

Dancing in Budapest



The 5 star Hotel for the dancing weekend was imposing and luxurious. When we arrived to check in we were greeted as old friends by some of the dancers from Budapest and those from many other countries too.



During the weekend, we were put through our paces by Pat Houghton's excellent teaching in the large mixed ability classes - three on Friday and two on both Saturday and Sunday. Fortunately, the exertions of the classes helped us to work off the three-course meals laid on for both lunch and dinner, with additional coffee and cakes in-between! An additional short programme of dances had been organised for the first evening, so all the dances were walked through. The dances for the Welcome Dance and the Ball however were just briefly recapped.

At Jim Cook's request, we joined a group for pre-Ball drinks and nibbles. During the evening we were entertained by local Folk Dancers and a demonstration of the Scottish Dance, Hungarian Bride, danced beautifully to a traditional Hungarian tune. Jim had encouraged some beginners from another Hungarian town to join the Ball and asked us to help them though some of the dances. They were really nervous to start with but it was a pleasure to help them (I was nicknamed the Purple Angel from the colour of my dress) and I think they really enjoyed the experience of their first Ball.



The main organiser, Katalin, is fluent in Japanese and had encouraged sixteen dancers from Japan to enroll for the weekend. Unfortunately four of the dancers could not attend as there were no flights from Sendai airport following the Tsunami. All the Sendai dancers are safe but one of them had sadly lost her home. The one man and eleven ladies from Japan were all beautiful dancers and were a delight to have in our group. Two of them, Masako and Toshiko were excited to recognise six people, including Michael and I, from our trip to Japan and got quite emotional on the last day. They presented us with a package of Japanese Tea as a parting gift.

After the Ball Diane and
and a French couple,
Simon, back to their room

After a hard weekend of
sore feet, and as their suite
round bath, Di ran cold
we hitched our skirts and sat
bathing our feet while
tonic - bliss!



Roger invited us
Ghislene and
for a few drinks.

dancing we all had
boasted a large
water into it and
round the edge
sipping on a gin and

About half of the group moved to a very pleasant, but more modest hotel to do the organised programme of tourism. This involved public transport, walking (including walking across into Slovakia), coach, hydrofoil and an amphibious coach. We even had an afternoon in the thermal baths. Michael and I gradually got to grips with the public transport system and later took a trip far out into the suburbs to visit their famous Statue Park. We rounded off our stay by joining the Hungarian's at their monthly Ceilidh Dance. Sylvia came to our Hotel to escort us there, which was just as well as they had closed the Metro Line nearest us for urgent maintenance and we ended up taking a tram, two busses and a metro to get there, arriving nearly half an hour late. These monthly 'Scottish Dance House' as they are called, regularly have about sixty attendees and as a result the Budapest group have a new beginners class every September for between 20 and 30 new, and often young, people. A group of us then went to a popular, very lively and noisy Scottish Pub nearby (the Landlord and most of the staff are Scottish) for a farewell drink.



We are already planning our next dancing holiday in Budapest.