

A TRIP TO HUNGARY.

I thought we were going to the Bohemian Ragtime/Jazz Festival.....well we did but beforehand we had a day out in the countryside about 30kms north of Kecskemet.

We went to a horse breeding/training establishment where we were met by the headman in full Magyar traditional costume. We were all (group of eleven) taken for a carriage ride round the farm and when they asked for one person to sit beside the whip, you can imagine who was there first!

After our drive we were given a display of their horsemanship which although very "showy" was based on the survival techniques on the Great Plains of Hungary. In particular the Magyar sitting on his lying horse twirling his goad, which makes a phenomenal noise when cracked, comes from their horses being trained to lie down so that they can either hide behind them or use them as rests for shooting.

The origin of the three horses in front with two behind we did not discover as the commentary was all in German and we were only able to pick-up bits here and there. We had a really good morning there and then went off for a traditional Hungarian lunch which was excellent though the wine was only just drinkable watered down! I may add that the Jazzers managed to imbibe most of that available- their ability to consume alcohol equals and maybe exceeds that of Equestrianists!

Amanda Preston.

