

1981 MAR 2 6

244

## Eötvös Secondary Grammar School

# Working on the traditions of first Hungarian school for modern sciences

"... our internal education system should be organized as soon as possible through laws which only touch upon financial problems and the structure of the schools, while the liberty of teaching and pedagogy, the inner essence of the work, is entrusted to the development of Hungarian science, education and public spirit...."

(from Lajos Tavasi's recommendations to József Eötvös)

The middle of the 19th century is a very controversial period in the development of Hungary. With the speedy development of capitalism and modern sciences, it became a burning necessity to establish schools that would cater for the education of industrialists, craftsmen, tradesmen, and give a push to the development of the machine industry. The establishment of such secondary schools for modern sciences came up against the protestations of the clergy, which played a dominant role in education.

István Stern, deputy headmaster of the Public School for Modern Sciences established in 1854, the predecessor of today's Eötvös Secondary Grammar School, sums up the aim of the school as set out in the 1855 Programme: "... between the public school and the technical institute, it aims to prepare pupils for further studies in technical institutes and industrial professions..."

As a consequence of Hungarian protests against the aggressive Germanizing policy, the school was reorganized in 1862 and a new curriculum was drawn up. This curriculum is interesting because it tried to justify the national nature of the school. It raised the teaching of the Hungarian language and literature from the elementary level, where German teaching had degraded it. Hungarian geography and history were also introduced, for up till then only those of Austria had been taught. In 1935, the school received the right of a secondary grammar school. In 1921 the school took up the name of József Eötvös (1813-1871), poet, writer, reform statesman. As Minister of Education and Religion, Eötvös did a lot to help solve the problem of public education.

petitions. Some of these students are also members of the Hungarian team that participates in the International Student Olympics in maths, physics and chemistry.

Under the guidance of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences special committees and the National Pedagogical Institute (OPI), various experiments are held at the school. Some of the most recent ones: in 1974-75 and in 1975-76, in two fourth-grade

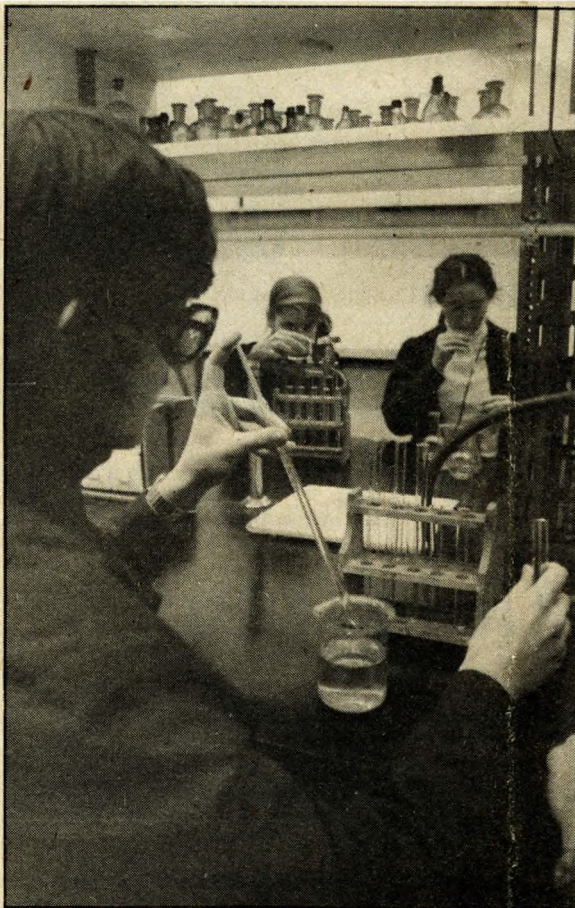
put to the test in first-grade forms.

Apart from these great traditions in the field of natural sciences the school has outstanding achievements in sports as well. Six or eight basket-ball teams participate in the championships for secondary schools. Last year the school's boy team won these championships. Some members of the team continue to be active sportsmen in the under-21 national team, and in the big national team.

Another interesting feature of the education system at the school is the non-compulsory tourist guide training. Training is going on in two languages,

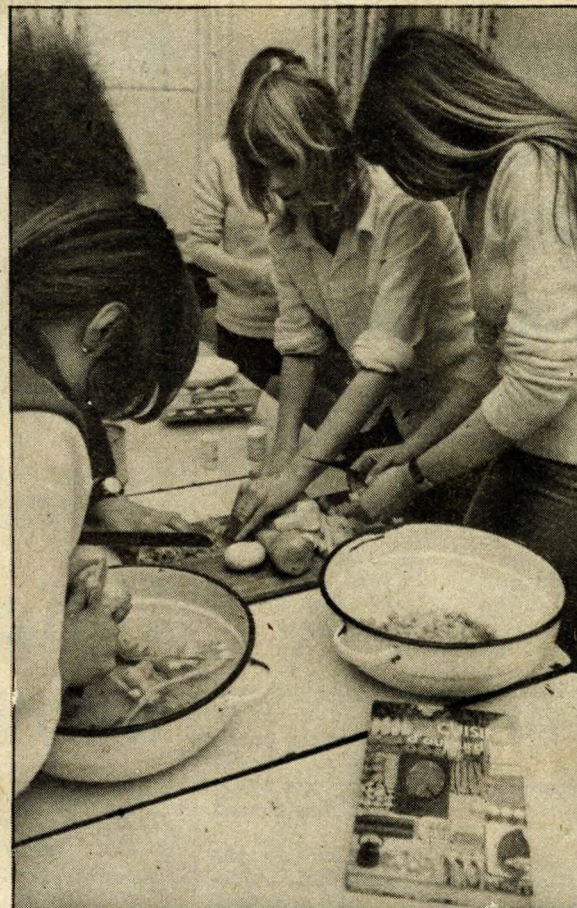


The bust of József Eötvös, that confronts the visitor at the school door



PHOTOS: A. LEVAI

"A drop of this and a drop of that, and we'll see what happens"



Girls trying out some specialities of the French kitchen during the recent Eötvös Days, an annual festival commemorating the anniversary of the founding of the school

### New initiatives

The life of the school nowadays is no less interesting than its past. Natural sciences, based on great traditions, rank first in the studies. The school has been famous for its chemistry tuition. Móric Preysz, who played an important part in setting up the network of gas lighting and the drainage system in Budapest, the first chemistry teacher of the school, managed to plant his enthusiasm into his pupils, and this enthusiasm has been carried on till the present time. Pupils participate with excellent results in the national competitions for secondary schools in physics, chemistry and maths. Last year, the competition in maths was won by Gábor Elek, now a fourth-grade pupil. Since 1961-62, pupils have won altogether 36 prizes at such com-

forms, atomic physics and quantum mechanics were introduced. In 1976-77 atomic physics was coupled with the teaching of solid-state physics.

From 1977-78 onward a new maths curriculum, yet to be introduced in other schools, is being

Russian and German, and if pupils wish to take examinations of guiding in other languages, they may. The guide training takes four years. In the first two years, the pupils learn art history and geography, and in the third and fourth years they learn

all about Hungary in the chosen foreign language. The Express Travel Agency provides opportunities for these students to guide groups part-time in summer, or permanently after finishing the secondary school.

Katalin Kolláth