



AC 2019 in Yekaterinburg

The day before the official opening of Area Convention 2019 all present participants had a warm welcome at one of the monuments showing the border between Europe and Asia a little outside Yekaterinburg. Members from Host Committee and Host Club made a show of performance with dance and music to

include everybody in Friendship and Brotherhood from countries across borders in Europe. This happening gave us a good experience and prepared us for the coming convention in the weekend.

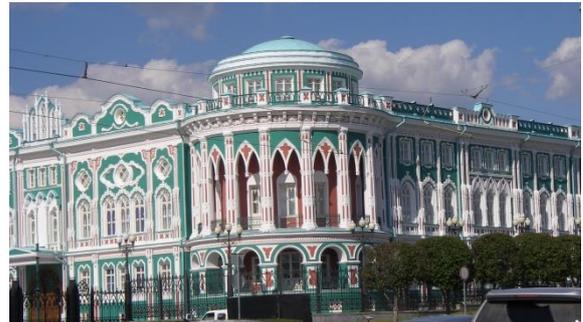


Friday 28.06.2019



The Convention was located at Novotel Hotel near the Center of the city, Yekaterinburg. After registration in the morning, we had some hours to make a city-walk on our own. In a few years Yekaterinburg will be able to celebrate 300 years after foundation by Tsar Peter the Great in the year 1723. The city has its own charm and character in a mix of old wooden houses, brick houses, concrete block buildings and sky scrapers from different periods of development and growth and culture. Old Russian history can be seen together with modern times. City planning goes from Tsar Time to Soviet time and further on to modern Russia. Orthodox Churches can be seen in many

places in their own timeless style, many of them newly restored. If you take a look inside you will find spiritual



activity with some local users.



It is not easy to find English speaking people, but visiting as a tourist you can get help from the English speaking local population. We found several helpers ready to guide us, when we needed!

Back in the Hotel we had the opening ceremony, with national flags and opening speeches in the usual manner.

Together we sang the Y's Men Hymn and we had a fine devotion by RDE of Norway reading a central text from the New Testament



assisted with music from one of the local Y's Men playing her violin. It was touching!

Our AP Poul Henning Löwendahl gave his greeting focusing on his theme "Development and Diaconia", short and clear! SG Russia YMCA, Kostyakov Aleksey, gave his greeting to all participants (Some of us had the chance to visit a YMCA activity in the big modern and famous



Jeltsin Center, before the convention). Former Mayor of Yekaterinburg, Evgeny Roizman, came and gave his very short welcome to all guests in Yekaterinburg.

Then we all had a short late lunch break, and some good talking together in the hall.

Key Note speaker Professor of Philosophy and Theology Sergey Azarenko needed our full attention, when he gave us his very philosophical speech on “Friendship and Brotherhood”. We were left with a lot of questions and answers and options how to use and understand friendship and brotherhood historically and for us in our time and situation. Maybe it was a little too difficult for most of us to cope with, I am sorry! – And it was spoken in Russian and translated into English or Danish, not an easy task!



In the evening we had The Ural Music Night. We had a walk in the center of the city. It was rather crowded with a real lot of walking people to explore and experience a city of music and performance so to say all over. From the Convention we entered the Yekaterinburg Philharmonic for a Classical Concert. Young and very young musicians got their diplomas and a few played their instrument glamorously. The performance of the Grand Prix winner Peter Akulov (13-14 years of age, I guess) captures all of us with

his fabulous energy playing the piano, by heart, without notes! The artist of the evening was the famous festival hero Denis Matsuev giving us his piano performance. A great experience, also realizing the audience of all kinds from childhood to old age, a cultural event for the people. Bravo!!

A 20 minute walk back to the hotel we could notice a great number of (walking) people listening to many kinds of music from here and there and everywhere. Last program of this Convention day was Late Dinner in Novotel restaurant.

Saturday 29.06.2019



After breakfast Saturday morning, we had 4 Forums: 1. What is important for you about friendship? - Run by APE Ulrik Lauridsen; 2. How can we share our culture with others? – Run by RD Allan Wallington; 3. Development and Diaconia for Y's Men in Europe. How to involve friends from our society? – Run by AP Poul Henning Löwendahl; 4. Programs of Y's Men International is a great assistant for Brother Clubs' relations – run by ASD IBC Marit Torp. Good sessions for talking together and finding ways for the future in Y's Men Europe.

After a coffee break, Marit Torp presented her report “IBC Program”. We were convinced about the importance of finding Brother Clubs inside our own Region, in Area Europe and internationally. Then we had reports from the Forums and from the Regions; some of them were very inspiring and unforgettable! You grow and learn by being a leader!



In the afternoon after lunch we had City Tours, visiting the memorial place for local people killed under the cruel regime by Stalin. It was making us very silent to see all those innocent people named on the walls. Terrible history of man slaughter! Also visiting one of the borderlines between Europe and Asia. Finally visiting a very beautiful place, the Virgin Mary Convent.



In the evening we went to the great Cosmos Hall dressed for President Ball. The fantastic hall was decorated bright and blue. The food was delicious. The performance was brilliant, song, dance, music, artists and so on for hours. AP gave his speech. ACCC gave her thanks calling for all taking part, club members and HC. Devotion by RD Birthe Kragh Sørensen accompanied by music performance. What a festival evening!

Sunday 30.06.2019



After breakfast Sunday morning we had devotion by RD Piia Karro-Selg. Then we went to our Regional meetings. Later we listened to speeches of AP Poul Henning Löwendahl and APE Ulrik Lauridsen. APE presented his slogan for the coming year in Area Europe. IPIP Henry Grindheim introduced and installed the new Area Team. He also installed the new Russian regional Team. Banners were handed over, and the outgoing ICM PAP Svein Håvåg made a speech to say thank you for his 3 years in the Area Team.

The last item on the agenda was the closing ceremony. A ceremony, yes, but also important to remind us, who we are, and what we are as Y's Men.

In the afternoon the Host Committee had arranged a picnic at a camping area. All of us enjoyed to be there, and to participate in the different activities.



The overall impression of the convention was very good. The Y's Men in Yekaterinburg had done their very best to make an unforgettable convention.

Highlights were the concert and all the cultural features, excursions, and mostly the being together, taking part in the fellowship as Y's Men across countries, belonging in a movement, where we get identity and have our dignity as we are in friendship and brotherhood. Thank you for AC 2019 in Yekaterinburg!

Impressions made by Anne Marie & Carl Hertz-Jensen