



# NEWSLETTER

October 2020

European IFYE Alumni



*German IFYEs defying the crisis*

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## Greetings from the President

Grias di and hello,

This year we had a unique summer. You can say what you want, but summer 2020 will be in the history books for even longer. I hope you had a good time and enjoyed the warm season.



Considering the special situation, my family and I had decided to take a vacation by the sea this year. Out front, we all spent the vacation without infection.

So, it happened that we rented a small bungalow about 100 meters from the beach in Rosalina (located about 80km south of Venice, in the Po - Delta). We spent 14 wonderful days at the sea, swimming, cycling and wave hopping.

The rules on social distancing could be respected in every situation without any problems and the wearing of mouth-nose protections was no barrier to enjoy the vacation. The mouth-nose protection had to be worn only if the minimum distance of 1 meter could not be kept.

During our vacation, I also discovered the next James Bond actor. Do you remember Daniel Craig when he came out of the sea in Casino Royal.... the same scene happened in front of me.... Awesome. Daniel Craig, is nothing against this young man.... see for yourself and be amazed.

We had a great vacation and came back relaxed on 12.09 because school started again on 14.09 in Austria.



I hope everyone of you had a nice summer and found a few days to relax. We are all challenged every day and we will have to live with the current restrictions for even longer. I personally think that we will have an effective vaccine by May - June 2021. From then on, the situation will slowly start to settle down. So today I expect that we will meet again on August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at the "Conference 2020" to spend a fantastic week.

At the first conference evening planned for this year, we had an online quiz. I was very pleased that so many people took part in that special event. Helen and Sam organized some quizzes this year. Thank you very much for your efforts and maybe we could include a quiz in the conference 2021? Let's look ahead and look forward to 2021, when everything starts to normalize again. In 2022 we will have another great week in Finland and in 2023 the next world conference will be held in Austria. The accommodation in Austria has been booked in the meantime. It will take place near Klagenfurt in the south of Austria.

Now there are only about 9 weeks left until Christmas and I am looking forward to it. This year it will be different from what we are used to, but it will still be unique. To see the joy in the children's eyes when the lights on the Christmas tree are on. I am looking forward to this special time of the year. Dear friends, I wish you a beautiful autumn and stay healthy. We will see each other again in England, in August 2021 and we will have a great time together.

Until the next newsletter and all the best.

Best wishes

Andi

IFYE from Austria to the USA, 2000

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## IFYEs traveling together at all times

*written by Katharina Steinrücke (IFYE from Germany to USA, 1982)*

Dear IFYE friends!

These special times require special actions.

Actually, many of us would be together at the conference in England right now, at the moment when this is written. Unfortunately, we miss out on that special event this year, but we are really looking forward to the coming year.

After we "behaved properly" and the number of infections did not increase so much over the summer here, we could no longer stand it. Eva (Singer) asked on the Hesselberg (2014) whether they could accommodate a small group. After a short consultation with our year-long travel group, we quickly agreed and met in the most beautiful sunshine. At first everyone reminisced, then Eva spread the program ..... because it was supposed to be kind of *conference*.





Of course, we visited Dinkelsbühl, a city that is usually overcrowded with tourists. Only a few people were out and strolling around now. What a great atmosphere it was at the KINDERZECHEN!



Well, on the first tour we looked at the Lichtenau fortress, from there to the impressive former monastery in Heilsbronn, an old Romanesque church with Gothic extensions. In Stein near Nuremberg we enjoyed a small tour of the Faber-Castell castle. Some of you might know remember seeing the production of the famous pencils at the time.





Another tour took us to Baldern Castle with a newly created cottage garden - a must for every garden lover. This is on the edge of the Nördlinger Ries'. The wonderful old town was of course again carefully explored with a guide.



As it is - castles and city tours - everything else that makes up a summer gathering was offered here! Of course, also the evening rounds with appropriate, typical food and drinks - where we then toasted YOUR wellbeing!!



We spent the last evening in Eve's garden, a wonderful place to relax.

We hope that you and your families will get through this crisis well. Take care and be all greeted warmly by Helga, Anne, Eva, Irmi, Annemie, Lilo and Katharina.



## Some memories to keep the IFYE Conference spirit alive

### Some remarkable conference tours

*written by Hans Ulrich Wuethrich (IFYE from Switzerland to the USA, 1979)*

Besides the get together and meeting of old and new friends, I always love to remember some of those amazing tours we experienced over the years.

**1981 at Falkenberg, Sweden:** We experienced an unforgettable “Deep Sea Fishing” tour there. Not many fish were caught, but the rough sea had another deep impact on most of us participants. It has been a great relief to lay on the lawn in front of Varberg Castle, right after our return. To my big surprise I felt much better right away and was shortly after this experience hungry enough to enjoy the well-prepared roast suckling pig on a spit.



**1985 at Sarnen, Switzerland:** One morning we got surprised by a load of snow, that fell overnight on the “Top of Brienzer Rothorn”. Following the sunrise and viewing a breathtaking panorama, while standing bare feet in the fresh snow, surely had been something very special.

**2008 at Lindau Strickhof, Switzerland:** We took part in an impressive “Geological tour inside a section of the Gotthard Base Tunnel” at Sedrun. With a small tunnel train, we rode far inside the longest railway tunnel in the world. In there, we experienced an impressive feeling, staying that far underground and being aware that there are more than 1000 meters of rocks above us. By the way, this tunnel is in full service since December 2016 now. With a route length of 57 kilometers, it is the world’s longest and deepest traffic tunnel and the first flat, low-level route through the Alps.





**2019 at Hamar, Norway:** A great “Hiking tour into the wilderness at Lake Øyongen” in Hedmark County. We followed our local tour guide on small foot trails through wide open and unspoiled nature, where the reindeer like to eat moss and lichen.



This is a great variety of tours that I find very unique and makes every European IFYE Conference very special. So, I am looking forward and I am eager to explore the Lake District in England next year.

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## **A mysterious raffle ticket only few know about**

*written by Mari Kindsbekken (IFYE from Norway to Northern Ireland, 2001)*

At every AGM at the conferences there is the famous tombola. In Estonia 2016, I won a card that said I had to leave my address at the bar with Cristina on a small paper that was included in the prize envelop. The card also said that if I did so, I would receive postcards from my mystery friend during the next year. Moreover, those cards would contain clues about who my mystery friend is, so that at the conference in 2017 I should be able to guess who she/he is. And as soon as I got home the cards indeed started appearing in my mail box. So far I have gotten 18 of them!

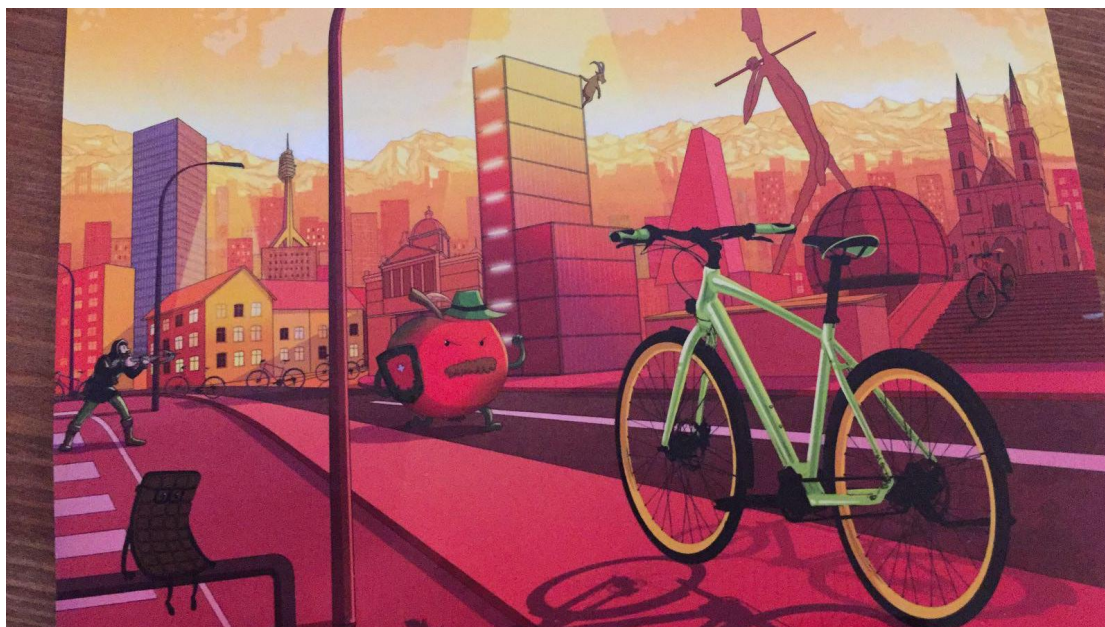


The clues in the cards hinted at a person younger than me which I had met at several conferences. One of the cards was an old picture of the area where my friend grew up: a photo of lots of green fields. All of these clues I think would fit to many of my IFYE friends. My cards had stamps from all over Europe, and one was even written in Norwegian. Due to the fact that I've been the youngest from Norway for several years, I didn't think it was a Norwegian person, just someone with a Norwegian friend, or been very lucky with google translate...

Having some help from Anna and Maria reading the cards when they visited me in spring 2017, we, for some reason, decided this was a man. One of the cards contained an email address that I could send emails to if I thought I knew who it was. So we sent an email to my friend, but it didn't get me much closer to the answer...

Because of - in my opinion - really bad clues that left way too many options, I still didn't know who he (or she) was when arriving at the conference in Switzerland. However, (late) one night, after several glasses of wine, I decided that I had to find out who this person was! And after talking to several people, including trying to bribe Cristina, I decided it had to be Paul! He was already in bed, sorry for waking you up Paul! Especially as it was in vain: it wasn't Paul.

Thanks to some more wine (and cider), I eventually did find out the identity of my mystery friend much later that night – although I don't really remember how that happened. As I had to promise not to tell anyone who he/she is, I have to leave you in the dark for now. I can, however, give a recommendation to others who get this prize and want to figure out who their mystery friend is: Just have some wine and cider and talk to a lot of people at the bar during conference.



*Latest postcard from my mystery friend*

## Great IFYE figures to remember

### Gudrun Berns (Germany)

Dear IFYE friends,

it is a sad duty to tell you that Gudrun Berns passed away on August 23rd. Please pass the information on in your groups.



Gudrun took part in the exchange in 1956 and lived in the host states of South Carolina and Ohio. In 1958 she was one of the co-founders of the European IFYE association. In other words, next to Piet Dijkhuis she is one of the people who made sure that WE could get to know each other at all.

She was President of the European IFYE Association from 1969-1971. She took responsibilities in the organization of the conferences in Grainau, Goslar and Altenberg.

Gudrun inspired many young IFYEs to get involved on a national and international level. She will be known and present to many of the "older generation".

Looking back, memories and pictures of earlier European IFYE-Conferences are turning up. We all together had so much fun - already on the way there and during those weeks. Because Gudrun wasn't only the perfect organizer and manager. Above all we will remember her as the cheerful, loyal and reliable friend she has always been.



So we say good bye with gratitude.

*Erna and Frieder Erbacher, Katharina Steinrück*

## **Fiona Cromie (Northern Ireland)**

It is with great sadness that the members and friends of Ulster Young Farmers' Ambassadors share the news that Fiona Elizabeth Cromie (nee Ellis) passed away peacefully at her much beloved home 'Fruitvale' Ballykeel Road, Aghagallon on October 8th 2020.

Fiona and her late husband John were very active members of our local agricultural community here in Northern Ireland. "Fiona fought a brave battle with cancer with a smile and a story, she was the heart and soul of many of our IFYE, YFA and YFCU gatherings." We know we will never have the same colour and style in our presence, but are lucky to have felt the love, passion and hospitality Fiona showed to everyone she met.

Due to current circumstances (Covid – 19 restrictions), a private family Funeral was held in Aghalee Parish Church Soldierstown on Saturday 10th October 2020. The church was reserved for immediate family and close friends so unfortunately not everyone had the chance to hear the tribute Racquelle made to her Mother:

*"'Fruitvale farm' was a lovely place to grow up. And little Fiona found friendships with little animals and dolls – she loved to play with cats, dogs, chickens, pigs, lambs, rabbits and even the bigger donkey and horses.*

*Mum did not have brothers or sisters but loved to make friends with everyone. When very young she befriended Pasty and the Fitzpatrick family, the Smyth family and her relations to the Buntings who all lived close enough to walk to.*

*They enjoyed picnics for the dolls and enjoyed a childhood of 'make believe' fun. She taught Jonathan, myself and our children, to see the beauty in Nature, to make friends, to take joy in sharing and giving and making fun out of fantasy, using your imagination. Her early childhood, spent with her animal friends and surrounded by nature lead to a lifetime of appreciation of our beautiful world – she loved the hymn 'All things bright and beautiful'.*

*Mum loved the reassurance of Gods love shown in the changing seasons – How the frosted twig in winter becomes cherry blossom in Spring. How the pear, apple and plum trees at Fruitvale bore such plentiful fruit and then leaves change to Autumn colours and fall in the wind and rain. She took time to watch and learn from the little birds, insects or a spider weaving her web. So Mum's education was first and foremost grounded in Nature, practical farm life and building friendships – then she went to school.*

*After attending her local primary school, she went to Wallace High School in Lisburn followed by Stranmillis Teacher Training College, Belfast and on to a demanding and varied career. She taught a lot of people, in a lot of places and a lot of different ages, but always with enthusiasm, flair and of course colour!!*



*All of you will remember her as a particularly colourful dresser. She was never scared to wear lots of colour at the same time! Also mixing unusual accessories and patterns to create a uniquely "Fiona-esque" style always set off with a HAT! She felt she was never fully dressed without a hat and her favourite lipstick, and she liked to brighten up an occasion in that way.*

*At the IFYE Conferences and YFA weekends Daddy and Her loved the fancy dress evening best of all, when really exuberant outfits were worn and they often won the fancy dress award – These YFA weekends were held annually in the autumn which was perfect for farmers who can't always get away in the summer. This was their chance to dance! They both loved dancing: and the fabulous friendships they made with other like-minded people. The whole ethos of IFYE is to bring people together, to build peaceful friendships and better understanding and to make lifelong connections – We have included the 'Song of Peace' at the end of the order of service.*

*My mum loved to entertain people by inviting them for meals as well as hosting countless overseas visitors. My daughter Sarah loves the Hebrew quote that mum has written out in calligraphy "Be not afraid to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares". Indeed mum believed that the best conversations happened while people sat together. Ans she is correct, as many friendships have been enhanced around the 'Fruitvale' dinning table! So the young Fiona grew to be the wife Fiona then the mother Fiona and now the Granny Fiona!*

*She has been a fantastic Granny to her Grand-children Christopher, Andrew, Sarah, Henry, Sofia and Louise. They have benefitted from the free-loving enthusiastic character and her dedicated support of them all at Christmas plays, musical recitals, carol services and other events as well as taking them on day trips and holiday whenever possible. Her capability just to listen to them and to spend time with them doing whatever they wanted to do has given them some wonderful memories.*

*The whole family would like to thank you wonderful people both inside the church and those socially distancing outside, for your love and support, through phone-calls, letters, social media for you kind tributes to Mum.*

*She has been known as: The Hat lady, The flamboyant colourful dresser lady, The artistic lady, The face painter lady, The dancing - dressing up lady, The farmer lady, The lady who wrote that Book lady The lady with her husband in the wheelchair lady, the great Hostess lady.*

*"I will finish with a lovely little sentiment that she has written and displayed at 'Fruitvale'"*

*"Reach to the sky - don't look down  
Life is a dance - so smile don't frown!"*



Our thoughts and prayers are with Jonathan and Diane, Racquelle and Terry and their families at this very sad time.

*Avril Herdman & Racquelle Reid*

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## Congrats to...



**Nadia**

*IFYE from Switzerland to Finland 2011*

**&**

**Salvatore Tassone-Appart**

Nadia and Salvatore to their son,  
Romeo Nikolaus  
Born on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2020

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**Deadline next issue: 30th December 2020**

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**European IFYE Alumni Association**

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IFYE Europe Newsletter – October 2020

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