



EUFORIA

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Continuing travels of a Regional Director – January–May 2011

Early in the New Year it was time to return to Germany for the second full meeting of the Steering Committee for the European Regional conference. I travelled via Frankfurt Airport and then took the European ICE train to meet Brigitte Wichmann in Kippenheim. After several days of planning, we drove again to Fulda, noting the flooding in many places due to melting snow. The pressure at this meeting was to meet the deadline for the March-April edition of *DKG NEWS* and to make sure that everyone knew what needed to be done so that all the information for members would be ready in time. The most complicated aspect seemed to be getting the online registration and booking forms correct. I trialled the registration process repeatedly, hoping that I would only be charged once and not ten or more times!

On 20th January, I flew to Schipol Airport in The Netherlands, then took a train north so that I could be present for the installation of a new chapter – Zeta. Riet Smits (State President) and I conducted a bi-lingual installation to set the new chapter off to a cheerful start. Before the ceremony, we all met for a meal together, then adjourned for the formalities. On the following morning, there was time to visit the Art Museum in Groningen before the journey home. I was impressed by the ‘swipe card’ system which enabled visitors to select pictures and have photographs emailed home to be downloaded – great technology!

The next visit (early in March) was to Estonia, where snow was piled up alongside all the roads, and the rivers were frozen. I went a day early so that I could travel from Tallinn to Parnu with Anu Joon (State President) and meet the members of the second Estonian chapter. On the



Estonian State Meeting

evening we arrived, we met for supper at the local yacht club, overlooking frozen sea! The following morning included visits to a school and the local university college, both of which were impressive. The school was immaculate, having recently been refurbished. The university, a branch of Tartu Ülikool, was housed in a combination of re-modelled ropework buildings and state-of-the-art modern architecture. At both venues we were taken round by DKG members who were proud to show us where they work. Later in the day, we returned to Tallinn to prepare for the state meeting. Overnight snow resulted in a treacherous car

journey to collect food from the caterer, but we successfully navigated a narrow, snowbound lane, then drove into the city for the meeting, held at the school where Meeri Sild teaches – members may remember her from Oslo. I was impressed by the number of members planning to come to Baden-Baden in the summer. Margarita Hanschmidt was announced as the new State President and two new members were initiated.

On the day of the GB state conference, I was in Sweden as the International Representative to their meeting. The journey to Växjö on the previous day had been eventful. At Eslov station, all passengers had to leave the train to wait for coaches to by-pass the blocked section. Luckily, I found a taxi/minibus to make the road journey to Hasselholm, or I might still be waiting on the platform with about 500 other people for the coaches to arrive. Arriving 2 hours late, with 15 minutes to spare before the Friday ‘mingle party’, I met 55 or so members who were already in Växjö. On Saturday, the local mayor was welcomed to start the proceedings, addressing the 80 members present and proud of the fact that Växjö prides itself as the ‘greenest city in Europe’. After speeches and presentations in the morning, the afternoon offered a choice of workshops – I chose the Swedish glass museum and the cathedral, both of which were fascinating. On Sunday morning, the meeting transferred to the Linnaeus University for the business agenda. Lunch in the local castle (Teleborgs Slott) closed the proceedings. In



Catherine Bringselius Nilsson

the afternoon, I had the opportunity to meet the new State President, Ingrid Stjernquist, and other members of the host chapter. Fortunately, the homeward journey lacked the excitement of the outbound one!

I was due to go to the Indiana state meeting as International Representative, travelling out on Thursday 28th April and returning on Monday 2nd May. However, on the afternoon of 27th April, I received urgent phone calls and emails telling me not to go because the conference hotel had been flooded by the nearby river! Fortunately, the meeting has been re-scheduled for 10th-12th June and I have been able to transfer my air ticket (at a price). Many members in the USA have needed to request help from the Emergency Fund because of recent storm, hurricane or flood damage to their homes – including the International President and the South-East Regional Director.

The State President of Iceland invited me to attend the State Conference in Keflavik early in May. I had hoped to be able to arrange single flights to Keflavik, then to Frankfurt, then back to the UK, so that I could spend some time in Germany immediately afterwards, but the times of flights didn't fit the schedule of meetings arranged in Baden-Baden, so I flew back to the UK on 8th May, then out to Germany on the morning of the 9th. It was a pleasure to meet so many Icelandic members and to see that DKG is thriving there, with two new chapters recently installed. Fortunately, the latest volcano eruption waited until I had left.

In Germany, I visited the conference venue with Brigitte Wichmann (State President and Steering Committee Chair) and Monika Huber (Co-Chair). We had a long and useful meeting with the management of the Sportschule at Steinbach. We will be returning early in June, when I will be

attending the German state meeting as International Representative. It is very encouraging to see how keen everyone at the college is to help make the conference a success – the attention to detail and responsiveness to requests is most impressive.

The Bishop's Palace at Galveston

Last, but not least, I flew to Texas for the Administrative Board, which began on 19th May. Because I have to 'cross the pond' to attend, I am allowed to travel a day early in order to cope with the time difference. This time I was able to visit Galveston for the first time, where I went to Fishermen's Wharf and the Bishop's Palace. The agenda for the meeting was lengthy and we spent 2½ days dealing with all the business set out for us. Prior to this meeting, I also attended a committee meeting for the International Speakers Fund. We worked on a handbook for the guidance of future committee members and also finalized the details of presentations to be made at the forthcoming Regional Conferences.



This brings me to the end of my report. Elsewhere in this edition, Brigitte Wichmann has written a detailed 'appetizer' about the European Regional Conference. I do hope that as many of you as possible will come – it promises to be an excellent conference in every way, with first-rate international speakers, excellent workshops, and a wide range of sightseeing and social occasions,



as well as a range of tours to appeal to all interests. If you haven't been to a regional conference before, I invite you to come and sample the delights of the regional and international aspects of DKG. If you have been to previous regionals, I can assure you that this one will be an experience not to miss. So – see you in Baden-Baden! Please come and introduce yourself if we haven't met before, or renew our acquaintance if we have

.Kate York

IPP Carolyn Rants and 1st VP Beverley Helms

GERMANY WELCOMES YOU CORDIALLY TO THE EUROPEAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE 2011

My time as State President and Chair of the Steering Committee for the European Regional Conference will soon come to an end. I would like to use this opportunity of my last contribution to EuForia to thank many of you, and in particular:

- you, Joan, for having provided us with this wonderful opportunity to stay in touch and move closer as Europeans - for so many years!
- Kate, for guiding us so expertly and patiently as Regional Director into this great adventure called European Regional Conference,
- members, especially in GB and NL, for contributing and supporting us so numerously in our efforts, as well as our Norwegian sisters for sharing their 2009 experience so generously,
- my German fellow members for their ongoing hard work,

to name but a few.

We are looking forward very much to seeing many more of you than have registered so far in Baden-Baden in August. It promises to be another great opportunity for European cooperation and exchange. You will love the setting - do make more use of the tours offered, the deadline is being extended except for tour No 8 which has had to be cancelled.

Coby van Klaveren (NL) is still hoping for more people to come forward and sing in the conference choir, so do respond to her call and experience for yourself what Diane Billam wrote about her Spokane choir participation in the October edition of EuForia '...It was good to be swept along with the music, and to feel the very strong sense of fellowship it creates ...'

If you're not quite sure about how to get to the conference, please do visit our website <http://dkggermany.org/>. It has a new layout since last week - and should be even easier to navigate and more helpful now, with details right down to bus times / numbers / proper stop / price. Double rooms at the college are still available from August 3rd, and hotel rooms at all hotels except 'Linde', the very closest.

The first of the conference highlights will be the opening ceremony and Black Forest Night on Wednesday, where you'll experience a true bit of our beautiful area, visually and acoustically, as well as orally, by watching and listening to a folk dance group, watching them demonstrate typical crafts and enjoying our hearty speciality buffet - not to forget the wine sampling in between the opening ceremony and BF Night where you'll be offered a (little souvenir to take home) glass of Kippenheim school wine, the delicious result of an ongoing school project of grade 7 students. To avoid queuing we'll open, at the same time, the Market Place and Info Fair - just do pray for good weather so you can 'lustwandeln' / wander between the three.

The second highlight will be Prof. Carl Parson's keynote speech on school exclusion, summarizing his 16 years' research into this serious problem and its damaging consequences on Thursday, our 'professional focus' day, to which non-members from our area have been invited, too.

For all those interested in instilling their pupils with an understanding of maths, the short introductory presentation keynote by Barbara Schindelbauer, author of 'Numberland,' at the first general session (as well as its follow-up workshop) is a must!

In the afternoon we offer a reception by the Mayor, guided tours of central Baden-Baden, and a meal at the Kurhaus Restaurant (in the same building as Baden-Baden's famous Casino).

On Friday's general session you'll hear a keynote speaker, Brynhildur Anna Ragnarsdottir from Iceland speaking about an innovative project, 'Language Plaza'.

In the afternoon we'll take you to Strasbourg for a guided tour of the European Institutions Quarter on foot (MEPs unfortunately being on holiday just like us teachers) and, subsequently, a guided bus tour round the old town centre (or free time to explore it yourselves on foot).

For the banquet in the evening, the coaches will take you to Bühl, where you'll stroll around outside (weather permitting) and in the community center's glass dome (work of a well-known modern architect) before enjoying a wonderful meal, listening to the conference choir and, subsequently, to a very versatile local music group.

Saturday's highlight will be Prof. Dr. Pfeiffer's keynote speech on media consumption and its influence on school performance. He is the internationally-known founder and director of KfN (Criminological Research Institute, Niedersachsen).

The very informal buffet-style luncheon will give you - as so many of you wished for - ample opportunity to mix and sit with who you wish to see and talk to before saying 'farewell'.

So please do come - you won't regret it - we are looking forward very much to seeing you!

Brigitte Wichmann

State Org. President 2009-2011 and Chair of Steering Committee for European Regional Conference 2011

A CALL FOR SINGERS FOR THE EUROPEAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE CHOIR!

So far only a few members have answered the call from Coby van Klaveren on the Europe and International websites. Please do join in and make it truly international! Singing unites, singing frees the mind, singing makes you happy - this is true for those who participate as well as for those listening! Do answer Coby's call, telling her whether you'd like to sing soprano I, II or alto. You don't need choir experience, but if you have it, let Coby know. Email her at: ivanklaveren@hetnet.nl or phone +31-5966-29549. If you could play piano accompaniment, Coby would like to hear from you too!

GREAT BRITAIN

As I approach the end of my term as State President, it is worth repeating how much I have appreciated the support and help I have received from so many of our members. Two years ago I had just accepted the role, and wondered what it would be like! There have been many highlights during my biennium, which I would like to re-visit with you.

The European Regional Conference in Oslo gave me the experience of carrying our state flag into and out of the Hall, and of undergoing the special training event for incoming State Presidents. This gave me an opportunity to meet and spend time with my opposite numbers from the other European member states of DKG, and to appreciate what a talented group they are. As always, the Conference itself was most enjoyable, with a range of great tours. So much to remember; the evening excursion out from Oslo into the sunset, the train, bus and boat tour which gave me the opportunity to see a range of scenes unlike anything I had seen before. The highlight was perhaps the wonderful waterfall.

Then came the planning of our GB Conference in Canterbury in April 2010. Running this from Friday midday to Sunday midday gave us time to organise training for incoming Chapter officers, hold a quiz, hear some excellent speakers, and to sing!! Trips exploring the ancient city of Canterbury on Sunday morning ended an enjoyable and memorable event. In July I went with

GB members to the International Convention in Spokane, where again I was proud to carry our flag, and to be introduced as GB's representative at the Presidents' Banquet. The next event was the European Forum, held in Freudenstadt, where I met a slightly different group of European State representatives, as some of the countries appoint their President and others someone else. Here we discussed a range of European issues, and planned for the Forum events at the forthcoming European Conference in Baden Baden this year.

Then it was time to plan for the 2011 GB Conference, held at the Soroptimist Club, London, in April, a one-day event with dinner afterwards at a local Italian restaurant. We were pleased to welcome visitors from the Netherlands, Germany and the USA, in the person of Corlea Plowman, Executive Director, who was our International Representative. Again our speakers did not disappoint, and we had an interesting `Forum` meeting to discuss the theme of the conference: Promoting Learning, which worked very well.

So now I approach the end of my two-year term of office. It is disappointing that despite strenuous efforts by a number of people, we were unable to start a new Chapter in Cambridge, as we had hoped. However, I am pleased that each of our Chapters has a new member, and that our planning on membership is beginning to take shape. We have our European Conference in Baden Baden to look forward to, which members from all chapters will be attending. I look forward to seeing many old friends there as well as making new ones, and to handing GB State on to incoming State President Sheila Roberts, who I know will do an excellent job and has a number of ideas for taking us forward. I know that she will receive as much support from members as I have. Thank you again, everyone.

Diane Billam, State President 2009-2011

SWEDEN

DKG Sweden State Conference was held on April 8th-9th. About 80 DKG members attended the meeting in Växjö, my home town in southern Sweden.



The Mayor of Vaxjo and Swedish State President Catherine Bringselius Nilsoon greet Regional Director Kate York

Our guest of honour was our *European Regional Director Kate York*. We were very pleased to welcome her to our conference. The theme of the conference was *Ethics and*

Aesthetics. Programmes, besides the conference business matters, included a visit to the Cathedral, which holds beautiful *glass altar piece*. *glass museum*, glassware illustrates workshop was to different epochs. Eta, gave an *Mauerspringer — of the Berlin wall*".



dates back to 12th century. The Cathedral works of art, for example *Bertil Vallien's* The guided tour went on to the *Swedish* which collection of Swedish and foreign the history of glass-making. Another learn about *clothes as art*, an exposé from *Inga Lundvall*, Eta. Dr. *Bärbel Westphal*, interesting lecture on the theme "*Die German literature before and after the fall*

IngaLundvall's workshop

A new board was elected. Before that important decisions had been taken, for example DKG Sweden will join your countries in contributing with one euro per member to the *European Regional Director's* expenses.

I also want to share some information with you about the Swedish school system. A series of initiatives is going on to raise standards in schools. The Government has taken several long-term initiatives to improve pupils' knowledge of mathematics, natural sciences and technology. The official report says (quote): "These initiatives include the introduction of educational goals and national tests in mathematics for year 3 pupils, a major investment in continuing education for teachers and a special government grant to strengthen support for the basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic."

I am looking forward to see you at the European conference in Germany with the inspiring theme "*Embrace our vision – Designing our future*". I wish you all a wonderful summer,

Catherine Bringselius Nilsson, President

NORWAY - Successful State Convention

On May 7. and 8. 50 of our 81 DKG sisters assembled at historic Hadeland north of Oslo for our State Convention 2011. We were especially happy to greet our guest International President JenSI Souders. Her visions for the society inspired us all to put an extra effort in the area of expansion and attracting younger members. DKG's educational profile was sharpened through an inspiring address from Anne I.H.Borge, professor of psychology. Anne conveyed to us her latest research on the role of friendship among children. The convention hotel is situated in an area with rich traditions not only from the Viking age, but also from the first Christian churches in Norway. With this historical background it was not difficult to broaden our convention experience with an early morning musical gathering in the 12th century Maria church. A show of hands indicated that many of our members are looking forward to attending the European Regional Conference in Baden-Baden.

Mette Heiberg State President

GREETINGS FROM ICELAND



Theta Chapter hosted our State Convention on 7th - 8th May in Reykjanesbær and made a beautiful setting for a very interesting and joyful Convention. We started with an Executive Board Meeting on 6th May. On Saturday 7th we had a full Conference day with progressive and professional lectures from all over the country and a banquet dinner in the evening. On Sunday we had our Annual Meeting and finished with a short meeting of the Executive Board. Our new State President is Sigridur Ragna Sigurdardottir from Alpha Chapter. Our international guest was Dr. Carolyn Rants Immediate, past International President. Kate York, our Regional Director

honoured us with her presence as well as two other sisters from Europe, Mary Wardrop from Great Britain and Trijny Schmitz du Moulin from the Netherlands. These visitors gave the Convention a nice international touch. I was able to join the State Conference in Netherlands the following weekend and it was very interesting. I do thank the DKG women in the Netherlands for making me feel so welcome.



Sigríður Valgeirsdóttir and Palína Jónsdóttir

At our Convention we honoured two women in our Icelandic DKG society, Palína Jónsdóttir and Dr. Sigríður Valgeirsdóttir. They are both founders in their chapters, Sigríður in Alpha and Palína in Gamma. They have both served as State Presidents amongst various other positions at State and Chapter Level. They both are retired from the Educational Department of the University of Iceland and were pioneers in their subjects. We are very proud of them and their contribution to the field of Education and DKG and we are honoured to have them still so vital in our Society at the age of 87 and 92.

Eta Chapter organized a successful invitation to a dinner with some activities on 18th March and Iota chapter is planning an invitation to a banquet raising money for Schools in Africa. This shows that chapters are finding ways to meet in different circumstances. Most chapters invite other chapters to a meeting once a year and that is a very nice custom. We get to know one another better and inspire one another.



Mu Chapter

We have two new chapters, Lambda and Mu with 50 new members' altogether. The Icelandic DKG counts over 320 members and 12 chapters all around the country. Now we will spend our energy to building up the spirit within the chapters. All countries have to be on their toes keeping the chapters going – it is an ongoing process for every country.

Two years ago the State Presidents attended a very good leadership course in Oslo in Norway. We became very close and were determined to keep in good contact. Since then we have all been busy serving our members in our country, but have not managed to keep enough contact between our countries. I think we need to give it some thought how we can change that and establish a better European community. How can we work close together? What are our subjects of interest?

Where is our enthusiasm? What are our benefits of being a Community of Excellent Educators in Europe?

I have often wondered: Do Women in Europe read EuForia? Do we have to look at different means of communication? Let us discuss this at the European conference in Baden Baden.

About 20 Icelandic women are going to the European Conference and we are looking forward to seeing you there. Have a nice and prosperous summer.

Ingibjörg Jónasdóttir State President Iceland.

The Netherlands

Dear friends,

For the State Presidents 2009-2011 the period of presidency is over. On the one hand it is a pity because it is an inspiring job; one wants so much and tries to accomplish it all. On the other hand, wishes are always greater than real life.

I've been a president for four years and with much pleasure, but now it is time to hand the presidency over to my successor. Ria Bleeker will be the new state president. She is a very busy woman, but next year she will reduce her work for the ROC in Amsterdam and will fill in this gap by working for DKG. We are very happy to have Ria, she has had many national and international experiences working for Delta Kappa Gamma. She also has many national and international friends at DKG. Together with her fellow board-members, we think they will do a great job, we expect a lot, and wish the new board good luck.



We look back on a good year in which we founded a new chapter and added many new members. But unfortunately some members left as well. Headquarters always encourages us to grow in this age by making use of the available technology. And therefore we now use the "Go to meeting" system. It is of much added value and we really feel the benefit: less travelling to join in for a meeting and therefore lower costs.

We also encouraged our members to be active and to use the international network.

Our convention in May was very successful. Marika from Germany and Ingibjörg from Iceland mixed in the international flavour. The theme was 'Personal Growth' and we brought two workshops in into the program. The first one was about entrepreneurship, a necessary skill for students in a professional training. By a variety of visual media we were informed of the concept. Thereafter we did the same tests and assignments as the students have to do. The second workshop was about presenting. We all thought that we were already quite good in that field, because teachers have to give presentations almost every day. But guess what, we actually learned some new techniques that were really eye-openers. And what we now all keep in mind: the core of a presentation is that it comes from the heart.

Many of our members will attend the European Conference 2011 in Baden Baden, for the interesting program and to see so many friends. For us it will also be of much interest to see how the conference will be organised. We are well aware that it is our turn in 2013.

I wish the new State Presidents all the luck in the world to fulfil their tasks for DKG and I am looking forward to the next EuForia.

Hartelijke groeten uit Nederland,

Riet Smits

I hope you have enjoyed this interesting and well-illustrated edition of EuForia. I look forward to seeing you in Baden Baden. Don't forget to join Coby by volunteering as a Conference singer. Best wishes,

Joan Carroll