GERMANY

Winding Valley

This morning started out with a dental appointment for Heather. The job was done quickly and relatively painlessly. Wonderful said Heather. Siggy says Heather is now worth more for all her scrap metal!! We provisioned ourselves with food and diesel fuel for our last two days on the road.

The aim for the rest of the day was to leisurely drive about 100km of the Moselle Valley. The river is slow and loops around and around. Small towns sit beside the river. The vineyards take up every available space on the steep valley walls. We wondered how the grapes were harvested. Surely no machines could traverse those angles. Metal rails were seen crossing the slopes so we assume they were for pickers to load the grape harvest for easier retrieval. The roads were not super busy and we often had to slow down for tractors as they went about their business. The other ubiquitous features were the number of camping places and motor home stops, boats

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PISSED? Yet another roundabout - this time with a probable drunk cat statue. Given all the wine made around here I suppose this is not out of the question.

BREATHE IN Vineyard tractors are built extremely "skinny" - no need to wonder why.

RIVER IN FLOOD A photo of the reception building of our caravan park in 1993 - the water was some 5 meters above where we parked our van.

plying the water and the masses of cyclists. It was certainly not the nicest day to drive (and even worse to ride a bike) because it was extremely hot and our vehicle does not have air conditioning. It is the only time in all our journeys in this van that we have felt the heat. By the time we got to our intended end point at Cochem it was 4pm but still very hot. Nevertheless, we soldiered on and took our bikes for a spin along the shore.

What a scenic place. A huge, multi-turreted castle sits on a steep hill at the entrance to the town. Vines climb to the walls of this spectacular building. The town below sits snug between the river and the walls of the valley. The buildings seemed very tall from our perspective on the street. They are very close together and the air flow provided some relief from the heat. We wandered the streets and foreshore for an hour. It was very busy with tourists, many coming off the pleasure ships that ply the river. Our night stop could have been here on the river but we decided to go over the top of the hills in the hope of finding some relief from the oppressive heat. We were also keen to have a little more solitude but unfortunately we are camped for the night in a car park beside a busy freeway - well you can't win them all.

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