

"The water gets stuck  
at the branches of the shore,  
a green palm leaf is now the lake,  
and your laughter like wind running downhill  
makes it quiver, playing along with it.  
From nowhere a ship is approaching  
it comes like a happy message."  
*Sándor CSÓÓRI: Floating landscape*

## RED SANDSTONE STUDY PATH TO THE ÓVÁRI LOOK-OUT TOWER IN BALATONALMÁDI

A 6 km long round trip marked by blue triangles: an easy walk of about two hours

### TOWNHALL SQUARE

Let's start our walk from the statue of Pannonia Aqua (the work of sculptor Gábor Mihály) symbolizing Lake Balaton which can be found in the park next to the railway station subway.

The foundation of the statue is a red sandstone block carved out from the Almádi quarry of the Győri-Fülöp – Toscani families, and it could easily become the symbol of our town.

On the eastern side of the park we can find the Town Hall, on the top floor of which is the Loft Gallery. We continue our walk above the covered bed of Remete Brook on Széchenyi Promenade as far as the end of the grove, from where we climb onto the hill along a marked path named Szent Imre Street.

### NATURAL LIFE ON THE RED SANDSTONE

In the Almádi area there are three different types of vegetation: those of the lake and the shore, of the red sandstone and of the dolomite. The trees by the side of our path are various xerophilous oak species and ash. Among the shrubs we find e.g. rowan, privet, may-bush, juniper and sloe. In the herbs, along with xerophilous and lime-demanding plants also such plants are common which prefer acidic soil, such as the meadow rush. Turning onto Kilitóhegyi Street we arrive at a bench to rest. There are stairs leading down to the QUARRY PARK developed from a one-time redstone quarry. When we stop next to it is Hotel Ramada and the multi-storeyed Györgyi Dénes Primary School that unfold in front of our eyes.

In the background the Kenese Escarpment is made up by 4 to 5 million years old sand and clay layers of the Upper Pannonian Tihany Formation, covered by patches of loess.

### THE ÓVÁRI BELVEDERE



The Look-out Tower or Belvedere was erected on the former vineyard hill of Almádi, towards the turn of the century. Its tiled roof was reconstructed in the early 90's from old photographs, but in a simplified form. For some time, it was called the Wesselényi Belvedere. Let us enjoy the panorama.

In the centre you can see Fűzfő Bay. A little closer to the left there is the village of Vörösberény, with two characteristic churches. The upper one, of Romanesque style, with its remarkable circular bulwark, dates back to the 11-12. centuries. The lower one was built in 1779, in Baroque style, and is flanked by the former Jesuit monastery. The name of the village (in the form Szárberény) was written down for the first time in a donation deed: "Stephen the Christian, King of whole Hungary" donated it to the nunnery of Veszprém Valley.

Let us have a look at Lake Balaton. It is the largest fresh-water lake in Central Europe. It came into being some 12-14 thousand years ago, after the end of the last Ice Age. In the foreland of the mountains a number of small basins developed, which later on have become united due to the ongoing subsidence (sinking) and abrasion (wave action).

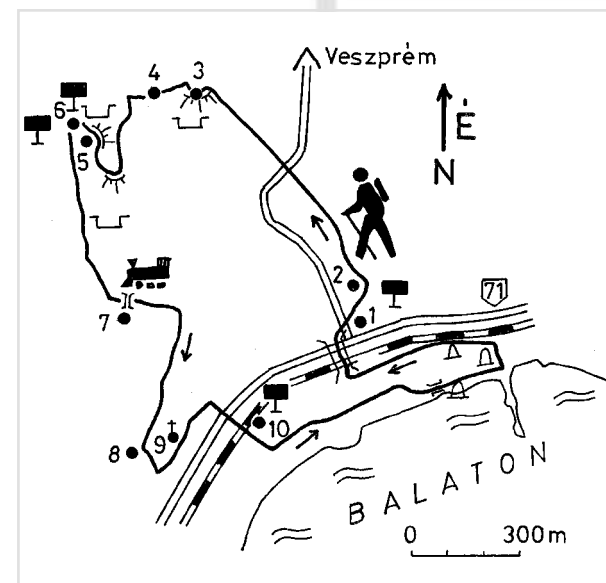
To the right, the Kenese Escarpment passes to the valley of River Sió, lined by the Pannonian hills of the Outer Somogy area. Behind Fűzfő Bay there are a few higher hills (Papvásár-hegy, Jákó-hegy), and to the left the Chemical Works of Fűzfő. In clear weather the town of Várpalota and the Tés Plateau can also be seen. Beyond Vörösberény village there are several hills (Megye-hegy, Vár-hegy, Vörös-hegy and Cseri-hegy).

At our feet the red beds of the Balatonfelvidék Sandstone

Formation of Late Palaeozoic (Permian) age are exposed. Their grains were deposited some 250 million years ago by waterflows going toward a sea in a semi-desertic landscape. The characteristic dead red-to-purple colour of the sandstone is due to iron minerals (hematite and limonite) incrusting the individual quartz grains. These grains are the products of the weathering of ancient (Variscan) high mountains.

The centre of quarrying of the red sandstone used to be in the streets we take to walk down (along Lomb Street and Batthyány Street).

The first written documents of quarrying are from the 13th century. However, the red sandstone was used for construction and sculpture much earlier, by the ancient Romans. In the Middle Ages, Italian masters of stone carving also contributed to the development of this craftsmanship. Its "secrets" were passed on from father to son through many generations.



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|--|------------------------------------|
| 1. Town Hall Square                    | 7. Railway passage, old locomotive |
| 2. Gate pillars of the former Zsák Inn | 8. Old wheeled well                |
| 3. "Lake Balaton" panorama             | 9. Chapel of the Holy Right Hand   |
| 4. Little Forest                       | 10. Old Park                       |
| 5. Óvári Look-out Tower                | ☞ Panorama site                    |
| 6. Red Sandstone outcrop               | ☞ Monument                         |
| ☐ Information board                    | ☞ Direction                        |
| ☐ Abandoned quarry                     |                                    |



#### LOCOMOTIVE

As a memorial to the former Veszprém-Alsóörs railway line a steam locomotive stands on the vaulted passage. Its serial number is 375. The specific feature of this type is that it had built-in coal and water tanks.

We arrive at a staircase named after, a renowned painter of Almádi Imre CSIKÁSZ. Then we by a wheeled well called „Sörény” bearing the inscription “S.L. 1907 ↓ 28 m.” In front of it, the flowers are planted in the basin of a 100-year old drinking-trough.

Semmelweiss Street, paved with basalt cubes, leads us down to Óvári Street. It is named – just like the Belvedere – after, attorney and Member of Parliament Dr. Ferenc ÓVÁRI (1858-1938) who had great merits in promoting the development of the village and the railway-line. His memorial tablet can be seen on the wall of the parsonage, in front of the St. Stephen Roman Catholic church which had been designed by István MEDGYASZAY and built in 1930.

Its highlight is a CHAPEL attached to the left side of the main nave, bearing the name of St. Stephen's HOLY RIGHT HAND. Since 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2001, one of the fragments of the Holy Dexter of King Saint Stephen has been preserved here. The golden mosaic of the chapel (created by Miksa RÓTH) was saved from the ruins of Royal Castle in Buda by vicar Sándor PINTÉR in 1957, and restored with the help of local craftsmen. Both he and Dénes GYÖRGYI, professor of architecture who designed the school seen from the hill, rest in the churchyard.

There is a marble plaque to honour the memory of one-time bauxite-prospectors (1950–1995) on the wall of the house at 22 Óvári Street.

We leave Óvári Str. on the short, sloping Twin Promenade divided by a row of trees. Crossing the highway N°71 and the railway-line, we reach the OLD PARK. There we find the information board of the Study Path. The alley of young platanus leads us to the main entrance of Wesselényi Beach. The creation of this 10 ha park was started in 1890. Since 1977 it has been under local nature protection. The biggest trees are white and black poplars and white willows. There are also valuable marsh cypresses (Taxodium), and salallows. Worthy of mention are a number of other trees, such as the yaw tree, the strong-smelling juniper, the thuya, the orange mulberry tree, the “weeping” varieties of several tree species, moreover the evergreen shrubs and the exceptionally old birch trees and the double row of orange-twigged willows. A nice statue facing Lake Balaton was dedicated to a local teacher, János Váth the writer of people round the lake.

In the park there are valuable busts: Prince Ferenc II. Rákóczi and Lajos Kossuth by Barnabás HOLLÓ, Sándor Petőfi by Miklós IZSÓ.

The most remarkable sandstone memorial stands beyond the bridge of Remete Brook, on the lakeshore. In front of it we can see the restored music pavilion. A red sandstone bench is dedicated to historian and Vice Prefect of Veszprém County, Dezső VÉGHELY, who initiated the establishment of the park. On the way back it is recommended to pass along the double alley of old platanus, leading against the shore. At a ginkgo tree of Asian origin we reach the underpass (built in 1975) leading to the railway station.

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## Red Sandstone Study Path



# BALATON ALMÁDI