



SI Monthly News

June 2005



What is SI Monthly News?

In SI News 2005 I indicated that changes were afoot concerning the methods of dissemination of what is going on. Servas is an active, living organisation with many members. These members need to communicate with each other. Modern technology provides ever wider methods of instant communication. It was decided to try out a Monthly News on the internet. It is accepted that not everybody has access to the internet, however that does not mean that we may not use it.

The aim of this Monthly News is to include:

- Updates about meetings
- Reports to be shared
- Information about different countries
- Perhaps a language section where useful phrases could be shared.
- What ever you as the reader would like to see.....

An apology

So I must now offer an apology. The heading is June but it is not going onto the internet until July. My fault. I have been exceedingly busy and this took back burner compared with school reports. Hence this is a short copy with a few of the items that people have sent. It is a starter. Hopefully the July issue will follow on fairly quickly with some stabilising in August, although that might just have to be done when I am on the move.

Obituaries

This issue commemorates the lives of two people who have been committed to helping others and have given time to Servas. Both these people have died since SI News 2005 went to print and so could not be included there. They are Denys Whitehead, former African Anglophone co-ordinator and Peter Benenson of Amnesty who was also a Servas member. These people have offered so much that people wished to commemorate them. There is an article about each one.

In the site of Amnesty International it's possible to view a good videoclip: tribute to Peter Benenson
<http://news.amnesty.org/mavp/mediaclick.nsf/0/5982E1E37E56174580256BDB003A8891>

Languages

The language section offers some words and phrases, in English, that people can find useful. What we now need is for these to be given in other languages so that each month there will be a different language to help hosts and travellers understand each other. You are welcome to add, in your language, with an English translation, words and phrases that you would find useful.

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Layout

The layout of this Monthly News is by page topics. You may find that not all pages are full. You may find that some pages run over to the next. However this way it should be reasonably easy to find the topics you would like to read.

You may prefer to just print off the whole issue to curl and read at leisure.

Contact

We welcome articles coming to SI Monthly News. We do not guarantee that the article, or any part of it will be published. This depends on the theme for the month along with the number of other articles also available for publication.

Preferred method of contact is email at:
 newsletter@servas.org
 or jgiffould@aol.com

Please make sure that Servas: Monthly News is part of the subject heading. Otherwise if the email address is not recognised it may well get deleted before being read.

The postal address is:
 Jane Giffould, SI Monthly News Editor
 20 Weavers Row, Halstead, Essex, CO9 2JX
 England.

Obituaries

Reverend Denys Whitehead is dead.

Reverend Denys Whitehead is dead. He passed away at the age of 82, after a long and active life as a priest of the Anglican Church, first in England and from 1960 in Zambia. He retired in 1989 after 10 years as priest in charge, Livingstone, and settled in the same town. Denys was born and raised in UK. In the 50s he hitchhiked around in Europe, before he emigrated, travelling overland to Zambia.

Denys married Margaret, who had a degree in physics from the university of Harare (in Zimbabwe). Denys joked, saying that the reason he married Margaret was that she was unbelievably practical, which was true as Margaret mended any technical problem from cars to washing machines.

Denys took the consequence of leaving his family in UK and brought his mother to Zambia, where she lived with them until she died at the age of 89.

Denys and Margaret had 4 children and 7 grandchildren. They enjoyed the pleasure of having 6 of their grandchildren going to schools near to them. But Denys and Margaret also suffered the pain of losing their firstborn - Peter.

September 8th. 1984 at 7,45 a.m., I rang on their doorbell as their first Servas visitor. I came without any prior notice (as I had just been given the address from the Zambian Servas Secretary). Despite coming unexpectedly I was invited to stay - as so many before and after me. Denys' and Margaret's involvement in all sort of local activities, their hospitality and compassion for their fellow man and fellow woman reflected the core of Christianity - love. I stayed with Denys and Margaret for 2 days, and Denys showed us the photos of his trip around Denmark in the fifties.

In 1993 they found themselves the only Servas Hosts left in Zambia, so they became National Secretary and recruited lots more Hosts. Over the years they have had more than 100 Servas Travellers in their house. In 2000 Denys retired as National Secretary. But in 2003 Servas International asked him to take up the post as Anglophone Africa Co-ordinator. Denys and Margaret attended the Servas General Assembly in Barcelona in 2004.

Towards the end of his life Denys suffered from a severe hearing loss, and had problems with his heart and with walking. But his eyesight and his intellectual capacities remained fit to the end of his life. Denys is dead now, and we have lost a fiery soul. But surely Margaret will carry on their work for the community and Denys' spirit.

Steen Carlsen, Denmark

Peter, dear friend

Friday Feb 25 in the night a dear friend, Peter Benenson, an English barrister whose outrage over the imprisonment of two students prompted him to found the human rights organization Amnesty International 43 years ago, died of pneumonia in Oxford at John Radcliffe Hospital. He was 83. Peter Benenson was not only the founder of Amnesty International, but a great friend of Servas too.

He discovered our association in Italy, where he frequently came. He was several times our guest in our home in Novara, a city not far from his beloved little lake, Lago d'Orta, where Peter rented for many years a little apartment. He became Servas host too in his country-house near London and participated in the Servas International Conference in Rome in May '86.

'Peter Benenson's life was a courageous testament to his visionary commitment to fight injustice around the world. He brought light into the darkness of prisons, the horror of torture chambers and tragedy of death camps around the world,' Irene Kahn, Secretary General of Amnesty International, said in a statement. 'This was a man whose conscience shone in a cruel and terrifying world, who believed in the power of ordinary people to bring about extraordinary change.' Khan added. "In 1961 his vision gave birth to human rights activism. In 2005, his legacy is a worldwide movement for human rights which will never die."

In the 1950s his human rights activism included efforts in fascist Spain, British-ruled Cyprus, communist Hungary and in South Africa. The one-year Appeal for Amnesty was launched on 28 May 1961, in an article called The Forgotten Prisoners in the British newspaper The Observer. That appeal attracted thousands of supporters and started a worldwide human rights movement. The catalyst for the original campaign was Benenson's sense of outrage after reading an article about the arrest and imprisonment of two students in a café in Lisbon, Portugal, who had drunk a toast to liberty.

In subsequent years, Benenson remained a modest, self-effacing man, shunning attempts to glorify his role and avoiding personal publicity whenever possible. When the group won the Peace Prize (1977), the organization was represented by its chairman, Thomas Hammarberg of Sweden, not Benenson. "Once the concentration camps and the hellholes of the world were in darkness," Benenson said. "Now they are lit by the light of the Amnesty candle; the candle in barbed wire. When I first lit the Amnesty candle, I had in mind the old Chinese proverb: 'Better light a candle than curse the darkness.'"

He wrote us his last Christmas Card two months ago: it will be his last dear memory. We thank Peter for all. He was really a great friend and we never will forget his smile, his voice, his availability, his intelligent simplicity, his warm humanity, his prophetic intuition, his great imagination.

Luigi Uslenghi, Servas Italy

Meetings, Get together, Seeing each other

Get together in London

Please note the change of venue.

It is no longer Boswells.

The new venue is **Pontefract Castle.**

This is in Wigmore Street, London W1.

The nearest Underground Station is Bond Street.

Date: First Monday in every month.

Time: 6.30 onwards.

Look forward to seeing you all there.

We hope this went well:

Italy 2005 - Pathways together

“Sentierinsieme”/Pathway together will return next year in Italy to a valley near Monte Rosa, in Piedmont: the green **Valsesia**. It is for the **weekend 15-17 July 2005**. After the weekend there will be **four days of trekking** for a limited number of people (max 30) in the “Walser” area. We will be at Cerva, a small locality in the little Val Sermenza, municipality of Rossa.

A reminder:

Germany - The Baltic Sea Surrounded by nine countries

In the northernmost corner of Germany, next to Flensburg and even closer to the sea that the Germans call "Ostsee", (East Sea) (Baltic Sea in the English speaking countries), the next yearly assembly of Servas Germany will take place from Friday Sept 23rd to Sunday Sept 25th 2005.

We would especially like to invite Servas members of the other eight countries surrounding the Baltic Sea to join us for our conference! The motto of the conference will be "The Baltic Sea - Surrounded by nine countries". We will have a special program for the young Servas members -to produce a video tape by themselves; for the adult Servas members there will be some workshops on Sunday morning dealing with the motto. On Saturday we will mainly discuss and "workshop" items of Servas Germany. On Friday evening and Saturday evening we will have a cultural program where contributions are welcomed!

For further information you may contact me (e-mail Nationalsecretary@servas.de). You will find information about the venue at www.scheersberg.de

We are looking forward to meet you in Quern!

*Inken Resa-Thomas,
National Secretary of Servas Germany.*

Languages

Language is an important tool of communication. When we understand each other we are more likely to be peaceful. Think of the problems that have arisen just by the wrong interpretation of what someone is trying to say.

In this section the aim is to build up a selection of words and phrases to help hosts and travellers communicate with each other and with other people. If you have words or phrases that you find useful then let us know. If you have languages you would like to share then let us know. For the moment the base language will be English, hence any non-English words and phrases must be accompanied by the English translation of them.

In the long run it would be good to be able to publish a booklet of useful words and phrases in a range of languages for the Servas hosts and travellers.

Our first language is **Tunisian Arabic**. An approximation in European script is given.

Hello	<i>Aslema</i>
How are you	<i>Chnowa Hwalik</i>
Goodbye	<i>Bislema</i>
Be seeing you	<i>Nchouffik imbahid</i>
Have a safe journey	<i>Inchallah nharrik is hiid</i>
Best wishes to your family	<i>Selem hala el haila</i>
Do come again	<i>Ija marra okhrra</i>
Please	<i>Haishuk</i>
Thank you	<i>Shokrran</i>
That's nothing	<i>Hetheia Hata shei</i>
Where is the toilet?	<i>Wiinni el twalet</i>
Left	<i>Issarre</i>
Right	<i>Imiin</i>
Straight on	<i>Jarrabha</i>
Behind you	<i>Ouwrrak</i>
Where do I sleep	<i>Wiin in bet</i>
I am vegetarian	<i>Min nekiush el ham</i>
Where is the nearest telephone?	<i>Wiin akrab teliphoon</i>

Zero	<i>Sfirk</i>
One	<i>Wahid</i>
Two	<i>Ithniin</i>
Three	<i>Kletha</i>
Four	<i>Arbha</i>
Five	<i>Khamsa</i>
Six	<i>Sitta</i>
Seven	<i>Sabha</i>
Eight	<i>Thmenia</i>
Nine	<i>Tisha</i>
Ten	<i>Ashrra</i>
Twenty	<i>Ishrriin</i>
Thirty	<i>Klethiin</i>
Forty	<i>Arbhiin</i>
Fifty	<i>Khamssiin</i>
Sixty	<i>Sittiin</i>
Seventy	<i>Sabhiin</i>
Eighty	<i>Thmeniin</i>
Ninety	<i>Tishiin</i>
Hundred	<i>Me'ye</i>
Thousand	<i>Elf</i>
Do you eat meat?	<i>Tekil il ham?</i>
Where do you live?	<i>Wiin Toskan</i>
This is my sister	<i>Hethi okhtii</i>
This is my brother	<i>Hethe khouya</i>
This is my mother	<i>Hethi ommi</i>
This is my father	<i>Hethe baba</i>
This is my son	<i>Hethe wildi</i>
This is my daughter	<i>Hethe bintti</i>
What music do you like?	<i>Enna rneya t'hibha</i>
Have you visited the town?	<i>Zorti il bled?</i>
Where are the shops?	<i>Wiini il hwainit</i>
Is there a market?	<i>Fama marche houni</i>
Thank you for your help.	<i>Shokrran limousseh dittek</i>

Host and Travel Reports

A HOST REPORT FROM TOP OF EUROPE

Kasper Holmen, Norway

Could we have a host report from the top of Europe, Jane, our new SERVAS INTERNATIONAL NEWS editor begged me this Christmas. I had the privilege to host our new SI editor the summer 03. She travelled northern Scandinavia by motorbike, looking for airfields where she could rent a plane and have a ride in the air. Jane is a good example of a Servas traveller in northern Norway. I normally do not get more than one or two travellers each year but the ones who visit me are always very interesting people, deeply determined and looking for something extra.

So who are these crazy people who find their way far north of the arctic circle?

Many come to experience the midnight sun, of course. In May, June and July it is light all night. Many guests want to stay up all night and have difficulties in sleeping because of the light nights. (For me it is opposite. I sleep better in summer than in the dark time in winter!)

-An American university professor (in architecture?) mostly studied our wooden houses. I had to stop several times on the sightseeing trip so he could take close-up pictures of details of our buildings. (The background mountains, the impressive Lyngen Alps, was nothing. He had a cottage in Rocky Mountains, in 3000 m height)

-Two German guys were so impressed by all the mushrooms and berries they could find just behind my house. They stayed for 3 extra days, picking and drying mushrooms in my oven, and picking blueberries. They had never seen any more mushrooms in life. (I did not dare to tell them about my really good and rich Cantarells-places further up the valley.)

- My only winter visitor ever was a french biker! He wanted to bicycle around the world in five years, and write a book about the different people he met at his journey. When he stopped at my house it was icy and slippery roads, and 10 freezing degrees! This is nothing, he said. I biked in Alaska, in Brooke Range, in winter in 35 degrees below zero!

- Last summer I had a family from Belgium staying here for 3 days. The 10 year old son was fascinated by whales, and his father took him up to northern Norway for Whale Watching. They were particularly interested in the traditional way of living in northern Norway, using the natural resources: Fishing in the sea, growing potatoes and other vegetables in the garden, and picking berries in autumn.

- All the way from Australia came an ornithologist professor. He was studying arctic birds, seagulls in particular! We spent hours together along the coast, sharing a common interest in birds.

- And finally a few Servas travellers have visited this area because they wanted to know more about our indigenous people: The Laps. They follow their herds of reindeer in the same way they have done for hundreds of years, from winter pasture in the interior to the green, fertile coastal islands in summer.

To be a Servas host in northern Norway is quite special since the travellers are special people. So many good discussions and talking in the bright summer nights - maybe that is the best thing of being a Servas host?

Malawi, "the warm heart of Africa"!

Myriam MICHEL (host on Reunion) and Delphine HARTER

Considering the warm welcome from all the SERVAS members we met during our trip, Malawi is definitely "the warm heart of Africa"!

We were lucky to be able to take part in the 10th Servas Malawi meeting, one of Ben's salsa classes, to visit a school and 2 orphanages, singing with the children, to fly to Mount Mulanje and to hike in this marvellous area with Masayo, a young Japanese woman, and Demelza carrying and feeding her adorable 3 month old baby. It was very special to stay in the hut up there, at 2000 metres of altitude, watching the stars at night before sleeping in front of the fireplace... It was so quiet until some eagles walking on the roof woke us up in the morning!

It has also been a treat to share a few days with George who drove us safely to Liwonde Park and to Cape Maclear on Lake Malawi, trying to avoid the many holes on the roads, but not the cobra which was crossing in front of our car! We stayed at Mvuu Lodge, a nice, comfortable place with a beautiful view on River Shire, especially at sunset. We had never seen so many hippos! One of them even stepped on a pipe next to our chalet so that there was no water left in the shower ☺

We are very grateful to our hosts (Marcel & Caroline, Silverio & Jane, Marco & Edith and all their children), Demelza, Ben, George, Mary, and all the other people we met, for the wonderful time we spent in Malawi thanks to them. *May 2005,*

Greetings:

First from the Area Coordinator for Anglophone Africa:

1. A group of people in Sierra Leone would like to revive Servas there. Gambia is active but so far Ghana and Nigeria are silent.
2. We are not sure what has happened to Servas in Kenya. The lists for there and Tanzania are many years old.

Servas is alive in Uganda, Zambia, Malawi, Botswana and South Africa.

Travellers with old lists with phone numbers — we would appreciate it greatly if you could contact a number of the people on them and let us know what is happening in dormant Servas countries.

So any assistance you can give would be most appreciated.

If anyone is travelling south from Kenya?
There are now buses between East Africa and Gaborone and trains go from Dar es Salaam to Lusaka.

Servas is now strongest in Malawi and Servas travellers are welcome there.

In peace,
Sheldon

Second, from Botswana.

Servas Lunch in Tlokweng Botswana

A lunch was held for Servas members and people who had applied to become members to be interviewed. Regrets were received from old five members in the area south eastern Botswana. Three old members came and four prospective new members. People talked about themselves, their interest in Botswana, their other activities, life and travels. The four new members were interviewed and accepted with pleasure. We began at noon and the last person left at five p.m. It was a pleasant afternoon.

Greetings from Iceland! **Christopher Morden**

I am Canadian and have lived in Reykjavik for six years. I kept coming to Iceland as a tourist and fell in love with the country, culture and language so decided to move here. I work at a nursing home and am completing a three degree in Icelandic. I took over as national secretary last year from the woman who started Servas here over ten years ago. We have very few hosts and almost no travellers. A few hosts in Reykjavik and three around the country. For some reason hosting or staying with strangers seems very alien to the Icelandic mentality so it is an uphill struggle trying to develop Servas. But we keep trying!

Quite a few travellers come here - many stopping over with Icelandair while travelling between Europe and America or visa versa. Visiting Iceland is not cheap but camping or hostelling and coming with the new discount airline Iceland Express (from London, Copenhagen, Frankfurt-Hahn) makes it less expensive. Nature is the big attraction here of course but the cultural life is amazing. The weather is totally unpredictable and one has to be prepared for the possibility of lots of rain and wind and cool or even cold temperatures. It is 8 to 12 degrees now in June and seldom goes above 20 in July and August. Off-season tourism is growing as people discover that it can be fun to be here in the winter too! Swimming in the outdoor pools while snow falls and the northern lights swirl overhead is really amazing! I will be happy to answer anyone's questions about travelling here.

Brazil

1) The Servas group in the state of São Paulo (Brazil) has recently issued its local newsletter (issue nr. 5), in Portuguese.

2) Pedro Puente, from Peru, is about to finish editing a South American newsletter, with news from each of the 10 South American countries. We think it will be ready in one or two weeks (in Spanish). We intend to send it by e-mail to the members of all South American countries.

Roberto Borenstein, Area Coordinator - South America

Comments

Financial Statement

- Budget for 2005-7

The original copy of this statement had a slight error in that the although SI Conference money was correctly (for then) placed in 2007, the totals for each of 2005, 2006 and 2007 were such as the SI conference money had been split equally between them. This does not affect the final total.

My apologies that this error in copying from one document to another was not noticed by myself but was brought up by another Servas member after SI News had been published.

This budget indicates proposed expenditure over the next 3 years. The money comes from the SI stamps. The figures are in Swiss francs as the account is based in Switzerland.

	2005	2006	2007	Total
EXCO	15833	15833	15834	47500
AC	8500	8500	8500	25500
UN	500	500	500	1500
IT budget	20250	20250	20250	60750
other officer	500	500	500	1500
auditor	600	600	600	1800
printing	13667	13667	13667	41000
committees	5375	5375	5375	16125
projects	1333	1333	1333	4000
SI conference	0	0	73333	73333
others	3000	3000	3000	9000
Total	69558	69558	142892	282008

In future SI News we hope to extend this column to show you how the money has been spent as well as the future planning. To help keep costs down we cannot do that with the space available this issue.

Have you read this newsletter?

What did you think of it?

How could you improve it?

Would you recommend it to friends?

What could you offer to it?

Let us know. Send us items. Publication is not guaranteed or promised but will be aimed for.

Please send to the address on the front page.

Thanks, Jane, Editor.

The way forward?

I read issue 47 with interest and especially enjoyed the country reports.

I feel somewhat ashamed by Bob Luitweiler's note on the future of Servas because I haven't done anything more than enjoy its existence. I am not an organizer, but I talk enthusiastically about Servas and its benefits on the small and large scale to one and all. I believe that getting to know people does shrink the differences between us and leads to empathy and even compatibility.

Robin Burkhardt, NY State
host and traveller

If I Could Be:

Susanita

I WILL BE A BIRD

THAT FLIES HIGH UP IN THE SKY

THE RAIN WILL WET ME

AND WILL MAKE TEARS OF JOY

AND HAPPINESS AMONG MY FRIENDS

THE SUN WILL DRY ME AND LET WARMTH

AND LOVE SURROUND ME FOR MY FRIENDS

THE WIND WILL SING SOFT AND GENTLE

AND WITH THE WIND I WILL SING

AND TELL THE SECRET OF A HAPPY VALLEY

'IT IS ONLY THOSE THAT CAN GIVE WITHOUT RECEIVING'

THAT CAN STAY IN A HAPPY VALLEY

AND BE HAPPY FOR EVERMORE

ROUND AND AROUND I WILL GO WITH THE WIND

I WILL SING - I WILL DRINK THE RAIN

AND KISS THE SUN

HIGH UP IN THE SKY I WILL FLY

BRINGING PEACE AND HARMONY

TO THAT HAPPY VALLEY OF LOVE

IF I COULD BE THAT BIRD