer gerechten Ein-
schätzung führen kann.

Mit freundlichen Grüssen,

Tibor Klaber

Cc: Herrn Tamás Szabo, Gröbenzell
Herrn Prof. Dr. Jaakov Steiner, Jerusalem
5 years unsolved case of Karoly Szabo at Righteous Among the Nations Department, director Irena Steinfeldt

(1) Irena Steinfeldt incorrect about rescue action January 8. 1945 "... Stoeckler, but his statement, written immediately after the war, is the expression of thanks in general terms and does not contain any description of what it was exactly that Szabo did"

In Stoecklers statement: exactly the rescue action, exact date, exact rescued 154 persons with 8 Stoeckler family members, act was dangerous to Szabo-s own live ... what is here not exactly?

(2) Irena Steinfeldt other incorrect statement: "very difficult, especially the identification of the person(s) who was (were) responsible for their rescue. For obvious reasons under these circumstances no introductions were made, and therefore the survivors could only hear the name of their rescuer after the war."

Karoly Szabo was introduced by Wallenberg to the survivors exactly December 24. 1944, the rescue was January 8. 1945, Irena Steinfeldt has the exact witness from this introduction since Summer 2006, Eva Löw and Anna Klaber.

(3) Irena Steinfeldt incorrect statement: "Szabo was acting under the instructions of Szalai Pal the superior from Szabo"

This is the totally new theorie of history constructed by Irena Steinfeldt: Szalai Pal was never the superior of Karoly Szabo, superior was the swedish embassy, Wallenberg.

Six years after witness letter Dr. Eva Löw in Summer 2006 – October 29. 2012

The Righteous Among The Nations Karoly Szabo
http://db.yadvashem.org/righteous/righteousName.html?language=en&itemId=5932612
Shoes on the Danube Promenade

The Shoes on the Danube Promenade is a memorial created by Gyula Pauer and Can Togay on the bank of the Danube River in Budapest. It honors the Jews who fell victim to fascist Arrow Cross militiamen in Budapest during World War II, and represents their shoes left behind on the bank when they fell into the river after being shot.

The memorial

It is located on the Pest side of the Danube Promenade in line with where Zoltan Street would meet the Danube if it continued on that far, about 300 metres (980 ft) south of the Hungarian Parliament and near the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.


Translation: "The composition entitled 'Shoes on the Danube Bank' gives remembrance to the people shot into the Danube during the time of the Arrow Cross terror. The sculptor created sixty pairs of period-appropriate shoes out of iron. The shoes are attached to the stone embankment, and behind them lies a 40 meter long, 70 cm high stone bench. At three points are cast iron signs, with the following text in Hungarian, English, and Hebrew: "To the memory of the victims shot into the Danube by Arrow Cross militiamen in 1944–45. Erected 16 April 2005." (Source: MTI, Saturday, April 16, 2005.)

Translation: "A holocaust memorial will be dedicated on Saturday, the holocaust victim memorial day, in Budapest. Sixty pairs of cast iron shoes, cast in the styles of the 40's, stand in remembrance of the people shot into the Danube during the Arrow Cross terror. The memorial lies on the riverbank between Roosevelt square and Kossuth square." (source: Népszabadság Online, April 15, 2005.)

Prevented crime in January 1945

During World War II, Raoul Wallenberg and 250 coworkers were working around the clock to save the Jewish population from being sent to Nazi concentration camps; this figure later rose to approximately 400. Lars and Edith Ernster, Jacob Steiner, and many others were housed at the Swedish Embassy in Budapest on Üllöi Street 2-4 and 32 other buildings throughout the city that Wallenberg had rented and then declared as extraterritorial to try to safeguard the residents.

On the night of January 8, 1945, all of the inhabitants of the building on Üllöi Street were rounded up and dragged away to the banks of the Danube by an Arrow Cross execution brigade. At
midnight, Karoly Szabo and 20 policemen with drawn bayonets broke into the Arrow Cross house and rescued everyone there (see also front page of 1947 newspaper below). Among those saved were Lars Ernster, who fled to Sweden and became a member of the board of the Nobel Foundation from 1977 to 1988, and Jacob Steiner, who fled to Israel and became a professor at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Steiner's father had been shot dead by Arrow Cross militiamen on December 25, 1944, falling into the Danube. His father had been an officer in World War I and spent four years as a prisoner of war in Russia.

Dr. Erwin K. Koranyi, psychiatrist in Ottawa, wrote about the night of January 8, 1945 in his Dreams and Tears: Chronicle of a Life in 2006, "in our group, I saw Lajos Stoeckler" and "The police holding their guns at the Arrowcross cutthroats. One of the high-ranking police officers was Pal Szalai, with whom Raoul Wallenberg used to deal. Another police officer in his leather coat was Karoly Szabo."

Pal Szalai was honored as Righteous among the Nations on April 7, 2009.
Schuhe am Donauufer

Die Schuhe am Donauufer (ungarisch: Cipők a Duna-parton) in Budapest wurden von Gyula Pauer und Can Togay als Mahnung an die Pogrome an Juden durch Pfeilkreuzler im Ungarn während des Zweiten Weltkriegs gestaltet.


Im Unterschied zum Mahnmal für die ermordeten Juden Ungarns bei der Großen Synagoge ist es am Donauufer ein eher stilles Gedenken.

Verhinderung eines Verbrechens am 8. Januar 1945


Unter den 154 Geretteten waren auch Lajos Stöckler und seine achtköpfige Familie, die Familie Jakobovits, Edith und Lars Ernster, Jacob Steiner, Eva Löw und Anna Klaber. Der Vater Jacob Steiners wurde am 25. Dezember 1944 am Donauufer erschossen.

Lars Ernster wurde später Chemiker, Professor an der Universität Stockholm und Mitglied der Königlich Schwedischen Akademie der Wissenschaften und des Nobelpreiskomitees, Jacob Steiner wurde Biologe und Professor an der Hebräischen Universität Jerusalem, Eva Löw und Anna Klaber wurden Ärztinnen in Basel.

Quellen, Sources

Károly Szabó
(auch in englisch, französisch und ungarisch)

Menschenretter 1945

Dr. Otto Fleischmann

Who was the man in the leather coat
http://mek.oszk.hu/09600/09621/pdf/who_was_the_man_in_the_leather_coat.pdf

The Righteous Among The Nations Karoly Szabo
http://db.yadvashem.org/righteous/righteousName.html?language=en&itemId=5932612

Wallenberg Mord in englisch:

Spiegel Online

Bilder und Dokumente bei Spiegel Online zu Károly Szabó
http://eonestages.spiegel.de/page/AllDocuments.html?k=owner_id%3A%22287221%22&s=0&r=20&c=1#searchResults