

Report on the 27th World Conference of ISGF

Held at Sydney 10th to 16th October 2014

Registration for the participants took place on Friday 10th, It was quite exciting as you made and renewed friendship with Australian and overseas members. A flag raising was held when the following flags were raised – ISGF, Aboriginal, NSW State and the Australian. The Conference was ‘Friendship – Beneath the Southern Skies’.

The conference started on Saturday morning with the opening Ceremony which followed the procession of Guests. The Guests included the Governor General, Sir Peter Cosgrove (The Chief Scout of Australia) accompanied by Barbara Dean, (Australian Trefoil Guild Advisor; Lady Cosgrove (Patron of Girl Guides Australia) accompanied by Robinette Emonson (Chief Commissioner of Girl Guides Australia). David Hurley (Governor of N.S.W.) accompanied by Gillian Garcia (State Commissioner of Girl Guides NSW/ACT) and Mrs Hurley (Patron of Girl Guides NSW / ACT) accompanied by Richard Stuart-Smith (NSGFA Treasurer) Rosalind Farley, (N.S.W/ A.C.T. Trefoil Guild Advisor); Alma Brand, (Victorian Trefoil Guild Adviser); Sue Hawkins, (Qld Trefoil Guild Adviser); Greg Davies (Australian B P Guild Master); Mal Cull (Qld B P Guild Master) a

Sir Peter Cosgrove opened the conference and David Hurley welcomed everyone to Sydney. This was followed by a welcome from the elder of the Aboriginal tribe located in this area read by the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

After these formalities the parade of all the flags from the member countries carried by youth and adult members of Girl Guide and Scout Association. This was very moving as the parade of many colours seemed unending and they took their place at the front of the Conference Centre.

After morning Tea and the departure of the dignitaries The Chairman of the World Committee opened the business of the conference with the handing out of voting cards to the heads of the delegations. The first vote of the conference was to approve the Rules of Procedure followed by the appointment of the Chairman

(Brian Jackson the Australian Chairman of the organising committee) and Vice Chairman (Jean Luc de Paepe) After the verification of the quorum and the approval of the agenda, a resolutions committee (Brett Grant, South Australia; Desmond Cross (NSW) Jean-Francois Levy (France); Gunaseelan Thambinnathan (Malaysia); The three teller were Val Hayward (Qld); Roy Grecian (WA); Desmond Cross (NSW) were appointed.

The next item was the presentation of the candidates who were standing for the World Committee where they were all received a yellow scarf, this gave all delegates time to speak with them before the voting was to take place. There were eight nominees and four places on the WC.

There was only one Country applying for full membership, the Maldives; this was carried unanimously; there were no candidates for Associate membership, no countries for cancellation or suspension of membership.

The fee system increased by 6% across the board to allow for inflation for the triennium 2015-2017. Prior to each vote there was a rollcall where each country had to acknowledge their presence. It was interesting to see the countries that were not present, and to whom they gave their proxy.

The world Committee Triennial report was given by Mida, Chairman of the WC. In 2011 there was a loss of members with the membership now standing at 23,500. All regional and sub regional gatherings were attended by a World Committee member.

The financial reports were the accounts for the last three years, the international development fund and the debtors. These were presented by the treasurer Anthony Florizoone, and were all passed.

In the evening the Cumberland Gang Show entertained us, this was enjoyed by everyone.

The following morning Melanie Bennett (vice Chairman of the Asia Pacific Region and from New Zealand) gave the WAGGGS and WOSM reports. The relationship with WAGGGS is very good and has not needed to be changed since 1986. The relationship with WOSM will be changed again later in the conference. 45% of girls think that they will not reach their potential; Six out of ten feel they don't look right. The Free Being Me project has been translated into eleven languages and it is hoped that it will reach 3.5 million girls by 2016. Violence against girls is a problem. We have a partnership with Zonta International to help with this. The Asia Pacific organisation has 3.15million members in 26 member organizations. ISGF supports the AsiaPacific region.

The Hon. John Price (Patron of the BP Guild) was the Keynote speaker. WOSM launches a new vision, new strategy and a new plan. WOSM are opening a new World Scout general office in Kula Lumpa. The World Bureau staff and legal seat will remain in Geneva. WOSM's new website enables members to share moments and experiences. (scout.org). by the year 2023 Scouting will be the World's leading educational movement with 100 million young people.

There were presentations from Ghana and Indonesia on hosting the 28th World Conference in 2017

The 14th ASPAC gathering will be held 12th - 17th September 2015 in Bangalore with the theme being 'Peace starts with me'.

The International Ambassadors Guild was founded in 1997 and has 140 members and has been giving support to the Ivory Coast and the Girl Guides of Mulwala. The report was given by Mrs Bjorg Walstad of Norway.

Mida gave a report on UNHCR asking us to be aware of refugees. It takes 700,000 Euros to put water on in a refugee camp. There are 60 million Children under 12 as refugees so the ISGF Europe launched 'Toys for Children' and gathered 60,000 toys that were distributed in the 2013-2014 campaign. The toys went to Jordon to the Syrian children. The UK sent 700kg of Toys.

A group photo was taken.

The voting on the next World Conference location was completed with Indonesia winning the opportunity to host the 28th World Conference in Bali in 2017. The Indonesians had been handing out vote for Indonesia badges and leaflets showing the mascot of the Conference.

Workshops were held during the afternoon.

Presentation on Development 2014 – 2017. The steps to the future. 1. Efficiency. 2. Visibility. 3. Communication. There should be a Current Constitution, Data base of Volunteers, Brand /Image, Project, using among other things YouTube, Instagrams and easy accessible websites. Co-operation with UNHCR, WAGGGS, WOSM, other NGO's.

Fellowship: Get together, Network, In touch with former members, Keep alive the Guide/Scout spirit, Contact with like minded and recruit younger members.

The result of the voting for the World Conference committee members was Mr Abdul Khaleque from Bangladesh, Mr Alf Runar Bakke from Norway, Mr Wahid Labidi from Tunisia and Mr Mathius Lukwago from Uganda. The ones remaining were Maria da Piedade Rodrigues (Mida) from Portugal, Antonia Athina Gentimi (Nana) from Greece Vena Lopez from

Curacao and Virginia Bonasegale from Italy. This makes a committee of four men and four women, three WAGGGS members and five WOSM members. The term of committee members six years with half changing at the conference every three years. Mrs Midas Rodrigus was elected to chair the committee for the next 3 years.

The budget for the next three years was presented and carried. It was suggested and carried that the ISGF membership fee be raised. Mrs Angela Stroter from Germany offered herself as auditor; she is 51 and would be able to get to Brussels in three hours. This was carried and received with acclamation.

The Apac Region committee members are Bangladesh, Australia, Malaysia, and India.

Mida (chairman of WC) gave a report on some of the work of the committee –*Our Kit* that will contain eight books of which three are complete 1. New Ideas
2. Scouts and Guides for adults. 3. UNHCR - some of the others will be on the Environment, Finances, Visibility, Development, Education and Training.

A Dinner Cruise on Sydney Harbour was affected by a storm, regardless it was a very happy evening. A sing-a-long was held on three nights after dinner.

The African Region report was given by Henry Lukwele from Zambia. They have divided into four Sub regions Western, South, Central and East. The Chairman is from Zambia, the Secretary and Treasurer are both from Uganda.

A World market was held when you had to buy ISGF notes to be able to purchase from the stalls. Many countries brought item from their country to sell and the money went back to their association. A total of AUD \$2,242 was raised.

The 60th Anniversary was celebrated last year and a video presented showing how many countries celebrated this event.

The conference closed with the exchange of gifts and thanks to the World Committee, the organising committee, and the secretary general – Cecile Bellet, after which the flags were lowered and the ISGF flag given to Indonesia to keep till the next conference in Bali in 2017.

The following day there were Tour of The Blue Mountains, The Hunter Valley, The South Coast and the Tobruk Sheep station. Because of the bad storms the night before some had to be amended.

At different times during the conference there were Action Times where various countries presented a video and/or a report on what their country is doing or has done; Australia was the first country to present theirs. Followed by Zambia, Germany, Liechtenstein, India, Curacao, the Nordic Baltic sub-region (Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Sweden, Lithuania, Finland), United Kingdom, Tunisia, Malaysia, France, Uganda, Argentina, Morocco, Finland, European Region, Norway, Haiti- USA, Casegha, Belgium, Indonesia, Italy and Bangladesh.

The Meals were good in quality and quantity, although some members would have liked Tea and Coffee with meals. Morning and afternoon teas were Tea and Coffee with Biscuits. The Bar was open during all meal breaks.

My thanks must go to the Organizing Committee and the volunteers to whom the success of the conference must go.

Margaret Norris
NSW/ACT T G Member and attendee
December 2014