



## WIMA News August 2016

### Åsa Öhqvist International VP of WIMA

*"I can easily say that joining WIMA is one of the most influential decisions in my life. For one thing, I never have to plan where to go on holiday, I just have to plan how to get there: travelling to the international WIMA rally has become an addiction and I can go without many things just to be able to attend."*



## WIMA Australia Committee

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## Two Kangaroos go to Hungary

After making the decision to go to the 2016 WIMA International Rally in Hungary, Lee and I had months of preparation and planning.

Numerous emails, phone calls as well as bottles of red wine were involved, however it was a team effort. We both wanted to see as much of the countryside as we could so we agreed that we should fly into a large European city and then catch a variety of trains to Hungary.



We booked the cheapest airfares available via Bangkok to Frankfurt and return flights from Munich via Doha.

Perhaps the most important items in our bags were the International banner and all the country flags from the event last year in Phillip Island. By the time that we had packed the banner, flags, merchandise and our bike gear (with a 20kg limit as a result of the cheap flights) we only had room left for a small hanky and one pair of knickers each. Thank god it was going to be summer...

Landing in a unknown city after a 30 hour flight is always a challenge. We caught the train from the airport into central Frankfurt and then tried to follow Mr Google's directions to our hotel. (Ha, ha, that was fun!) Fatigue was a huge factor.....thank heavens for kind strangers whom we asked for directions...Finally found the hotel.....and collapsed into a beautiful, flat, comfortable bed.

On our first night in Frankfurt we dined at an African restaurant called the Queen of Sheba. The food was amazing and we had the first of many cold beers. The owner of the restaurant was a lovely Eritrean woman

and she kindly spoke English and explained the menu to us (She spoke at least 3 languages fluently...wow!!) We sat and watched the semi-final of the European Cup, Portugal versus Wales. Portugal won.

The next morning (after a wonderful breakfast in the hotel) we set out to explore our first European city. Frankfurt is a beautiful city which is easy to walk around, with many open air markets and cafes. We travelled on the underground in search of the Botanic Gardens but we found the Palmengarten

The Palmengarten is one of two botanical gardens in Frankfurt and covers a area of 22 hectares.

Like many public sites in Frankfurt, it was privately financed and work was completed in 1871 and opened to the public. Halls destroyed in the war were redeveloped and expanded. In 1992 the reconstruction was completed. The botanical exhibits are organized according to their origin in free-air or climatized greenhouses, which also contain numerous tropical and subtropical plants.



We were in awe of the massive palm garden until we saw the glass house/s. It was bigger than Ben Hur. The variety of plants was amazing with even part of one of the buildings containing an Australian collection. With all this walking, we developed a little thirst so another glass of wine was sipped at one of their many cafes while we enjoyed the summer sun, and wondered what the poor are doing?

After two nights of R & R and resetting our body clocks to European time (8 hours behind EST,) we caught a train to Vienna. We had WiFi and travelled at 260km/hour, amazing!! We had bought lunch from markets - marinated olives and marinated stuffed tomatoes Needless to say, it spilt in my backpack. Weeks later, the backpack still has that wonderful aroma...lol!!

We arrived in Vienna, sorted out a problem with our booking, settled into our room and strolled through the city that evening. We even took a quick tour on a double decker bus. The city is beautiful and we promised ourselves we would return on another occasion.

On our walk back to our hotel, we dined at an outdoor café with a cheeky Spanish waiter, who helped us with the menu....The cherry pop cocktails were delicious.



The next morning we took the train to Hungary. We had chatted with Emese, WIMA Hungary National President via FB messenger and arranged to leave the train at a stop before Budapest. We were met at Tatabanya station by two WIMA Hungary members. Such is the strength of the WIMA network ....We didn't speak Hungarian, they spoke very little English but we recognised each other by our WIMA Tshirts. A warm welcome was given and they kindly drove us to our accommodation.

We arrived early so had arranged some accommodation at a nearby pension. The man who appeared to be running the pension didn't speak any English and of course, we didn't speak any Hungarian (a problem that was going to recur.) He was also drunk! (like, barely able to stand, drunk) The room had two very basic beds and an ensuite (a fancy name for the very basic bathroom.) There were no towels, no air conditioning (temp of 30+ degrees) the toilet didn't flush, no way to make coffee, no breakfast provided. ...It was a bit grim.... We looked for another hotel but there was a festival in town so there wasn't a bed anywhere.

The next day we searched the town for coffee and breakfast. It was Sunday and nothing was open until ten but at the town square we found a farmer's market/trash and treasure, and a stall selling baked goods and bread. Using our Very limited Hungarian (ie, none!!) we bought wonderful bread and yummy sweet rolls. We attempted to ask the very cheerful woman who was manning the stall, if there was anywhere that we could buy coffee. Of course, she had no clue what we wanted....so, we did this complicated mime of kangaroos dying of lack of coffee... use your imagination. It must have worked because the stall holder called up a colleague across that market, who, after an animated conversation, disappeared and returned minutes later with two tiny cups of the MOST amazing black coffee. She had gone home to her house on the town square, returned with a little coffee machine...and made us the coffee....What an angel!! Pure kindness...it was an indicator of what we would continue to experience in our time in Hungary. !

On Monday we moved into a bunkhouse in the Gran Camping grounds. The rally had begun.



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Sheonaugh & Pat arrived from Great Britain. Elsbeth arrived from Switzerland. Claudia & Uli from Germany, just to name a few. Tents went up everywhere. The weather was hot & sunny. The swimming pool was very popular as was the small bar with the cold beer (STELLA)

Our rental bike was delivered to us that day too. Thanks ZO MOTO. A lovely Triumph Tiger. Lee had not ridden for two years and so it was a quiet first ride for both of us... We rode out to a nearby village with Great Britain Pat guiding us.(thanks Pat) and then sufficiently comfortable with the new beast we took off for a bit of a blast up the main road. We even got back without getting lost (different story in later days, but that's another story.)

The welcome dinner was held that night amidst enormous noise from 250 voices in 14 languages. It was a wonderful night. Schnapps was offered when we arrived which to Lee's taste was very similar to rocket fuel. As you would expect, there were lots of speeches including the local mayor who spoke and had her speech simultaneously translated by one of the Hungarian members. The room was wonderfully decorated with all of the international flags hung above our heads.

The banner that we had carried all the way from Australia was proudly hung on the wall behind the stage and just before dinner the international committee was introduced and the national presidents were introduced.

I was very proud to represent Australia.

After dinner the very loud disco started and dancing! When we went to bed, we really appreciated HOW LOUD the disco was. We inserted our ear plugs and fell asleep. (to be continued)



International President Claudia Fehrer (left) with other WIMA members before the Parade.

### Information about Esztergom, where the rally was held.

**Esztergom** (Hungarian pronunciation: [ˈɛstɛrɡom]) is a city in northern Hungary, 46 kilometres (29 miles) northwest of the capital Budapest. It lies in Komárom-Esztergom county, on the right bank of the river Danube, which forms the border with Slovakia there.

Esztergom was the capital of Hungary from the 10th till the mid-13th century when King Béla IV of Hungary moved the royal seat to Buda.

Esztergom is the seat of the *prímás* (see Primate) of the Roman Catholic Church in Hungary, and the former seat of the Constitutional Court of Hungary. The city has the Kereszteny Museum, the largest ecclesiastical collection in Hungary. Its cathedral, Esztergom Basilica is the largest church in Hungary.

The majority of the historic sites and the city's architectural heritage are of a religious nature, like the Primate's Palace, the Franciscan monastery, and several chapels and churches. Remains of the former royal palace, Turkish, Classicist and Baroque buildings, as well as the Basilica, attract many visitors. One of the newest additions to Esztergom is the Mária Valéria Bridge, which connects the city with Slovakia. Esztergom is often nicknamed as the 'City of St. Stephen' and the 'Hungarian Rome'.

Summer is the busiest season in Esztergom starting with Gizella Days at the beginning of May and followed by the Withsun Market.

The Esztergom Summer Festival (30th July-20th August 2007) offers a range of concerts including jazz and classical music. At the end of summer, Esztergom has events organized to the memory of Hungary's first king, St Stephen around 20th August.

## WIMA International Rallies

The 2017 international rally will be held in Estonia 17-22 July. Australian members attending include Margaret Stewart, Kathy O'Donnel, Liv Andersen and Lee Skinner.

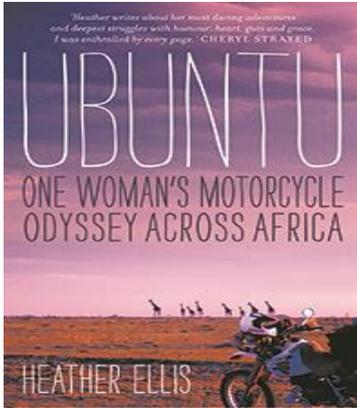
**2018** Finland in Moominland from 30th July – 3rd August

**2019:** Curaçao and UK

**2020:** Germany



Australia author Heather Ellis has produced a fascinating account of her adventures riding across Africa, solo, some years ago. . It's a thoughtful piece and you can see her [video intro here](#). The book [can be found at this link](#). <http://www.heather-ellis.com/>



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