



NEWSLETTER

November 2021

European IFYE Alumni



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Greetings from the President

Dear all,

I'd like to welcome you, with an Austrian "Servus"!

Last year I thought summer 2020 was a unique summer, but 2021 was even the same as last year. I hope you had a good time and enjoyed the warm season.



I hope everyone of you had a nice summer and found a few days of relaxation. Also this summer we had to respect the rules of distance in every situation linked to the Covid-19 pandemic. How long will it go on like this? I don't know and I can't make any forecast. We had to cancel the conference again this year. It was not an easy decision for us, but the health and safety of everyone took precedence over everything else. However, we are confident that we will have another conference in 2022. Today I expect that we will meet again on July 16th, 2022, at the next European Conference to spend a fantastic week. Finland will welcome us, and we will have another outstanding week in "Lake Finland".



Further, the 2023 conference will take place from 27.08 – 02.09.2023 in Velden at the Wörthersee and the location offers everything that guarantees a relaxing and varied stay. The Austrian organizing committee will soon tell you more about this.

What else happened in the last few months? Well, Carolyn Gehrke, lifetime member of European and Austrian IFYE, got married on 10 September. Unfortunately, no one was able to travel from Europe to attend her wedding because of the American immigration restrictions. I would have liked to surprise her with a visit, but unfortunately that was not possible. However, we were able to help another IFYE couple to get married. Anita and Jens - you probably remember them.



It started sometime in 2014 at the conference in Germany and continued in 2015 in fertile Scotland. They now live with their sons in northern Germany, in Hude, near Bremen. On 27 October they had their wedding night and on 30 October 2021 they were married in church at St Elisabeth's Church in Hude. It was a very beautiful wedding and many IFYEs from all over Europe were there. You can say what you want, but the spirit of togetherness within IFYE is enormous. If I counted correctly, there were about 20 German, 7 Austrian, 2 Finnish and 2 Welsh IFYEs at the wedding. It is so nice to see these international friendships and feel this spirit. I am proud to be a part of it.

Of course, it wasn't just about the "getting-married-part", there was also a hen-party and the beautiful traditions for a wedding and a hen-party in northern Germany impressed me. A "nice" tradition, for example, is that the groom's bachelor trousers are taken off by a couple of ladies. The bride's bachelor bra is also taken off by a man, both items of clothing are burned, and the ashes are placed in a casket together with a bottle of schnapps and buried in the garden. On the first wedding day, the casket is dug up again and the bridal couple, together with friends, empty the bottle of schnapps. This ensures that a year after the wedding there will be another reason for a party - I think it's a nice practice.

We might hear more about the wedding from the bridal couple themselves or via a short text from the German IFYEs in one of the next newsletters.



Now there are less than 2 months until Christmas and I'm looking forward to it. The time will again be different than we are used to, but it will be unique. To see the shine in the children's eyes when the lights on the Christmas tree are on. I am looking forward to this time.

Dear friends, I wish you a beautiful autumn and stay healthy. We will see each other again in Finland, in July 2022 and we will have a great time together.

Until the next newsletter and all the best.

Best wishes,
Andi

An 'unofficial' IFYE conference in Ireland!

written by Pauline Armstrong (IFYE from Northern Ireland to Finland, 1982)

Interesting sights, an abundance of food and drink (especially wine and gin), plenty of craic but absolutely no pine martens featured in the 2021 Unofficial IFYE Conference in Co Roscommon Ireland. A small party of NI IFYEs carrying more luggage than ever before – Claire and Trevor brought bikes! – and clutching vaccine certificates gathered at Douglas Lodge Holiday Homes. We were greeted by the usual welcome bags which, unusually, contained toilet rolls in case of Covid related shortages- thank you Avril!



We began the conference with a Country procession from Sally's Cottage to Stone House for the opening ceremony – conducted by Sam – and the singing of the Song of Peace- harmony by Janette. The N Ireland flag was raised and

County photographs taken to commemorate the event!

During our stay we visited the top 10 attractions in Co Roscommon and ventured out into neighbouring Co Leitrim and paddled in the sea in Co Sligo. We visited the Arigna Coal Mine, received a warm welcome at the Elphin Windmill, admired the magnificent Glencar waterfall in full flow, wandered round the walled garden at Stokestown house, relaxed on a river cruise to celebrate Shirley's birthday and enjoyed a poetry recital by Linda at the grave of W. B. Yeats in Drumcliffe. However, the outstanding memory for those who saw it was a short but exhilarating tandem ride by Sam and Helen. They soon swapped it for electric bikes and joined the group taking a ride along the canal. Most unusual sight of the week was the smallest Chapel in Ireland where we saw (fortunately under glass) the coffins of the builder and his wife!



In the evenings we enjoyed beautiful meals and desserts at our venue – thanks to our resident chefs – Trevor's famous Irish coffee and Avril's Millionaire shortbread – a particular favourite for Philip – we even had an international evening (Chinese food!) Of course, the variety of drinks on offer meant several trips to the bottle bank to avoid embarrassment! Entertainment included travel quizzes, board and card games, Shirley's Birthday Party and even a storytime! However, no conference is complete without the formal dinner and – thanks to Trevor for the recommendation – we made our way to the Purple Onion in Termanbarry for a glorious feast and a very warm welcome from the owner who produced Prosecco!



Unfortunately, our venue is too small to suggest a full scale IFYE Conference there but we would all recommend a tour of the area – just message us for details! Thanks to Helen for finding the Holiday Homes – it was just great to spend time away after lockdown with friends and – as Shirley said – get to know each other even better!

Our Unofficial IFYE Conference was a great success but, mind you, I would have liked to have seen a pine marten!

The story of the very first IFYE World

Conference

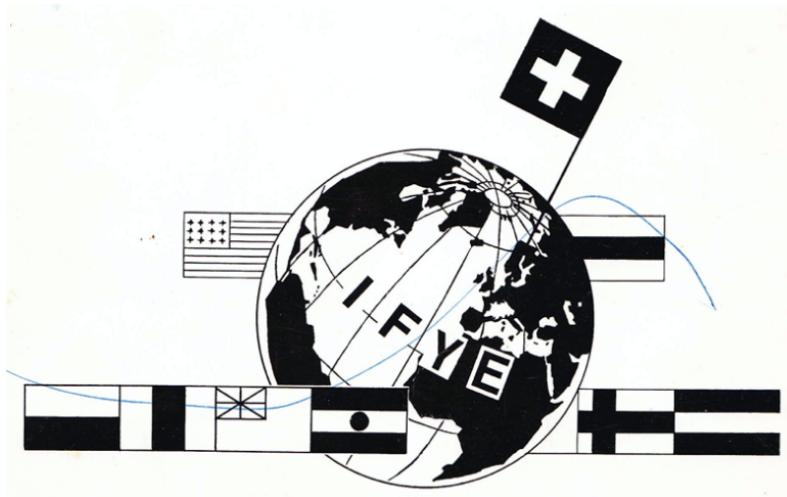
written by Elsbeth Schär-Jordi (IFYE from Switzerland to Norway, 1971), translated by Nora Feyder (IFYE from Luxembourg to the USA, 2015)

While digitalizing all their old newsletters, IFYE-Swiss came across some interesting stories. As such, also reports about the very first IFYE World Conference, which was held in Switzerland in 1965, were dug up. With the next World Conference on European ground on the horizon, it seems fit to revive the story of the beginning of the dear tradition, which the World Conferences have become. Elsbeth from Switzerland assembled some intriguing facts and stories on the matter:

“The decision to hold the very first IFYE World Conference in Switzerland was made in 1961 during the 4th European IFYE Conference in Dublin. At that time, the Swiss delegates took the responsibility to organize this meeting.” This could be read in old reports of the general assemblies of IFYE-Swiss. And no sooner said than done! Quickly, a president for the organizing committee was found and who else than Ruedi Mumenthaler, THE figure of the worldwide IFYE - family, would have been more fit for the job? The national agreement, and its recording, to organize the first World Conference should actually have been made on March 25th, 1962. However, the report of the general assembly from 1963 indicates that such an agreement had not officially been made and recorded: “During the board meeting on December 8th, 1962, the recording of an agreement by the general assembly on the organization of an IFYE World Conference in Switzerland in 1965 was asserted to be missing. (President Hans-Heiri)”.

This certainly led to animated discussions at the time. It seems that while the Swiss were themselves uncertain about their responsibility regarding the organization of such a famous meeting, IFYEs in other countries were convinced that it was an upcoming event to look forward to. Finally, the president of the organizing committee declared: “Everyone is talking about this conference, we simply cannot back down from it!”. Still, a voting among Swiss IFYE members was requested in the matter. 14 of the in total 22 eligible members who had been present at the general assembly in 1962, voted in favor of the following addition to the respective AG report: “It is positively recognized that Switzerland should organize an IFYE World Conference in 1965.” With this, it was finally official! Now the path was cleared for the organizing committee to start planning a worthy gathering. Nonetheless, as often with such large events, the budget proved to be a limiting factor. Thus, in the spring edition of the IFYE-Swiss newsletter in 1964, passive members, IFYE friends and host families were called on with the following request: “With

regard to the World IFYE Conference, which will take place in Switzerland next year and which will raise certain costs, we rely greatly on your assistance and we hope that we can count on your support.”



Step by step, the planning took form. So, Ruedi Mumenthal informed Swiss IFYEs in the autumn edition of the Swiss newsletter in 1964, that preparations for the meeting were in full swing and that invitations had been sent to 400 eligible participants of which 260 were from the USA. The organizing committee had come up with an exciting program. What is most impressive is the fact that this first World Conference was opened by Friedrich Traugott Wahlen, former Federal Councilor in Switzerland.

On 23rd August 1965, the first IFYE World Conference was, thus, opened at the agricultural school Schwand in Münsingen, Switzerland. Participants from all over the world were offered a diversified program with for instance an excursion to the Grimsel, visits of cheese dairies and a trip to the 'Tellspele' in Interlaken.



Only in the spring newsletter of 1966, the organizing committee gave a short review on the first World Conference. Here, they informed that the meeting had generated a profit of 2300 Swiss Francs, that a complete report about the Conference was available, that they recognized the great efforts accomplished by all helping people and that the Conference had been a grand experience for everyone involved!

For those of you who are intrigued by these stories and eager to learn more, do not hesitate to visit the European IFYE Museum on the IFYE website. There, you will be able to find additional material in text and picture formats on this exciting event!

News from Finland - IFYE Conference 2022

The Finnish IFYEs are happy and excited to welcome you to Finland!

The IFYE conference 2022 will be held in the middle of lake Finland, in Korpilahti, at the Alkio College from 16th to 23rd of July 2022. The conference site is located by the lake Päijänne and is easily accessible. The nearest city center, Jyväskylä, is only 30 kilometres away! We have multiple saunas waiting for you and we are preparing to upgrade your knowledge of Finnish saunas, nature, education system, culture, technology and other exciting perspectives of Finnish lifestyle. So, be prepared for Upgrading IFYE 2022.2!

Registration for European IFYEs and their spouses/partners is open since 1st of November 2021. Price of the conference is 650 EUR. If you are not a life time member of the European IFYE Association, you must also pay the membership fee of 20 CHF together with the conference fee.

Non-Europeans may register from the 1st January.

Deadline for registration is 29th of March.

Please check our official website for the Upgrading IFYE 202.2 conference and keep yourself updated! You can also find our video invitation by following this link to our website: <https://ifye.fi/conference2022>. You may also follow us on Facebook: European IFYE Conference, Suomalaiset IFYET:t/Finnish IFYEs, European IFYE Alumni Association and also on Instagram: @ifyefinland with #europeanifyeconference, #ifyeconference, #ifyeconference2022 and #upgradingifye.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask! The contact member for any questions related to the conference is our marvelous Kati Nurminen. You can reach her via e-mail: kati.nurminen@aholanraitti.fi



In memoriam

Kari Virtaniemi from Finland

Dear IFYE friends,

Our beloved IFYE-member Kari Virtaniemi (64) passed away on 17th July 2021 at his home in Kuortane, Finland. He was an IFYE to USA in 1977 and an active member in the Finnish IFYE Association for over 40 years.

He will be sorely missed.



Congrats to...



Carolyn Gehrke

*IFYE from the USA to Germany,
2010*

&

Scott Brummel

Carolyn and Scott
got married on September 10th
2021.

Laura Sartamo

*IFYE from Finland to Switzerland,
2008*

&

Simon Garlough

IFYE to Switzerland, 2008

Laura and Simon and their son
Linus
born on 6th May 2021



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