



ROYAL, TWIN-CITIES AND LITHUANIAN ACTIVITIES IN KALMAR

Forty thousand people lined the streets when five Nordic heads of state visited Kalmar in June. This was the highlight of a yearlong celebration, the 600th anniversary of the Kalmar Union.

What a glorious weekend! For two days Kalmar was at the centre of attention. The royal couples of Denmark, Norway and Sweden joined the presidential couples of Finland and Iceland in a Nordic manifestation. The weekend, known as the Great Union Meeting, took place on the 14th and 15th of June. Kalmar was crowded, over 40 000 people lined the route of the royal cortège.

The Great Union Meeting took place to commemorate the foundation of the Union of Kalmar 600 years ago. In 1397 Queen Margareta united the Nordic countries and had her foster son Eric of Pomerania crowned king over the greatest realm in Europe.

As the grand finale of a magnificent day, more than 30 000 people gathered nearby the castle to witness the Jubilee Show. This turned out to be a multimedia happening where everything could, and did, happen. The creator Tuomo Haapala used the castle as screen for his laser show. He made people cycle on water while witches on burning brooms flew over the spectators heads. An aeroplane circling the castle with a woman standing on one of its wings made many hearts miss a beat when the woman suddenly jumped off the plane. Luckily the woman is a member of the local parachute club...

Before leaving Capital of the North, the five Nordic heads of state signed a stone plaque placed where Eric of Pomerania was crowned in 1397. This will remind future visitors of the important Nordic meetings that took place in Kalmar, exactly 600 years apart.

Another event in Kalmar this year was the twin city meeting 26-29 June. The Nordic twin cities Arendal (Nor-

way), Silkeborg (Denmark), Selfoss (Iceland), Savonlinna (Finland) and Kalmar decided 1947 to meet every second year. Because of the 600 years celebration Kalmar had also invited its twin cities Panevėžys (Lithuania) and Wilmington (USA) in Kalmar.



On the 27th of June the representatives met and each twin city made a presentation of the cities and of their international contacts. Mr Anders Engström talked about Kalmar's twin city relations, Mr Roger Kaliff informed about the Committee of Regions of the European Union and Mr Lars Malmberg demonstrated how far Kalmar has developed its information technology.

All mayors signed a statement regarding co-operation on the environment, Agenda 21 and co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region.

One more of the 300 activities in Kalmar during the Kalmar Union Anniversary will be Forum Lithuania. It has earlier been held in Karlskrona (1994), Växjö (1995) and Kristianstad

(1996) and on the 11-12th of October 1997 it will be arranged in Kalmar. The purpose of the forum is to create possibilities for collecting information and spread it to different people, authorities, organisations, companies etc. which are interested in or already have established contacts with Lithuania.

The main topics in Forum Lithuania -97 are Agenda 21, media communications, culture and twin city co-operation (exchange of experience, information on projects and transfer of knowledge) and will be carried out with seminars, work-shops and exhibitions. All Swedish cities which have twin cities in Lithuania (about 22) have been requested to invite their twin cities to participate in the forum. After this event they have the possibility to continue their own twin city meetings.

Commission on Communication welcome UBC member cities to

INTERNET & WWW TRAINING

in Kalmar on October 5 - 7 1997

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