



## Nordic Baltic Sub-region News Letter December 2016

### News from Europe



The 9th ISGF Europe Conference was held in the town of Tours in France. Guild members from Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden participated. The main results of the conference were as follows:

- The report and accounts for the period 2013-2015 were approved
- A new bye-law gives the small European guilds that constitute Central Branch a collective vote
- The annual fee for each country will be changed to reflect the number of members and the economic level of the country.
- A Nordic proposal to recommend that international workshops and other arrangements include a weekend was agreed - aiming at reducing the number of working days needed to attend such events.

- The new Europe Committee will be Doris Stockmann (Finland, Chair), Pierre Decoene, (Belgium, Vice Chair), Angela Dernbach, (Germany) and Ana Matoso Rodrigues (Portugal)
- The next Europe Conference will be in 2019 in Bremen, Germany

*Knut Jorde, IS Norway*

### News from Denmark

#### Peace Light 2016

Peace Light ceremonies take place several places all over Denmark and in many different ways.

#### Peace Light to Greenland

The first event was sending off the Flame to Greenland, where it will be received in two cities: Nuuk and Sisimiut.

As in the previous 11 years, the Royal Arctic Line has willingly carried the Peace Flame on their ship, Mary Arctica.

The aim for the Flame is to arrive in Greenland timely enough to be used for use on the first Sunday in Advent.

On November 9, 2016 our co-ordinators picked up the Flame from the Catholic Church of Aarhus and brought it to Aalborg by car.

4 guild members from Aalborg joined there, in good time for handing over the Flame to the Captain, who promised to take good care of it on the way to Greenland.



*Captain (in black) receives the Peace Light in order to bring it to Nuuk, Greenland, and later on to Sisimiut (Photo: Rigmor Lauridsen)*



*Lene and Christian in front of the Greenland map (Photo: Rigmor Lauridsen)*

The flame has already now reached Nuuk and, on November 20, the ship will call at Sisimiut.

## Roskilde, Denmark to Sweden

On November 14, 2016 International Secretary of Denmark, Anne, met with the Swedish coordinators, Yvonne and Gjermund Austvik in the Catholic church of Roskilde.

A short ceremony was held there, in which the Peace light was handed over to the Swedish coordinators.



*Handing over the Peace Light from the Catholic church of Roskilde to the Swedish coordinator, Gjermund Austvik. Anne is reading the words handing over the flame*

Later in the evening the three of us drove to Helsingborg, Sweden where a ceremony was held at Knutpunkten (bus and train station).



*Gjermund reads the Peace Light message 2016*

Quite a few people were present there, ready to take their Flames with them.



*Ulla – a veteran Peace Light fetcher – has fetched the flame for 21 years*



*Leif Granéli, Treasurer in Sweden fetches his flame, He is one from the delegation from Kristiansstad*

*(Photos: Anne Haastrup-Nielsen)*

Two young scouts came rushing back, as their flame went out, when they came outside the building. They got a new flame and went away happily.

## ISGF Haiti Project 2016



As could be seen in the Thinking day message from our ISGF chairman,

Mrs. Mida Rodrigues, which can be read on our homepage, one of the ways of donating money for the project might be to buy a Haiti pin at the price of 3 Euro/piece.

We were promised to be kept updated about the three projects, as well as we

were told that photos, plans, in-coming amounts, the sale of pins and other comments would be available, runningly.

The ISGF project **HAITI 2016** focuses on some of those urgent needs:

- Build the Headquarters of the National Girl Guide Association of Haiti
- Complete the fence of the Orphanage "Enfant Haitien Mon Frère" supported by the ADSEGAH, Fellowship from Haiti
- Refurnish the newly constructed School Carmen René Durocher, supported by the Girl Guide Association

During our meeting in April 2016 with our District International Secretaries we, International Committee, put forward our proposal about supporting the ISGF project.

As an appetizer we had bought 20 pins to check out whether they would sell. And indeed, they would. Our members right away and willingly joined in the effort of going back to all districts (21 in all) to check the idea with their respective districts. 15 districts participated.

Although information about the project did not become available until we saw the Haiti 2016 presentation during the European Conference in Tours back in September, we have managed to sell more than 1000 pins for the time being. Adding to that, also donations have been running in.

We have decided to extend the project until end of this year, hoping to get yet some money collected.

All in all, it has been a challenge to follow the project, but we are also

proud that we have succeeded in raising funds for the projects so much needed.

*Anne Haastrup-Nielsen, IS Denmark*

## News from Finland

### Roihu 2016 - 7<sup>th</sup> International Finnjamboree

Roihu 2016 was the 7th International Finnjamboree organised by the Guides and Scouts of Finland. It was the largest youth project of the year in Finland. Roihu (=large campfire) was the culmination of 17,000 scouts' summer camp in the forest at Evo in southern Finland.

The Fellowship of Scouts and Guides of Finland took part in the sub-camp Oasis at Roihu. This sub-camp offered leaders the possibility to come for a cup of coffee, to have a shower or visit a warm sauna. They could also have their hair done, have a massage, enjoy singing or just take a nap. There were also experienced leaders available for a talk. The younger participants were not allowed in this sub-camp.

The Fellowship had a tent where ISGF and Finnish Fellowship products were sold. We also promoted the Peace Light from Betlehem and the Stamp Bank. The camp participants had been informed that they could bring stamps to the tent and thus through the Stamp Bank help WOSM and WAGGGS Scout and Guide projects around the world. Our goal was to make the Fellowship more visible and to recruit new members.



*The SGSF tent*



*The Stamp Bank*

We distributed leaflets on how to start a Guild and the ISGF leaflet. There were lots of things happening; programmes for different age groups, workshops, hikes and campfires as well as evening programme at a smaller scale - sub-camps and camp groups had their own evenings in addition to the international evening programmes!



*Guild day – BP gymnastics*

At Roihu there was a sub-camp for families and all adults participated in the camp duties. This was the place that gathered children and parents together from each one of Roihu's sub-camps. Whenever you heard excited laughter, you knew that the children were not far! For handicapped scouts who need extra support, the activities were roughly the same as the activities for other scouts and age groups. There were many religions and ideologies present and it was a chance for everyone to learn about our differences while embracing one's own spirituality.

We were very pleased with the interest shown by the visitors. All together 32 persons wanted to be on our contact list, many of them wishing to establish a new Guild and/or be a member of our Fellowship.

*Doris Stockmann, Chair Europe Committee*

## **Fellowship members in Tours and Bretagne**

All together 23 members of the Fellowship of Scouts and Guides of Finland travelled to the 9<sup>th</sup> Europe Conference in Tours in the Loire valley. 13 of these participated in the

conference meetings - only 4 were of course official delegates with voting rights.

During the conference we had several possibilities to meet young local scouts and guides and of course Fellowship members from the local Guilds. The program included several social events; outdoor concerts (scouts and guides performing), the Mayor's reception at the Town Hall, visits to ancient castles and of course the Gala Dinner the final evening.

After four days in Tours 21 Fellowship members from Finland started exploring Bretagne on their own with a private bus and Finnish guide. The program committee had planned an interesting and diverse route. We started with a tour in the town of Angier by the river Maine where we admired the ancient castle with its deep but dry moat and the impressive drawbridge. The town also had an old cathedral and beautiful timber-framed houses. The first night was spent in the port of St. Nazaire on the Atlantic coast where we were reminded of the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War and the massive bastions built by the Nazis.



*Cap Frehel Lighthouse*

The next day we admired the Megalite fields in Carnac, where our ancestors more than 6000 years ago set large

stones and boulders in an immense geometric construction in an east-west direction. The stones stood like sentinels in blooming heather for miles. There are many question marks around the people living here. We visited a diverse museum which shed some light on their society and their culture.



*Visiting the Carnac menhirs (standing stones)*

The following night was spent in Quimper, where we shopped ceramics and cookies Bretagne-style. Like everywhere we stopped, we also visited the old cathedral. Bretagne and Normandie seem to be filled with beautiful old churches and cathedrals! Really worth a visit!

The third day we drove straight north, crossing the Bretagne peninsula. A very beautiful route, connected with many stories and legends which inspired our excellent guide, Minna. In the idyllic little town of Equiry, said to be the model for the home village of Asterix, several of us used the possibility to have delicious shellfish of many varieties for lunch. Here we could also see the great difference between low and high tide, something we don't have in the Baltic Sea.

Our last night was spent in St. Malo, an old harbour and fishing town. On our way to the airport in Paris the next day,

we stopped in the ancient town of Vitré with its many old timber-framed houses which were still used as living quarters, several hundred years old. Due to a delicious lunch with galettes and crepes, and the disastrous traffic around Paris, we reached the plane home "by the skin of our teeth".

We are already talking about arranging a similar trip to Germany in connection with the next Europe Conference in Bremen.

*Liv Aure-Olli, IS Finland*

## News from Iceland

### **Kvistur on the road...**

The members of Kvistur in Akureyri, Iceland, always take one day of travelling in the autumn. First we concentrated on the colours of autumn, took photos and had a picnic where we could admire the view surrounded by the colourful autumn leaves.

This year we decided to extend this one day trip and drive all the way to the Snæfellsnes peninsula, stay two nights in a nice guesthouse, enjoy the beauty of Snæfellsnes which is one of Iceland's National Parks, and have a grand dinner to celebrate our 20th anniversary. This was a great trip with good weather, beautiful nature, tasty food and last but not least, great companionship!

We visited two very different churches; an old one (Búðakirkja) and a new one (Stykkishólmskirkja). The old one (black, timber), situated by itself close to the sea, has been rebuilt several times,

originally being built in 1703 by Bent Lauritzson, a man of Swedish origin who lived in the area. It has some of the original details and an altarpiece from 1750.



*The Búðakirkja church*



*The altar in Búðakirkja church*

The new church (white, concrete) is in the town Stykkishólmur and was built in 1990. The altarpiece is from 1999, painted by Kristín Gunnlaugsdóttir, a woman of Swedish origin.



*The Stykkishólmur church*



*The altar in Stykkishólmur church*

Text: Lára Ólafsdóttir - Photos: Lára Ólafsdóttir and Sigurgeir Haraldsson

## Fellowship Day

The Friendship Day was held in Kópavogur where we had the folk music ensemble of Kópavogur music school playing and singing. This is a group of young talented musicians in the age of 14-16 who have been practising folk music both for pleasure and Icelandic music heritage.

*Kristjana Ásgeirsdóttir, IS Iceland*

News from  Lithuania

Sorry, no news from Lithuania this time.

## News from Norway

### Trip to Gilwell Park and Brownsea Island

17 eager guild members, 15 Norwegians and 2 Danes, left for Brownsea Island on 28 July - a small group that was quickly welded together. We had Trond Olsen as trip manager, he has been to Brownsea Island several times, and Øystein Gonsholt as a human encyclopedia on every aspect of Baden-Powell's life and history.

In London we naturally stopped at Gilwell Park. We heard the whole story, and saw the whole area, where both young and old scouts were very active. We also visited Pax Lodge, which still receives scout guests from all over the world.

We had our own coach for the whole trip. The driver knew both the traffic and all the roads very well, so even if the rest of us did not quite manage to follow the route on the map, he ensured that we easily reached our goals. We visited both wellknown castles and the Charterhouse School that BP attended, and which still had memories of him.

The main target of the trip was Brownsea Island, the place where BP organised the first scout camp in 1907. We first arrived at the harbour town Poole, which is also known as the place where many of the war ships were gathered before the 1944 invasion of Normandy.



*Harald and Mary flanking BP in Poole Harbour*

From Poole we took a ferry to Brownsea Island, and it was a great moment to disembark on the island. We were divided into patrols, pitched our tents for the night and cooked our dinner on the fire.



*At the camp site*

The following day, 1 August 2016, we had our morning gathering at the same location that BP had his gathering with the first scouts 106 year earlier. It was a great moment for everybody, giving inspiration for continued efforts for the scouting and fellowship cause.





*The memorial stone*

When we left the island, the ferry arrived at the quay with a new load of scouts, a large troupe from Portugal, correctly dressed with scout uniform and dashing hats. Even if we had to wait a little while they unloaded all their luggage, it was an impressive sight that boosted our belief in the scouting cause.



*The story of the first Brownsea Island camp*

Apart from our stay at Brownsea Island, we stayed at nice country hotels. Before departure, the driver took us on a small round trip in Central London. The traffic was intense, but it was worth the trouble. All in all, we had a great experience.

*Harald B. Pettersen*

## Mountain trip

As for the previous year, the 2016 mountain trip was organized as an "out in the unknown" trip, for which we knew the timing, and where and when to meet: the mountain hut Krækkja - but not where the rest of the trip would take us. Krækkja is located in the north eastern part of the Hardangervidda mountain plateau, nearly ten km from the nearest road, so the means of transport would clearly have to be walking boots.

The ten participants met at Haugastøl, one of the stations on the Oslo-Bergen railway line. From there, we went together to Krækkja, a day's walk further west. With guilders with many years' scouting experience - our ages ranged from 47 to 80 years - both finding the right route and the walking it were quite easy. At Krækkja, our tour guides, Jan Petter and Gry, welcomed us to a nice dinner and information about the rest of the trip.



*Happy mountain walkers*

Next morning we went southwards to Halne, enlightened by running commentaries about the local geology. From Halne, we went by boat on the Halnefjorden lake, and continued on foot to Rauhelleren, one of Hardangervidda's mountain summer farms.

Traditionally, these summer farms were used only during the summer season, as pasture centres for the animals from farms in the nearby valleys. Rauhelleren still had animals, thus we had fresh eggs for breakfast from the hens picking their feed from the green grass among the houses.



*Crossing one of the many small rivers (Photos: Helene Tjugen Landheim)*

From Rauhelleren, the trip continued via Heinseter (another summer farm) to the Tuva mountain hut, through the open and friendly landscape of the eastern part of Hardangervidda. At Tuva, we had the trip's third minced steak dinner - luckily it was the best-tasting of the three, and the hosts were the most friendly.

The daily walks were fairly friendly, with moderately steep ascends and descends, and distances from 12 to 24 kms. The weather varied a lot, with scattered rain showers, partly also sleet and snow, but also nice spells in between. We therefore often had to stop for a quick change into or out of our rain gear. The temperature was generally fairly low, requiring caps, mittens and gloves. As usual for our

trips, the fellowship feeling and the sharing of common experiences created a nice and friendly atmosphere, with lots of laughter and fun.

On the last day, we walked northwards to Ustaoset, where we split up, taking the train eastwards towards Oslo or westwards towards Bergen. This was our third mountain trip organised so far. The trips have been so successful - and the participants so happy - that we shall surely continue organising similar trips. It will not be one next year, however, in 2017 the main summer attraction will be participating in a Fellowship troop at the national scout and guide jamboree.

## **Trip to Spitsbergen**

The 2015 Spitsbergen trip was so heavily overbooked that it was very quickly decided that a similar trip should be organised also in 2016. This time, it was held in the beginning of July, in order to give the participants an opportunity to experience the flowers of the short arctic summer.



*The Dryad Flower, *Dryas octopétala*, a modest little Arctic flower (Photo: Helene Tjugen Landheim)*

*The trip was fully booked, with 52 participants, five of them from Denmark. Leader and tour guide was also this time former National Fellowship President Harald B. Pettersen. The trip*

*programme was almost identical to that of the 2015 trip, with sightseeing in Longyearbyen, a boat trip to the Nordenskiöldbreen Glacier and the abandoned Russian mining town Pyramiden. The only difference was that the boat trip to Barentsburg was deleted. Instead, two half-day excursions were organized, one to see the Arctic flowers, and one to look for plant fossils in the rocks containing the Longyear-byen coal beds.*

## Foreign projects

At the Pigeon Park scout and guide campsite in Nyeri, Kenya, the Norwegian Fellowship has during the last year provided financial support for the work needed to complete the construction of the Pigeon Park Hall.



*The Pigeon Park Hall as of June 2016*

The hall is intended to be used for instruction and other indoors activities by scouts and guides, as well as by women's groups and other members of the local community. With support also from the International Ambassadors Guild, the roof has been erected, and the concrete for the floor has been reinforced and poured.



*Reinforcing and pouring the concrete floor*

Windows and doors have been installed, and plastering of the walls is ongoing, thus the building is now almost completed.



*Installing windows*

When the hall has been completed early next year, we plan to provide financial support for one of the ISGF projects in Haiti.

*Text: Knut Jorde, IS Norway*

## Peace Light 2016

The Peace Light from Bethlehem is spread throughout Norway - and the distance from Oslo to Vadsø is about the same as from Oslo to Milan (1883 /1922 km). In recent years, we have sent the Peace Light by environmentally friendly trains rather than cars, with support from an official in NSB, the Norwegian state railway company. Unfortunately, our previous procedure of transporting the flame by train has now changed, as the railway company

considers it to be too dangerous. However, the former network was intact, and the Peace Light will be spread this year by willing drivers. From Molde north to Vadsø and south to Bergen, the Peace Light is sent by the coastal steamer, Hurtigruta. Scouts and guild-members can fetch the flame at the many ports of call - something the crew are impressed by.



*The Peace Light is taken on board the coastal steamer*

Many churches use the Peace Light in services on Advent Sunday. It burns at nursing homes, on graves and outside the homes of guild members (where neighbours are welcome to fetch the flame). In Bergen on 2nd December, faith and humanist communities are to come «Together for Peace» in the ancient Mariakirken. There will be newly composed music in a gathering organised by the Church Dialogue Centre, the City Mission and St George Guilds, with support from the city council.



*Candles lit for peace in Tranby Church 2015*

*Text: Ivan Chetwynd*

## Local news

At the guild-owned scout and guide campsite at Kvernmoen, near Halden in South Easternmost Norway, a new climbing tower has now been officially opened. The tower has been built with financial support from banks and from the National Fellowship, and is expected to be very popular with scouts and guides who go there for district or group camps. It will also be available for use by the young people in the nearby communities.



*Opening ceremony of the climbing tower at the Kvernmoen campsite (Photo: Vivi Heine-Hansen)*

*Text: Knut Jorde*

## News from Sweden

### Mountain trip

Our most important activity during the first half of this year was our guild mountain-walking trip at Grövelsjön in Dalarna in the central part of Sweden. The mountains at Grövelsjön are the country's most southerly mountains. Approximately 60 people, of which two from Denmark, gathered at Grövelsjögården in the last part of August. We walked for three whole days in various groups among mountains, reindeer and a few other tourists.



*Walking in Dalarna, Central Sweden*

For each day there was a choice of two different trips, a shorter one of 4 to 6 kms and a longer one of 9 to 12 kms. Participants who could not or would not walk that far instead went on a shorter walk, or went by car to nearby Norway. On the first day, the long walk was along the Grövelsjön lake, with return by boat. One group made the trip in the opposite direction, first the boat trip outwards and then return by foot. The short walk went to the Silverfallet waterfall close to the border to Norway.



*A nice rest in the hillside*

The two other days had a similar programme. When we returned from the walks, dinner was ready. Nice not to have to make our own meal. In the evenings, we received information about the following day. The last evening, we all visited the Storsäteren Chapel, a real wilderness church, which among other things had a wooden baptismal font. In addition to a candlelight devotion, we received an information talk about Grövelsjön, how the town had developed and how the place had changed.

The weather is, naturally, important when walking. During our travel to Grövelsjön, we had a rainy and windy day. Shortly before we reached Grövelsjön, the rain stopped, and it did not return during our stay. We had perfect walking weather.



*We had nice weather*

## **Peace light 2016**

The Peace Light arrived from Denmark to Helsingborg, where a ceremony was organised, visited by many scouts and other people from Sweden and Denmark. From there it was transported to the home of Gjermund and Yvonne Austvik in Varberg. They sent it northwards to Göteborg (Gothenburg) and the areas further north. They also later handed the flame over to Johan A. Bye, who brought it to Norway.

The Swedish flame has been split into two, with one of the flames being transported northwards along the eastern coast, and one flame brought to Dalarne in Central Sweden. The former has passed Gävle, and will end up in the chapel of the Ice Hotel in Jukkasjärvi in Swedish Lapland.

## **Other activities**

In addition to this, we have spent much time on the everlasting question: How do we get new members, and how do we keep the ones we already have?

The planning of the Nordic-Baltic Gathering in Göteborg (Gothenburg) in 2018 has started and is ongoing.

*Mariana Ceder, IS Sweden (translation by K. Jorde)*