

CHRONICLE

HUNGARIAN HERITAGE CENTER: DEDICATION AND OFFICAL OPENING, MAY 21, 1989

The Hungarian Heritage Center, established by the American Hungarian Foundation, is a national center in New Brunswick, New Jersey, to preserve and display the most extensive historical documentation on Hungarian Americans assembled to date. It consists of historical and contemporary documents, including written records, photographs, work of art and artifacts, illustrating the historical and contemporary life of Hungarian Americans. The American Hungarian Foundation preserved and collected this unique historical material since 1954. The completion of the Center assures the permanent preservation, display and proper utilization of these documents. The Center also represents a national institution for advancing education, community life and strengthening the traditions of Hungarian Americans.

Formal dedication and opening of the Hungarian Heritage Center is scheduled for May 21, 1989. Construction of the Center under direction of architect László Papp was completed in July 1988. First Fidelity Bank, N. A., New Jersey, provided the construction loan and mortgage. Also participating in the \$ 1.4 million mortgage are the William Penn Association and the Hungarian Reformed Federation of America.

All interested persons are cordially invited to the Dedication and Opening on Sunday, May 21, 1989 at 3 : 00 p.m., 300 Somerset Street, New Brunswick, New Jersey. A gala dedication dinner will be held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in New Brunswick.

The Hungarian Heritage Center consists of a museum, library, archives, visitor's center, gift and craft shop, conference and research facilities. The Museum is designed to display both permanent and special temporary exhibits. Displays illustrating the diverse contributions of Hungarians to American society and culture will be shown, including such fields as education, broadcasting, music, engineering, science, fine arts, architecture and the performing arts. Special exhibits, based on original historical documents, will illustrate the history of Hungarian communities, including both outstanding persons and the life of the average citizen. Current collections include the Joseph Domjan collection of woodcuts and paintings, the Ede Streng collection of Hungarian coins from 1000 to the twentieth century, and an outstanding collection of photographs from the world-famous work of Andre Kertesz.

The formal establishment of the Library will expand the opportunities for personal and scholarly research. Enlarged space and cataloging equipment will enable the Foundation to preserve its 30,000 volume collection and serve individual and

institutional requests for research. The Library expects to add 1,750 volumes per year to its holdings. A special resource of the Library is the Vasváry Collection, consisting of 24,000 entries on American Hungarian history dating back to the seventeenth century. The Library is currently an affiliate of the Rutgers University Library and is integrated into the Research Library Information Network (RLIN) data base, available in major research libraries nationwide.

The archival collection includes rare books, manuscripts and other types of historical documents that require special handling and a controlled physical environment. This collection will be a key to historical documentation of the Hungarian community in America. It will represent the first professionally maintained permanent Hungarian archival collection in the United States.

The book and craft shop will promote traditional Hungarian crafts, various types of arts and crafts by Hungarian artists and books by or about Hungarians here and abroad. Some space will be reserved for actual craft demonstrations. Conference areas of the Center will be available for meetings, conferences, workshops on a variety of issues and sponsored by professional or scientific organizations. Such events will reinforce the role of the Center as a meeting place of the Hungarian community in America.

A total of \$ 4.6 million in capital and endowment funds are needed to construct and maintain the facility. Nationwide and local fundraising activities are currently underway under the direction of Zsolt Harsányi, President of Porton International, Inc. of Washington, D. C. Under Phase I of the fundraising campaign, over \$ 1.7 million has been pledged and raised. Major corporate gifts were received from the Johnson & Johnson Corporation and a challenge grant of \$ 100,000 from Nicholas Salgo, former US Ambassador to Hungary. Individuals, corporations and organizations such as the Rockefeller Foundation, the Charles E. Merrill Trust and the New Jersey Committee for the Humanities have provided significant support to the American Hungarian Foundation and its programs.

Phase II of the fundraising campaign plans to raise \$ 2.9 million. Hungarian Americans throughout the United States are requested to make contributions to this effort. Specific rooms and areas of the Hungarian Heritage Center, Museum, Library and Archives may be named and designated by major donors.

For more information on making contributions or attending the Dedication and Opening of the Hungarian Heritage Center, please contact August J. Molnar, president, American Hungarian Foundation, 300 Somerset Street, PO Box 1084, New Brunswick, New Jersey 08903, tel: 201-846-5777.