

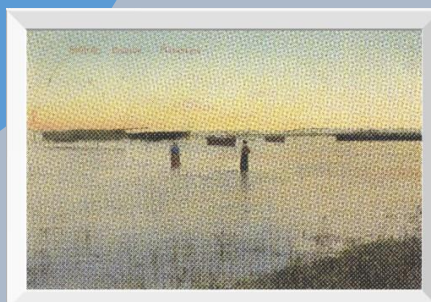
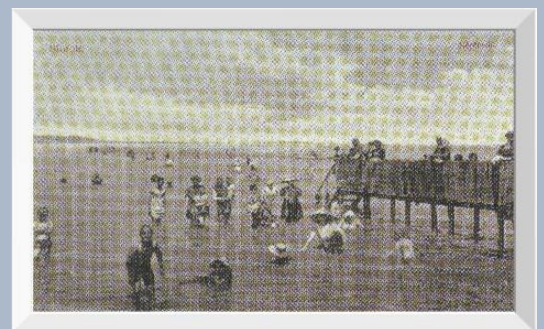
A BEACH-TOWN IS BORN

Although Siófok had been inhabited since prehistoric times, it was not a really significant settlement, despite the Sió Canal, which already existed in Roman times, and the fort that was located here in Turkish times. For centuries, the slightly higher elevation on which the people of today's village lived was surrounded by a wet, marshy, waterlogged area. In the middle of the 18th century, the landowners took advantage of the flow of the Sió River and lined its banks with mills; it was only after these were demolished that the border took on its present form. Its territory was small, but the people of Siófok also had land on the other side of the Sió, in the Kiliti border area, especially vineyards. Their cemetery was also there, where they buried their dead until the 1950s.

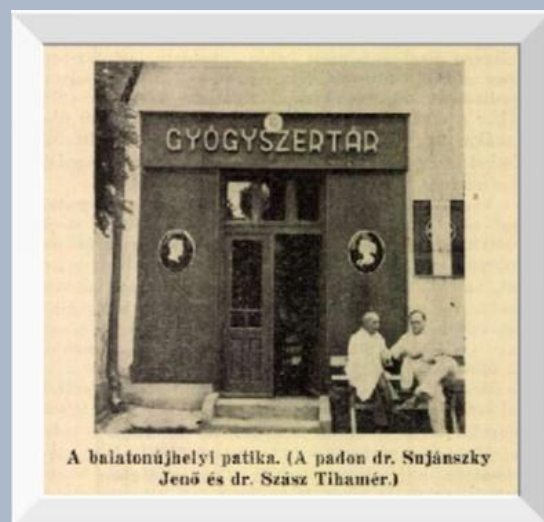


In 1863, the flood gate was built and the railway station was also completed, from then on Siófok became the "gateway to the paradise of sour water". Gyula Mészöly recalled the summer of 1863 as follows: "At that time, there was no beach life on Lake Balaton yet, only a few of us, the worshipers of Lake Balaton, kept tents made of reed on its shores, and later cabins built on piles in the water."

In the middle of the 19th century, the waves of Lake Balaton still washed the shore on the territory of the Siófok. The village had a small border, and its inhabitants were engaged in fishing in addition to agriculture. Such conditions prevailed on the southern shore, the people of the villages lived further away from the lake, the shore was uninhabited, with a „csárda” building here and there. As we can learn from the descriptions of contemporaries, the population - already in the 1850s - went down to the lake in carriages in the warm summer, primarily after harvesting and threshing, and bathed merrily, not so much for refreshment as for hygiene.

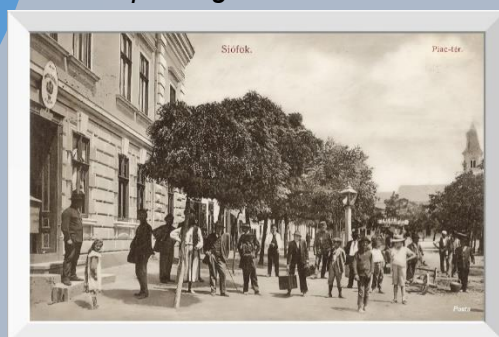


In 1865, the village with 1500 inhabitants was granted permission to hold a national fair. Its character as a commercial center is also well illustrated by the fact that by the turn of the century the proportion of the Jewish population had reached 23%, while in Kiliti the advance of the proportion of Protestants was observed. The modernly built estate of the Veszprém Chapter lay mostly in the Kiliti border area, so Siófok could start its urbanization more freely. In 1876, the industrial structure reflected the needs of the village: the most numerous were shoemakers, bootmakers, tailors and weavers. In Kiliti, a mechanic was recorded, and here we can also find a cooper, a carpenter, a wheelwright, and even a bricklaying contractor. In the food industry, a butcher, a baker and a miller worked. In addition to a steam mill, a dry mill was also recorded in Siófok. The catering industry deserves special attention, which included pubs, csárdás and guesthouses. At the end of the 19th century, there were already 41 shops in Siófok. These included a flour dealer, a salt dealer, a commission agent, a wine and a grain merchant. There was also a general store and a haberdasher in the village. In the 1870s, 21 types of industrial crafts were practiced in Siófok and 17 in Kiliti. In 1870, the establishment of a pharmacy was also authorized in Siófok.



One of the measures of culture is the ability to read and write. In Siófok, 59% of the population could read and write, which was a good proportion even on a national level. Siófok had a Singing Society, a Self-Help Association, a General Industrial Association and the Balaton-vidéki Takarékpénztár (Savings Bank). The large municipality had a railway station, a boat station, a telegraph station and a post office, and its character as a spa was particularly emphasized.

In 1882, both Kiliti and Siófok were large municipalities with their own clerk's offices. Their religious composition was more diverse. The majority a Roman Catholics, in Kiliti the Protestants, in Siófok the proportion of Israelites was remarkable. In the 1900s, there were about 140 Jews living in Siófok, and 506 in 1941. At that time, 10% of the population was of the Israelite religion. Most of the members of the community had so-called small businesses. There were also wholesalers, well-paid lawyers, doctors and guesthouse owners, such as the Hirschs, Rabins, Freuds, Braumanns, Gombos, Brück, Radó, Dr. Béla Hegedűs, Dr. Benő Pick, Dr. Dezső Kertész and Dr. Emil Friss. The latter, an exceptionally talented man who also worked as a lawyer, published the first local newspaper called Siófok és Vidéke (Siófok and its Countryside) on July 20, 1924. The establishment of the first printing house in Siófok in 1905 had a great influence on the development of cultural life from the turn of the century. It was not a large printing house, but it satisfied local needs, and the first owner of the printing house was Lipót Weisz. Several weekly newspapers were also printed in the printing house: the Balatonpart (Magyar Tenger) weekly from July 28, 1907; the Balatonvidék weekly from May 31, 1908; and the Magyar Tenger weekly. In 1915, a much more modest printing house was also established in Siófok (Károly Singer's), which existed until 1944.



POST

In the 1900s, agriculture had already receded into the background in the settlement, and an increasing proportion of the population worked in industry and trade. The proportion of people working in transport also increased in 1900 and 1910, while that of day laborers decreased. Siófok was "more urban", while Kiliti, which was not considered a Lake Balaton resort, had a more rural character. The external appearance of the two villages changed by the end of the century. They have a railway station, a post office and a telegraph office. A separate bathing resort called Vilma-telep was established on the outskirts of Kiliti.



Országos Földművelésügyi Minisztérium Ingatlanforgalmazó Iroda SOMORH JENO Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	Sándor Miklós Ingatlanforgalmazó Iroda Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	Grand Hotel-Pensió Dombay Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	Áll. polgári fia- és leányiskola Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	Grand Hotel „FOGAS” szálloda Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	Szűcs Menyhért Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	Balog Gyula Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.
GROSZ ISTVÁN Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	Kolcsy Ferenc „Széchenyi” gépjármű Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	Osváld István Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	Weitzelbaum Gyula Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	„Zemlér” turizmus-iroda Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	Farkas Sándor Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	Langmájer Ferenc Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.
Balaton-szálloda Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	SOMORH JENO és TÁRSASÁG Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	Hozbor-vendéglő és étterem Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	Stefánia-Pensió Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	Földvár Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	SZABÓ ANTAL Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	„Hirsch” szálloda Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.
HIRSCH JÓZSEF Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	KREMSIER BELA Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	Grosz Sándor Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	Herskovits és Winger Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	Nefczár Aladár Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	Siófok pályaudvar-étterem Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	Jakabfy István Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.
Maurer József vendéglője Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	Balaton Halászi R-T. Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	Siófok Földművelésügyi Iroda Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	Nemes Vilmos Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	L.R. U. Sz. Rt. Jachtépítő üzem Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	Pónsz Antal Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	Siófok Strandfürdője Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.
Rózsás Imre Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	Erőss Lajos Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	HUNGÁRIA MOZGÓ KERTMOZGÓ Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	LÖVY ARMIN Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	Nádas Miksa Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	RESZVENYSOR Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.	„Hirsch” szálloda Budapest, Széchenyi u. 12.

By 1910, a slight decline in trade could be observed in Siófok, due to the increase in railway traffic diverted to Dombóvár. Between 1911 and 1913, electricity was introduced, sewers were built, a water pipe was built, and the sidewalk on the main street was paved. The joint-stock company that managed the spa in Siófok made serious investments, which made it the first resort of Lake Balaton for Budapest residents. The serf village began to develop into a bathing resort.

INTERESTING FACTS FROM THE HISTORY OF THE CITY

THE SETTLEMENT DEVELOPED WITH ITS MARKET

Siófok received the title of market town in 1865, and life in the center perked up due to the market holding rights. The market square was formed next to the Catholic church. On the day of the first national fair, March 26. 1865, a grand celebration was held; "ten barrels of wine were poured down from a high stand in the market square, and a thousand rolls were distributed to the people".

According to the civil registry data, the following families lived in Siófok in the 17-18th centuries: Ángyán, Balika, Bencsik, Biró, Bognár, Borbély, Borsos, Csepeli, Domokos, Erdős, Fehér, Forgács, Gaál, Gáspár, Gulás, Gyömerei, Hegedűs, Horváth, Illés, Karikó, Kálmán, Kele, Kelfel, Kerti, Kéri, Kiss, Kovács, Koszöghi, Látrányi, Miskei, Molnár, Nagy, Németh, Pap, Palenta, Pintér, Saári, Soós, Szabó, Szalai, Szapanyos, Szekeres, Szücs, Takács, Tímár, Tollinger, Tóth, Varga, Vella and Zinka. An 1871 law regulated the status of localities. The leadership of Siófok consisted of the judge and his deputy, at least four councilors, a treasurer, a municipal clerk, a public guardian and a municipal doctor. By this time, development had started, the settlement attracted craftsmen and merchants, and those led by the Jews built a row of shops around the square.



In 1878, local resident Katalin Tóth erected a cross in the market square. It first stood on the site of the World War I memorial, later it was placed in front of the Sió Department Store facing the Sió Canal. In 1967 it was moved to the church garden. According to popular saying, "this cross had no peace anywhere", because it was always being carried.

THE STUMPF FAMILY



In the square in front of the house was the poultry and vegetable market, next to it the Kardos inn. The Baroque Catholic church was consecrated on July 2, 1737, on the feast of Visitation of Mary. In the neighborhood, farmers from the surrounding area gathered at weekly fairs, selling various products, firewood and pigs from horse-drawn carriages. The market became increasingly lively, its turnover increased, and it happened that a ship on the Sió brought up 400-500 barrels of Szekszárd wine.

GIZELLA OR ATRIUM

The shops of the town were located in the buildings surrounding the market square in the center of Siófok. The Gizella Courtyard - on the site of which the Atrium Shopping Center was built in 1991-92 - was raised in 1905 and was named after the wife of the owner, Lajos Kis. Previously, there was a thatched house with eaves that reached the ground, and Jewish peddlers sold goods there; Singer, for example, sold lime, and Löeinger sold sugar.

In the Gizella Courtyard, there were also shops lined up below; these often changed hands. There was the widow of Gyula Spitzer's women's needlework and glove shop, and after 1914 János Mező became the owner of the corner shop, a spice and delicatessen shop.



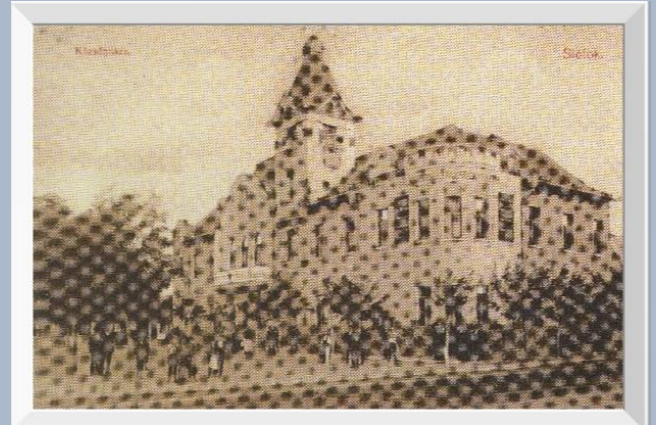
The ground floor also housed the general store of János Erdős, the electrical company of Simon Szalai, the flour shop of János Molnár, the tailoring shop of Miksa Büchler and the hairdressing salon of Alajos Bruckner. According to research by József Sebestyén Matyikó, Gyula Balázsovič, a photographer, previously worked in a tent on the edge of the market square, who placed those who wanted to be photographed behind a plank with the inscription Siófok. This is how the "Siófok souvenir" was created.

The upper floor of the building had 28 rooms. The Gizella Courtyard was demolished in the year Siófok became a city, and a car park was built in its place. The Atrium Shopping Center was built in 1991-92. Its exterior evokes the shape of the Gizella Courtyard.



A CONFECTIONERY IN PLACE OF THE TOWN HALL

The former town hall could be one of the most beautiful buildings in Siófok, if it had not been demolished in 1955. According to local memory, the leaders of the settlement always worked there, at first in a thatched house, but the decision-makers of the time did not complain about this, of course, since many of them were farmers. They were also interested in the development of tourism, so that they could sell the products of their land. In 1900, the town hall was built in the Transylvanian style, and the Balatonvidéki Takarékpénztár (Savings Bank) was also located in this building.



This style was fashionable at the time. After the Treaty of Trianon, many streets in Siófok were named after cities in the lost part of the country. In 1947, the first tourist office in the country was also established in this building. In the first year, one thousand forints were provided for the promotion of the settlement, where at that time fifteen guesthouses and twenty-four "modern workers' resorts" welcomed the guests. Moreover, texts written in ink were put on the corridors of the town hall, which the people waiting for the administration could read to learn about the history of the settlement. There were also paintings hanging on the walls, which presented the former leaders of Siófok, the judges in chronological order (these have disappeared completely). The town hall was demolished in 1955, because it allegedly sank. The leaders first found accommodation opposite the church, then in the current MOL - Hungarian Oil and Gas - building, until the "modern" town hall was built. Since then, catering establishments have been operating in the place of the old town hall; first the Pannónia company's Balaton confectionery, then the Bella Itália Restaurant, owned by an Italian owner after privatization.



Later it was
renamed Magyar
Korona Szálló
(Hungarian Crown
Hotel).

Distinguished
personalities also
lived there.

FROM CONFECTIONERY TO LAND REGISTRY OFFICE

Today, the building of the Land Registry Office stands there, where you can climb up the stairs to the railway overpass. With the help of local historian József Matyikó Sebestyén, it was possible to find out that the building on the corner was built in 1869 by master confectioner Mátyás Wesely, who also had a shop in Budapest. There was a confectionery on the ground floor, with a large terrace overlooking the promenade. The house was stylishly called the Mignon Hotel. There were ten rooms for rent on the upper floor.

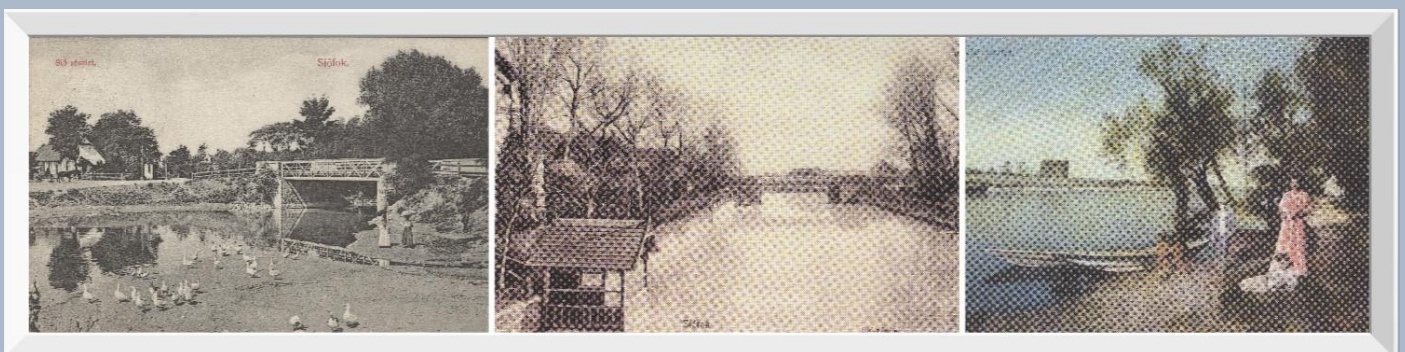


The chestnut trees lined the promenade next to the railway track, which became a popular strolling place for holidaymakers. The world-famous operetta composer Imre Kálmán was born in the building next to the hotel, and a renowned theater operated one house away, whose performances attracted the audience. After the Second World War, after the nationalization, the former hotel building was moved to MAORT, the predecessor of the oil company. Later, the city library was moved here in a adventurous way. It was regularly visited by famous people, including painter Vladimír Szabó and writer Ferenc Karinthy. After the reconstruction, the children's library remained on the ground floor; on the first floor, the offices of ÁFÉSZ - General Consumption and Sales Cooperative - were first located, now the land registry office is located here.

SIÓ: SEPARATED LIFE FROM DEATH

The Sió Canal is a symbol of Siófok's existence. The Fuk stream flowing out of the lake is also mentioned in the oldest Hungarian language monument, the Founding Letter of Tihany written in 1055. Military barges sailed on the small river, cargo ships transported red wine from Szekszárd, and the water of the river drove mills. The Sió Canal separated life from death. Also in the sense that the settlement was once in Veszprém County, and its cemetery was in Somogy County. The saying goes that a person from Siófok is born in Veszprém, looks at Zala and is buried in Somogy. It separated life from death in such a way that during the wars the front line usually froze along the canal, and bloody battles were fought for the crossing. In peacetime, the wealthier inhabitants of the settlement liked to build on the banks of the canal. The Balla guesthouse stood on the left side of the canal, which only received guests in the summer. A staircase led down to the water, and from the pier small boats took the guests on boat trips or fishing. In connection with the Sió Canal, it has been raised several times that it should be used for the benefit of the city and tourism, among other things, the canal can also be used as a boating lake, and tourists could have fun in the music-filled guesthouses on its banks. Another idea is that it could be a paradise for motorboaters and jet skiers banned from Lake Balaton.

SAINT JOHN DID NOT WATCH OVER THE BRIDGE



There has been a crossing point at the mouth of the Sió for as long as anyone can remember. According to a document from 1055, the bed of the water flowing out of Lake Balaton was often so clogged with sediment that it made it possible to cross. When the water level was low, the horses' eyes were blindfolded so that they could dare to cross to the other side. Mátyás Bél wrote in 1731: "There is only plenty of water in the Sió when the lake is full, otherwise it is easy to cross, and it often dries up completely. To prevent this from happening, Somogy and Veszprém counties had several thousand people dig and deepen the estuary for eight days, but the work was destroyed in a single night by the waves raised by the north wind." József Sebestyén Matyikó recalled that those who crossed the bridge had to pay a toll; at first it was 10% of the product, later the toll was fixed in money. Others also "collected" money on the bridge, which was also a county border. The anecdote is related to József Sobs, known as Cini, who was a porter. He had to face great competition, so he undertook to transport luggage for a few pennies. However, when he reached the middle of the bridge, he put down the wheelbarrow and asked for a penny. When the guest was indignant, he replied: "different county, different tariff"... Until 1893, the two banks of the Sió were connected by a wooden bridge. However, as traffic on it became life-threatening, a competition was announced for its construction. Finally, the authorities commissioned Ferenc Say, an architect from Székesfehérvár, who had a villa in Siófok. During the works, the traffic was diverted to a pontoon bridge. The statue of St. John of Nepomuk stood at the bridge from the 1700s to the end of World War II, just like at every major bridge in the territory of the monarchy. However, he could not help the one in Siófok: it was blown up, the force of which swept the roofs of the houses down to the water tower. After the war, a pontoon bridge stood in its place for a while, then the present bridge was built, and it was modified several times over the years.

THE BALATON POWDER

"Also noteworthy is the Balaton powder available in the Siófok area, which is similar to the sand that the Mediterranean Sea washes ashore at Messina and Genoa, the Ocean at the Canary Islands, and the Indian Ocean at Coromandel; its components are porphyry, iron particles, and even precious stones, such as ruby, topaz, amethyst, garnet, etc. particles - and it is becoming more and more famous under the name of Balaton powder and is already in trade." "From the early Middle Ages to the end of the 18th century, powder was used to dry ink. The powder spreader was a small container, similar to our salt or sugar shaker, into which a fine powder made of various materials was placed, and with which the wet writing was sprinkled. The powder was most often sieved from sandstone debris, or yellow sand was used for this purpose. Gold and silver colored powder was made from various glitter powders, or the sand was mixed with gold leaf. The powder, like the inkwell, could be a decorative object."



JEWELRY FROM THE WATER OF LAKE BALATON

"The Hungarian Sea, Lake Balaton, is not only a treasure for us as a god-given water and resort, and not only because of its magnificent catches. A new patent, which is now being sold on a large scale in Siófok, has also brought us a treasure of international importance. Namely, the scales of the Balaton bleak are used to make the famous old "oriental essence", which has been known to goldsmiths for three hundred years, but never, anywhere, has it been possible to make such a pearly extract from these scales as here at Lake Balaton. This essence is then used to produce the Thekla pearl, which in its perfection is unmatched by any other artificial pearl. Today we already have a large export of this artificial pearl. Our first picture shows the scaling of the bleak, and our second picture shows some examples of the Thekla jewelry made in this way."



ASSOCIATIONS



— A siófoki ipartestület alakulási ügye. Horváth János siófoki érdemes iparos kezdeményezésére Siófokon ipartestület van alakulóban. Ez irányú kérvényét már régebben be is adta a helybeli iparosság. A győri kereskedelmi és iparkamara azonban, hova a kérvény felterjesztve lett, a járási főszolgabíró útján arról értesítette a folyamodókat, hogy Siófokon száz bejelentett ipart üző nem lévén, ipartestület e miatt nem alakítható.

Hogy az ipari és kereskedelmi életre nézve annyira szükséges ipartestület Siófok iparosainak kebeléből megalakítható legyen, Horváth János az iparosok választott elnöke, a 13 tagú választmányt 1. hó 28-án, Fodor Ignác vendéglőjében este 8 órakor tartandó értekezletre hívja meg.

Ezen értekezlet tárgyai: 1. Az iparkamara leiratának megbeszélése. 2. A vasvármí ker. betegsegélyező pénztár felemelt díjainak tárgyalása. Betegsegélyezői ügyben 2 kiküldött tag választása.

Forrás: Magyar Tenger, 1907

In addition to the educational, family and guild-based cultural activities, the associations played a significant role, including the Siófok Industrial Association, founded in 1872, which developed into the Chamber of Crafts in 1909.

The memory of the specialized sections within the Chamber of Crafts still lived on in the 1940s, referring to the shoemaker, saddler, carpenter and weaver guilds. The Chamber of Crafts established a number of cultural institutions. One example was the Siófok Choir, which was founded in 1876, before the Chamber of Crafts was established.

CHOIR

The Industrial Association also had a reading circle. The Siófok Industrial Workers' Reading Circle was founded on April 8, 1894. According to its bylaws, the purpose of the circle was: "To provide members with suitable reading material, to develop social life, and to promote national and local interests."

Master shoemaker János Horváth played a prominent role in the establishment of the Chamber of Crafts. He was friends with Ferenc Kossuth, the Minister of Trade. The only authentic document that remains from the foundation is a letter that Kossuth wrote to János Horváth: "Dear Friend! Further to my previous notifications, I inform you that the establishment of the Siófok Chamber of Crafts has been authorized and the bylaws have been simultaneously approved under number 16964/1909. Sincerely, your friend, Kossuth."

Another prominent cultural event of the Chamber of Crafts was the annual harvest festival, which involved the whole village.



Following the example of the Chamber of Crafts, the Siófok peasantry established the Farmers' Circle in 1909 on the initiative of Boldizsár Horváth. Its first president was László Szabó, who held this position for more than thirty years. Every Sunday, the farmers would gather to exchange ideas, talk and discuss readings. A drama group was also formed within the Farmers' Circle. They mainly studied and performed folk plays with great success on numerous occasions in the large hall of the Fogas Hotel.

József Zákonyi (Gruber) organized a choir, led the Siófok Choir and founded the Church Choir. The barber apprentices had their own gypsy band. In the summer, they listened to the famous gypsy bands and first violinists, and inspired by this, they got together in the winter. Zákonyi also taught them to play the cimbalom and the violin. Zákonyi collected folk songs from the Drava region, which he notated and taught to his choir.

The Siófok Volunteer Fire Brigade was founded in 1833. 50 volunteers applied as members and started their work under the command of Gyula Karlberger. They regularly held balls and dances, usually in the large inn called "Tüzoltóhoz" (To the Firefighter), with the participation of well-known bands. At their general meeting in 1899, an important decision was made: the Association decided to establish a firefighter band. The band was founded in 1900 with 14 members.

In 1875, the Chevra Kadisa relief fund set up by Chief Rabbi Mór Dessauer also had an educational dimension. In 1878 a synagogue was built. The Siófok Israelite Women's Association was founded in 1880 and was mainly concerned with social affairs. A big social event was the traditional Purim ball of the women's association, which was held in the Balaton restaurant and attended by the people of Siófok without religious distinction. The Jewish Girls' Association also functioned, serving a similar purpose to the Chevra Kadisa. And the Jewish Youth Association was self-educational, with an irreligious, literary character.

