



Dear Ladies and Agora friends,

February and its day of Valentin!

Each year on the 14th of February the world celebrates the day of love:

The day of Valentin.

He was a priest living in the 3rd century, busy with wedding ceremonies and was executed on 14th February.

Remembering this day, it is a custom to give flowers or *hearts*.

Do you know this custom of love? Everywhere in the shops you see hearts: sweet red hearts of chocolate, of paper, of glass, etc.

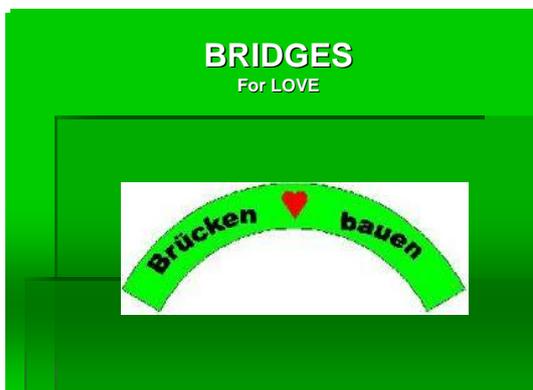
By getting or giving a heart you can build a *bridge for love* to the person you like!

Hopefully *you* all got or gave a heart!

„BUILDING BRIDGES“

In continued friendship,

Elisabeth Hiller, ACI President 2011-2012



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- 10-03-2012 Charter AC 45 Angoulême-Marguerite, France
- 18-03-2012 Red Nose Day
- 19-22 April 2012 AGM 41 Club International, Chennai, India
- 21-04-2012 Charter AC 7 Venlo, The Netherlands
- 28-04-2012 Charter AC 47 Lorient-Océan, France
- 01-05-2012 AGM AC Zambia in Lusaka
- 05-05-2012 AGM TC Germany in Weiden
- 12-05-2012 AGM AC Morocco in Casablanca
- 12-05-2012 Charter AC 46 Amiens, France
- May 2012 AGM AC Romania in Brasov
- 26-05-2012 AGM AC South Africa in Ermelo



Report about boardmeeting 3 in Walsrode, 10.-13. February 2012 (by Karen)

On Saturday afternoon Nikkie, who had flown in to Brussles, Veerle and her husband Dirk arrived by car at Elisabeth's and Bernd's welcoming house surrounded by a quiet nature. As it was snowing a little bit outside the whole weekend, Elisabeth's feeding place for the birds was very crouded and we could observe them during the meeting and the meals. In the evening Karen and her husband Dieter joined for dinner.

After an early but rich German breakfast we started our meeting with a full agenda on Sunday. In the meantime our husbands visited graves from the stone-age on a military area near Walsrode, which can only be visited on Sundays due to the tank activities during the week. Afterwards they were up to the frozen lake Maschsee in Hannover crowded with people enjoying ice-skating, food, and hot drinks.



In the afternoon they picked Nicole up from the airport, so that we could all have the German meal "Kaffe und Kuchen" (coffee and cake) homemade by Elisabeth's neighbour and Jutta from TC 31 Walsrode. The cakes were so delicious!

And up we were to Hannover again, where Elisabeth and Bernd invited us to watch a fascinating show under the motto ASIA in a variety theatre. Afterwards we enjoyed a very special dinner. Everybody could choose whatever he wanted to eat from a buffet and the ingredients were cooked immediatly combined with special sauces. Thank you Elisabeth and Bernd for this extraordinary evening!





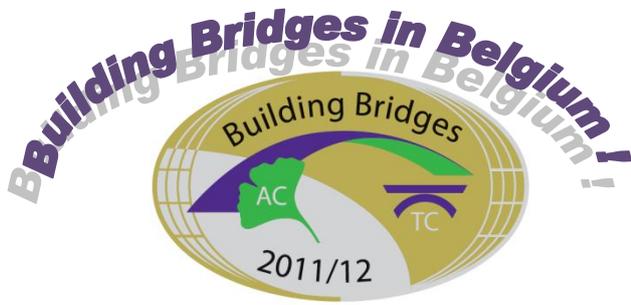
On Monday we continued working the whole day interrupted by a short visit to the village Stellichte. The purpose was to take a photo of the ACI board on a bridge during this meeting. The result you will find under the rubric “Bridges”.

As the bridge is situated close to the tiny little church of Stellichte, Elisabeth had organized a short guided tour in the church for us. It was built from 1608 till 1610 by the noble family Von Behr. The church is probably the most beautiful renaissance church of Northern Germany. It is a very personal building, because many works of art remind of the noble family. The meeting finished with a final breakfast on Tuesday morning.



!! Important informations from the boardmeeting to you !!

- **Don't forget to register for the ACI Conference in Lübeck as soon as you have decided to come. The ladies in Lübeck offer Early Bird prices for the full package till 30th of June 2012. Early registrations are also helping the organising committee a lot! You can find the programme on the website under News-> Agenda ACI -> ACI Conference 2012**
- **We recommend all councillors to arrive in time to be able to attend the Councillors Meeting on Friday afternoon.**
- **We would like each country to bring a typical present for the tombola.**
- **Do consider whether you would like to host the ACI Conference 2014!**
- **The ACI Board needs a new Vicepresident and a new treasurer for 2012/13.**
- **Please keep us informed about new dates of charters or other important events in your country.**
- **In Iceland the first Agora Club is in formation in Akurevri.**



These past few weeks, the members of my hometown Agora Club 7 Lokeren have been busy "Building Bridges", completely in the atmosphere of the international moto.

Bridges were built between Lokeren and Morocco, and extended even between my hometown's **4 Clubs 1 Vision** and Morocco :

When President AC 1 Casablanca (Morocco) Fatema Maher visited Belgium in the beginning of February, we took her along to a 4 Clubs 1 Vision breakfast, organized by LC Lokeren. It was a successful and very cosy morning activity, to which Fatema added her exotic touch.



Karen, Mimi, and Veerle from AC LOKeren together with Fatema Maher from AC Casablanca



Mimi

Back from the ACI Boardmeeting in Germany, Nikkie and I visited AC Lokeren member Carine Everaert in her restaurant in Ghent. A great reunion with 2 dear friends!

The members of my Agora Club N°7 Lokeren will confirm : these "international flavors" are véry tasty!

Veerle De Jonge
ACI Vice President

Just before the departure of Nikkie and I to the ACI Boardmeeting near Hamburg, also the bridge between AC Lokeren (Belgium) and AC South Africa received a new coat of paint: Agora Club International Immediate Past President Nikkie was received by a few members of AC Lokeren, and also ACI Past President Daniëlle Gardin joined us.

What was organized as an outside activity was directed to my house because of -18°C outside ! It would have been too hard on our Nikkie (coming from sunny and warm Johannesburg!).

What more do we need other than a warm bowl of spaghetti, a crackling open fire, a good glass of wine and terrific company?! What a lovely evening it was!





Since January we have got a new webmaster. Veerle's husband Dirk volunteered to create a new structure and sight for the website of ACI. Together with Veerle he gathered inspirations and worked already hard on it.

During our last boardmeeting he gave us an idea of the changes and plans. As this is a big project Dirk does for free, it will take several months till the new website is finished.

Afterwards we hope to have a more handsome website for the user and we will be able to update the website much quicker than before.



Nicole, Karen, Elisabeth, Nikkie, and Veerle



Winterbridge in Walsrode



LC Belgium MEETS AC Belgium

On 11/2 l' Atrium Waver was the place to be for this LCI-day.

The evening was completely dominated by the theme 'Valentine' and the appropriate hint ' be a Valentine Bee' as a reference to the year device of the National President of LCB Cindy Kempeneers 'Be a buzy Bee'.
About 40 guests came along, some dressed with a touch of Red - or not, just as they preferred.

The location was very original and trendy and the tables were so nice with the little red balloon decorations.

This organization of Cindy and myself and our committee was a unique opportunity to unite all members under the sign of 4C1V.

It was a pleasant surprise to me to welcome Philippe Collin, Imm. Past President 41 Clubs to our happening.

Also Fatima Maher, President of the newly founded Club Casablanca 1 could join us in Waver to celebrate with us.

Fatima's fervid enthusiasm on the dancefloor showed once again that life really starts at 45!

The band had enough energy to swing everyone into the right mood.

We were glad to have also Annick De Becker, President of AC Arlon 15 i.f. amongst us to celebrate on this special Valentine.

It was a very successful evening with plenty of bubbles and tasteful food.

Let us not forget to thank the whole staff who completed the success of the evening thanks to their professional and friendly service.

And then we had of course also various wonderful tombola prizes.

The Past National Sophie Hardiquet was the lucky lady to win an overnight stay in Paris. Other ladies went home with delicate perfume or aatiful cushion.

My special thanks to all who were present that evening and especially to Cindy, a very dedicated lady who took the first step for this event and whith whom I enjoyed working together so much.

Ath the end of the evening we all went home - tired but so satisfied!
We all met new friends and made new plans together.
Nothing is more beautiful than friendship and service



Yours in Agora & Friendship
Mimi De Maere
National President ACB 2011-2012



Fatima, Mimi, Cindy, and Phillip



Imagine!

ACI has already collected 900 € for Viva con agua!

Has your country been among the donors?

Please inform us, about all kinds of activities you have planned or plan to gather money for the ISP. In TC Gernay an ISP-team has been built. They are planning projects such as producing greeting cards for all kinds of events. Christmas cards for Viva Con Agua have already been sold.



Miscellaneous

Valentin('s Day) and some Customs round the World

History: Valentin was a priest living in Rome in the 3rd century. He healed sick and wounded people and liked to give flowers to men and women in love. He married people after Christian's rites despite prohibition of Emperor Claudius II.

For that reason he was executed on 14th February 268.

Customs: In **GB** young people write letters of love poems, often anonymously.

In **USA** they send cards with lots of hearts and special Valentin stamps.

In **China** and **Japan** only men get little gifts or chocolate. The Japanese prefer chocolate.

The quality depends on the chef's popularity. Less popular chefs get the "Giri-choko" which is very cheap chocolate. One month later, on 14th March, the women get chocolate, too, but preferably white chocolate.

In **France** or **Belgium** it was a custom in the past that every year in May men could "buy at an auction" young women for one year as "partner".

The **Germans** like to give flowers or little gifts, sometimes even jewels.

The **Italians** meet at bridges where they go by bike. They lock up their bikes with a special lock of love, write their initials in and afterwards throw the locks into the water with a wish in head.

In **Finland** the "day of Valentin" is celebrated as "day of friendship" and cards or little gifts are given to those who are sympathetic.

The thoroughbred **Spanish** men like to buy dessous and spend a romantic evening with the woman in love. Of course, they want to see HER in this special gift....

DIFFERENT DECORATIONS *of* Love

Valentin Decoration of a tree
in USA



The Taipei Day Financial Center
at Day of Valentin



DIFFERENT LANGUAGES *for* Love

Denmark: Jeg elsker dig

England: I love you

Spain: Te amo / Te quiero esperanto

Sweden: Jag älskar dig

Hawaii: Aloha I'a Au Oe

Ireland: Taim i'ngra leat

Kroatien: Volim te

Malta: Inhobbok

Jiddish: Ich lib dich

Germany: Ich liebe Dich

Finland: Minä rakastan sinua

France: Je t'aime

Greece: S'agapo / philo su

The Netherlands: Ik hou van jou

Italy: Ti amo

Luxembourg: Ech hun déch gärn

Norway: Jeg elsker deg

Rätoromania: Jau hai tai gugent



Valentin' s Day

.....and another bridge