

# A Happy Reunion After 52 Years

By Emmerich Koller

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Back in the first half of the 1950's, Alexander Ban Korsos, the director of the village school of Pernau, a.k.a. Pornóapáti, started a music band, thus giving the more musically talented of his pupils an opportunity to show off and expand their musical skills. In no time, the little group of nine pupils made such fine music that its reputation traveled beyond Pernau and was invited to perform in neighboring villages and even Szombarthely, a.k.a. Steinamanger, where it won first prize in a young musicians' competition. The bands repertoire consisted of local, mostly German, folksongs and some fancier tunes from operettas. By the spring of 1956, arrangements were being made for a brief tour to Austria, an exceptionally generous concession on the part of communist Hungary of that time. The pictures for the passports and promotion were ready, visas were being processed, *Die blaue Donau* by Johann Strauß Jr. was being practiced weekly. Then suddenly it all came to naught. The revolution broke out in October of that year and by November 4 half of the band members, including Ban Korsos, were gone. They and their families fled across the Iron Curtain. The band ceased to exist.

Fifty-two years went by before the band members saw each other again. It happened last summer, on July 12, at the exquisitely appointed Alpesi Fogadó és Borház located between Vaskeresztes/Großdorf and Csatár/Schilding. After an unforgettable reunion and a delicious dinner such as we couldn't even have dreamed of 52 years ago in communist Hungary, the owners Erzsi and Zoltán Heinisch invited us all to continue our celebration with music and singing at their beautiful villa in the vineyards of Csatár. It was a perfect reunion on a beautiful summer day that will never be forgotten.

The reunion was attended by all the former band members except Pfliegler Gusti who is no longer with us and Schmied/Hanzel Zsuzsi who couldn't make it. A number of guests and family members contributed to the celebration, most importantly the organizers Franz Schmalzl of Viehhofen, Salzburg, and Mitzi Perlaki of Pernau.



1956 picture from left to right: (sitting) Pfliegler Gusti, Molnár Erzsi, Schmalzl Laci, Schmied Zsuzsi, Gober Jancsi; (standing) Koller Imre, a.k.a. Emmerich, Sásdi Pista, Teacher Bán Korsos Sándor, Mátyás Erzsi, Bruckner Georg



2008 reunion picture: (sitting) Molnár Erzsi – now Mrs. Zoltán Heinisch, Schmalzl Laci, Gober Jancsi; (standing) Koller Imre/Emmerich, Sásdi Pista, Teacher Bán Korsos Sándor, Mátyás Erzsi – now Mrs. Emil Horváth, Bruckner Georg

