

XVIth Károly Széchy Memorial Session and XIXth Geotechnical Evening Forum

The Hungarian National Committee of the International Society for Soil Mechanics and Geotechnical Engineering (ISSMGE) jointly with the Geotechnical Section of the Hungarian Chamber of Engineers (MMK) organized the XVIth Károly Széchy Memorial Session on 12th February, 2010 at the Great Hall of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, with over 250 persons attending the event.



This series of festive gatherings has been highlighted from the beginnings by lectures delivered by the most illustrious professors paying tribute to the memory of the Hungarian professor, Károly Széchy. This year, the guest speaker from abroad was Professor William Van Impe (Ghent, Belgium), president of ISSMGE from 2001 to 2005, and currently president of the International Association of Geoengineering Societies (FIGS).

A speaker from home was dr. Erno Biczók, invited professor at the Budapest University of Technology, formerly for 20 years head of the Geotechnical Laboratory at the same University, later technical director of the GTU Engineering Bureau in Hannover, Germany.

Traditionally, a young engineer who excelled himself as the best junior speaker at the annual national geotechnical conference at Ráckeve is offered an opportunity to introduce himself by a lecture at the memorial session. This year the candidate was Zoltán Káposztás from Geoplan Ltd.

William Van Impe (Belgium, president of FIGS): Analysis of observations and experience on underwater dam construction on soft subsoil.

Zoltán Káposztás (Geoplan Ltd.): An evaluation of numerous static pile loading tests from recent motorway construction in Hungary.

Erno Biczók (GTU Hannover): Reinforcement and heightening of coastal flood control dams in Northern Germany.

The two main lectures addressed the intriguing topic of underwater construction of dams and reinforcement of flood defence dams. This topic is of particularly high importance in Hungary. This country has very special hydrogeological conditions due to its being situated in the Carpathian basin, which is one of the most confined basins of the Earth, with inadequate drainage and thus exposure to ever present flood hazards hydraulic engineers have to be faced with.

Following the traditions, the Károly Széchy memorial plaque and prize was awarded, this year to Dr Béla Balázsy. Professor Dr Márta Doležalová, director of Dolexpert-Geotechnika, Pague, was awarded the honorary Károly Széchy prize.



In the photo from left to right:

Dr. József Mecsi, president of Geotechnical Section of MMK, president of National Committee of ISSMGE, Dr. Béla Balázsy, Károly Széchy prize winner, Dr. Márta Doležalová, decorated with honorary Károly Széchy prize, Mrs Barsi Etelka Pataky, president of MMK, István Lazányi, honorary president of Geotechnical Section of MMK.

The professional events were concluded by a casual dinner, organized for the 19th time, with more than 200 participants having a good time together in very friendly atmosphere. Toasts and telling joyful stories by the decorated persons and the main speakers added to the high spirits of the evening.

It was very gratifying to see the crowd of young geotechnical engineers attending the prestigious events.



J. Mecsi (ISSMGE HNC)

Széchy Memorial Lecturers in the past:

- 1994 Fazakas György (Budapest), Mistéth Endre (Budapest),
Varga László (Gyor), Heinz Brandl (Wien), Farkas József (Budapest)
- 1996 Kovári Kálmán (Zürich)
- 1997 Varga László (Gyor), Lazányi István (Budapest)
- 1998 Heinz Duddeck (Braunschweig), Greschik Gyula (Budapest)
- 1999 Ulrich Smoltczyk (Stuttgart), Scharle Péter (Budapest)
- 2000 Dulácska Endre (Budapest), Marta Doležalová (Praha)
- 2001 Robert Mair (Cambridge), Müller Miklós (Budapest)
- 2002 Michele Jamiolkowski (Torino), Nagy János (Budapest)
- 2003 Jubilee memorial lecture (BME-MTA) James K. Mitchell (Blacksburg, VA)
Mecsi József (Budapest), Posgay György (Budapest), Träger Herbert (Budapest)
- 2004 Suzanne Lacasse (Oslo), Szepesházi Róbert (Gyor)
- 2005 Lothar Martak (Wien), Szabó Imre (Miskolc)
- 2006 Seco e Pinto (Lisboa), Szilvágyi Imre és Szilvágyi László (Budapest)
- 2007 Serge Varaksin (Párizs), Klados Gusztáv (Budapest and Kuala Lumpur)
- 2008 Roger Frank (Párizs), Soós Gábor (Budapest)
- 2009 Rudolf Katzenback Juhász József (Miskolc)

KÁROLY SZÉCHY

- 1903 born in Budapest on 27th December as the son of Ilona Zwerencz and Károly Széchy, MSc in Civ. Eng. chief inspector at the Hungarian Railway
- 1922 graduation at the High School Árpád in Budapest
- 1926 MSc Degree in Civil Engineering at the Technical University József Nádor in Budapest
- 1926–27 Assistant Professor at the Water Resources Department of the same University
- 1927–28 scholar at the University College London 1928–32 private engineer, construction manager
- 1930 married, wife Margit Kókai, son Dénes (1930)
- MSc in Civ. Eng. and daughter Edit (1932) pharmacist 1932–45 various posts at the Bridge Department in the Hungarian Ministry for Transport
- 1933 PhD in Law
- 1935–37 management of the widening of the Margaret-Bridge
- 1937–39 in charge of the functional and preliminary planning of the Árpád-Bridge
- 1938 supervisor for the modernizing of the Ferenc József-Bridge (today Liberty-Bridge)
- 1939–43 management the construction of the Árpád-Bridge
- 1944 PhD in Engineering
- 1945–51 Head of the Bridge Department in the Hungarian Ministry for Transport, administrative leader for the reconstruction of bridges destroyed in WWII
- 1945–46 leader of the planning and construction of the Kossuth-Bridge demolished in 1960
- 1945–47 leader of the temporary and the final reconstruction of the Ferenc József-Bridge
- 1945–48 leader of the reconstruction of the Margaret-Bridge
- 1946 Officer's Cross of the Republic award
- 1947–49 leader of the reconstruction of the Chain-Bridge
- 1948 Golden Grade Kossuth-Prize award
- 1948 Honorary Professor at the Technical University of Budapest
- 1948–50 supervisor at the construction of the Árpád-Bridge
- 1949 started the lectures on foundation engineering at the TU Budapest
- 1950 Technical Fellowship of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences
- 1950–53 general director for the Underground Railway Development Co. in Budapest, leader of the planning and construction of the Metro
- 1952 Corresponding Member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences
- 1952 published the first edition of the book Foundation Engineering volume I and II in Hungarian
- 1952 Outstanding Worker of Transportation award
- 1953–54 director of the Underground Railway Construction Co. in Budapest
- 1953 ordinary professor of foundation engineering and tunnelling at the Technical University in Budapest
- 1956–57 head of the technical board at the Ministry of Transport and Communication
- 1958 published the first edition of the book Foundation Failures in Hungarian
- 1958 visiting Professor in Egypt for two months
- 1959–60 contribution to the planning of the reconstruction of the Elisabeth-Bridge
- 1961 published the first edition of the book Tunnelling in Hungarian
- 1964 visiting professor in Egypt for two months
- 1965 research assignment at National Research Council, Ottawa, Canada
- 1966 Outstanding Worker in Higher Education award
- 1966 awarded the honorary degree of the Technical University of Helsinki
- 1968 invited lecturer in Canada
- 1970 Full member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences
- 1970 Pro Urbe award, by the Municipality of Metropolitan Budapest, for his dedication to the reconstruction of bridges and the establishment of the underground railway in Budapest
- 1970 awarded with honorary degree at the Technical University of Wroclaw
- 1972 died on 22th May in Budapest

