



Knitting is still very popular in Iceland

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NEWS from ICELAND

The 24th of April is an official holiday in Iceland. The day is considered to be the first day of summer. Scouts in Iceland have celebrated this day for decades by attending special masses held in various churches around the country.



Guild scouts help organize these events. In many locations groups of guild scouts sing at the ceremony and sometimes the younger scouts join us.

The St. Georgsday was held in Kopavogur this year in the building where the rescue team in the area keeps its equipment and cars. A young, charismatic woman introduced the key activities the rescue team is involved in. Many members in the rescue team are former scouts. After the presentation we had coffee and „real“ cakes. Friends met and could talk and sing together and the St. Georgs messages was read. The day was very enjoyable. Special thanks to Karl Otto Mayer for his messages.



Hamrar

During the period 20th-27th of July 2014 there will be a National camp at Hamrar near Akureyri, our camping site in the north. The guilds have already started to organise some agenda items that they will support or contribute to the camp.



The next copy of our newsletter Bálíð (The Campfire) will be published on our website (stgildi.is) soon. Printing cost is getting too expensive for us, since our members are not so many, so we will limit ourselves to the online version in the future.

Our best news this spring is that a new guild has been established in Hafnarfjörður (town close to Reykjavík, in the southwest corner of Iceland)



The name of the guild is Skýjaborgir (Cloud City) and it is named after a scout hut that does not exist anymore. The new guild has just over 30 members, mostly young people around 25 to 50 years old. We expect that this guild will be prosperous in the future.

Þorvaldur Sigmarsson (Doddi) a guild scout in Kópavogur was recently honored by the scout chief Bragi Björnsson. Þorvaldur has been a district leader for the scouts in Kópavogur for more than 20 years and has been very active in many ways.



The mayor of Kópavogur town brought best wishes from the town council and wished the scouts all the best. We are very proud of Þorvaldur.



NEWS from DENMARK

ISGF UNHCR Fellowship Toy Project , what are we doing?

It has been difficult to get information about how to work with UNHCR and how to get the toys delivered.



Denmark contacted UNHCR in Stockholm, who knew nothing about the agreement with ISGF.

Sweden and Finland have not got any answer from UNHCR in Stockholm (February). Finland has learnt that small parcels can be delivered through channels in Paris, France.

Denmark subsequently contacted AWB in Germany, but was told that the children were too weak to play, they were struggling to survive. Then the Turkish Red Crescent was contacted, from where it was informed that it is difficult to deliver toys directly to refugee camps in e.g. Turkey, because they are so afraid of infections. Our ISGF vice chair had given the advice that the

toys can be given to children's homes in different countries, where the need is big.

Guild members of Denmark were keen on the idea of supporting refugee children with toys and our International committee then decided to join a well-known project in Romania, supporting children's homes. The project has been running for 20 years + and is a very well organized and recognized project.

The first lot was sent off in April and the second lot will be sent in September, 2014.



It has been depressing to learn how difficult it has been getting the project started, but on the other hand very pleasing to read about the success from the UK. It was noted that UK works together with a museum to which the toys can be delivered and the museum takes care of delivery and cost, because they had received a grant for US 6,000 and asked people delivering toys to pay 150 pounds for shipment. And the latest post at the ISGF home page even talks about several organisations working together on this project.

Quite a different concept.



Jutland, Denmark

NBSR Gathering in Denmark 2015

The town of Horsens lies at the end of Horsens Fjord in eastern Jutland, 50 km South of Aarhus and approximately 200 km from Copenhagen.



There is a train connection from Kastrup, as well as an airport in Billund. The Hotel is often used by the Danish Fellowship. A working group will soon be appointed to start planning the program. The first general assembly was held at the very same spot back in 1955.

Anne Haastrup-Nielsen, IS, Denmark

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NEWS from FINLAND

After recovering from our joint NBSR-project, the 8th Europe Region Conference, Finland celebrated Fellowship Day and ISGFs 60th anniversary with a dinner in Jyväskylä in Central Finland.



One of the first scout groups in Finland was started at the Jyväskylän Lyseo, an old college in the city. Dinner speaker Erkki Fredrikson from the Central-Finland Museum presented the history of scouting in Jyväskylä and Finland in a very captivating manner.

Earlier in the afternoon, we had Skype-contact with ISGF and several NSGF's in celebration of the 60th anniversary.

The guilds in Finland participated this year for the first time in the Peace Light from Bethlehem. The Peace Light has been coming to Finland for several years, but only to the western coast and only the scouts and guides have participated. The guilds were not as eager as we had hoped, but a few guilds joined and the Peace Light was a part of several different events the last two weeks before and during Christmas time.



One special event was the mass early on Christmas Day at the Karuna church in the Seurasaari outdoor museum in Helsinki.



A sea-scout group in Helsinki has arranged early mass on Christmas Day in this museum church since the late 1940 and from now on the Peace Light will be a part of it. Hopefully, the path of the Peace Light will grow longer and wider this coming Christmas.



Last year two new guilds were started in Finland, one in Kyyjärvi in Central Finland and one in Pori on the west coast. But due to the increasing age of our elder members and consequent “closing down” of some old guilds, the number of guild members did still not rise. Even if several old guilds are living a quiet life, others are very active and taking part in charity events, arranging outings, helping the local scouts and guides, partaking in scout camps and above all, finding

joy and togetherness through scouting and guild activities.

The Fellowship of Scouts and Guides of Finland arranged its annual General Meeting in Helsinki on March 21st-22nd 2014.



The meeting took place at Cultural Centre Sofia, which is owned by a foundation within the orthodox church and comprises a congress center and hotel as well as a beautiful orthodox chapel and a small monastery-like community. The arrangement started on Friday afternoon with a joint program in the guild spirit, including a lecture around the theme “The positive influence of scouting in studies and working life”. The new strategy of the Fellowship in Finland was presented. Later we had an evening program with entertainment, music and scout songs. Three guests from Sweden visited our meeting. On Saturday we had the official General Meeting with audition of finances, approval of the new strategy plan and work program for this year as well as election of board members.

In the beginning of June, the Fellowship of Scouts and Guides of Finland will take part in the Finnish Scout Associations great Assembly in Kouvola in Eastern Finland. There we will have our own meeting as well as taking part in the official program like the Gillwell meeting.



We have got our new home page working and you can read more about our activities on www.spyp.fi not only in Finnish but also in Swedish and English.

Liv Aure Olli
IS, Finland

NEWS from LITHUANIA

No news this time.



NEWS from SWEDEN

The 8th European Conference (4-8/9 2013) was hosted by the Nodic Baltic Sub Region (NBSR) and the theme was 'Crossing Borders'. We were 180 participants from 20 countries.

The meeting started at the old school Norra Latin that is now 'City Conference Center' where the opening ceremony was led by Gunilla Engvall. The opening speaker was former Prime Minister of Norway Kjell Magne Bondevik. There were a lot of discussions regarding some of the motions. Gjermund Austvik (Sweden) was re-elected as Auditor and Doris Stockman (Finland) will be NBSR's representative in the European Committee. You will read more in the coming protocol.

The second day of the meeting continued at the ship Mariella that was headed for Helsingfors in Finland. Almost every country had a presentation of good projects that been done during the years.

The third day we arrived in Helsinki/Helsingfors and there were a lot of guided trips to choose from. A nice warm and sunny day with a lot of meetings with old and new friends. Some of us continued back to Stockholm at the evening and arrived there early next morning.



France invited us all to Val de Loire (UNESCO world heritage) for the next European Conference 2016.



During winter we've started a member growth project. We've started at the southeast of Sweden

since we saw that there was an empty spot at the map. After sending letters, a follow up by telephone calls and meetings, there is a possibility of 2 new guilds starting during the year. Now we will continue in other parts of the country.



At the last meeting before summer our LGR (board) met in Gothenburg. At the evening we went to Liseberg (amusement park) and engaged ourselves in a pentathlon (5 kamp). It was a close call of who were winning – we all won at the end. At this time of the year the park is full of tulips and other spring flowers, in wonderful colours.



NEWS from NORWAY

Why not visit Norway this summer? You will be welcome at the YWCA-YMCA scouts' national jamboree at Asker, not far from Oslo, 2nd-9th August. The guilds will be represented by a guild troop, which will run "Hotelt", providing simple overnight accommodation for visitors to the camp. On Sunday 3rd August at 13:00 guild members from much of Southern Norway will meet for a get-together, including a talk on Norway's constitution, which is 200 years old this year.



From celebration on 17th of May in Oslo

Norwegian society has changed in the last 200 years, and has not least become multi-cultural. And scouting in a multi-cultural society will be the main theme at the bi-annual meeting for guild masters in September.

The Scout Law has also changed over the years. In Norway the scout associations are in the process of making a new version. The process involves thorough research and an extensive period of hearings, in which guild members have taken part.



The most controversial question is §1. In the 1960s a paragraph on "openness for God" was introduced. There are three proposals for revising this, and the guilds' leadership has supported one that resembles the scout law in Denmark and Sweden, "A scout seeks his/her faith and respects others' (faiths)".



The experience of the year for over 30 guild members was celebrating Founders' Day with 30 000 scouts and guides at Baden Powell's grave in Kenya.



National president Karin Thompson laid down a wreath. Contact with Nyeri and the the Scout Centre will continue in cooperation with the Scout Museum in Oslo.



Tree set to grow in the BP- garden remembering the Norwegian visit

The guilds in Norway are continuing to spread BP's thoughts through the booklet "Gamle tanker - nye vyer" – "Old thoughts new visions" which has now been translated into English and French. An Arabic edition is under way. "How God must laugh at the little differences that we men set up amongst ourselves under the camouflage of religion, politics, patriotism or class, to the neglect of the greater tie - that of Brotherhood in the Human Family."

Have a happy summer!
Ivan Chetwynd post@sgg.n.no



This is Alkf Runar Bakke, Norway, candidate for election to the World Committee.

Today Alf Runar Bakke leads a large and active St George Guild and has former been the Chief Scout of Norway.

May I wish you all a happy summer!

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editor