HUNGARY

Communist Baggage

The countryside we have travelled through over the last few days has showed signs of communist era neglect. The secondary roads, although wide enough, are very much a patchwork quilt of tar and cement and the little and big settlements have not shown much "civic pride" in the form of preened pubic spaces, well finished homes and manicured gardens. This is not to mean a criticism of the place. It is just a fact of the lack of funds to achieve these things. It has, after all, only been 30 years since they emerged from the numbing influence of communism. Today we came across a large market in a small town. We parked quite a distance away and walked with many others to the large outdoor area. It was a very interesting experience. It had the usual clothes, tools and plants. But it also had a very large section devoted to the sale of fowl of all sorts. Pigs were also available. There was only one stall selling vegetables and fruit. We wondered whether that is because most of the locals provide their own from their home plots. Not sure about this.

Bokod

Our second stop for the day was the tiny settlement of Bokod. The town has developed around and, IN, the lake. Yes. According to a local who stopped to talk to us, it is like the water villages in Indonesia! The reason the little huts were built out over the water is because it is such a great fishing spot. The lake was formed by the local power station. It is their cooling pond. This fact means that the lake does not freeze in winter and therefore can be fished all the year round. We really enjoyed the ride around the lake to take in this interesting lifestyle. We met Carl, a friendly local and landowner, who told us that the power station is going to be decommissioned in a few years and it will mean the end of year round fishing. He did not speak English but Siggy conversed with him in German. Heather was impressed when Carl, who is as old as us, if not older, kissed her hand and said "Auf Widersehen."

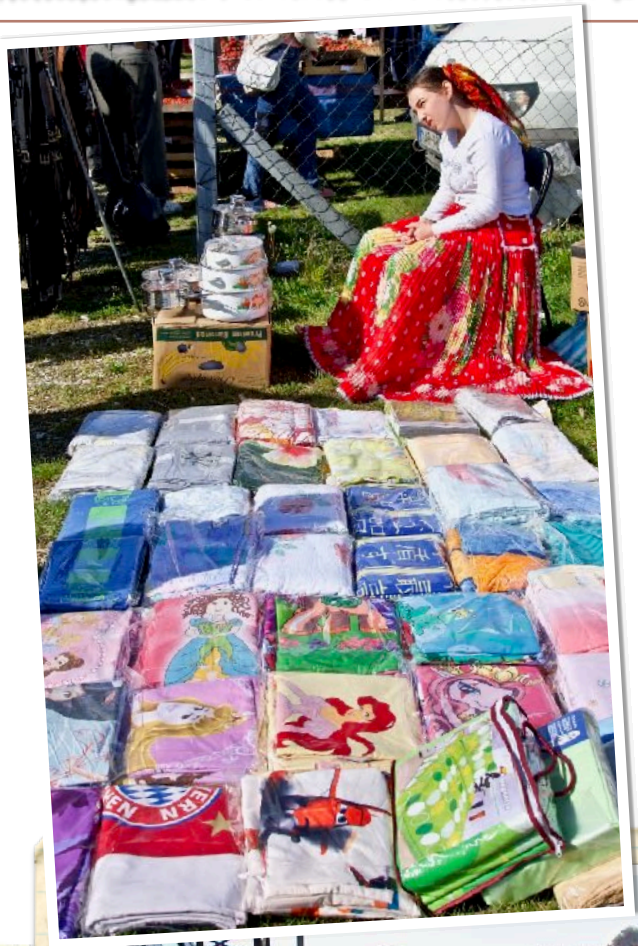
We drove from there to Lake Balaton via secondary roads and are now happily ensconced in a park about a kilometre from the lake. Tomorrow we go for a ride.

PRONUNCIATION Talk about tongue twisters. Get your tongue around the names of these towns. We had great trouble, as did our GPS lady.

SENSIBLE SIGGY When the wooden board are very flimsy and if you fall off your bike you land in muddy water do what Siggy does. Walk!!

WTF? Apart from the words Komplex and Program none of this makes any sense to a traveling couple of Aussies.

Deeper into Hungary …….



PHOTOS

Sumeg Castle - privately owned and lovingly restored. Best example of a 13th century embattlement in Hungary.