

ON THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF HUNGARIAN SPELEOLOGY

Speleologists in Hungary began formal collaboration within the Hungarian Geological Society. In 1910 with the encouragement of a brilliant natural scientist, Ottó Herman, they constituted an independent Commission on Speleology. With the passing of time, the Commission was repeatedly reorganised and re-named, finally becoming the Hungarian Speleological Society. The Society (in Hungarian: Magyar Karszt- és Barlangkutató Társulat, shortened: M.K.B.T.) was last reorganised in 1959. It has a total of about 800 active members and is a member of the Hungarian Federation of Technical and Scientific Societies. Executive functions are administered by an Executive Board composed as follows:

Chairman:

Dr. Sándor LÁNG

Associate Chairman:

Károly JAMRIK
Dr. András JUHÁSZ
Dr. György DÉNES

Secretary General:

Dr. Tivadar BÖCKER

Secretaries:

Zoltán HÁZI
Tamás HAZSLINSZKY
Gyula HEGEDÜS
István SOHÁR

Board Members:

Dr. Dénes BALÁZS	Dr. Miklós GÁBORI
Dr. Jenő BÁRSONYOS	Dr. László JAKUCS
Dr. Károly BERTALAN	Dr. Dénes JÁNOSSY
Dr. István FODOR	Lajos RÉVÉSZ

In addition, the Society's business is managed by a permanent secretariat directed by Kinga SZÉKELY, a full time appointee.

The aim of the Society is to conduct scientific research on karst regions and caves and to publish the results; to co-ordinate work by karst and speleological specialists with that in cognate fields of science; to serve as forum for all theoretical and practical research in speleology and karst studies in Hungary.

The Society's scientific work is conducted in a framework of sections and/or commissions:

Section of Karst Hydrology and Geology

Section of Documentation

*Commission on Speleoclimatology
and Speleotherapy*

Commission on Biology

Commission of Karst Morphology

Commission on Paleontology

Commission on Archaeology

Commission on Education and Training

Commission on Subaquatic Speleology

In addition, ad hoc committees will be formed to tackle specific tasks and there are standing commit-

tees such as editing committees and the Castle Cave Committee which direct continuing operations. Such committees are entrusted by government agencies etc., to undertake special research in karst and speleology that may be required from time to time.

Society members conduct their research in *speleological research teams*. There are a total of 30 such teams within the Society at present. As a rule, individual teams operate within the organisation and financial framework of other entities such as sports clubs, academic institutions etc. The Society's function is to supply technical supervision, management and co-ordination. Close association between teams and the Society is assured because the Board of Trustees of the Society includes the heads of the teams, as well as its elected officers. The work of different teams within particular major karst regions is co-ordinated by a series of *territorial organisations* of the Society.

Significant events in the Society's calendar are report meetings held on Mondays from September to May, when speakers report upon their research or describe study tours abroad. Discussion meetings devoted to selected scientific problems of special importance are convened two or three times a year; the most prominent representatives of the appropriate scientific fields exchange and discuss their findings. Finally, theoretical and practical training courses in various subjects are organised occasionally for junior speleologists. An agenda of meetings is published monthly. For discussion of topics of international significance or to celebrate notable anniversaries etc., international conferences or other special meetings are arranged.

The Society has two regular serial publications: *Karszt és Barlang* ("Karst and Cave") is issued twice a year, in Hungarian and with English and Russian abstracts in most instances. It contains brief scientific communications reports on major national and international scientific achievements. *Karszt- és Barlangkutató* ("Karst Studies and Speleology") is the year book of the Society and publishes larger papers of high scientific standing, mainly in selected foreign languages.

The Society's expenses are met from membership fees, contributions by government organisations and industrial enterprises as well as considerable subventions by the State. The Society holds the nation's only official speleological library, which maintains efficient exchange arrangements with other important speleological institutions and organisations around the world.

English translation revised by D.C. Ford

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