



# NEWSLETTER

## December 2017

European IFYE Alumni



*German Autumn Meeting in Switzerland*

## Content of the Newsletter

- Greetings from the Board
  - Switzerland - here we are... again!
  - UK Young Farmers' Ambassadors 61st Annual Reunion
  - Swedish IFYE Annual Meeting
  - Invitation to Northern Ireland 2018
  - Congrats to...
-

## Greetings from the Board



Dear IFYE-friends,

Today is the 1st of Advent, in Sweden we put up stars and candleholders in the windows. I love this time of the year, for after some dark months people put the light back. It also gives me a feeling of peace and start of something new.

So take time to contemplation and enjoy the time towards Christmas and don't get up to much in everything you have always done and shopping. I think the best thing we can give as Christmas gift is time. Give time to be together with your family, to do things with people you like and to someone who has a hard time.



We go into a new year, a year that hopefully will give us all

lots of joy. A year where we will celebrate the IFYE organisation in Europe. I am already looking forward to the conference in Northern Ireland and I hope to see you all there. I am looking forward to see the work the Anniversary group has done, lots of memories have been written down. And I am looking forward to working with the board under 2018.

So to all of you my warmest greetings  
Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Best regards,

Your president,  
Anna Persson  
IFYE from Sweden to Scotland 1991

## Switzerland – here we are... again!



*written by Bettina Heinemann (IFYE from Germany to USA 1998), pictures from Katharina Steinrücke*

Friends were asking: What are you doing for the “long weekend” around Oct 3rd? (Germany's National day is on Oct. 3rd – and as it was a Tuesday this year, a lot of people were planning on a long weekend)

My answer was: I am going to Switzerland!

Next question: Again? Haven't you been there this summer for some kind of an “IFYE thing”?

My answer: Yes that is correct, but I am going for the this year's German IFYE Fall Meeting again to Switzerland.

Now they were confused. They are used to IFYE and they also know, that I travel a lot because of IFYE reasons, but having a German meeting in Switzerland, how could this happen?

That happened, because of Hans Gfeller. Who is a Swiss IFYE, but also a member of the German IFYE Association, invited us for “Switzerland Part II”.

Also this invitation gave us (at this time Gesche Köhler, Christine Relke and me) the chance to travel a few days earlier and visit some Swiss IFYEs and their families at home. We did a very little IFYE-Exchange from Germany to Switzerland and had the chance to see how Regula Pünter-Berli, Andreas Lehmann, Adrian Marti and Peter Gautschi live and work. After visiting them, the idea about a “Senior IFYE Exchange” is growing in my mind. I really would like to go on exchange again, and I think, I choose Switzerland! I will be retired in 2042 and then I have time for that!!!

After spending these wonderful days with our IFYE friends, we traveled to Interlaken, to spend more days with more IFYE friends. On Friday night we met at the Youth Hostel with around 50 IFYEs from Germany and Switzerland. Deona Johnston, our this year's incoming IFYE from Colorado, USA was also with us.

Hans' Theme for this weekend was: Water, Mountains, Caverns and Culture!

Well – yes – we got all of that!

We started on Saturday morning to KWO Grimselwelt and learned how water is used for running power plants and produce electrical energy with that. Already the way to KWO was one highlight of the day, because the bus took us through a beautiful landscape. Especially



someone like me, who is absolutely not used to mountains, because the only “mountain” at home is the dyke, was impressed by the mountains and the qualification of a Swiss bus driver!

Back in the valley we took the “steepest cable railway of Europe” up, to see the Gelmersee. If you ever have the chance to do that – do it!!! What a trip with the cable railway, what a lake, what a watercolour!



To make sure, that we got another highlight, Hans had organized, that we walk through the Aareschlucht (Aare Gorge). Over thousands of years, the Aare River eroded a path through this rock formation resulting in a gorge which is 1'400 metres long and up to 200 metres deep. Amazing!

Back at the Youth Hostel, we were celebrating Irmi and Jürgen Wiegands 50th Wedding anniversary, were singing to two Neele (Heinemann) & Mike Haye and Eveline (Gfeller) & Adrian Liechti who have had their wedding this summer and then we sang to Frieder Erbacher who had his 60th IFYE anniversary this year. As you can see – we had a lot of reasons for having a party.

Sunday morning we visited the St. Beatus Caves. To reach the cave, we had to walk up quite a steep walkway – but the view of the Lake Tune, where the cave is located, was a good excuse for that!

This time, Hans had asked Swiss IFYEs to be our drivers and after visiting the Beatus Caves, they drove us to Beatenburg Station.

There we took another cable car up to the top of Europe, the “Niederhorn”. While having our lunch out there, we enjoyed the beautiful view “over the mountains”.



Down in the valley our drivers drove us to Oberhofen, to visit the “Swiss Clock and mechanical Music Instruments Museum”.

After having the “outdoor activities” in the morning and arriving at the museum a little after noon, it was a bit hard to follow our guide through this very interesting little museum. Our tour ended in a “Concert Hall” where mechanical Music Instruments were playing a concert to us.

Those of us, who were interested, had now the chance to take a tour through the Castle of Oberhofen. Others walked in the park and had some ice cream or coffee.

During the day, we have already figured out, that Dory Wiemann & the family of Hans were preparing something for the group in Hans’ Apartment at Lake Tune. Now it was time to find out, what they prepared – and to find out how big Hans apartment is, if he is able to invite 50 IFYEs to this place.... As you can imagine: It is big!!! After having a “Apero” on his patio, where all of us found room, and if necessary, another 20, we sat down in his living room and had a delicious meal. Starting with a pumpkin soup, followed by salads and sausage and ended with a dessert buffet. To continue with the Saturday night, the “Gfeller Family” gave a concert with keyboard, guitar und their voice and after seconds with the voices of 50 IFYEs. It seems, that Hans lives in a good neighbourhood (– or we gave a great concert?), because no one called or rang at the doorbell, to complain the noise what we made.

After these entertaining weekend, on Monday we could do what we wanted. There were different options, like sightseeing in Interlaken, doing Paragliding, visiting a Market or whatever we felt for. Some of us had to leave already in Monday, so like I am. Most of the group stayed until Tuesday and had the chance to enjoy one more day the area around Lake Tune and Interlaken.

Thank you to Hans Gfeller & Family and the Swiss IFYEs who organized this weekend!

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## **UK Young Farmers' Ambassadors 61st**

### **Annual Reunion**

*written by Margaret Khnichich (IFYE from Scotland to Australia 1984)*

Some 150 old and new friends gathered in Taunton, Somerset in the south of England for a fun-filled weekend. In keeping with longstanding tradition Friday evening meant Fancy Dress. “Wear Where You Were” produced a wide variety including Canadian Mounties, American Indians, an early visit from Santa Claus and gave Mo a chance to wear his Moroccan Djelaba!

Saturday dawned bright and fresh and off we went to visit the unique town that is

Glastonbury. Unfortunately the wrong time of year for the famous music festival but an informative tour of the historic Abbey and the local culture. The “hippy” age lives on here – the odd man walking up the street in bare feet, shops with vintage clothes and everything a spiritualist or crystal healer might need. Not to mention a couple of dogs with Rasta dreadlocks! The evening gave us another opportunity to sample the local speciality – the area is famous for its high quality cider. After the formal dinner the theme continued with the Mangledwurzels treating us to their particular brand of local music and song.



The serious business passed smoothly on Sunday morning and then we were off to try our hand at “skittles” (bit of a medieval version of 10 pin bowling). What was lacking in technique was made up for in enthusiasm! And for some that enthusiasm carried over into the evening when skills were tested again with the West Country Morris Dancing troupe - hopping around, waving their hankies, banging their sticks and ringing their bells.

A big thank you to Tony and his team for a great weekend. A good time was had by all!

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## Swedish IFYE Annual Meeting

*written by Marianne Svensson (IFYE from Sweden to Scotland/England 1973)*

Another amazing IFYE weekend has passed. This year Stockholm IFYEs hosted around 40 members for our yearly autumn gathering with lots of laughs mixed with serious discussions and still more serious competitions and quizzes.

Friday night started up with welcome hugs, catching up since we met last time and sharing memories from last summer’s Switzerland week. Fia and Karl-Erik gave us a slide show from The European conference last summer. We were served good soup and a presentation of Södertälje.





Saturday morning started with a long breakfast, with “Ring så spelar vi” when Bibbi, alias Lisa Syren, phoned dazed IFYEs, interviewed them, let them solve difficult questions and wish a melody. Then we visited Saltå kvarn, a Swedish food business owned by antroposophic foundations, selling more than 150 ecological products from all over the world. The guide was very enthusiastic and seemed a bit surprised by all questions she got from interested IFYEs. They buy grain and milk from Swedish ecologic farms and have their own dairy and grinder. Their grinder can be seen from the motorway. Of course we had the morning “fika” with coffee and wheat buns at their café and filled our bags with flour, musli, raisins, figs, almonds, nuts, oil, vinegar, artichokes and beetroots from the shop.

The afternoon was filled with different activities in true IFYE spirit. Beautiful autumn weather, grilling sausages, making table decorations, walk-and-talk with a quiz walk and discussions of how we can develop our IFYE exchange and cooperation with 4H. We also tested our species skills, trying to identify all sorts of plants, herbs, handicrafts, tools and materials.



A fancy dress party with harvest theme and a delicious buffet ended the day. People turned up in fancy hats, necklaces, earrings and dresses. Birgitta and her guitar led the singalong and we had a very nice evening.

Sunday morning - time for the serious part, our annual meeting. Marianne Revai-Karlsson was reelected as chairman for next year. How to get a better cooperation with 4H, responsibility of finding host families and how to attract the younger IFYEs to be more active are some of our challenges today. The board together with all members must be engaged in this work. Many of us look forward to the European conference in N. Ireland next year. A few are also registrated for the world conference, cruising to Alaska. Next autumn we all meet again in Skåne.

Thank you Bibbi, Åsa, Karin, Katarina and all other Stockholm IFYEs who helped them to give us all a splendid weekend!

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## Invitation to Northern Ireland 2018



Dear IFYE friends around the world,

As Christmas approaches we are working hard at putting together next year's programme and we look forward to saying 'Fair fa ye' (welcome in Ulster-Scots) and 'Céad Míle Fáilte' (a hundred thousand welcomes in Gaelic) when you reach the Emerald Isle.

We plan to show you a wide range of aspects of life in Northern Ireland with trips to Belfast, Derry/Londonderry, the North Coast and other rural communities but if you are planning a longer stay and want to explore a little further yourself check out

[www.discovernorthernireland.com](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com) for more information. As soon as our trips have been confirmed, hopefully by early January, we will send you a link so you can go on-line and make your choices. N.B. Some trips will have limited numbers and may book up early.

***Registrations are well underway for next year with two thirds of rooms already reserved so if you want to secure your place please go to [www.ifye2018.com](http://www.ifye2018.com) and send us your details as soon as possible. You have until 31st March 2018 to pay your fee.***



In the meantime we will keep updating the website and the facebook page with information about the conference and Northern Ireland in general which we hope will be useful to you.

Merry Christmas, Nollaig Shona, Blythe Yuletide and we'll see you next year!

**[www.ifye2018.com](http://www.ifye2018.com)**

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## **Congrats to...**

### **Willie Annett**

*IFYE from Northern Ireland to the Netherlands 1997*

Willie and Karen married on 20th October 2017.



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**Deadline next issue: 28th February 2018**

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#### **European IFYE Alumni Association**

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