



NEWSLETTER

September 2019

European IFYE Alumni



IFYE Conference in Norway 2019

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Greetings from the President

It is the first time for me to write some words for the newsletter, as president of the European IFYE Alumni board. It is a real pleasure for me. We all enjoyed a fantastic week in Norway of catching up with old, not so old, and making new friends.



We were blessed with some typical and not so typical Norwegian weather, a stunning location with a great view over some areas of Hamar. The program was packed full with interesting things, which also allowed us to enjoy some of the Norwegian magnificent countryside, food and drinks. Some of us had the opportunity to do hiking at Øyungento and see an amazing part of Norway.

I participated in that activity and it was a unique experience. Some brave ones, jumped in a lake in Ringsaker, and swam in fresh, approximately 15°C water. I wasn't that brave, but one Estonian lady and some boys from Switzerland and Scotland did it. Guess who?

One afternoon we did a wonderful boat trip, with some live singing. This was also a unique impression for me. I really enjoyed the whole week!



I like to say Thank you to the Norwegian team for that they hosted the conference and for their outstanding hard work, day & night! I am sure they spent days in bed afterwards!

Thanks once again for that memorable week!

At the Annual General Meeting, there were a number of changes in the composition of the Executive Committee. We expressed appreciation to Anna Person (Sweden) who did a brilliant job as President over the last 4 years and to Linda Steele (Scotland) who retired as Secretary, after 6 years, for all her fantastic work. I hope to catch up with Mrs. Ex- President and Mrs. Retired Secretary on one of the next conferences in future, and maybe dance a little....

Anna, Linda, I'm grateful for your support after my start as 1st Vice President in 2015.



Mari Kindsbekken (Norway) was elected as new Secretary for a 2 year term. We also welcomed Sam Hawkes (Northern Ireland) as 1st Vice President and Christine Cooper (England) as 2nd Vice President to the Executive Committee. Ursula Spillmann (Switzerland) continues as Treasurer and Nora Feyder (Luxembourg) continues as our Newsletter Editor. I believe it's a great team to take IFYE forward into the future. Wait for the newsletter in December to learn more about the



This year we had the pleasure to welcome a new country within the IFYE – family. Slovenia has started the IFYE program in 2017. In 2018, the first exchanges went to Switzerland and communication with the European IFYE Alumni association started. In October 2018 I had a meeting with the Slovenian IFYE leaders Rok and Anja in Maribor. This year we could welcome 4 Slovenian IFYEs at the conference.

I will always remember the conference in Norway - for sure because of the fantastic location, program & team but also because of you, my dearest friends. I was so happy to see you there and talk to most of you. Sorry that I couldn't talk to everyone, but more conferences will come. Many thanks, once again!

August and September went by very fast and normal life is back – so I wish all of you a fantastic late summer & fall and do not forget: the next conference is coming soooooooooooooooooooooon.

England – Lancashire – 2020 – be part of it!!

Kind regards
Your president,
Andreas Poelzl
IFYE from Austria to the USA, 2000

European IFYE Conference 2019

Viking adventures of the Pre-Conference

written by Effingham Embree (IFYE from USA to Australia 1969)



Our trip to Norway was a Heritage trip for our family. Anita, who grew up in Minnesota, comes from 100% Norwegian ancestry. Our daughter, Annalea, was on a Norske Exchange in 1995. Our son, Edward, has been fascinated by Viking history and legend since childhood.

While attending the European Conference in Switzerland two years ago, we made the firm decision to attend, if possible, the IFYE Conference in Norway. When Tomas Gunnarsson, whom we have known from previous conferences, announced a Pre-conference with a Viking history theme in the Trondheim area, it became a "must do".



The first couple days we spent in Oslo with Larry Zilliox (MN) and Sallie Narhi (MI), visiting important sites like the Nobel Peace Memorial and Viking Ship Museum. We were joined in Trondheim for the Pre-Conference by fellow American IFYEs, Ellen Paine (CT), Ruth Trail (WA), and Linda Pursley (MA). The first day in Trondheim we went downtown to the Cathedral and other important places like the famous "bike lift". The second day we had a wonderful welcome and "FIKA" at the beautiful home of Tomas and Malfrid. In the evening we proceeded to the Stiklestad National Cultural Center near Verdal. There, we were joined by our fellow IFYE and great historian and guide extraordinaire, Johannes Sollid.



The first night we had a great introduction to the Viking Past in the Long House on top of the hill. The professional orientation of what they have discovered and can now substantiate about the Vikings based on archaeological evidence was fascinating and enlightening.



The next day Johannes took us on a fantastic tour of the area explaining how landslides of enormous proportion shaped the area. We also visited an interesting farm with a micro brewery. The day was highlighted by a wonderful lunch of all locally produced products on a small mountain overlooking the whole area.

That evening we had a Viking eight course dinner in historical accurate reproduction of a farm house of that era back at Stiklestad. Wow, as if that weren't enough, we enjoyed great scenery and another great lunch in the mountains on the way to Hamar.

The last surprise for us came at the Venabygd Church on the road to Hamar. Just before Ringeby, Tomas and Johannes had arranged a surprise meeting in the churchyard for Anita to meet her 4th cousins, Asgeir Haugstad and sister, Anne.



It we had been 20 years since we met them on our first trip to Norway. It was great to see them again and identify some of Anita's ancestors buried in the cemetery. We had lost contact with Asgeir over the years, but through the efforts of Tomas and Hilde Hjelt, we were able to reconnect.



I know I can speak for everyone who participated in the Pre-conference when I say that we are forever thankful to Tomas, Johannes and all the other people who worked behind the scenes to plan, carryout the Pre-conference which was a very important and enjoyable part of our overall Norwegian IFYE Conference experience. It was really great and in the true IFYE spirit. Thanks to all.

A Newcomer's experience



written by Laure De Fontaines (IFYE from France to the USA 2015)

The idea to go to the conference in Norway wasn't actually mine but my dad's. And he was right : it was an experience you should make at least once in your IFYE-life.

First, I wasn't very convinced to participate because I thought that It would be pretty hard to find someone to talk to or to share your thoughts with. But I was entirely wrong.

Just upon arrival, I found some very cool people who showed me to my room. They also gave me a tour of the school campus where we were staying all week. I was glad to see that I was sharing my room with another girl. She helped me to meet other people and to integrate faster - very kind and friendly.



All the workshops planned on the first day were such a good idea to help getting to know other IFYE members. I am only 18, so I probably was the youngest IFYE newcomer attending the conference. I was scared to only meet people who were much older than me, going to bed very early... But, in fact, I actually went to sleep earlier than everyone else because that week was not a vacation at all!



I mean, it was very cool because we did a lot of different activities each day, like selling raffle tickets (which also helped us, as newcomers, to talk to the other IFYE members), hiking in the (flat but very wonderful) mountains, playing some games... All of this added to the parties in the evenings, made me understand that the IFYE association is far from being a bored one. Even though the majority of the other members were older than me, I really enjoyed that week!

written by Christof Badertscher (IFYE from Switzerland to the USA 2017)

There was always something going during the week of the IFYE conference in Norway! Indeed, a lot of interesting things happened: For instance, I learned how to throw horseshoes and how to handle a lasso. Sometimes, you even win a beer for your dancing skills.



During the day we made exciting excursions. I especially liked the hike in Øyungen and the farm visits to Helgoya.

You quickly get in touch with people from all over the world and learn interesting things about different countries. For me, the highlight of the week was the boat trip with wonderful live music on the lake Mjøsa.



So all in all, my first IFYE conference was real fun and I am already looking forward to the next conference!



written by Johannes König (IFYE from Austria to the USA & Scotland, 2008 & 2014)

What a fantastic week I had as a newcomer at the European Conference this summer! Eleven years after my first exchange, I finally made it to this very unique event about which I had already heard so many fun stories.



On the first day, we met for some hilarious ice-breaking activities, which turned out to be way more competitive than expected. During the following days we have been out in the beautiful Norwegian countryside for hiking, visiting sights, farms, distilleries, interesting companies and other wonderful places. I won't forget jumping into the fresh and clear lake Mjøsa, which was freezing but very effective to recover from the long nights before.



Throughout the week, all the newcomers had to sell raffle tickets as well as mastering a highly complex square dance, which we finally performed on stage. It was great fun to be part of such a big group of newcomers going through the stage of being a “baby IFYE” together.

Beside all the nice trips and activities, the greatest experience was meeting all the nice people. It was a true pleasure getting to know each and every one. I believe it is easily possible to have a two-hour talk with everybody at the conference, since there are so many interesting and exciting life stories to share. Everyone is valuable and contributes to this exceptional IFYE spirit, which leads not only to unique opportunities but also to true friendship.



I am deeply grateful to be part of the IFYE alumni world now. Thank you for attending and organizing this conference and making all those wonderful moments and memories possible. See you next year in England!



written by Vida Ogrinec (IFYE from Slovenia to Switzerland 2017)

This year, Slovenia has been represented for first time at an IFYE conference. In 2018, we started implementing IFYE exchanges. So we are so glad that we were able to attend the conference in Norway.

I liked the conference, because it gives you the chance to meet a lot of people, get to know a different culture, try out new things and make new contacts. What is for me the most important thing, is that the emphasis is not on formality but more on socializing and having fun together. I believe, we were all enjoying the week in Norway, had a lot of fun and made many new friends. So you'll see us again at the next conferences!



written by Nikolaos Chakis (IFYE from Greece to the USA 1997)

This year was my first IFYE Conference ever attended. When I firstly applied, I didn't really know what to expect. I was going to a new country, attending a conference without knowing anything about it or anyone of the other participants. Those thoughts threw me back to 1997, at my first IFYE experience. It was the same feeling, except that I was a bit younger at that time. Preparations for my trip started and, in the process, I realized that Jon, one of my fellow IFYEs from 1997 in North Dakota, would be there, too. That was a relief despite the fact that we had never met again since 1997.



Arriving in Hamar, I got a warm welcome from the organizing committee and this made me feel more comfortable. People were introducing themselves to me which made everything a lot easier for me. After a while I met Jon. He hasn't changed at all. He started introducing me as his little IFYE brother to other participants, although due to our size difference it was funny. But everybody had an interest to welcome me and have a chat.



The activities started right the next day. In the icebreaking games, I think we were the worst team but I still enjoyed it. Climbing was possibly a bit more challenging for me. The visits to the farms were very interesting. I have to admit that I regret that I missed the cooking over the fire.

I was impressed by people approaching me and asking me to join them for a drink or a dance. Not to forget the dancing we had to do as newcomers. I tried to hide but I ended it up in the very front row. I was even invited in a country meeting and that was good laugh as well.

I have much more to write but my the strongest memory from this experience is that the IFYE spirit, even after so many years of my absence, was still there for me. I want to thank everybody for their warm welcome and I will meet my new IFYE friends at the coming conferences.

The second conference after more than 60 years

written by James Gooch (IFYE from the USA to Italy, 1958)

In 1958, about halfway through the summer of my IFYE trip to Italy, Mauro Chiabrando escorted the two of us Americans to Dinant Belgium. On the way there, we passed through Paris where we had to walk a considerable distance from one

train station to the other to continue our trip to Belgium. We detoured just long enough to go up to the second level of the Eiffel tower before continuing on to Belgium.

There was being held there a study seminar to present the various provisions of the recently formed European common market and there were possibly 300 in attendance. 13 of which were European IFYE alumni who had gotten together for their first alumni conference, and we two Americans were privileged to be a part of that. The daytime hours were pretty well filled with the study sessions but in the evening, we IFYEs found things to do around town, visiting a few places that furnished some kinds of entertainment. I don't really remember how many places we visited, we just scrolled around town a lot I remember.

One day we went up on the cliff where there was an old castle or fort or something of that nature and visited it. A couple of those pictures that I shared in the last newsletter, were taken up there high above the city. I remember the group having a business meeting or two and that it was interesting listening to them discuss the various matters they were concerned with. Little did I know at that time that this was going to be an ongoing annual event for them and that I would be privileged to be included in another one some 61 years later. After the common market study session was ended we went down the river to Namur, then on to Brussels where we spent two days at the world fair being held there. We pretty much went our separate ways during the day observing the various facilities but in the evening we were back together again as IFYEs finding various things to do and finding places of entertainment. We stuck together as a group pretty much during a lot of our free time.

As for a comparison between the conference back then and what it has become now, well you can't even compare the two. We were a small group in Belgium and enjoyed each other's company and making our acquaintances. The conference in Norway with so many people, so many wonderful activities, tours the farm visits and all of that was really an interesting event for me. It was so different from the US conferences mainly in the fact that so many younger people were in attendance where our group in the US has a lot of gray hair. What I appreciated most about the conference in Norway: well aside from the fact that I was able to be reacquainted with my old friend Johannes but indeed saddened to hear that my friend Ingaborg was deceased, I guess my answer to that would be ,”the week in Norway “, was what I appreciated the most.

Silver Pin and Golden Certificate



Silver Pin

Elsebeth Ulnits (Denmark, IFYE in 1982)
 Marja Tiiri (Finland, IFYE in 1989)
 Shirley Walker (Northern Ireland, IFYE in 1994)
 Philip Walker (Northern Ireland, IFYE in 1994)
 Linda Steele (Northern Ireland, IFYE in 1994)
 Elaine Mowat (Scotland, IFYE in 1988)
 Elizabeth Renwick (Scotland, IFYE in 1975)
 Målfrid Fuglås (Norway, IFYE in 1982)
 Knut Herren Vognild (Norway, IFYE in 1989)
 Thomas Johansson (Sweden, IFYE in 1987)
 Annemarie Aeberhard (Sweden, IFYE in 1990)

Golden Certificate

Lieselotte Bolländer (Germany, IFYE in 1969)
 Elizabeth Miller (Scotland, IFYE in 1969)
 Bengt Gunnarsson (Sweden, IFYE in 1968)
 Ann-Charlott Öhman (Sweden, IFYE in 1968)
 Arne Jönhill (Sweden, IFYE in 1969)

Invitation to England 2020



EUROPEAN IFYE CONFERENCE

LANCASHIRE, ENGLAND

8th – 15th August 2020

We would like to invite you to the 62nd European IFYE Conference. The conference will be held at Myerscough College, Bilsborrow, Preston, Lancashire in the North-West of England which is 47miles (75km) from Manchester airport.

The conference will be held from Saturday 8th August to Saturday 15th August 2020.

We are planning a week of activities and trips based on the theme of “Farming, Food and Fun”. This will be an opportunity to see the best of Lancashire farming and food producers together with visits to the Lake District, Cumbria and Yorkshire.

Registration will open on 1st November for the European IFYEs, and in January for IFYE’s from the rest of the world.

In the meantime, if you have any questions please contact the organising team by email: info@IFYE2020.com

We look forward to seeing you in England next year.



Invitation to Swiss Ski Weekend

ifye swiss winterweekend

10.-12.01.2020



Klewenalp NW

More information: <http://www.ifye.ch/aktuell/agenda>

or: zuberei@bluewin.ch +41 79 962 11 32

Registration until 03. January 20: zuberei@bluewin.ch +41 79 962 11 32



Congrats to...



Anita

IFYE from Austria Scotland 2007

&

Jens Huntemann

IFYE from Germany to Finland 2015

The registry office took place on the 22nd June 2019 in Anita's home town in Austria.

Deadline next issue: 30th December 2019

European IFYE Alumni Association

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IFYE Europe Newsletter – September 2019

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