



Servas Monthly News 2

July 2005



Thank you

Thank you, merci, gracias, tak, takk, grazie, xie xie, aferistopole, asante, danke schön, dank u wel, shukran, shukria, tesshekur,
(with apologies for incorrect spellings where I was going by the sound that I remembered in my head.)

Thank you to all those people who have been sending in such complimentary comments about SI News and Servas Monthly News. They are certainly a motivating factor. Thank you to those who have been sending in constructive comments, these are very welcome as they help me to see in which direction to progress.

Thank you is a common method of appreciation in the European culture. In other cultures it is not necessarily used. Long time ago, when motor biking through Zaire, the track was rutted and many things fell off the bikes. Finally my bike was definitely limping and so we turned round. In every village people came racing out to return our articles, even apologising because the thermos was broken. We tried to thank them and found that this was an insult. We learnt that by saying 'Thank you' it indicated that we did not expect the goods to be returned and so were pleased when they were. It implied that we had thought the people would be thieves. We were humbled at this aspect. We were assured that in the villages they were not like the people in the big town further east. How much one can learn about different cultures and that they have so many good points that are different from our own.

That learning about cultures is a part of Servas. Hopefully we can then apply the good points in our everyday lives.

Expansion

This issue has expanded on the June issue in that we are now starting to look at the eGA - Extra General Assembly - see p 7, Exco has been allocated a slot - see p 7, and Pablo from South America will be starting the Youth Page soon. Some pages were not full and so have been put together. They have space to be extended. If you would like to add extra, or just fill the current pages then please send in items. As yet I am not up to taking photographs as I have yet to install broadband. That is the future

Is bombing constructive?

Thank you to all those people who sent emails to us in Britain expressing concern about the London bombings. We appreciated your concern.

However, in line with this, we see a lot of fuss made about bombings in London, yet similar abuses of people's freedom are being made all over the world every day. The news shows greater numbers of civilians being killed by irresponsible people in many different countries.

How can we counteract this. I was impressed by an article I read in New Internationalist which outlines people who have the courage to go and talk with people rather than just hitting out at them. NI: 381, Aug 05 p: 9 - 11 Article: The Challenge to Violence. website: www.newint.org (but articles only come up 6 - 8 weeks after print publication)

This echoes the comment made by a 6 year old in a class doing a project on Nepal and discussing the internal wars there. His comment was 'Why do they have to fight, why don't they talk about it?'

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Contact

We welcome articles for Servas Monthly News. We do not guarantee that the article, or any part will be published. This depends on the theme for the month and the other articles available for publication.

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

Please make sure Servas: Monthly News is part of the subject heading. If the email address is not recognised it will be deleted before being read.

The postal address is:

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20 Weavers Row, Halstead, Essex, CO9 2JX
England.

People

30 Years of Service in South Africa - Gwen McLaren

The first South African main contact address to be found on a Servas key list was that of Judi Davies in 1974. In 1976 she handed over to Gwen McLaren from Cape Town, who was the national secretary until 2001 (for 25 years), then deputy and since 2002 host list coordinator. Gwen has been the soul of Servas in South Africa for 30 years; most Servas travellers to South Africa visited her and her husband Glen (they have about 30 Servas guests every year). With her help I could update the host lists of the other Southern African countries when I was General Secretary (1986-92), because Gwen reported to me which hosts had been visited by Servas travellers and which hosts she had been in touch with. For many years Gwen was assisted in her Servas work by her deputy Franz Auerbach in Johannesburg until he died in 2004.

It was not easy for Gwen to be national secretary of South Africa during the time of Apartheid, because the government thought Servas was a subversive organisation. They were suspicious of Servas as a peace organisation. Government spies contacted her to become hosts to check if Servas was a subversive organisation, since several South African Servas hosts were publicly anti-apartheid such as Franz Auerbach. When joining Servas they had to agree to the Servas ideas with the result that they soon disappeared from the list. Thus Gwen had to be very careful.

On the other hand, there was pressure from outside. There were complaints from some national groups because there were no black people as Servas hosts in the lists. At the 1988 conference in Montreal there was even a request from a national group to take South Africa from the key list, because there were no black Africans listed as hosts. This was refused because Gwen could convince the delegates that besides white people there were coloured people and Indians as hosts on the list. On the other hand it was (and still is) unsafe for strangers to find their way alone around black townships, where their black Servas friends lived. Some black militant groups at that time would also say that anyone staying with a white person or having a white visitor was a traitor. Gwen assured the delegates that all travellers wanting to meet

black people could do so with the help of Servas hosts who could take them to their friends in the townships for a visit. Gwen informed us that she worked in a township as an occupational therapist and always took their Servas guest along with her there. Thus only the safety of the Servas travellers could be guaranteed. A young black man visiting her recently informed her that he was glad that they are now gaining some black Servas hosts and travellers.

At the age of 84 Gwen is still actively involved with Servas and other activities: e.g. she is secretary of the university of the third age. She has visited me twice in Germany and I recently visited her in Cape Town. She still likes travelling with her husband, a retired university professor, but they do not travel abroad any more. They enjoy hosting Servas people, especially those whom they visited themselves during their many trips in the past. As Gwen wrote me their international travels are now mostly done through the adventures, ideas and plans of their Servas visitors who are always interesting and some very lovable, and they hope they are thus contributing in a small way to peace.

Antonie Fried (S.I. archivist)

A tribute to Franz Auerbach

We remember Franz Auerbach with warmth and respect.

He was a host in South African Servas from 1978 until his death in 2004 and coordinator in Johannesburg for many years. He also attended the Servas Congress in France as South African Representative.

What we remember though is his life. As a Jew his family emigrated to South Africa in the 30s and had a difficult time getting work. He left school early to help support the family but continued to study by correspondence and eventually got his doctorate. He felt the injustices of the apartheid system and spoke and wrote openly about it which angered the government of the day so that he got no promotion in his position as teacher. He pioneered teacher training programmes for black teachers and continued to write about the inequalities in black and white education in many letters to newspapers.

For all that he lived modestly himself with his family and is an example to us all as one who believed in peace and justice and was fearless in supporting it.

Gwen McLaren, South Africa

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.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT (from Botswana)
 "When you track an animal—you must become the animal. Tracking is like dancing, because your body is happy you can feel it in the dance and then you know that the hunting will be good. When you are doing these things you are talking with God."
 — !Nqate Xgamxebe—1998
[The Great Dance—A Hunter's Story]

Vacant space

 waiting

 for

 YOUR MEETING

 ANNOUNCEMENT

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.*

WHOSE MEETING

 WILL

 WE

 WATCH FOR HERE?

 WE'LL SEE

Languages - Danish

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 second language is Danish

Hello	<i>Hej</i>
How are you	<i>Hvordan har du det?</i>
Goodbye	<i>Farvel</i>
Be seeing you	<i>Vi ses!</i>
Have a safe journey	<i>God rejse!</i>
Best wishes to your family	<i>Hils din familie!</i>
Do come again	<i>Kom igen en anden gang!</i>
Please	<i>Vaer venlig</i>
Thank you	<i>Tak</i>
That's nothing	<i>(selv tak) (derfor ikke)</i>
Where is the toilet?	<i>Hvor er toilettet?</i>
Left	<i>Venstre</i>
Right	<i>Højre</i>
Straight on	<i>Lige ud</i>
Behind you	<i>Bag dig</i>
Where do I sleep	<i>Hvor skal jeg sove?</i>
I am vegetarian	<i>Jeg er vegetar</i>
Where is the nearest telephone?	<i>Hvor er den nærmeste telefon</i>

Zero	<i>Nul</i>
One	<i>En</i>
Two	<i>To</i>
Three	<i>Tre</i>
Four	<i>Fire</i>
Five	<i>Fem</i>
Six	<i>Seks</i>
Seven	<i>Syv</i>
Eight	<i>Otte</i>
Nine	<i>Ni</i>
Ten	<i>Ti</i>
Twenty	<i>Tyve</i>
Thirty	<i>Tredive</i>
Forty	<i>Fyrre</i>
Fifty	<i>Halvtreds</i>
Sixty	<i>Treds</i>
Seventy	<i>Halvfjerds</i>
Eighty	<i>Firs</i>
Ninety	<i>Halvfems</i>
Hundred	<i>Hundrede</i>
Thousand	<i>Tusind</i>
Do you eat meat?	<i>Spiser du kød?</i>
Where do you live?	<i>Hvor bor du?</i>
This is my sister	<i>Dette er min søster</i>
This is my brother	<i>Dette er min broder</i>
This is my mother	<i>Dette er min moder (mor)</i>
This is my father	<i>Dette er min fader (far)</i>
This is my son	<i>Dette er min søn</i>
This is my daughter	<i>Dette er min datter.</i>
What music do you like?	<i>Hvilken slags musik kan du lide?</i>
Have you visited the town?	<i>Har du været i byen?</i>
Where are the shops?	<i>Hvor er forretningerne?</i>
Is there a market?	<i>Er der et marked?</i>
Thank you for your help.	<i>Tak for hjælpen.</i>

Host and Travel Reports

Ups and downs in West Africa.

Teresa Mazzella from Rome visited Gambia and Senegal. She had varying experiences with Servas in these countries. She is concerned that in some countries there is perhaps more help needed to run Servas effectively. Here are some extracts from her report.

I went to Gambia for a week but with the intention to remain longer. I was there for a month but I could not see any list.

The Senegalese secretary has been more efficient. He has an email address but he has no computer and he has no money to use the public one. He has no money even for a telephone call so he had the last century list with dead members.

I organized a Servas meeting in his house where I was hosted for a few days. He seemed very happy to be helped. Now he has a list of about 70 members even if many of them are in his village, 15 km from Dakar. Now he goes round with a Servas folder looking for someone who can help him to print the list and send it to the main countries.

I think this is the situation of many western African countries. The secretaries have a lack of personal experiences, of money, of advice, which weakens their enthusiasm and so undermines the Servas project and aim. They don't pay anything to be in the list (some of them even didn't know they were in the list). They have no travellers (which would be the only income) they have no explanatory material and of course no budget to face a minimum form of organization. What we can do, to help them? Even if they can't afford long trips they can visit nearby countries, learn from others, get new energies and create peace team back home.

Some simple ideas:

- 1) Send them explanatory material (simple English and French pamphlets to hand out in Universities, Embassy, cultural centre etc)
- 2) Give secretaries, who show a "real" efficiency, a bonus
- 3) Support them with ideas, advice, suggestions without abuse
- 4) Ask for up to date lists and check them (There are 10 members in the list and one bed)
- 5) You can talk about this in your national newsletters and at meetings

These are just a few ideas. I'm sure there are many more.

and from Botswana

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"Ao santse o thenya thenya"

— Are you still alive? — Tswana saying

" Raviolis in Montevideo"

I landed in Buenos Aires in November 2004 for my first experience in South America. I guess I chose the wrong time because the humidity and the heat were at their highest. I was received by wonderful Servas members who came to get me at the Airport. I only stayed 3 days there as I had planned to go to Uruguay. So I proceeded with the Busquebus, the fast boat to Montevideo, 2 ½ hours. I called my friend Gustavo and announced my arrival. So they came to get me at the port of Montevideo and found a place for me to sleep. I then called a lady Servas, Zulma and she received me for a few days before I could go and visit Marisa Contini. Many of you at Servas know that charming lady as the Spanish teacher. She is a lively lady full of life and stories, ready to laugh at any moment. I lived with her in Montevideo for one month, she had a room to rent.

So back to the raviolis, Marisa told me that her young cousin was going to sing at La Specia which is a ravioli and spaghetti factory. The owner is a sponsor for many musicians and art. His own daughter is a classical singer and he has a concert hall on top of factory. So following Marisa's instructions I went by bus to La Specia. I arrived at the store and saw all those goodies, so I asked the saleslady if I could get a plate of ravioli with sauce. She explained that this was only the store to buy and the restaurant was at another location, and was open only Friday, Saturday and Sunday. So making believe I did not understand I asked again if I could have a meal before the concert. So I guess the young lady asked the owner and she asked me what sauce I wanted and of course I chose the mushroom sauce. She told me that they would put a table upstairs for me so I went upstairs and I only saw a concert hall. Before I turned around, they put a little table next to window, with a red table cloth and as I sat there I saw the waitress run across the street in the parking lot and bring back one of those big, beautiful flowers that she put in a bowl in front of me. They brought a plate of bread and a bottle of wine and served me a glass. I was delighted and kept looking at the street, to see if Marisa was coming to share my meal. The young lady told me she was a mosa at the restaurant but she helped in the store in the week.

So that was my wonderful story in Montevideo. At the concert the owner came to me and asked me if the raviolis were good and I thanked him with all my heart.

Jacqueline Lewicki, USA and French citizen

Country Reports and Comments

Hope for the Future

We in Ghana are looking forward to doing more and adding to our numbers. We also anticipate receiving more travellers and thereby opening Ghana to the outside world. We hope that very soon Servas Ghana would have full status at the SI and we would be able to effectively contribute towards world peace.

Country newsletters

A number of countries are producing their own newsletters so that their members can know what it going on locally. These can be of interest to other countries and to travellers visiting the country.

Following are some of the latest announcements about newsletters:

- 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).

Comments

Working together

Emails are racing round the world on the internet as people communicate with each other. Some stop off in the editor's box. Following are some extracts showing how, all over the world we are helping each other.

From a new national Co-ordinator to the area Co-ordinator:

Thank you very much for getting in touch. It feels real, now that I am able to contact people and get responses. It feels like one big family.

From an artist in Spain who would like to do a house/job exchange

Hi my name is Chus, I am sculptor and painter, I live near Alicante in Spain, In nice place near Mediterranean. I would like to interchange my sculpture workshop and house for another workshop in other country, USA, Germany, Italy, England, Ireland, or anything for exchanging ideas of art, to know other thoughts about the art.

I have a workshop with a community of artists, who reside in others workshops there, in the same place, we have one gallery of exhibitions, that the artist will be able to exhibit his works of art, his artistic works, during his residence in workshop. Those interested can write me. regards Chus
mailto:chusquesada@yahoo.es

Area Co-ordinator Southern and Anglophone Africa

For those that are unaware:

Sheldon Weeks, as well as being National Secretary for Botswana, also co-ordinates Southern Africa and Anglophone Africa.

And to show a growing, active region the following are some extracts from detailed minutes:

SERVAS Botswana— First National Workshop, 11-13 Feb 05, Serowe, Khama Rhino Sanctuary

Inaugural Meeting

Introduction:

Servas is at least 15 years old in Botswana. Felix and Mmacheri were among the first members. Sheldon was an initial coordinator and then handed over to Regina Dambe. Regina was planning the 1st National Workshop in Kasane when she had a stroke. She died a few years later. Servas is small in Botswana with ten hosts in 2004 and visitors only from Canada, Israel, Netherlands, Sweden and USA.

Initially fourteen adults and eight children were expected to attend this inaugural meeting. Due to circumstances beyond our control we had only ten adults and two children participating. People invited from Servas International in Sweden, Malawi and Reunion were unable to attend. The inaugural meeting was still judged to be a success. The rain on Friday evening, though it drove us indoors, was welcome and made for a cooler weekend.

The 1st Servas Botswana National Workshop was held at a place in Central Botswana with the objective of making it accessible in half-a-day's drive to people in northern and western Botswana. As a consequence, because until now we had no members in that part of the country, we rented a low-cost facility with ten beds and space for tents within the Khama Rhino Camp, a nature sanctuary. As a result we may have between three and five new members from Serowe and Palapye.

• Smiles and Tears and Bright Ideas

Smiles: Servas established in Botswana. Meet new friends. Good food in plenty. Loved Rhino Camp and seeing the Rhinos. Thanks to Stella and Kobamelo for the food.

Tears: No one was able to come from Maun and Gantsi. The potential member from Kasane has vanished. That those who came on Friday couldn't stay on Saturday. That no games were played.

Bright ideas: Hold meeting in 2006 in Maun and stay with hosts there.

Hold meeting in 2007 in Gaborone and stay with hosts.

Every member must have a free e-mail account

A press release on the First Servas National Workshop should be sent to the press.

Exco Info and the EGA

NEW Local Key list Coordination and Survey Campaigns

by Claudio Pacchiega

Having the key list complete and accurate is essential for making communication effective in Servas. Through the key list Servas can actively network and be alive, like the blood circulation system is essential in the human body connecting every single cell.

Roles, addresses, emails and phone numbers must be particularly up to date. The Key list is the basis for *all* Servas activities including: sending stamps, sending host lists, sending newsletters, sending communications. Errors in the Key list might end up in wasting money, parcel losses, time and frustration for other officers and or travelling members! Key list, Group and Area Coordinators have the task, annually, to make a survey to understand if the data should be amended and to change them accordingly, but this turned out to be not enough and we decided to make a pilot experiment to:

**** let each country change their keylist portion ****

Recently Germany accepted experimenting this way of working. But we suggest that *every* country representative should contact the key list group (keylist@servas.org), and give the name of a person entitled to change local key list data, who can then be trained properly. Also Area Coordinators should actively help in bringing the data of related countries up to date.

Data on the key list will be checked by Host list Helpers (Area Coordinators, Key list, other groups), using emails, direct phone, surveys, and sending via email Newsletters and other communication. So please, try to react promptly when contacted via email and check your mail boxes often assuring they are open and functional and not full. The Host list helper group, with the recent valuable addition of George Gonzales and the rest of the key list group will help in making these surveys, trying to help in a better networking of Servas people.

If you are an officer in the key list, please help us have all the data correct by checking the actual content of the key list related to you and your fellow friends in your country (check it directly on the website, and/or ask your NS to print one copy for you). Alert either your Local Key list coordinator, the NS or the key list group of whatever needs to be changed. (If mistaken data are related to yourself you can change them directly going to www.servas.org/login and changing your profile accordingly).

Let's work together. :)

Servas International Extraordinary General Assembly 2006

Some of you may have travelled to Italy in 1986 to attend the Servas International conference held in Rome. You have the opportunity to retrace your steps once again next year when Italy is the host for the S.I. Extraordinary General Assembly. The conference is being held in Latina from Sunday 2nd April to Saturday 8th April 2006. Latina is just a short 35 minutes rail journey south of Rome. The venue chosen is the Park Hotel which was the venue earlier this year for Servas Italy's conference.

The registration fee for the conference is Euro 270 per person in a two/three share room or Euro 330 per person for single room occupancy and all rooms are air-conditioned. The registration fee includes accommodation for six nights with 'full board'. The Park Hotel is offering accommodation prior to and also after the conference at the special rate of Euro 45 per person per day (full board) in a two/three share room and Euro 55 per person per day (full board) for single room occupancy.

Conference registrations will be processed by the Reservation Department of the Park Hotel and a Servas Registration Application form will be made available shortly for downloading from our S.I. Exco website at www.servas.org/siexco

It has been the practice for a S.I. General Assembly to be held every three years. The last conference was in July 2004 in Spain but earlier this year many 'member' countries of Servas International requested an additional General Assembly to be convened earlier than the planned conference for 2007.

Servas delegates from all parts of the world will assemble in Latina in April next year to discuss and vote on such matters as:

Minutes of the last General Assembly held in Spain – Reports of all S.I. office holders – Audit reports – Programme of future activities of Servas International – Budgets – Election of Executive Committee and other S.I. officers and committee's – Fees, regulations and procedures of Servas International. There are many other items that have to be reviewed and voted upon.

Whilst it is important that as many Servas delegates as possible attend the General Assembly, we welcome those members who are interested in coming along to experience the way that Servas International functions, enjoy the fellowship and making of new friendships.

In peace and friendship
Geoff Maltby
President – Servas International