

**January 2014**

## Editorial

2013 was a good year for EOE with increasing opportunities for networking and developing joint projects. Our website: [www.eoe-network.org](http://www.eoe-network.org) was improved thanks to the team at bsj-Marburg.

The highlight of the year was an excellent seminar in Stockholm in June organised by Erik Backman from the Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences (GIH) on the theme of "Urban Nature: inclusive learning through youth and school work". A report of the seminar is found in this Newsletter.

The TEOS Masters' programme hosted by three universities recruited another full cohort of international students. Irena Kokalj organised a successful meeting at Planica in Slovenia for the newly formed Outdoor Education Centres network. Updates on both these groups can be found in the Newsletter.

The EOE Board had useful discussions on future seminars with proposals for meetings in Norway in 2015 and Austria in 2016. The main planning session was with the Iceland team to develop ideas for a possible seminar in September 2014. At present we await to hear whether funding is available from the EU.

Please contact the Board with any other news of ideas and projects you may wish to share with members, there is now a special News section on the website.

Best wishes for the New Year.

Geoff Cooper

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Erik Backman opens the Seminar in Sweden

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## **A note from the chair of EOE**

I took up the role of chairing the EOE last year and will be working with the committee for the next few years. I am a reader in Outdoor Studies at the University of Cumbria in England and an educational advisor. Currently I lecture on the MA TEOS and I am part of a team evaluating the value and impact of residential as an integrated aspect of school pedagogy. My first EOE event was in Tornio, Finland in 1995. Since then I have been to roughly half the 13 seminars so I will have met many of you.

We have much work to do. The EOE seminar programme continues to be busy with plans for Iceland (2014), Norway (2015) and a 25 year anniversary gathering in Austria (2016). We plan to add more electronic publications to our website from these events and other projects. The new website is a great asset thanks to the hard work of our member BSJ in Germany. We plan to keep this growing as a resource as well as a central point for members to network with each other.

During the coming years we will do our best to support the flourishing projects such as Breaking Barriers, European Network of Outdoor Centres and TEOS established by members and to encourage other collaborations as they emerge. One challenge will be finding new ways to fund our activities in the changing EU arrangements.

Can I take this opportunity to wish you all the best in your work outdoors in 2014.

Chris Loynes

## **Swedish seminar sets high standards.**

96 delegates from 14 countries met in Stockholm in June for a stimulating seminar on "Urban Nature" organised by Erik Backman of GIH. It was an excellent venue next to the 1912 Olympic stadium and delegates were introduced to the strong traditions in Sweden linking outdoor sports, education and nature.

The programme was well planned to include keynote speakers and parallel presentations describing current research, philosophy and methodology. There were practical workshops and three excellent afternoon options on parkour, kayaking and a cultural landscape tour by bicycles.

Accommodation was at the hostel Af Chapman on Skeppsholmen, some participants sleeping on board the 1888 square-rigged ship in the harbour. From here it was a pleasant 40 minute perambulation (with the options of bike or bus) to the conference venue.

Steve Bowles from Finland commented, "In the early years of EOE we were often seen as an "academic " group but EOE always needed a practical emphasis along with the theoretical work....my impression from Stockholm was of friendliness and the collective project".

Erik has sent out a detailed summary of the participants' evaluation of the seminar and an e-Book of the presentations will be available early this year.

Participants will also remember the days of sunshine, the rooftop dancing and the constant requests for the talented jazz/blues band to play yet another Abba song.

## EOE- Outdoor Education Centres Network

This special interest group was formed at the Derwent Hill seminar in October 2012. The first planning meeting was organised by Irena Kokalj (CSOD) and held at Planica, Slovenia in May 2013. Nine participants took part, representing 5 countries: Irena Kokalj (CSOD, Slovenia) Jochem Schirp, Peter Becker and Simona Lison (bsj, Germany) Tanja Liimatainen and Ilpo Kauppinen (Metsäkartano, Finland) Irmina Łachacz (Frajda, Poland) and Geoff Cooper (Low Bank Ground and Brathay, UK).

Agreement was reached on the aim of the Network: *“TO PROMOTE THE VALUE OF OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRES FOR LIFELONG LEARNING, HEALTHY LIFESTYLES AND ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP ACROSS EUROPE”*

This will be achieved by:

1. Supporting outdoor education for its own value as an active, practical, co-operative and lifelong approach to learning.
2. Supporting outdoor education as a means of delivering aspects of the school curriculum.
3. Sharing philosophy and good practice across outdoor education centres.
4. Developing new practice.
5. Understanding political and educational systems in European countries and how they influence outdoor education.

A second meeting was organised by Irmina Łachacz at Frajda in Poland in January 2014. The theme was “Aesthetics and Outdoor Learning” and the group drew up proposals for an

application for EU funding under the new Erasmus + programme. This will be a substantial two year project to incorporate a “Training for Trainers” seminar, a multilateral youth event and a series of job shadowing sessions between the Outdoor Education Centres in the network. The project will also have a research component.

See the website for further information.



Aesthetic approaches at Frajda, Poland

## Real World Learning Network

Geoff Cooper was invited to make a short presentation as a representative of EOE to the Real World Learning Conference at Planica in Slovenia in November 2013

This fieldwork-based European outdoor learning network is considering the value of outdoor science and how it can contribute to a more sustainable future. It has established four working groups:

**Group 1-** Developing quality criteria for success and assessment for learning.

**Group 2-** Outdoor Science and Sustainability.

**Group 3-** Pedagogical approaches to outdoor learning.

**Group 4-** Real world learning and developing career competencies.

There are clearly links between the interests of EOE and the RWL network and the Board hopes to invite one of their members to our next conference to discuss possible ways to collaborate.

## Breaking Barriers Group

The Breaking Barriers network has its origins in the first EOE conference at Spital in Austria in 1996. At Marburg in 2001 a “Disability” group was formed with participants from Portugal, Romania, Sweden, Slovenia, Finland, Netherlands, UK, and Germany. There followed a network meeting in Portugal in 2002. As a result many youth exchanges have occurred including programmes in Germany, UK, Romania, Czech Republic, Croatia, Poland and Portugal between 2003 and 2013.

Jochen Riehl says “Breaking Barriers provides a great challenge for my students with their multiple disabilities. Being part of BB projects gives them the kind of inspiration for their lives as I got for mine. To see and learn from the work of European colleagues in countries with different levels of economic development is impressive and empowering”.

There have been some recent setbacks with European funding but Jochen is hoping to renew interest in the network and has recently made contact with Trevor Clarke at Bendrigg Lodge, a centre specialising in working with young people with disabilities in the UK.



## TEOS

The first cohort of the MA in Transcultural European Outdoor Studies graduated in Marburg last December in the medieval hall of Marburg University. The degree is an Erasmus Mundus project set up by EOE members the University of Cumbria, the Norwegian School of Sport Science and Marburg University. Students from this cohort came from 13 countries from four continents. Applications for the fifth cohort will open in November. For more information

<http://www.erasmusmundus-teos.eu>

## EOE attracts new members

EOE has had a good year in attracting new members. The following organisations and individuals have now joined our network:

### Organisation members:

- School of Education, University of Iceland
- Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK
- Metsäkartano Outdoor Education Centre, Finland
- Forest Research Institute, Hellenic Agriculture Organisation, DEMETER, Greece.
- Ashley School Academy Trust, Suffolk, UK
- The Adventure Education Network, Finland.
- The Institute for Outdoor Learning, Cumbria, UK

### Individual members:

- Björn Vilhjálmsson, trainer, Iceland.
- James White, Director of Sunrise Outdoor Academy Ltd, UK.
- John Crosbie, Cumbria, UK