

[Print article \(https://www.archivnet.hu/print/3256\)](https://www.archivnet.hu/print/3256) |

[Volume 25 \(2025\) Issue 3 \(/kiadas/25-evfolyam-2025-3-szam\)](#)
[Levente Vardai](#)
[Curiosities \(/kuriozumok.html\)](#)

“HUNGARY AND THE JAMBOREE” AN AUSTRALIAN SCOUT’S LOOK BACK AT THE 1933 WORLD SCOUT JAMBOREE IN GÖDÖLLŐ

Hungarian scouting undoubtedly flourished in the period between the two world wars. In addition to educating the youth, their national organization, the Hungarian Scout Association (hereinafter: MCSSZ), carried out significant foreign affairs activities, as a result of which it was able to raise the issue of “mutilated Hungary” on the international stage. Thus, one of the cultural diplomacy highlights of the Horthy era was that Hungary was able to host the 4th World Jamboree. The English-language source and its footnoted translation published here provide insight into what remained of the Gödöllő jamboree in the memories of Australian scouts arriving from the other side of the world.

Introduction ^[1]

“The mutilated Hungary is in a situation that every small country is in: the world rarely takes notice of it.” ^[2] – this is how Dr. Frigyes Molnár, the representative of the Foreign Office of the MCSSZ, who soon became the organization’s co-chairman and head of foreign affairs, began his 1926 report. In his report, he also emphasized that every Hungarian person – including the Scouts – had the duty to carry out “propaganda” of an appropriate level and in a positive direction in the interests of Hungary. From the very beginning, the MCSSZ consciously sought – after the Trianon Peace Treaty – to place the country at the center of international attention through Scouting, and at the same time to draw attention to the socially and economically unjust Trianon situation. The leaders of the MCSSZ conceptually seized every opportunity to have themselves represented at an international Scout meeting, and thus, as a result of persistent work – and not by chance – the IV. Hungary was the host of the 1933 World Scout Jamboree. ^[3] During the 1933 Jamboree, the world’s attention was truly focused on our country. Approximately 25,000 Scouts camped at the Gödöllő center, where young people wearing ties from all over the world flocked. ^[4]

It happened on this day September 02.

- 1945** The Japanese delegation signs the instrument of unconditional surrender aboard the battleship Missouri. This formally ends the... [Read more \(/ezen-a-napon-tortent-1945-09-02\)](#).
- 1945** Ho Chi Minh declares the independence of Vietnam and the founding of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. [Read more \(/ezen-a-napon-tortent-1945-09-02-0\)](#).

About us

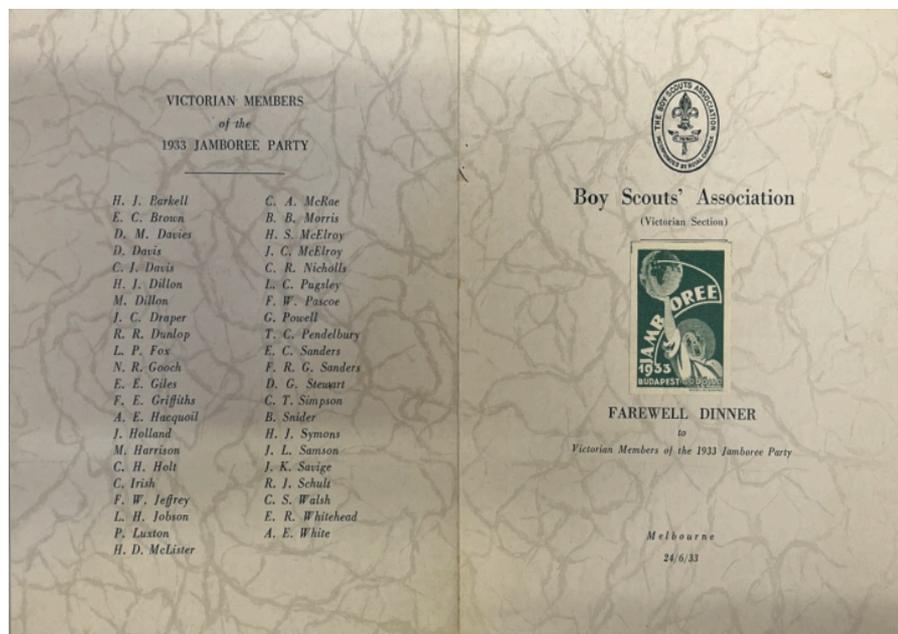
The Hungarian National Archives founded the electronic source journal ArchivNet in 2001 – a completely new initiative in the archival profession at the time – dealing with the history of the 20th century. The journal, published six times a year, has an ever-growing readership and seeks to satisfy the thirst for knowledge not only of specialists but also of a wide range of people interested in history.

In 2016, ArchivNet was renewed in terms of both content and form. In addition to political, diplomatic, cultural and military history, economic and social history topics are more strongly present than before, and personal documents (diaries, memoirs, correspondence) that are becoming increasingly popular these days are given greater emphasis. Thematic issues are published, and the new interface is more modern, transparent and organized than before.

As in the past two decades, ArchivNet intends to continue to provide publishing opportunities for Hungarian and foreign archivists, historians, teachers, students, and doctoral candidates dealing with the period after 1867. We welcome your writings to the editorial office!

The Editorial Board

We recommend to our authors our [marking \(https://mnl.gov.hu/hogyan_hivatkozzunk\)](https://mnl.gov.hu/hogyan_hivatkozzunk) and [referencing \(https://mnl.gov.hu/utmutato_kiadvanyok_k\)](https://mnl.gov.hu/utmutato_kiadvanyok_k)



(/sites/default/files/u364/bucsuvacSORA.png)

Invitation to the farewell dinner in Melbourne before departure, held on 24 June 1933. The document clearly shows the names of the participating Scouts from the state of Victoria.

Source: Scout Heritage Victoria & Archive

This youth camp, unique in its time and of its kind, was a major event not only for Hungary. It was the first jamboree of the World Scout Organization to be held not on the coast, but in the interior of the European continent and in a country that was not exactly a tourist paradise. Thus, through the event, thousands and thousands were able to get to know this region, which they would probably not have had the chance to visit otherwise. [5]



(/sites/default/files/u364/a_kontingens_romaban.png)

Group photo of the Australian contingent in Rome, in front of the walls of the Colosseum on 28 July 1933.

Source: Scout Heritage Victoria & Archive.

The available Hungarian-language sources essentially remember the 1933 Gödöllő World Meeting as a success story. And no matter how much the organizers strived to achieve the highest level of hospitality, the picture that formed in people's minds may have been much more complex. As many participants arrived from the more than 50 countries that sent contingents, as many stories of experience could have been formed regarding the Hungarian jamboree and the country. After all, people had different knowledge about our country due to their own life circumstances. Their emotional attitude was also determined by the fact that a war alliance or perhaps political opposition had previously developed between their country and Hungary. Within the contingents of each country, the evaluation of impressions can be said to be largely identical due to the similar emotional attitude of the young people arriving from the same place. [6] The first pages of the trilingual, Hungarian-French-English *Jamboree Album* read: "Love here expressed itself in the form of hospitality. We can say that all our foreign Scout

[eszitesehez](#)) guide, which is the same as that of the Archives Bulletins.

Welcome

Dear Readers!

The third issue of our source magazine, ArchivNet, has been published. In our latest issue, you can read four source reviews, which are quite diverse in terms of their topic and place of origin: an example of the latter is that one of the presented sources was written in Melbourne and one in Rome – and they also differ from each other thematically. The former is a participant's recollection of the 1933 Gödöllő World Jamboree, and the latter is a report on the situation of the Hungarian colony in Italy.

In terms of chronology, the publication by Gyula Kosztyó (archivist, Hungarian National Archives, Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County Archives, historian, researcher, Institute for the Study of Violence) is the first in which he presents the local impact of the national events taking place at the time with the help of archival sources: in his writing, he presents the events in Tiszadob during the turbulent, to put it mildly, period of 1918–1919 caused by the changes in empires – with particular emphasis on the destruction of the Andrassy Castle.

Levente Várdai (historian and museologist, Janus Pannonius Museum) draws attention to a special source in his presentation: during his research trip to Australia, he came across a transcript of a speech given at an event, in which a participant from Victoria at the 1933 World Scout Meeting in Gödöllő looked back on the event. The published source not only describes the everyday life of the jamboree or the stations on the European journey, but it also reveals what a "culture shock" the stay in Hungary must have been for young Australians in the 1930s.

László Imre Németh (retired priest, papal prelate) already provides a source from the Cold War period, which, however, is linked to the period immediately following the end of World War II. Lajos Kada compiled his report in 1952 at the request of the American Hungarian Catholic League, in which he reported on the situation of Hungarians in Italy, among whom there were still a large number who had arrived in the country as refugees and were still living in various camps.

In his presentation, *Miklós András Deák* (historian, retired diplomat) presents sources that may provide new information regarding the death and funeral of József Mindszenty's

brothers felt at home in the warm atmosphere of Hungarian hospitality. There were those who – by their own admission – crossed the Hungarian border with a certain reserved apprehension: but when they were swept into the hot current of love, their faces were also covered with dust. " [7]



A 1933 portrait of JC (Jim) Draper from Victoria in his Scout uniform, showing the jamboree patch.

Source: Scout Heritage Victoria & Archive

A contingent of Australian Scouts arrived in Hungary from the most remote part of the world, which added a touch of curiosity to their stay here. It is worth mentioning that in Australia – as in other parts of the British Empire – Scouting life began very quickly, parallel to the publication of *Scouting for Boys*, the "bible" of the movement, in 1908. [8] In the pages of the Jamboree Album mentioned above, published after the international world meeting, the authors of the MCSSZ commemorated the participation of the Australian Scouts on several occasions, who sent a significant delegation despite the Great Depression. [9] In this volume, their number was given as 87, which was probably the true number. [10] Due to the geographical and political distance, the Scouts arriving from the land of the koalas must have had very little prior knowledge of this distant small country. That is why they set off for Hungary with a "blank slate", so the knowledge they have retained in their memory can be considered the impressions they gained at the jamboree and the imprints of the MCSSZ's communication.

mother, Borbála Kovács, in 1960. The latter event resulted in the Associated Press and Reuters correspondents ultimately not traveling to the funeral due to the threatening actions of the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, at which members of the American embassy were not present, but French and Italian diplomats were.

We thank our authors for the manuscripts, and we also draw the attention of our future authors to the fact that the editorial staff of ArchivNet continues to welcome articles describing twentieth-century sources on topics of economic, institutional, local, political, and social history.

Budapest, July 23, 2025.

Daniel Miklos

editor-in-chief



Australian Aboriginal costume in the Gödöllő camp. The caption of the picture in the album published by the MCSSZ after the jamboree is: "Australian exorcist. A jamboree smile lurks under the chin."

Source: Szerk. RADVÁNYI : im 117.

They began their long journey from Melbourne on 27 June aboard the RMS (Royal Mail Ship) Otranto, arriving in Naples exactly one month later. The Australian contingent did not return home immediately after the jamboree, but instead embarked on a European cruise, spending three weeks in England. They finally sailed home from Tilbury, London, on 14 October aboard the RMS Orsava, which arrived in Melbourne on 20 November.



[\(/sites/default/files/u364/ausztral_cserkeszek_a_gilwell_parkban.png\)](/sites/default/files/u364/ausztral_cserkeszek_a_gilwell_parkban.png)

Australian Scouts surround the founder of Scouting. The picture was taken a few weeks after the World Scout Conference in Gilwell Park, England.

Source: Scout Heritage Victoria & Archive

The following source is also valuable due to the geographical distance of the Australian participants, and can be found in the collection of the *Scout Heritage Victoria & Archive* (abbreviated: SHV) in

Melbourne. [11] The aforementioned community collection on the subject of scouting has an extensive collection, not only in terms of Australian but also international scout jamborees. Their permanent exhibition includes, among others, a souvenir album with illustrations by Lajos Márton related to the 4th World Meeting. [12] But in addition, they also keep a boxful of sources related to the 1933 Hungarian jamboree. Among them is "HUNGARY AND THE JAMBOREE." a copy of a 10-page document from 1936 entitled, which was undoubtedly prepared for a post-jamoroee scout gathering, where the participants of the jamboree three years earlier were present and relived their settled experiences. [13] What makes this document special is that, in contrast to other available Australian news reports and experience reports [14] – which highlight other details of the almost six-month journey – this one focuses exclusively on the experiences in Hungary. The exact identity of the author is unknown – his signature is illegible – but based on the way he describes Melbourne, it becomes certain that he is a representative of the large, 43-strong group of the Australian contingent from the state of Victoria.



(/sites/default/files/u364/edinburgh_evening_news_1933_szeptember_26.png)

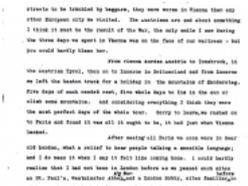
The Australian Scouts toured England after the jamboree. The contingent is pictured in Edinburgh, wearing the camp commemorative patch, with the mythical White Stag symbol, on their uniforms.

Source: Edinburgh Evening News, 26 September 1933.

The visual and textual appendices mentioned in the document – a lecture outline in terms of its genre – have unfortunately not survived. The document, which was prepared for the purpose of reading, formulates the consensual memories of the Australian contingent, to which the text refers several times. In the lines now translated into Hungarian, the author recalls in a cheerful tone the scouting experiences he had in Hungary almost three years earlier. As all recollections are contingent, he does not mention, for example, the trip to the countryside of the jamboree, where on the 8th day of the camp on 8 August 1933, under the name "Englishmen", they visited Balatonfüred and the city of Tihany. [15] Nevertheless, when reading the source, it becomes clear: the MCSSZ was able to thematize the Treaty of Trianon and its consequences through the jamboree, and this left a mark in the memory of the Australian scouts even years later. Thus, overall, the cultural diplomacy efforts of the MCSSZ and the state through the jamboree can be considered successful, because the visiting – distant and neutral – contingent gained impressions that preserved positive memories of Hungary. Let the source itself speak for itself:

Document

"HUNGARY AND THE JAMBOREE"



(<https://www.archivnet.hu/sites/default/files/galeriafotok/hungary-and-jamboree/9.png>)



(<https://www.archivnet.hu/sites/default/files/galeriafotok/hungary-and-jamboree/10.png>)

[Go to the gallery page \(/hungary-and-jamboree\)](#)

Hungary and the jamboree

It has been almost three years since the Gödöllő jamboree, and in that time one's impressions of such a hasty trip can easily fade if one does not keep a diary. There are many moments that I have long forgotten, but I have managed to gather as many of my memories as I can briefly tell you. There are two reasons why I am talking about our trip to Hungary. First, since most of us know so little about Hungary and the Hungarians, I need not fear that my recollections may wander. Moreover, I am sure that you have all heard much better accounts than I could give of such well-known places as England, Switzerland, and of course Paris.

Hungary is located at the crossroads of East and West and is well off the tourist trail. Tourism is not encouraged as much as in other European countries, so the country is not a typical destination. Today, Hungary is about a quarter of its pre-war size, and is therefore sometimes called "Chunky Hungary." Despite the way they were treated in the past, the Hungarians did their best to promote peace and goodwill among visiting nations, and they all had the true Scout spirit.

However, the Hungarians have not forgotten the Great War and the injustice done to them. On the surface, these people seem calm and content, but it is not long before their sorrows are revealed to everyone. As an example, I will read you an excerpt from a letter that I received from a Hungarian Scout shortly after the World Scout Meeting. It shows what thoughts are going through the minds of these people. (Letter) [16]

As for me, I am sure that they will not rest until they have regained the territories they once held. At present, with Europe so unstable, they are in a wait-and-see mode, and they are striving to maintain good relations with both Mussolini and Hitler, their two most powerful neighbors. [17]

We left our ship in Naples, and before leaving Venice for Budapest and the jamboree, we spent a week visiting and seeing the major cities of Italy. We left our hotels at dawn, at half past two, and walked across the Grand Canal to the train station. On the way, we passed two lonely people, one a milkman on his morning walk, the other a fruit vendor on his way to the market. At this time of day, the romance leaves the wonderful city of Venice and the smell of gloom takes its place.

Leaving Venice, we traveled to Trieste, near the border, where we were given a cup of coffee and a croissant, which we were led to believe was actually breakfast. Then, changing trains, we fell back into a half-sleep as we sped through Yugoslavia [18].

When we arrived at the Hungarian border at six o'clock in the morning, we were all half asleep, but at Murakeresztúr [19], where the whole village had gathered, we received an enthusiastic welcome. It was a real welcome at its best, with the most beautiful flowers and girls, and plenty of drinks. These few moments of cordial Hungarian hospitality came so unexpectedly to us that every member of the contingent will remember it for years to come. With one exception, because there was one poor couple who only woke up when we had just left the station. [20]

That morning we were able to enjoy the beauties of the Hungarian countryside for the first time. Our train rattled along Lake Balaton (also called the inland sea of Hungary) for more than an hour, and in the fading light of the sun the view of the wide expanse of water between the twinkling trees presented a beautiful sight, which HV Morton [21] could describe much better than I could.

We finally arrived in Budapest at eleven o'clock that evening and that was, except for that one bright spot, [22] the end of our uneventful journey. However, we did accomplish one thing: we had breakfast in Italy, lunch in Yugoslavia and dinner in Hungary. In addition, we had 20 hours of continuous train travel, which we successfully completed in the wooden seats of the third class. By this time everyone would have gone to bed, but unfortunately we did not get a bed that night and, like so many others, we slept on the floor of a school.

Of course, I should mention some of the sights of Budapest here. The best way to get to the city is by steamboat from Vienna on the Danube, which gives us the opportunity to admire the most

beautiful landscapes of the country and the countryside from the riverbank. But we, who are always in a hurry, accidentally chose the second best way and arrived at night. Looking across the Danube to Buda, the Royal Palace, dressed in white lights, and numerous monuments reflected in the rippling reflection of the river, all of this was a sight worth seeing. (Pictures)

I suppose you know that Budapest is actually two cities. On one side is Buda, while on the other is Pest, which were united in 1872. [23] For tourists, the more attractive part is Buda, on the Gellért Hill side, with its old buildings and spas. While the flat and rather indifferent Pest is the center of the country's commercial life. The two cities are connected by several beautiful suspension bridges.

One day during the jamboree was set aside for sightseeing in Budapest. I don't think these trips were very popular, as you had to get up at around 4am and walk to the Gödöllő train station. There everyone was given a small bag of breakfast to eat on the train to Budapest. Usually, after opening the bag, a piece of bread, cheese and sausage came out, and then everything flew out the window untouched. [24] We were happy if we were lucky enough to find a small pear or apple at the bottom of the bag.

We spent most of the day on buses trying to get from one station to the next, and we spent some time at places like Buda Castle and the Parliament. In the meantime, everyone was scribbling notes on scraps of paper that were sure to be lost the next day. The Hungarian Parliament is said to be the second most beautiful after the one in London. Perhaps the charm of these two buildings lies in their location on the waterfront.

It was warm until late in the afternoon, and we were thoroughly enjoying ourselves. We took a steamboat and went down the Danube to Margaret Island. In one direction we saw the modern buildings of a bustling city, the Parliament prominent among them, while on the other side the Castle on the top of Gellért Hill, [25] with two magnificent monuments nearby—the Fisherman's Bastion and the Statue of St. Gellért. These were the same buildings that we had seen illuminated a few days before, but when viewed in daylight they did not seem to have lost any of their evening beauty.

For a while the steamboat journey seemed more interesting than the scenery itself. Steamers passing under bridges have to tilt their funnels to the deck, and this operation was usually left to the last moment. We did not notice this at first, but it caused great excitement among us when it seemed that the funnel would hit the bridge.

Margaret Island is Budapest's outdoor entertainment district. The island – which is several miles long [26] – is actually a large garden, with wide lawns and long promenades. Here and there, there are cafes with tables scattered under the trees where you can sit and listen to the band playing while you sip your Tokaj wine and just think about how beautiful Budapest is. On the island, we visited one of the city's many baths. We could swim in the long pool and also had the opportunity to sit in the smelly, medicinal waters of the adjacent thermal bath. [27]

And now about the jamboree... The morning after our arrival in Budapest we took the train to Gödöllő, which is about 20 miles [28] away. Gödöllő is the summer residence of the Hungarian governor, and the jamboree site was part of the large estate surrounding the royal residence. The park, covered with many oak-like trees and with thick grass, was similar to the scout parks in England, but quite different from our camping grounds at home.

The total area of the jamboree must have been three or four times larger than the Frankston camp. [29] Our camp was a two or three mile walk from the main entrance to the camp. It seemed that all the visiting nations had arrived that morning, but there was no real congestion. We saw only Americans and Hungarians in the camp, the latter having been there for a week. By that afternoon, all 25,000 Scouts had gathered on the parade ground of the camp.

On the way to our campsite, we first passed a multitude of American camps, with two-person brown tents scattered everywhere. But their numbers later seemed insignificant when we reached the Hungarian camps with their cunning gates. We could never discover them all, Hungarian camps and Hungarian scouts everywhere! However, when all the visiting scouts arrived, the number of Hungarian scouts was not overwhelming, by that time they were in the minority.

Before I continue, I would like to read you a paragraph from the *Hungarian Scout*, our camp newspaper, about the American Scouts. I think it will amuse you, because it describes them very well. " *How do Americans fold their dining tables to fit in their bags? How do they carry refrigerators in their backpacks? Do they always sleep on mattresses? These three questions amuse American campers, who want to make it a public record that they do not use tables, refrigerators, and spring mattresses during their camping and hiking trips. The Scouts of the United States are not so soft, and they are just as used to harsh conditions as other Scouts.*" [30]

Well, after two hours of walking, we finally reached our own campsite, where we were confronted with the fact that our equipment sent ahead had not yet arrived. Since we had half an hour left before we were to leave for the opening ceremony, the lodge manager arranged for some lunch to keep our bodies and souls together. He returned with a little bread and some kind of white cream, which later turned out to be goat's curd. We carefully placed the latter on the ground before burying it. We satisfied our hunger with a slice of bread.

After our lunch we marched round and round until we found ourselves at the assembly point where Bi-Pi [31] opened the jamboree. Even in our gloomy mood the sight of 20,000 to 30,000 Scouts

assembled made a great impression on us. In the parade before Bi-Pi and the Governor we marched with the British Scouts and greeted the Chief Scout with a hearty Australian ooeee. There were about three Hungarian Scout bands within earshot, their voices mingling with the battle cries of Huy! Huy! Huyrah! [32] of the Hungarian Scouts lining up, so it was a real art to keep up.

Before the opening ceremony ended with the grand parade, we had to rush back to our campsite to clean it up, set up our tents and prepare the tables in the remaining hour of light. Fortunately, by the time we got back, we had already found our equipment at the camp and had set up camp in record time, so we could also eat the food that had been prepared for us. As soon as we had a proper meal, we were ready to forget about the poor organization and get down to the fun of camping. The first day was the only time the organization was not in order, and I think that was as much the fault of the British contingent as it was the fault of the Hungarians for not taking care of us when we arrived. (Pictures)

The next morning, as on all of them, we were gently awakened by the sounds of Hungarian scout bands. The Hungarians' love of music apparently extends to the scouting movement, every second troop had a brass band, so you can imagine how many bands there were among more than ten thousand scouts, and what kind of noise they could make when they started their practice that day at half past six. The melody and the time didn't really worry them, as any false notes were completely drowned out by the pounding of the bass drum.

During the first few days we were busy setting up a camp that would appeal to visitors. With a few spears, Aboriginal hunting sticks, boomerangs and the Australian flag and Union Jack in the background [33] we managed to build a pretty showy camp entrance. And then the fun began, the jamboree opened to the public and we Australians saw a very different jamboree to the one we had seen in Frankston. Although there were actually more Scout visitors than Hungarian civilian guests (only slightly different from Frankston where the ratio was one in a hundred), we Australians were somewhat the most visible, as we had travelled the furthest of all to get to the world meeting. With the possible exception of the black Jamaicans, our autographs, Ned Kelly [34] signatures etc. were as sought after as anyone else, until the autograph business was completely gone. We didn't really mind if they stopped us for a photo, as we usually had something interesting to do.

We spent most of our time wandering from one camp to another, constantly discovering new camps that we had never known existed, while visitors kept asking us questions. Since there must have been a hundred thousand visitors to the camp every day, we soon figured out that it would be easier to visit other camps ourselves. Staying in our own camp would have meant just showing off the boomerang and stuff, which we knew almost nothing about, but fortunately much more than anyone else.

(When the good-natured Hungarians visited us, they usually read our nameplates and we heard "Oh, Austria." – then a grunt, as if to say, is that all? Then the smartest one took another look at the nameplate and read Australia instead of Austria. Following a few excited Hungarian words, "Sprechen Sie Deutsch?" we replied no, then came "Parlez vous français?" we replied "Non." So they signed and continued on their way, satisfied. [35])

We found the jamboree shopping centre, with over a hundred shops, particularly interesting. They had set up the shops in two groups, and around twenty of them they had built a row of arcades, almost a veranda. We spent a great deal of time there, too much I might say, walking up and down the arcades, and constantly trying to bargain with the shopkeepers, but we never succeeded. They made a huge profit on their prices, and Charlie Fraser [36] could learn a lot from them.

There were usually three large bonfires in the evening, plus concerts and screenings in purpose-built halls. We did a presentation at a single bonfire, which we were told would be broadcast globally. There were about six countries taking part, and each performance was five minutes long. We started with a nice long ooeeee, then the Australian anthem [37] (the only song we had all managed to learn) [38], and ended with a rousing battle cry. There was something wrong with the broadcast, as it turned out the signal didn't get past the campfire amplifiers. [39]

If we ventured to visit a campfire, we would usually hear the guide shouting in Hungarian over the PA system – it wasn't enticing enough to stay long. So a few of us would usually go to an open-air restaurant next to the market, where we were sure we would have a good time.

For us, the biggest attraction of the whole jamboree was when one of the Hungarian groups invited us to dinner and a campfire. [40] I quote again from the camp newspaper: "Last night a small group of Australian scouts visited the campfire of one of the Hungarian scout groups. This of course was the most pleasant evening of the jamboree so far, which is the best form of international brotherhood. They sang, or at least tried to sing, each other's songs, in which the Hungarians achieved greater success than the Aussies [41]. When the Hungarian Scout March was sung to conclude, and the campfire circle broke up, the scouts said good night to each other in seven or eight different languages. At that moment everyone realized again that Scouting as a world-wide brotherhood does indeed exist." [42]

The newspaper did not mention our pre-campfire program. First we played a few games, such as blindfolded hitting each other with a stuffed blanket until someone fell out. After that came the evening meal, where soup was served, although it may have been the meat course itself, in any case a piece of meat was floating in a plateful of sauce. Then we were given sandwiches with garlic, paprika, various spicy sausages and other goodies. Everything was nice, but this was designed for stomachs stronger than

mine. Finally, we finished with cookies and tea, which was very sugary, but flavored with lemon, very pleasant. After the campfire, the entire Hungarian team accompanied us home singing.

Then came the big moment for the Australians at the jamboree, when we performed the Aboriginal [43] corroboree [44] for the first time in Europe. This was the culmination of a lot of hard work during the voyage, as we spent about two hours a day making costumes and learning the various dances and chants. Our performance was very authentic, even though no one had ever seen anything like it before. We painted the parts of our bodies that weren't covered by our black clothes black. We ran around wildly, brandishing real spears, boomerangs and sticks, shouting loudly, making us look quite wild and warlike. It was a good performance and we had a great time. I'm sure the audience enjoyed the performance, even though they wondered if we were really okay. The best part of the program took place backstage when we returned to the camp. The visitors who were passing by our camp watched in amazement as ninety naked boys painted black tried to scrub themselves white. Fortunately, it was getting dark by then. A few days later we were asked to repeat the performance. But they couldn't catch us because we burned our costumes ten minutes after our first performance.

After ten days, the camp came to an end, the first to leave were the Yugoslavs, the Poles and other neighboring nations that did not have particularly friendly relations with Hungary. After two weeks, by the time of the closing ceremony, less than half of the teams remained in the camp. We set off the next day, when only two or three Hungarian camps had said goodbye to us. Thus ended the exhausting two weeks of camping.

The jamboree was over, but our journey had only just begun, for we had travelled to Vienna, the cheerful Vienna, as we had thought, but were disappointed on the first evening. Some of us went out to see the carefree night life we had heard so much about. At about nine o'clock in the evening we found nothing of the sort, so I asked if we were perhaps too early? The prompt reply was that we had arrived too late, everyone had gone to bed. So we contented ourselves with a second-rate cinema, and about eleven o'clock we returned to the hotel, where they charged us the equivalent of sixpence to let us in. After dark every door in the city must be locked. During the day we found the streets full of beggars, and in this respect Vienna was the worst of any European city we had visited. The Austrians are sad about something; I think it is the result of the war. [45] During our visit to Vienna, the only smile I saw was on the face of a waitress, but she could hardly be blamed.

Leaving Vienna, we traveled through Austria to Innsbruck, the Austrian Tyrol, and then to Lucerne in Switzerland. From there we left the beaten track to vacation in the mountains of Kandersteg [46]. Five days of well-deserved rest; five full days for sunbathing or a little climbing. All things considered, I think these were the most perfect days of our trip. Regretful that we had to stop any longer, we hurried to Paris, which was as it should be, having everything that Vienna lacked.

After seeing the sights of Paris, we soon arrived in good old London. What a relief it was to hear people speaking a language we could understand. I must say, it felt as if I had come home. I hardly noticed that I had not yet been to London, as we passed places—St. Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, Big Ben with the London police—that I had only seen in pictures before. During our three weeks in London, we were self-sufficient, even eating out—mostly at the famous Lyons' Corner House [47].

Finally came the grandest march, a comprehensive tour of England, Scotland, and Wales in three weeks. Cathedrals, castles, birthhouses, factories, haylofts, ruined abbeys, churches, and receptions everywhere (as sailors have their daughters in every port, so we had ours at every station). We ate as much as we could, but usually got more. We wanted five meals a day, and that was it. [48]

Traveling on three buses – each with thirty people – no one could expect the large group to remain quiet for long. On bus number 2, the fights were going on in full swing; as we approached a town, we could hear shouts of "Catch him! Tear off his shirt! Take off his pants too!" Then from the bottom of the bus came a muffled roar: "Don't throw him out the window!" Oddly enough, the father of these fights was none other than our professor. It was only then that most of the boys realized what a good man the professor was, who in his calmer moments wrote a few bus songs, battle cries or thematic poems. Here is an example from one of his many works of art:

There was a bus driver named Harry,
 He who often stands guard at the haystack,
 Here's a good picture of Clarrie,
 Whose pants cost a lot,
 But oh, what a sight,
 He got into a fight,
 And he lost it in half an hour.

We returned to London tired, dirty and burnt (it cost about ten pounds to replace the windows and sunshades on the buses). On October 14th we left Tilbury aboard the Orsava, stopping at many places on our way to Australia. As we boarded the ship, our tour was essentially over, and we were excitedly counting down the days until we reached our home ports. On November 20th we arrived in Melbourne, which is without a doubt the best city of all.

This document is marked: AU-SHV. 4th World Jamboree 1933 Hungary. "HUNGARY AND THE JAMBOREE" document from 1936, unknown author. Typewritten copy.

[1] This publication was implemented with the support of the Ministry of Culture and Innovation, National Research Development and Innovation Fund, project number 2024-2.1.1-EKÖP, funded by the University Research Scholarship Program code number EKÖP-24-1.

Special thanks go to Csenge Radicsné Andrásfalvy for her linguistic proofreading of the translation text published here, which includes footnotes and an introduction.

[2] Citation: HU-GVK-CSI-1926. [Gödöllő City Library, Scout Archives] (Box 10) Foreign Office (details). Foreign Office report – Dr. Frigyes Molnár, foreign affairs commissioner, 1926.

[3] On the early foreign affairs activities of the Boy Scout Movement and its participation in the first jamborees, see: LEVENTE VÁRDAI : The foreign affairs activities of Hungarian scouting after the first World War, in the light of the international scout world meetings. Edited by SZILVIA ZÁVODI: *War days VI*. Bp., 2024. 49–57.; The selection of locations for jamborees was always of significance and message value. See: [Sz. N.:] *The Jamboree Story. The full story of the eight World Jamborees of the Boy Scout Movement 1920–1955* . London, 1957. 102.

[4] GERGELY FERENC : Scout World Camp in Hungary (Gödöllő, 1933). *Centuries*, 1981. No. 6. 1218–1243.

[5] *The Jamboree Story* ... 18.39.

[6] Of course, the ethnic distribution of scouts arriving from within a country could have been more complex. Primarily, those arriving from neighboring states – or, as they were called at the time, successor states – could have formed ethnically mixed groups. Thus, Hungarian youth also arrived at the jamboree in the Yugoslav and Czechoslovak contingents.

[7] Edited by KÁLMÁN RADVÁNYI : *Jamboree. Budapest-Gödöllő 1933*. Bp., 1933. 3–5.; Hospitality took many forms during the jamboree. The foreign scouts visiting here also received gifts during their trips to the countryside, see also: LEVENTE VÁRDAI : Miskolc badge from the Gödöllő world scout meeting in Pécs. *Pécsi Dénár*, 2021. 240. no. 6–7.

[8] For the history of Australian Scouting, see: AR MILNE – CB HEWARD : *Those Boy Scouts. A Story of Scouting in Victoria*. Melbourne, 1987.; While the latest Hungarian translation of *Scouting for Boys* is available here: <https://tudastar.cserkesz.hu/documents/81> (<https://tudastar.cserkesz.hu/documents/81>) (Download date: July 18, 2025)

[9] The Australian contingent considered the participation in the jamboree and the long overseas trip a real gift and considered themselves extremely lucky. Some members were still talking about their experiences at the Gödöllő jamboree in the 1970s. See the publication of a group with Israeli ties in Melbourne, four of whose members were also in the Australian contingent, STAN MARKS : *3rd St. Kilda Scout Group. 50 Years of Achievement 1924–1974*. Melbourne, 1974. 26–27.

[10] In the Hungarian and international press, there are mentions of the Australian contingent of between 80 and 90 people. RADVÁNYI: im 18.; For further mentions, see also: RADVÁNYI: im 26., 34., 36., 56., 96. For more on the effects of the Great Depression on Australian Scouting, see: MILNE – HEWARD: im 91–93.

[11] For a detailed presentation of the Scout Heritage Victoria & Archive, see: LEVENTE VÁRDAI : Community Scout Museum in Australia. Introducing the Scout Heritage Victoria & Archives . *Hungarian Museums Online* , April 17, 2025. <https://magyarmuzeumok.hu/cikk/kozossegi-cserkesz-muzeum- ausztraliaban-bemutakozik-a-scout-heritage-victoria-archives> (<https://magyarmuzeumok.hu/cikk/kozossegi-cserkesz-muzeum- ausztraliaban-bemutakozik-a-scout-heritage-victoria-archives>) (Downloaded: July 18, 2025.) Two members of the Australian contingent also made film recordings of the trip to the jamboree, which are stored in the collection under the registration numbers SHV Collection M0260 and M0509. The author of these lines assisted in subtitling and providing information on the digital copies of the videos, but the collection had not yet published them at the time of publication. They are expected to be available on this channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@ScoutsVic/videos> (<https://www.youtube.com/@ScoutsVic/videos>).

[12] AU-SHV. Collection 8844.

[13] A review of the 1935–1936 issues of *The Victorian Scout* reveals that this gathering was not mentioned in the Scout press. This suggests that its organization was limited to a narrow circle.

[14] *The Age* , 1 August 1933, 5; *The Argus* , 29 August 1933, 5; *The Victorian Scout* , 15 December 1933, 107; But the most detailed of all is the more than 100-page travel diary written by JC (Jim) Draper, a member of the contingent, a later edited copy of which is available in the SHV collection, in the box containing the 1933 jamboree materials. The information given here in the source is confirmed by lines from Draper's diary, but the language is different, so that identity of authorship can be excluded.

[15] During the jamboree, the prominent cities of the Hungarian countryside were also presented to the visiting nations. For more on this and the case study of the Pécs trip, see: LEVENTE VÁRDAI : The preparation of the 1933 Scout Jamboree excursion to Pécs based on the sources of the Janus Pannonius Museum. *The Janus Pannonius Museum Yearbook* , 2022. 55. no. 175–182. The so-called uncle assigned to them during the camp, who performed the interpreting duties, was presumably Tamás Jeszenszky. Unfortunately, his report is not preserved in the Hungarian Scout archive. For the reports of the other interpreters, see: HU-GVK-CSI-1933. (Box 135) Interpreter reports.

[16] The letter is missing, but its contents can easily be imagined. Following the jamboree, the MCSSZ encouraged its members to correspond with foreigners, so this could have been a letter from any boy,

not necessarily a central communication. For an example of further correspondence between the two associations, see *The Victorian Scout*, 1 February 1935, 131.

[17] Italy and Hungary were not neighboring states at the time of the jamboree or when the text was drafted.

[18] The state formed in 1918 was known as the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes until 3 October 1929, when the term Kingdom of Yugoslavia became official. However, the name Yugoslavia was widely used in colloquial speech throughout the period.

[19] A border settlement in Zala County on the banks of the Mura River.

[20] When organizing the jamboree, special attention was paid to the elegant reception of the contingents entering the border. This is illustrated by the following quote: "Therefore, it seems to be purposeful that we Hungarians should do everything on our part to make our foreign brothers feel the direct Hungarian love that awaits them everywhere, from the present border of the country to the capital." HU-GVK-CSI-1932. (Box 34) Correspondence of the camp command. Draft letter signed by Pál Teleki and Ferenc Farkas of the World Jamboree Social Committee. December 23, 1932.

[21] H. V. Morton (1892–1979) was an English journalist whose travelogues were popular reading. He became famous in 1923 when he reported on the discovery of the tomb of Pharaoh Tutankhamun as a correspondent for the Daily Express.

[22] Here the author is certainly referring to the border crossing at Murakeresztúr and the ornate greeting.

[23] In fact, Budapest was created by the merger of Buda, Óbuda, and Pest in 1873.

[24] This was due to cultural differences, as young Australians were not used to this type of breakfast.

[25] Although the two locations mentioned are close to each other, the author is not precise here. The Buda Castle Palace – referred to as "the castle" – is located on Castle Hill in Buda.

[26] This is a fair estimate, as the island is 2.5 kilometres long and 0.5 kilometres wide. The English mile – also used by Australians – is approximately 1609 metres.

[27] This is probably the National Sports Swimming Pool (now: Alfréd Hajós National Sports Swimming Pool) and the pools of the Szent Lukács Spa.

[28] The author's estimate is correct: 20 miles is roughly 32 kilometers – Gödöllő is located 30 kilometers from Budapest.

[29] The SHV collection contains two archival document boxes containing a variety of sources regarding the event. Frankston, located near Melbourne, hosted an international jamboree in 1935, which was also reported in the Hungarian (Scout) press, as the then co-president and head of foreign affairs of the MCSZS – the aforementioned – Frigyes Molnár traveled with another scout (Károly Haraszty). They formed the Hungarian contingent in the world's first jamboree camp outside Europe, which was called the Pacific-Jamboree because of the geographical area. The program report also published the kangaroo logo of the event. *Magyar Cserkész*, December 1, 1934. 25.; *Magyar Cserkész*, February 15, 1935. 7. and *Magyar Cserkész*, March 1, 1935. 10.

[30] The *Hungarian Scout Association* operated as the official monthly magazine of the Hungarian Scout Association from 1920 onwards. During the World Scout Meeting in Gödöllő, a daily jamboree special issue was published. The article quoted verbatim can be read in English here: *Jamboree Hungarian Scout Association*, August 7, 1933. 4.

[31] Lord Baden-Powell (1857–1941) was the founder of the youth movement. In Scouting circles he is simply referred to as Bi-Pi (BP).

[32] This battle cry probably sounded like this in Hungarian: Huj! Huj! Hajrá! It is still a common practice to shout this among Hungarian scouts at home and abroad. <https://kmcssz.org/csatakialtasok/> (<https://kmcssz.org/csatakialtasok/>). (Download date: July 18, 2025)

[33] The flag of the United Kingdom is known worldwide, having reached its current form in 1801. It was also used in the British Commonwealth.

[34] Ned Kelly (1854–1880) was Australia's most notorious outlaw, whose respect and memory are comparable to those of native outlaws.

[35] In the original text, the German and French parts are written as follows: "Sprechen si Deutsch?" and "Parlez-vous Français?"

[36] During my research, I was unable to find any information on the identity of the person mentioned.

[37] The official anthem of Australia was God Save the Queen, the national anthem of the United Kingdom, until 1984. Advance Australia Fair, Waltzing Matilda and The Song of Australia have previously been sung as unofficial (and since 1984 official) national anthems.

[38] The author is probably just joking here.

[39] For the radio broadcast to overseas countries, see: *Jamboree Hungarian Scouts*, August 5, 1933. 7.

[40] This joint Australian-Hungarian dinner and campfire was also commemorated in English in the camp newspaper: *Jamboree Magyar Cserkész*, 4 August 1933. 15.

[41] A common affectionate term for Australians.

[42] See the quoted newspaper excerpt in English: *Jamboree Magyar Cserkész*, August 15, 1933. 11.

[43] The contemporary name for the Australian Aborigines, which is still used today. Interestingly, however, in the last few years it has begun to be replaced by the term "First Nations people(s)", which is intended to more thoroughly acknowledge the diverse culture of the Aborigines. Although this source statement focuses primarily on presenting the cultural diplomacy efforts of the Hungarians, it also reveals the activities of the Australians in this direction. For example, the boomerang is still present in our public consciousness as a symbol of the continent and, among other things, it was also displayed at the 1933 jamboree.

[44] Corroboree is a general term used for gatherings of Aboriginal Australians. Corroboree are often religious ceremonies or celebrations accompanied by music and dance.

[45] The economic crisis and the Dollfuss regime may have been behind this – something that an Australian "glasses" might not have noticed.

[46] The Swiss town has been home to the Kanderstef International Scout Centre since 1923.

[47] A London restaurant chain, also known for its Art Deco style, which awaited hungry guests at busy intersections of the city between 1909 and 1977. For more information, see: <https://flashbak.com/the-rise-and-fall-of-the-lyons-cornerhouses-and-their-nippy-waitresses-35186/> (<https://flashbak.com/the-rise-and-fall-of-the-lyons-cornerhouses-and-their-nippy-waitresses-35186/>). (Downloaded on 18 July 2025)

[48] Having returned to the Anglo-Saxon world, the Australian contingent was once again faced with a familiar diet.

Keywords

[Hungary \(/cimkek/magyarorszag\)](#). [Australia \(/cimkek/ausztralia\)](#). [scouting \(/cimkek/cserkeszet\)](#). [world jamboree \(/cimkek/vilagjamboree\)](#). [Godollo \(/cimkek/godollo\)](#). [recollection \(/cimkek/visszaemlekezés\)](#).