



Zrínyi Miklós Grammar School Zrínyi Miklós Gimnázium



Comenius Newsletter

It was a warm and sunny when on 12th April 50 of you arrived in Zalaegerszeg from every corner of Europe. We, the Hungarian hosts were all upbeat and eager to finally meet you, full of curiosity about you and the amazing week we were about to spend together. You must have been excited as well, as you didn't know what to expect from us. I believe everyone was a bit shy in the beginning, later, however, when we let our hair down and got rid of our inhibitions, everything ran like clockwork. We learn a lot about each other's customs and lifestyles by the end of the week as well as about traditional Hungarian architecture.



HOSTING



As we got closer to the week with the exchange students, I was getting more and more excited. I had been to another country as a guest before but I knew it would be completely different. In Wales I had the opportunity to listen and talk to native speakers every day, however, this time I was going to host a boy from Europe. I thought it would be interesting and a bit more challenging to understand each other. During the Comenius-week we got to know each other's hobbies, interests and culture and found out we have very similar taste in music which can be a strong bond between people. We even learned words from each other's language. It was funny to realize that there were some similar words in our languages. Fortunately, we scarcely had problems with the communication. Every time I recall the memories of that week, I can say that they were among the best days of my life.

WEEKEND

The weekend was spent with the host families. Most of you arrived late on Saturday afternoon or evening. However, Sunday proved to be your first real adventure in Hungary. Not only were you surrounded by completely new people, but also a quite different environment.

The students were not the only ones having fun at the weekend. The general elections were being held at that time, so some of the teachers went along with their Hungarian colleagues to see how they voted for the candidates. Afterwards, they spent a refreshing afternoon in Oszkó visiting a group of historic wine cellars. In the evening, they visited a modern winery as well and they enjoyed a dinner of Hungarian delicacies.

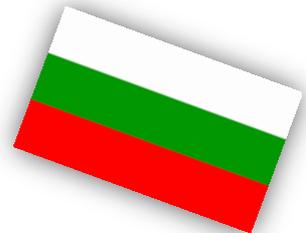


MONDAY



Monday was officially the first day where you could mingle with the others, trying to get to know them a bit better. At first we gathered for the Opening Assembly to welcome you. We introduced two traditional Hungarian folksongs to you then you had your first language session and took part in different activities. After lunch we took a stroll to the City Hall where our mayor gave a speech on our cosy little town and Hungary. After that the delegations walked you around Zalaegerszeg in 6 groups guided by Hungarian students. We visited monuments, squares and the theatre. In

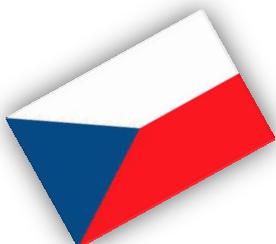
the evening, you chilled out with your hosts.



TUESDAY

We had a wonderful time visiting Órség and Lendva. Our first destination was Kávás where we visited old farm houses. Next, we walked around old stables and barns in Óriszentpéter.

On our way to a beautiful little church with a small graveyard around it, we stopped to have snacks in a barn converted into a restaurant. Our last destination was Lendva in Slovenia. We visited the Makovecz House of Culture enriched with elements from traditional Hungarian architecture. What an exhausting but fantastic day!

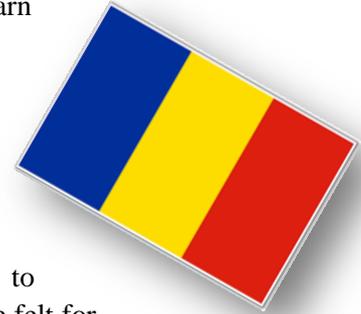


WEDNESDAY

On Wednesday morning we went to Lake Gébárt near the town to learn handicraft techniques. The delegations worked in groups with Hungarian students trying to translate the craftsmen's instructions. It proved to be quite a difficult task for us because we were not familiar with the terminology, but it was fun. The main task for the delegations was to make a small wooden model of a traditional Hungarian farm house.



They also had the opportunity to thread beads, to make Hungarian dishes, to use felt for decorations and to sing folksongs. They had a lunch break, during which they could taste some Hungarian delicacies. Fatty but delicious! After lunch they continued working on the houses as it was a time-consuming activity. Finally they finished the models and we had a free afternoon to spend with our guests. Everyone was tired at the end of the day, but it was a fantastic time to spend with each other.

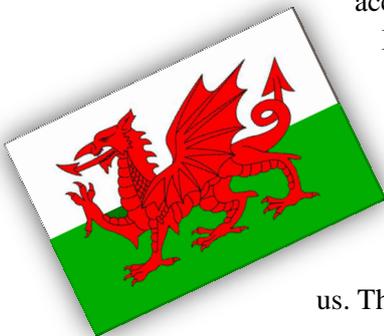


THURSDAY

On this chilly morning we set off to Keszthely at Lake Balaton. On the way there, we took a short break to conduct our daily language session. In Keszthely we first explored the Festetics Castle. A group of some Hungarian students including me skipped this tour in order to prepare the special assignments given to the groups created by our teachers. These groups included people from different countries so they could only use English as a communication channel. At the checkpoints they had different tasks to accomplish, e.g.



Rubik's Cube, Jenga, word cards in 8 languages, puzzle and syrup tasting.

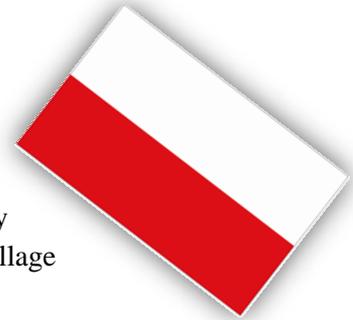


After all this we had a little free time to guide our fellows along the beach. On the way back there was a last program point left "The Greenhouse" in Dötk. Inside this environmentally friendly house, a biotechnology expert shared the latest advancements of that field with us. The expert emphasized the importance of environmental awareness.

FRIDAY



Friday came shockingly soon. The delegations performed and recorded the songs we had practised. Afterwards, they took a language quiz and played sports. We spent a lovely afternoon in the Gőcsej Open-Air Village Museum.



PEOPLE

I had a great experience during the Hungarian Comenius Meeting. The people who came here were really nice, I met some of my old friends from the first meeting and I also had the chance to make a lot of new ones too. From the first day we organised several programs, including bowling and a movie night. These activities were great ways to make friends. Even us, the Hungarian participants got to know each other better. All the teachers were really nice. I think they were truly excited about the events. I believe they enjoyed this trip just as much as the students. I feel that Comenius is all about making friends, practising languages and learning about other cultures and I think we achieved these goals successfully.



FAREWELL

Everyone was really excited before the party assuming that for some of us this might be the last time to spend time together with the delegations. The party began with the speech of the leader of the local educational authority, expressing how much the world and our prospects had widened in the last decades. Then the delegations shared their honest emotions coming from their hearts with the others. I will never forget the moment when one of the French girls started crying telling us that she could not believe that it was over and she didn't feel like going home at all.



The party was the last chance for us to talk to each other. The atmosphere was fascinating, the music and the dances united us in an international community, raising the awareness in most of us that the youth of Europe had to hold together to make this continent a better place to live in. The air was full of emotions as we were hugging each other saying goodbye with eyes full of tears. If there was one thing I learned through this program was that friendship is one of the most precious treasure we have. When we realized that the week was over and the visitors were already gone, there was an inexplicable emptiness in our hearts.

