



# Moving Forward Together

## KANDERSTEG

INTERNATIONAL SCOUT CENTRE, SWITZERLAND  
15-19 OCTOBER 2003

CONFERENCE REPORT

### Conference Report

The aim of this report is not to give detailed information about all elements of the Conference but rather to summarize the content.

This report has been produced by Miriam Herzberg at Kandersteg International Scout Centre. We would like to thank all the organisers of plenary and cornerstone sessions, and all participants that have given us written or verbal reports from workshops. Without this input we would not have been able to write this report. All participants will receive a CD with this report and more detailed information such as the evaluation, pictures and several PowerPoint presentations. If you are interested in receiving this CD Please contact :

[europe4U@kandersteg.scout.org](mailto:europe4U@kandersteg.scout.org)

### Aim

The aim of the European Scout and Guide Centre Managers' Conference is to strengthen and develop co-operation among Scout and Guide Centres and to enable strong working relations between the staff of those centres.

### Conference Programme

A planning team comprising of Pit Kallmeyer (Pfadfinderburg Rieneck, Germany), Derek Langford (UK Scout Association, United Kingdom), Doreen Henry (Pax Lodge, United Kingdom), Lars Bo Petersen (Stevninghus, Denmark), Damien O'Sullivan (Larch Hill, Ireland), Miriam Herzberg (Kandersteg International Scout Centre/The European Scout Office) and Ali Davis (Kandersteg International Scout Centre, Switzerland) were responsible for the organization and running of the Conference assisted by the staff at Kandersteg International Scout Centre.

The director of Kandersteg International Scout Centre is responsible for organizing the Conference, on behalf of the European Scout Office. Due to the change over of directors a delay occurred in getting a planning team together. Thanks to the big efforts and input of all planning team members and inspired by many emails from interested participants the team managed to get this year's programme together on time. Since the Planning Team had a lot of new members they refreshed the conference programme with new ideas, whilst keeping important pillars to carry the programme.

The aim of these "Cornerstones" sessions was to treat issues of fundamental interest for Scout & Guide Centres and to do this in smaller groups to allow interaction and discussion between the participants.

The plenary sessions were an introduction to "Scout of the World" (a new WOSM award), a session on Moving Forward Together and an update on the situation in Europe. We had the opportunity to visit Our Chalet, one of the WAGGGS World Centres and to live the KISC Experience. This was a morning of experiencing how it feels to be a guest in the World Scout Centre. We ended the conference with the celebration of the our centres' successes and an open session that gave everyone the opportunity to evaluate and present new ideas.



### Opening of the Conference

As Director of the hosting centre and co-coordinator of the planning team for this event, Miriam Herzberg welcomed everybody to the 8th European Scout and Guide Centre Managers' Conference. She expressed her excitement about finally meeting the people behind the names that she has seen and heard so often. In spite of some last minute cancellations, there were a total of 73 people representing 41 Centres in 18 countries.

Marc Lombard, former director of Kandersteg International Scout Centre and one of the initiative takers to organize the first Centre Managers Conference in 1989 read out part of the opening speech of that first conference. He was happy to see that what started 14 years ago, had grown into a successful and important event for Centre Managers from so many countries in Europe, organised every two-year. He linked this growth to the growth of Kandersteg International Scout Centre in those 14 years, for which the inspiration partly came from experiencing other centres and hearing the stories of their managers. After the welcome ceremony, the participants had time to unpack, make a guided tour through the Chalet or prepare their presentation for My centre, My country, which filled our first evening together.

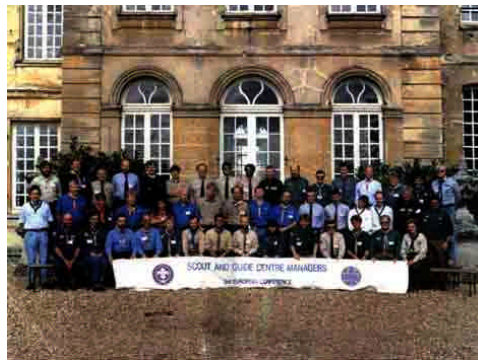
### Previous Conferences, run by Derek Langford

Thursday began with a short introduction to the Conference and the programme for the next few days. The chairman for the day, Doreen Henry, then gave the word to Derek Langford. Derek presented the development in the Conference participation which showed a steady increase in numbers of participants, Centres and countries represented. As reminded by Marc Lombard during the opening the first conference was held at Kandersteg International Scout Centre in 1989, with 32 participants from 12 countries.

### Following conferences were:



2. 1991- Vässarö Scout Centre, Sweden  
40 participants, 12 countries



3. 1993- Jambville, France  
43 participants, 13 countries



4. 1995- Houens Odde Scout Centre, Denmark  
54 participants, 18 countries



5. 1997- "Irene Tsimbouki" Training Centre, Greece  
64 participants, 17 countries





6. 1999- ZHP national. training Centre, 'Perkoz' Poland  
73 participants, 42 centres, 16 countries



7. 2001- Pfadfinderburg Rieneck, Germany  
75 participants, 45 centres, 18 countries

During the projection of the conference pictures participants shared their memories of the specific conferences and why it made a difference in their life as a manager.

**Scouts of the World, run by Dominique B nard (director Youth Programme Unit, WOSM World Scout Bureau)**

Dominique B nard introduced a new Award called "Scouts of the world", this award will be officially introduced to all National Associations in January 2004. In order to achieve this award young people have to complete training and a voluntary service on one of the three topics: Development, Environment or Peace. Kandersteg International Scout Centre has had a pilot of the training and voluntary service in 2003, which has been very rewarding for the scouts and the centre. More information was given about how centres can be involved in this new award. CD-ROMs with a presentation and paper copies were handed out to participants.



After these sessions, everyone went outside to the stairs of the Chalet for the conference photo to be taken.



### Moving forward together

This session introduced the theme for this joint WAGGGS and WOSM conference. All centres had been asked to bring a flipchart to the conference on which they had to answer 3 questions. After having studied all the flipcharts it was very interesting to see that although all centres are different in the way they operate and in size, there are a lot of pressures and challenges the managers have in common.

**Question 1.** What makes your centre a Scout/Guide centre?

- Owned, operated, and managed by Scout/Guides Organisations.
- Traditions.
- All offer programmes based on Scouting/Guiding principles and values.

**Question 2.** Is your centre open to non-scout/guide visitors?

Almost all centres are open to non-scout/guide visitors

**Question 3.** What are the advantages or disadvantages to your situation?

The advantages of taking non-members:

- Bigger market than the over 39 million members of WAGGGS and WOSM.
- Income to keep running or to offer cheaper accommodation to Scouts/Guides or to expand. (For some Centres up to 90% of their income is from non-members).
- Increase membership through good experience.

The disadvantages of taking non-members

- Non Scout or Guide groups may have different expectations.
- Higher usage = higher maintenance requirements.
- Do not always understand the 'culture' of Scouting or Guiding.

From the answers on the questions we could also point out the following pressures on a manager in 2003:

- Increase the occupancy.
- Cut costs.
- Secure core or additional funding.
- Expand facilities.
- More legislation to comply with.
- Fewer volunteers willing and available.

- Higher expectations from guests.

It was very interesting to have a plenary discussion on this theme, and it was clear that we do not all agree on the disadvantages and advantages, nor on how we should deal with our challenges and pressures. The session ended with two new questions we want to take with us through the conference and in our work back at our centres.

- How do we achieve a BALANCE, whilst retaining our roots but still doing the best for the centre?
- How can we support each other in 'moving' forward?

### Our Chalet, WAGGGS World Centre



Thursday afternoon we visited Our Chalet in Adelboden. Having the conference in Switzerland gave us the unique opportunity to see the World Scout Centre and a World Guide Centre. After coffee and tea and an introduction by Peter Neurater, the manager, we had a guided tour through the chalets. After this we hiked through the beautiful surrounding of Adelboden and visited the waterfalls of Engsligenalp. We took the cable car up, to have dinner at a height of 2500 m. After dinner the staff of Our Chalet tested our knowledge of Switzerland, World Scouting and World Guiding with a quiz.



### KISC EXPERIENCE

Friday morning started early with the KISC experience. Divided in 5 groups, we spent the morning enjoying some of the programme activities Kandersteg International Scout Centre offers. We played volleyball, held a pioneering competition, found ourselves hugging trees in the environmental workshop, examined the World of Scouting in the International game and bonded in the teambuilding games. It was an active and fun morning, with the aim to experience being a scout and a guest on a camp again. We cooked our lunch (BBQ) on the campsite on open fire.



### My Centre, My Country

On the first and third evenings the participants were invited to present their countries and Centres. All Centres from the same countries had a chance to work together on their country presentations. Both evenings were very enjoyable and to run this evening on two different nights gave everyone a chance to both have a look around and present their centre and country. This event gave the opportunity to the participants to get familiar with some of the other Centres, not to mention to taste some of the different specialties from the various countries.



### Workshops

A total of 9 workshops were run by participants over 2 different sessions on Friday. Subjects were as proposed by the participants who run the workshops:

1. How Green is your Centre, by Charlie Leadbetter (UK), Kingsdown Scout Campsite

Most of us try to run our centres in an environmentally friendly way but without any documentary proof of our efforts. This session looked at how centres tackle this, with as an example the environmental audit from Kingsdown. This showed an analysis of everyday operating procedures to reduce the impact we have on our local environment with the aim of reducing wastage to save money and resources.

2. How to found and run a Scout Centre by Enrico Caruso (I), B.P. Park,

Aim of the workshop was to share the ten year experience of running a permanent scout camp only through volunteers. It gave a general overview and focussed on specific issues such as financial resources, customers and future development.

3. European Voluntary Service, by Ole Damkjaer (DK), Næsby and John Boll (DK), Houens Odde  
Information was given on how to apply for a grant for European Volunteer Service under the EU programme called The Youth Programme. John shared his experience on having a participant on a 6 months programme.

4. Growing as a manager and as a centre, by Hans Sonnenveld (NL), Scout Centrum Rotterdam  
In this workshop the participants were challenged to look at their growth as Centre Managers. Hans showed his own growth supported by the competence development theory of professor Benner. Every one starts as a Novice, becomes an advanced beginner, then competent and proficient before we can call ourselves experts. And even experts should keep growing.

5. Electronic Booking Systems by Pit Kallmeyer (D), Pfadfinderburg Rieneck

This workshop was an exchange of different electronic booking systems as used by participants. They also tried to define the needs for such a system, the advantages and disadvantages and the best system for their specific centres.

6. Quality Management by Manfred Strecker (D), Pfadfinderburg Rieneck

This workshop gave a short introduction on quality systems and a discussion on how these systems could be a help for running a scout or guide centre.

7. The international Kitchen, by Birgitte Rose (DK) and Troels Duhn (DK), Arresøcentret

In this workshop the participants exchanged recipes and ideas for cooking on fire. Different types of food from several countries were prepared and tasted.

8. The changing volunteer by Brendan Wyse (IR), Larch Hill

Throughout Europe, the whole ethos of volunteering is diminishing and it is getting harder to find volunteers. As campsite managers we need to review what we require from volunteers. This workshop attempted to answer the following questions: What kind of volunteer do we need? What do we need to provide to our volunteers? What does the volunteer expect? What is the role of the volunteer?

9. Europe for You, by Uli Tauben (European Youth Programme force)

In this workshop information was given and discussion took place about:

- the analysis and results of the work undertaken by the "Europe for You!" Task Force
- the overall evaluation of "Europe for You", from 1998 till 2002
- the "new face" of different elements of "Europe for You!"
- the opportunities and challenges for Rovers
- the criteria for taking part in "Where to stay in Europe", "Euro Steps" and "The European Scout Voluntary Programme".
- the wide range of possible projects and activities
- the kind of support you can get from the European Scout Office and/or the National Scout and Guide Associations.

**European Update, by Jocelyne Gendrin-Guinebault and Diane Dixan, member of Europe Committee WAGGGS.**

The aim of this session was to bring people up to date with what had happened at a European level since the last Conference in Germany 2001 and to emphasise the role of Centres within Europe. This was done by giving information first about the current situation in WOSM and WAGGGS, the different projects, the joint operation, such as this conference, and where the regions want to go in the future. Important is the upcoming European Conferences in Iceland in April 2004. After this information was given, participants had the chance to ask questions for clarification or for more information. The PowerPoint presentations used for this update were provided to the participants on cd-rom.



## Cornerstones of our work at Scout and Guide Centres

These sessions treated fundamental aspects of running Scout and Guide Centres and were run in smaller groups in order to allow the participants to take an active part and ask questions. Each session was run twice.

### 1. Marketing, by Alison Neurater, Our Chalet (CH)

the objective of this cornerstones session was to give Scout and Guide Centre Managers some good ideas on how to market their Centre. Alison explained that for effective PR you need to know your public first. Once you know your costumers you can start developing a strategy that suits your centre. In your strategy you need to make choices on what you want to do and what you can do. The quality of your PR, souvenirs, leaflets and website reflects the interpretation of quality in how we operate our centres. The groups shared a lot of good and bad experiences. We seemed to agree on the ratings, with advertising at the bottom of the list (least efficient) and the mouth to mouth information and a well updated website topping this score list.

### 2. Programme Development, by Pit Kallmeyer, Burg Rieneck (DE) and Katrin Tauscher, Buchenberg (DE)

This cornerstones session introduced Scout and Guide Centres to organising and running a programme at your site. Pitt told the participants about his experience with setting up a programme offer for Burg Rieneck. His experience is that programmes can make a big difference to your site. The way you develop programme activities depends a lot on the resources you have or can make available. The is first of all, of course, human resources but also the surrounding of your site. Do you have mountains, forest, a river, a castle.... At Burg Rieneck they found that their strength was in the fact that they are a medieval castle, visitors particularly like to experience life in such a castle. The Programme can be used as a support to Scout or Guide groups that visit you; it can also be used to introduce non-scouts to the scout values and methods.

### 3. Safety, by Damien O`Sullivan

This cornerstones session started of with a little risk assessment of the session room and surrounding. This was used as example to show that safety issues are always around you. As Scout and Guide Centre managers we should constantly be aware of health and safety at our centres. It is important to make sure that our guests have the best possible stay, without accidents that could have been avoided. Therefore our strategy on safety shouldn't just be to wait on legislation, but to start thinking before that and beyond that. The session raised the awareness of the participants for safety issues at their own sites.

### 4. Staffing, by Doreen Henry, Pax Lodge (UK) and Miriam Herzberg (Kandersteg International Scout Centre (CH)

In this corner stones session the World Centre of WOSM and one of the World Centres of WAGGGS introduced their (fairly different) way of staffing. At Pax Lodge the staff team is partly professional, whereas at the Kandersteg only the director, the bookkeeper (20%) and the catering supervisor (20%) have paid jobs. A lot of attention was paid on recruiting volunteers to work at centres. How can one find the right person if there is no money to fly everyone in for an interview? Different tips came from participants, for example to ask applicants to send some pictures that show them being active in Scouting. It was also mentioned that your guests are an important resource to recruit future staff from. Therefore you need to promote your staff team constantly on your site.

## Celebrating Successes



In this session every one was asked to share a success they have had personally as manager or on their campsite in the last two years. At the beginning people felt a bit awkward standing up and telling about their successes, but soon it started to become easier. It was good to hear that everyone has had successes, from building new facilities to surviving their first half-year as a manager. It is good to realise every now and then how much you've achieved and to celebrate it. After everyone had their turn we had huge cake to actually celebrate.

## Open Session

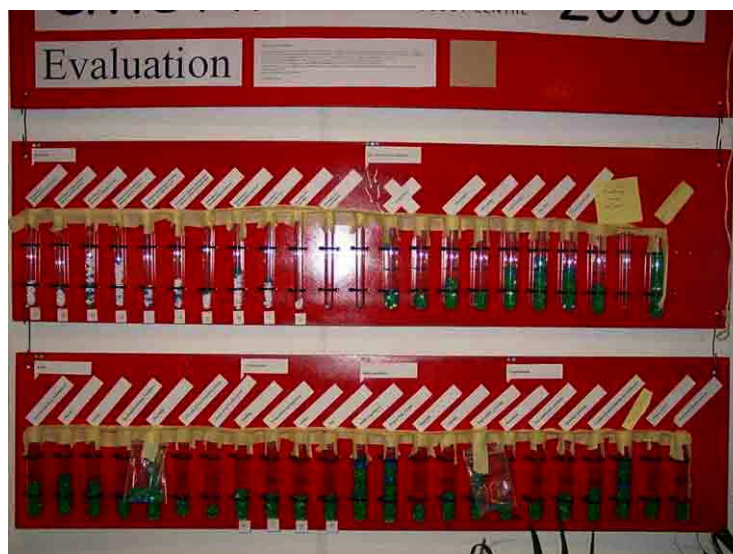
The aim of this last session of the Conference was to bring the final thoughts together and give everyone the possibility to bring up subjects they would like to discuss.

- The Goose Network introduced their plan to organize a Scout and Guide Centre Staff Conference next year in September. This idea was supported by all centres. The Goose Network will keep everyone who is interested informed on the development of this conference.
- Guido Maccabiani introduced his work for the Special Department of Associazione Guide e Scouts Cattolici Italiani.
- Pit Kallmeyer and Manfred Strecker, Burg Rieneck (DE) launched the idea to work on a joint presentation of European Scout and Guide Centers on big national and International events like Jamborees. They also made managers aware that they should provide their National Association with brochures and leaflets about their centre to promote at the European Conference in April 2004
- Ole Damkjær, Arresøcentre (DK) came up with the idea of group gathering. He has good experience with groups from different nationalities that organize a joint camp or expedition. As centres we could promote and offer this to groups.
- Martin Bentzen, Naesbycentre (DK) invited all centres to participate in "International Centre Day" on the 14th of July 2004. If you have internet connection you can celebrate this day with other centres, by contacting them and exchanging ideas.
- Mike Masino, the Lochgoilhead Centre (UK) introduced the idea of organizing a Scout and Guide Centre Managers Conference for managers from all over the world. To start building on this idea it was decided by the participants that it would be good to invite people from other regions to join in this European Conference.
- Jakob Knol, Gilwell Ada's Hoeve (NL), wanted to send a short questionnaire to all participants after the conference to find out what managers are looking for in a booking system.
- Miriam Herzberg, Conference director invited centre managers to apply for being the host for the 2005 Conference and handed out the requirement list for hosting centres.

All participants asked Miriam Herzberg, to spend time for the European Scout Office on some of these ideas.

## Evaluation

The evaluation took place in an ongoing process during the Conference. All participants received different colored beads, they could put into test tubes. With this they could show their appreciation to several different sessions, the organization, the hosting centre, etc. The green beads were for "normal" counting and had a maximum per tube per person. The blue beads were for extra appreciation and free to be given as liked. Mentioned in the session on Saturday in addition to the beads evaluation were "Good planning", "I would have liked a space to smoke" and "it was very good to have coffee available all day". The detailed results of the evaluation are sent to the participants separately.



## Closing

At the end of the four days, Miriam Herzberg thanked everybody who had helped make this Conference such a fantastic success. In particular, Miriam thanked the other members of the planning team, the staff of Kandersteg International Scout Centre and the participants who ran workshops, cornerstones and other sessions for their great work. A special thank you went to Derek Langford, for this was his last Conference after retiring from Hawkthirst last year. Derek has attended all conferences and has contributed to many planning teams. He got a big applause from all present. On behalf of everyone present, Damien O'Sullivan also thanked Miriam for her great work and hoped that the event would continue to be such a success.

Finally, the formal closing was made by Thijs Stoffer, chairman of the Kandersteg Committee. He expressed the feeling gatherings like these give you, how much inspiration comes from it and how hard it can be to explain at home what you have done. He wished everyone a lot of inspiration in the coming years.

After the official closing all participants were invited to experience a night of The Magic of KISC. If you want to know what this is, we suggest that you visit Kandersteg soon. The pictures below will give you an idea.



This conference ended, as so many nights before in the German tents that were set up as a bar/campfire place. The strength of a conference like this is in meeting colleagues, exchanging ideas, sharing experiences, having fun and inspiring each other. Of course it is the time after and in between sessions that can make the difference...

### Thanks to our supporters

The European Scout and Guide Centre Managers' Conference could not take place without the support of several different organizations. In particular, we would like to thank:

- The European Scout Region and the Europe Region WAGGGS;
- The participants who gave lots of good feedback and worked hard during the event;
- All those who took part and helped create such a great event in Switzerland.

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