



Nordic Baltic Sub-Region Newsletter

June 2020

News from Denmark

The virtual room has come to life.....

The activities in the various guilds having been on stand-by since March due to the corona restrictions, meetings and activities have been cancelled or postponed till after the summer.

Many guilds have anyway managed to keep contact. A few guilds even had their 'guild ting' - annual meeting - electronically.

Also the St. George's Day was marked on a few occasions. Here below a screen shot of a guild in Odense meeting to sing the 'Scout song' -A couple of other groups met to review their guild promise.



Denmark as host country for the 11th European Conference ... in 2023

As a consequence of the World Conference being postponed to 2021 and a new rhythm from 2024, we have chosen to postpone the European conference in Denmark till 2023. We cannot yet reveal the venue, but it will be in Jutland from where we will have ample opportunity to show you wonderful parts of Denmark. We can also reveal that it will almost certainly be in August when we can still enjoy the 'light summer nights'.

The UN Goals for sustainable development in focus over the next years

The Development secretaries of the districts and guilds have as a theme for next year's activities chosen the UN Goals for sustainable development seen in the light of



the guild law and promise. The subject will be introduced at the annual gathering of the Development secretaries in August, and the district will be encouraged to initiate inspiration days and events with this particular subject.

▣ **A May-greeting from guild members in Sæby – the top of Jutland**

Guild members gather to pick pretty lilies-of-the valley for those members, who could not go out and enjoy the wonderful spring.



Text: Birthe Ømark, IC Denmark.

News from Finland

Summer Camps

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the beginning of this year has not followed normal routines. Thinking Day meetings were organized by the local Fellowships as usual, but after that no reunions have been possible. Virtual meetings have taken over the physical meetings.

The Annual Membership Meeting

The Annual Meeting and the Fellowship Days had to be postponed with short notice and are planned to be held as a one-day event in October around the Fellowship Day. The old board is responsible until the new elections during the Annual Meeting.

Stamp bank

The stamp bank in Finland has yielded a nice sum every year to the ISGF and the NSGF. Pauli Ihamäki has taken over as the new responsible person.

Text: Viveca Ståhlström, IS Finland.

News from Iceland

Here in Iceland we have luckily had a fairly good situation during the last months. Apart from kindergartens and elementary schools, the country was closed down due to Covid-19 at the beginning of March and is slowly being opened again, allowing 20 people to gather as of 3 May. Recently the

number of people allowed to be together has been increased to 500 people. Since 15 June, Icelanders and tourists can come again, but they have to be tested when they come to Iceland or go to 14 days quarantine.

Due to the old age of our members, we have had no meetings during the last 2-3 months. Many guilds should have had a big gathering in March or April, eating lamb chops and other goodies. Also, annual meetings have been postponed to late summer.

17 June is our National Day, and in Hafnarfjörður the guilds have hoisted the flag in different parts of the town at 8 o'clock in the morning and lowered them again late in the evening. This is done in co-operation with the town's scouts, and will be done also this year.

The Hveragerði Guild in May went to a small forest grove outside the town, where they, to their surprise, found that someone had planted new trees in the grove. They dug up the new trees and moved them a little further up the hill, where they will in the future give better lee for the grove below.

In Akureyri, the Kvistur Guild has recently had their annual meeting. They also had a joint meeting and a nice time in February together with the Akureyri St. Georges Guild.

Now we are hoping for better times and looking forward to the coming summer and the following winter. We hope to see many of you 27 to 31 May next year for the Nordic-Baltic Fellowship meeting in Selfoss (more info at [Nordisk Baltisk gildemöde](#)).

Text: Kristjana Þórdís Ásgeirsdóttir, IS Iceland (translated by K. Jorde)

News from Lithuania

Sorry, no news from Lithuania this time.

News from Norway

General Situation

The amount of Fellowship activities of first half of 2020 has been heavily reduced, reflecting the dramatic changes in the society caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. The large increase in temporary leaves from work has, however, not been as dramatic for our members as for other groups of people, since a large part of our members are retired, and many of our younger members have been able to continue their usual work at home, connected to their office by their PCs.

More important for our activities have been the quick introduction of Emergency Laws, which have restricted the number of people who are allowed to be present in meetings and other social gatherings. Initially the number was set at a maximum of five people. In addition, it was strongly recommended to avoid all non-essential travelling. As a consequence, normal Fellowship meetings and tours planned for the spring of 2020 have been cancelled.

Some activities have been possible, however. The National Board has been able to meet in Oslo, using conference phone to involve members in distant districts. The Stamp Bank has been able to continue their monthly work meetings, sorting and cutting stamps that had recently been contributed by guilds and individual guild members.

The ongoing renovation project of the buildings on our Kvernmoen campsite has continued. The number of participants has, however, been smaller. Also, initially, the work was limited to day-trips only; overnight stays at cabins, vacation homes etc. has until recently been prohibited. Also, some of the guilds have done maintenance work on local scout centres and scout cabins.

In Bergen, 8 May - Liberation Day (the day that represents the first day of peace after the Second World War) - was celebrated by a small group of Fellowship members in the Maria Minde Convent, where our local Peace Flame is continually burning under the supervision of the nuns.

Improving Conditions

Due to a successful reduction of the spread of the Covid-19 virus, the strict regulations are now being carefully adjusted, allowing up to 20 people to be gathered at meetings etc. - provided that a list is kept of who participate, and that the one meter minimum distance between people is adhered to. Hence, plans are being made for increased Fellowship activities for the coming months and for the rest of the year.

One of the first activities to result from the adjusted regulations is illustrated by the 2nd Drammen Fellowship tour group, who has already had their first walking tour under the new rules in the countryside north of Drammen.



2nd Drammen fellowship members walking in the Lier Valley

Our Constitution Day, 17 May, which is normally celebrated with a parade of literally thousands of children and with a large crowd of onlookers filling the streets, was this year celebrated much more quietly. Locally, scouts and/or Fellowship members participated in small groups, hoisting the National flag. An example of this is the 1st Hamar Fellowship, who hoisted the flag at the local scout centre.



Hoisting the flag at the Hamar Scout Centre

It was followed by coffee and cake and gathering around a campfire in the classical scout way. As can be seen from the photos, the limited number of people and the inter-people distance were strictly adhered to.



Cake and coffee are parts of the tradition

International Covid-19 Project

In addition to local fellowship activities, a project directly aimed at problems caused by the pandemic has been started. Former scout leader Astrid Hareide is actively involved in scouting in the Pumwani slum in Nairobi. The conditions in Pumwani are already under normal conditions very difficult and the additional problems caused by the virus-related travel and job restrictions have made the food situation critical. We have therefore initiated a process of collecting financial support for the Pumwani scouts and their work to help the local people.



Packing food-aid bags for Pumwani families

New Name?

In addition to traditional fellowship activities, time has during the last year been used to discuss the name of our organisation, currently "St. Georgs Gildene i Norge" (the St. Georges Guilds of Norway). A proposal that a new name should be evaluated was presented at the National Assembly last autumn, suggesting that a name that more explicitly reflects the close association with scouting would be beneficial. All guilds have been invited to discuss the matter and report the results of their discussions. The issue shall be addressed in the 2021 National Assembly, to be held at Karmøy in western Norway, where a decision is expected.

Text: Knut Jorde, IS Norway. Photos: Jorunn Juven, Sidsel Gotaas and an unknown Kenyan contributor.

News from Sweden

In Sweden we have not had any Fellowship activities during the spring of 2020. The National Board has had a telephone meeting, in which it was decided to move the National Assembly scheduled for May 2021 to August of the same year. It will be combined with the Fellowship walk that was initially planned for the summer of 2020.

Apart from this, there is no news - except that we have generated a new home page, <https://gillescouterna.se>, which we are very pleased with.

Text: Mariana Ceder, IS Sweden.