

EUFORIA

Estonia 5th Anniversary Edition

March 2013



Dear Members,

Ever since I had the privilege to serve as chair of the International Expansion Committee and thus having been able to play a role in establishing the Estonian state organization, I have promised to attend the annual conference in Estonia. Now on the fifth anniversary this promise was redeemed.

Margareta Hanschmidt had prepared an outstanding programme along with her members.

The state meeting was crowned with the installation of Gamma chapter, the chapter with the youngest members ever initiated as far as the annals show. Mari Lauk, chapter president, expressed her excitement about becoming a member of our Society and described a promising future for her new chapter.

I think such events are worth a special edition of EuForia. My thanks go to Margarita for reports and photos, to Epp and Marina for their generous hospitality, to friends across borders who shared the joy and to Joan Carroll, our editor, for spreading the good news.

Marika Heimbach

Happy Birthday Estonia

I am so proud of the fantastic development of Estonia state. It is a child with the quickness of a five year old but with the wisdom of a 50 year old. You can notice that on the way our sisters in Estonia have adopted the spirit of DKG and in the quality of their meetings. The high point was of course the international conference last December in honor of Hilda Taba.

Now they have started a third chapter in Tartu. These ladies certainly know how to spread the word!

Marianne Skardeus, Sweden

Real Hospitality!

Do you want to know what real hospitality is? Visit our DKG members in Estonia! They have just celebrated their 5th Anniversary and already have more members than most of the other European countries! The convention was visited by most of the Estonian members and by guests from USA, Sweden, Germany and The Netherlands.

They offered a program with excellent speakers and good content and besides that they provided us with a fantastic extra program. We went to the Adriorg museum (former palace of Peter I), we had a

guided tour (Urve was the guide) and we visited the Kau Manor, a fantastic building 55 km. from Tallinn which is used for seminars, parties and celebrations now. There was also a meeting with the



US ambassador when we had the chance to talk to him about the excellent educational system in Estonia and the support they are offering the students in Tallinn.

So this was a very inspirational event!
Janny Kistemann, The Netherlands

Pre-conference days. Extracts from Margarita's diary

March 6, 2013

Dr. Beverly Helms, DKG International President and Dr. Muriel O'Tuel, DKG International Speaker arrived in Tallinn at noon. Though having had a long journey they did not reveal any sign of tiredness, they were so excited to see a snowy Estonia. As Beverly told me, she had started to take photos already from the plane. I accommodated guests in my house.



Some hours later I and another hostess, Epp, met Marika Heimbach, Regional Director and Janny Kistemann from DKG Netherlands at the airport. What a joy to meet DKG sisters who we have known for 5 years already.



In the evening we had a dinner together at a cafe "Moon" (Poppy) at a hidden corner of wooded Kalamaja suburb. Simple, honest, local, sustainable, Nordic – this was the food and home-like atmosphere. We linked our hands and felt this genuine sincerity which connected us.

March 7, 2013

In the morning Marika "went to work" with Epp. Epp Raag works as a teacher of English in Secondary School No. 21. Epp gave Marika a short tour of the schoolhouse and Marika had a happy chance to participate in a German lesson and talk with students in the pure German language.

Janny's hostess Marina brought Janny to my place and Janny, Beverly, Muriel and I drove to Kadriorg Palace where we were supposed to meet Marika and Epp.

As we reached our destination a bit early we decided to have a quick look at our "Miami" and we went to Pirita Beach. Sorry to say we had to face a freezing wind from the frozen sea but, nevertheless, the guests enjoyed the amazing sight of endless snow.



Our next stop - the Kadriorg Palace and Park is a resplendent summer residence, built by Tsar Peter I in the 18th century for his empress, Catherine. The Italian architect Niccolo Michetti designed this baroque splendor, stuccoes ceilings and landscaped gardens all round. The Art

Museum of Estonia has set up its foreign branch here and we found a great collection of paintings by Illian Repin displayed in the Palace's spacious halls. In case you were wondering about the curious-sounding name, 'Kadriorg' it means 'Catherine's Valley'.



It took an hour's drive along Tartu road to reach the Kõue Manor, first mentioned before 1241. The famous explorer and sefarer Otto von Kotzebue (1787-1846) lived in this manor. In 2007 the manor got new owners Eerik-Niiles Kross and the artist Mary Jordan who started to restore the

manor buildings. Kõue manor today is Mary Jordan's mesmerising creation and one can find an exclusive art-collection there. We were all stunned by what we saw and later, the excellent food we tasted.



In the evening we went to the Estonia Opera House to see a performance of a musical adaptation of Mark Twain's "The Pauper and The Prince".

March 8, 2013

The sunshine woke us up as appropriate for Women's Day. My husband's yellow and red tulips for great American ladies made the day.

At 11 a.m. we met our DKG member Urve Läänemets in Old Town. Urve performed a memorable tour through narrow cobblestone streets and she was a living encyclopedia, remembering all important dates connected with Tallinn's long history. We visited old churches, the sites of 13th century buildings and had a cup of coffee with fresh pastries in the oldest operational cafe, dating from 1864. The cafe is unique due to its interior, which has remained unchanged for almost a century



At 3 p.m. sharp we were honoured guests at the US Embassy Tallinn where Beverly, Muriel, Marika, Janny and I met the new US Ambassador in Estonia Mr. Jeffrey D. Levine, Deputy Chief of Mission Mr. Robert Gilchrist, Ms. Alison Davis from Public Relations Department and our DKG sister Tiiu Vitsut. We had a lively conversation and our guests could hear what the Estonian way of life is like through the eyes of American people working in the US Embassy Tallinn.

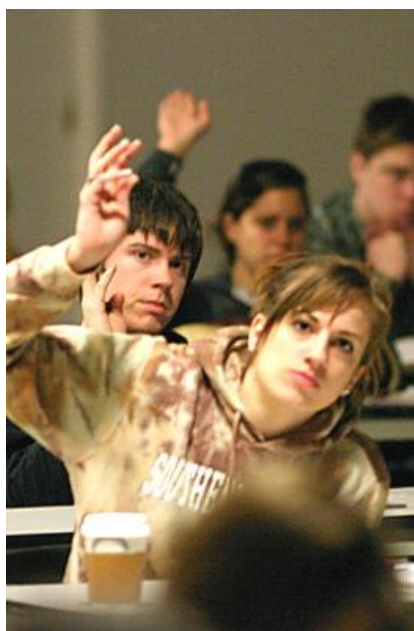
After a long day full of events we found our seats in the medieval Town Hall. The building history of the Town Hall goes back to the 13th century. In its present form it was completed in 1404. The management of the city worked in the Town Hall until 1970. Since 1975 the Town Hall functions as the ceremonial building of the city government but, like this night, it also serves as a concert hall and a museum. We had arrived to listen to a Women's Day Concert performed by the best singers of the Estonia Opera Choir.



RAHVUSVAHELISE DELTA KAPPA GAMMA ÜHINGU

EESTI ORGANISATSIOONI 5. AASTAKONVERENTS

WE ARE DIFFERENT LEARNERS



9. MÄRTS 2013.A.

TALLINN

March 9, 2013

The plenary session "We are different learners" started with a music performance where 2 future music teachers sang an Estonian song, words by Anna Haava, and played Estonian national instruments.

Margarita, the DKG Estonia State President, opened the conference, introduced the guests among whom there had also arrived sisters from Sweden: Marianne Skardeus – our DKG Estonia godmother, Ingrid Sjernquist – DKG Sweden State president and our great friend Gudrun Nylander.



DKG International **President Dr. Beverly Helms** brought greetings from DKG Headquarters and **Marika Heimbach**, Europe Regional Director, opened her speech with ESTONIAN SENTENCES! What amazing efforts! The message from the poem was heart-warming and her encouraging words were inspiring.

The first lecturer was **Viire Sepp PhD**, Director of the Gifted and Talented Development Centre, University of Tartu. The history of today's Gifted and Talented Development Centre spans back almost 50 years when through the initiative of the mathematics department of Tartu University, a non-stationary mathematics school to find and help the development of mathematically talented students, mainly from the countryside, was established. The form correspondence learning gives to students from all over Estonia an opportunity for more specialised learning without leaving their home schools. Nowadays there are more than 30 yearly courses, concentrating on the subjects of mathematics and natural sciences, but also medicine, philosophy, linguistics, economics etc. Over half of the courses take place in an e-learning environment. Recent years have brought a new development in the form of mobile "science labs" and hands-on workshops. An important milestone in the development of the Centre was when in 1992 Estonia joined the movement of International Science Olympiads for high school students, and it became the responsibility of the Centre to prepare Estonian teams for international competitions. Olympiads are one of the most important stimuli in the development of gifted students particularly in inspiring them to hard independent work. Not a year goes by when Estonian students do not return from the international arena without medals. In 2001, the organising and co-ordinating of national academic Olympiads was trusted to the Centre also, which brought along an expansion of domains and in spheres of activity.

During the last decade, the Gifted and Talented Development Centre has become a centre of competence in gifted education, where both research on giftedness and schooling are combined. In the survey "Worldwide provision to develop gifts and talents" (Freeman, Raffan & Warwick, 2010), the Gifted and Talented Development Centre of Tartu University was brought out as one of the 12 most outstanding centres working in area of gifted education in the world. Combined participant numbers for the Centre's different courses and workshops are as high as 3000, amongst competitions the most remarkable is the mathematics contest "Kangaroo" with more than 13,000 participants each year. The study materials published by the Centre are also a good resource for

teachers for differentiated work with more able students in the classroom or during extracurricular activities. The strength of the Centre comes from continuity – the alumni of the Centre and former participants of Olympiads now, as university students or scientists, contribute towards the development of new young talents.

The second lecturer was **Tiiu Puik, speech therapist**, whose main points in the presentation were:

- Language learning is more complicated for boys than girls.
- School systems providing opportunities for learning are based on speaking.
- The brain and speaking of boys and girls develop at different pace. Speaking skills of 7-year-old boys are about a year or a half year behind the level the girls have achieved.
- The two first years of children's life are crucial from the point of view of their further development
- Is the nursery the best supportive environment for learning speaking?
- The influence of a bilingual or multilingual communication environment for development of speaking skills
- The role of TV and computers in the development of speaking skills
- School experiments and educational research have demonstrated great advantages of girls over the boys of the same age
- 9% of the population are left-handed. About 70% of children having problems with learning are the left-handed children who have been instructed/retrained to perform using their right hand in all activities.

The third presenter was **Marie Maarendi, a young school psychologist**, the future DKG Estonia member 😊, who talked on the topic: "Behavioural difficulties – causes, prevention and intervention".

Factors that determine one's behaviour are:

- Environmental factors (family, school, peers)
- Parental care during child's first years of life
- Personality (emotionality, activity, sociality, impulsiveness)
- Gender, health (symptomatic or diagnosed behaviour disorders)
- Social skills

Marie was sure that social skills can be taught just like academic skills and the main focus should be put on:

- Discussion of the need of social skills
- Teach and model the skill
- Practise the skill
- Reflect the results

In addition, it is always necessary to explain the importance of considering others' feelings.

In her everyday work she pays special attention to parent-teacher cooperation. The more frequent is the interaction and co-operation between the family and school, the more effective is the child's social and academic development. She has involved families in many different activities as much as possible. Eg.:

- Regular communication
- Parent-teacher conferences twice a year
- Parents are involved with school fairs and sportsdays
- Family Week
- Spring Ball
- Pets' Day
- Father and Mother's Day celebrations
- ABC party
- Parties with parents
- Parents' Feedback Questionnaire

It is also necessary to explain the importance of considering others' feelings. Marie provided a lot of examples from her everyday practices.

The fourth presenter was **Aili Maar, a psychologist** from Counselling and Psychotherapy Centre for Problem Gamblers.

Aili Maar reflected on two recent surveys on:

- (1) Internet use, risk and safety: EU Kids Online 2009-2011 (II trend estimation at 2010) and
- (2) problematic computer/internet use connections to later gambling problems: Counselling and Psychotherapy Center for Problem Gamblers; Gambling Prevalence Study in 2010.

Aili Maar pointed out that we have come to know that Estonian children's online use and activities are now thoroughly embedded in children's daily lives and children are going online at ever younger age. Children do a range of diverse and potentially beneficial things online but comparing across countries, encounters with one or more online risks include around six in ten children in Estonia.

Hidden risk factors involved that either them or their parents, teachers etc. are not aware of, reside in learned behavioural patterns which can lead to gambling problems in later life.

At the end of her presentation Aili Maar gave some “tips” for parents:

- Make an agreements on other out-door and household activities, engagements etc. – your child is a family member and should be part of the family life. Make sure your child has a possibilities for socializing and getting supportive social network
- Make sure you understand what kind of computer/internet activities are justified as a school project
- Set the time limits for spare time computer/internet use
- Put the computer to the open area of a (living-)room so that it would be possible for you to observe online activities
- Use parental control software : [Net Nanny](#) , [CyberPatrol](#) , [ParentalControl Bar](#)
- Use counselling and training possibilities (www.15410.ee)

The keynote speaker was **Dr. Muriel O’Tuel** whose topic was “Connecting with students one heart at a time”. For more than a decade Dr. Muriel O’Tuel has motivated a variety of audiences including business, college, school, church and civic organizations. She is a highly acclaimed keynote speaker who inspires her listeners to leave positive footprints on the hearts of others.

Dr. O’Tuel struck chords in our hearts and stirred memories as she led us to feel she has walked in our shoes. She promoted high ethical standards from a caring heart and long tradition of family values.

Her book FOOTPRINTS ON THE HEART which was nominated for the Delta Kappa Gamma Society International Educator’s Award, sold well among our members. She is currently working on her second book, HEARTPRINTS ARE FOREVER, which deals with aging, generational differences, and leaving a positive LEGACY that lives forever.

The second part of the conference was a business meeting. The agenda included:

1. Annual reports of the state president, chairs of committees and a state treasurer.
2. Gamma Chapter installation and initiation of Gamma members
3. Voting for the new president of 2013-2015

First there were annual reports of the state president, chairs of committees and a state treasurer. Margarita pronounced that SAP for 2011-2013 was completed and summed the two most important projects carried out during the year which were:

- **Hilda Taba 110 conference in December 2012**

All scheduled speeches and reports were delivered at plenaries and workshops

The products compiled for the conference were the following:

- exhibition of Hilda Taba's life and works
 - 4 banners and a selection of books
 - flyers with photos and the full text of the exhibition in English
 - a book of abstracts and texts prepared by invited speakers in English and Estonian
 - a DVD – a slideshow of places where Hilda Taba has lived and worked in America
- **Compilation of methodical instructions and materials in the Estonian language for Russian teachers in Russian schools in Estonia.** The compilations will consist of various official forms with additional simple explanations, collection of phrases and vocabulary regarding teaching and education in general, also some methodical tools and materials which help to understand cultural and social differences and give clearer guidance in more specific educational domains such as Estonian art and crafts, history and infrastructure, internet facilities etc.

This work so far has been a great pleasure and an awesome lesson of human nature and humility. We have been targeting different individuals and mapping out their specific areas of concern and giving them the feedback about the possibilities how we feel the help will be most sufficient. The idea of compilation of various materials and tools came to life after a few meetings with our Russian colleagues and we have prepared materials to be used in workshops, trainings and lessons.

This work so far has been a very pleasant and productive cooperation. We have had friendly meetings with Russian teachers. We have visited together A.H. Tammsaare museum to introduce them to a great Estonian writer (Meeting I). They have helped us to sew red roses for our organisation gifts (Meeting II). Russian teachers have invited us to their students' art exhibition (Meeting III). They have taught us to make vases in their pottery classes (Meeting IV). We had a

wonderful spring party when the first draft of Art History materials was ready (Meeting V). Russian teachers evaluated our work and gave a good feedback to our work (Meeting VI)

The next stage of the project is the compilation of tasks to the texts, games and tests. We also add photos of different architectural buildings as didactic materials. The workbook for teaching and learning Art History will be ready in April 2013. Both projects were sponsored by DKG Educational Foundation.



The second part of the agenda was the installation of Gamma Chapter. All members were introduced and the initiation ceremony was carried out with

the help of our honoured guests DKG International President Dr. Beverly Helms and Marika Heimbach, Europe Regional Director.



The third significant part of the business meeting was voting for Anu Ariste, the new state president for 2013-2015 and the new board (Urve Läänemts – vice-president, Anu Joon – secretary; Margit Timakov – treasurer)

Finally we joined our hands for DKG song and we celebrated our 5th birthday with a huge cake. There were birthday greetings from Marianne Skardeus, Ingrid Stjernquist, postcards from Anne-Marie Badersten (Sweden), Anne-Marie Salonen (Finland), Monica Tengling (Sweden). THANK YOU!



The conference was followed by the after-party at Margarita's house.

Postscript: It gave me much pleasure to produce this special Estonian Anniversary edition. It brought back many happy memories of my one visit to the beautiful city of Tallinn. My thanks to all

those who contributed to this edition, which I am sure you will agree conveys the great enthusiasm and liveliness of the Estonian membership. I wish I could have included all of the many lovely photographs but I have squeezed in as many as possible. Happy Anniversary Estonia, we look forward to hearing from you again soon. The deadline for the summer edition of EuForia is 26th May 2013.

Joan Carroll, Editor