

EDITION 265



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SKÅL

MAGAZINE

International Association of Travel and Tourism Professionals • Founded 1934
A Trusted Voice in Travel and Tourism



THE PURSUIT OF WELLNESS

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MESSAGE

from the

PRESIDENT

DEAR SKÅLLEAGUES,

I hope your year has not started quite as hectic as mine has. I am amazed at how quickly my term of office and this year is flying by. Some people say it is a sign of getting old but I believe it is the fact that I, along with the whole Executive Committee, have been so busy that time has just disappeared.

My schedule so far has included a visit to the Secretariat to assist our new C.E.O., Daniela Otero, in settling in while also conducting meetings with the staff. On the way home I was able to attend the 60th Anniversary of Skål Istanbul which included the very successful Skålité Awards event. It was a very special award ceremony as apart from the usual categories of awards the pioneers of Skål Turkey were also recognised. During this visit I also spent some time with Erhan Us, a Turkish, Young Skålleague, discussing some of the wonderful ideas and proposals that the Young Skål members are implementing under the guidance of Vice President Susanna Saari.

In February the Executive Committee met in Torremolinos, which allowed the whole Executive Committee to spend time with Daniela Otero and the staff at the Secretariat which has proven to be beneficial to all of us.

I then attended the AGM of the London (U.K.) Club and met a passionate group of Skål Members who are trying to move Skål forward whilst facing the same challenges as other Clubs regarding the gaining and retaining of members. It was refreshing to see how so many members who attended still remain passionate and fully committed to the vision of Skål which envisages the growth of the organisation so that we make ourselves relevant in order to attract new and younger members.

Before heading back to Nairobi, I

was honoured to represent Skål International in Castlebar, Ireland at the Mass to celebrate the life of Skål International Honorary President Joe Malone. He was truly a passionate and charismatic Skålleague and will be sorely missed by all who came into contact with him. While I was in Ireland, I spent some quality time with the Dublin Committee.

Our new C.E.O. Daniela Otero continues to be successful in her quest to understand the organisation and to address the members' expectations. A lot has been achieved in these few short months and even more will be as she gains an insight into the organisation.

One of the key objectives given to Daniela Otero was to create a strategic plan for the organisation which will help us move forward.



This project is now in its final stages and should be distributed to the International Skål Councillors prior to their Mid-Year meeting in May in South Africa. Once the strategic plan has been reviewed by the Executive Committee and International Skål Council it is envisaged that it will be sent to all members in June.

It was emphasised at the General Assembly in Monaco that we have to source other avenues of revenue because currently we are far too dependent on membership income. For this reason, our CEO is working on the obtaining of sponsorships, while evaluating how to improve our platforms and visualisation channels, so that Skål becomes a more attractive product that provides a better advertising exposure to future sponsors.

Daniela Otero has already attended

three trade fairs (IBTM, FITUR and ITB) and has gained a good insight regarding the operations. She will be working with Director Teresa Diaz on improving the presence and brand exposure of Skål International as well as formulating a plan to attract potential members during the trade fairs.

As for my personal goals, I would like to leave Skål in a better place than it finds itself now. It will be tough but we must be realistic and recognise that we have some issues to address if we are to reinvigorate the organisation. How do I achieve that? I cannot do it on my own, it will have to be a team effort, so along with the Executive committee and you, the members, we must all put our thinking caps on and come up with ideas and actions that can help us grow and achieve

new heights. Yes it is a dream but the passion out there amongst members is strong and if we all pull together I truly believe we can start to make a difference. Any and all suggestions and creative ideas are welcome, so I encourage members to communicate with the C.E.O. or any of the Executive Committee members.

One thing I know for sure is that all members must communicate, communicate and communicate more and more effectively so that the true and accurate message is spread and heard for the good of all Skålleagues.

All the very best Skål wishes

David John Fisher | President 2017 Skål International

NOTE FROM THE CEO, DANIELA OTERO

In 1932 following the inauguration of the first air service between Stockholm and Paris, a group of French travel agents were invited to take an exploratory flight on this new route.



As a result of the welcome they received, they realised the importance of strengthening relationships between people working and promoting tourism. This pioneering group then decided to found an organisation whose main objective was to foster friendship in the travel industry. Thus the Skål Club of Paris was born in December of that year and by 1934 another twelve Clubs had appeared in five countries.

Florimond Volckaert had the idea of integrating them into a single international organisation and on 28 April 1934 the first Working Session took place, which is why 28 April is considered the Founding Day of Skål International.

During these 83 years the tourism market has seen an exponential growth representing a powerful industry now and in the future. The importance of the industry is not only economic but also cultural. As the United Nations' Secretary General Antonio Guterres said, "Beyond the measurable advances that tourism can drive, it is also a bridge to improve mutual understanding among people of all kinds."

In a world that seems increasingly lacking in tolerance and generosity, tourism can be a fundamental pillar to continue to strengthen ties. It is at this time, where an organisation like Skål takes on an extraordinary meaning, promoting the principles of friendship, integrity and honesty.

Skålleagues, I encourage you to organise a Club event on 28 April; I am sure it will be a great pretext to celebrate together our philosophy of doing business with friends.

Skål!

NOT MAKING DECISIONS WILL ALWAYS BE RISK FREE

With the sudden demise of the "Tourism only B2B platform" by 3BaysOver, I thought it appropriate to shed light on the background and relationship between this company and Skål International.

The Executive Committee received an offer from the CEO who wanted to adapt their platform and incorporate the global membership of Skål International.

As it was a global vision and imperative that Skål International needed to modernize and digitize its communication channels, 3BO presented itself as a unique and ideal option as it targeted Tourism professionals exclusively. Past President Nigel Pilkington researched their proposal in detail and after discussing the idea with the International Skål Council at their Mid Year Meeting it was agreed to formalise the relationship with 3BaysOver.

Even though it was a newly formed company, it had a very interesting forward projection plan which included an exciting expansion plan with no financial obligations from Skål.

I was duly appointed as the Project Manager and would be the official liaison between 3BaysOver and Skål International. You can imagine how surprised I was at learning of their closure as well as disappointed as I have been an active and keen user of this platform both in my professional capacity as well as in Skål matters as I belong to a club that actively use 3BO as our official communications channel.

I would like to state that Skål International was not a shareholder of this company nor did we make any capital contribution to 3BaysOver. Skål only and specifically contracted specific services related to the onboarding of the membership under strict project management from our part. Furthermore, I would like to stress that 3BaysOver never had any direct connection to our Database.

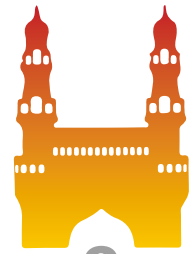
I have received messages from members during the past few hours who have questioned the Executive Committee's decision to collaborate with 3BO and

others that are sorry to see the closure of a platform that was both beneficial to them personally as well as in business. In retrospect the decision was probably wrong but as a duly elected committee, we have to make decisions on behalf of our members, some will be right and others wrong.

Surely not making a decision would be risk free, but we all know that not deciding is itself a decision. If we do not decide, nothing happens but then nothing changes either.

Susanna Saari,
Vice President, Skål International





SKÅL
WORLD CONGRESS

HYDERABAD | INDIA

5-9 OCTOBER 2017

TOGETHER WE CAN

WELCOME TO HYDERABAD, INDIA

The history of India can be traced back to the Indus Valley civilisation (2500 BC). India has a rich cultural heritage and diversity in language, dress, religious places, flora and fauna and varied delicious cuisines.

India is an agricultural country but has made a rapid growth over the last few decades in industries, information technology and in the field of science. Hyderabad, the conference venue, is the meeting point of the central and southern part of India. It was ruled by the Mughals and the Nizams and the architectural beauty is seen in Charminar, Golkonda fort, Falaknuma and Chowmahalla palaces and the world famous Ramoji Film City, etc.

Hyderabad, Telangana is solidarity with hundreds of associations supporting the less fortunate and a Government which supports research, the preservation of the environment and sustainability with vim, vigor and vitality with its vibrant leadership.

Last but not least, Hyderabad is tourism innovation with constant improvements to its leading attractions, surrounded by the Buddhist circuit and many more attractions as a rainbow state having everything.

This great congress will be done by Skål International India and team Skål International Hyderabad.

Please join us at the 78th World Congress in 2017 in Hyderabad. We look forward to seeing you in Hyderabad.

Vijay Mohan Raj | President Skål International Hyderabad



HOTELS AND PRICING

REGISTRATION	PRICE	HOTELS
Single registration in Deluxe Hotel (4 nights package in single room)	€1177.00	Novotel 5* (Headquarter) Taj Krishna 5* Park Hyatt 5*
Double registration in Deluxe Hotel (4 nights package in twin or double room)	€1608.00	Sheraton Hyderabad 5*
Single registration in First Class Hotel (4 nights package in single room)	€1144.00	Marriott 5* Taj Deccan 5*
Double registration in First Class Hotel (4 nights package for twin or double room)	€1576.00	Taj Banjara 5* Holiday Inn Express and Suites 4*
Congress only	€628.00	No hotel included
Young Skål	€470.00	No hotel included

PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME

(subject to changes)

Thursday 5 October 2017	Arrival of participants Get-Together Party
Friday 6 October 2017	Opening Ceremony Lunch Celebrity Speaker Session Celebrity Dinner and Entertainment
Saturday 7 October 2017	General Assembly of Delegates + Lunch Optional excursions for non-delegates Dine Around
Sunday 8 October 2017	Executive Committee Forum Travel Forum (Panel and/or Keynote Speakers) Celebrity Speaker Session Lunch Young Skål Workshop Optional afternoon excursions President's Gala Dinner
Monday 9 October 2017	Departure of participants Optional Post-Congress Tours

REGISTRATION

Register online [here](#) or on the Congress website.

AIRLINE INFORMATION

Rajiv Gandhi International Airport is located 22 km south of Hyderabad and offers service to most major airline hubs.

Cathay Pacific Airways is proud to be the Official Carrier of the 2017 Skål World Congress and offers up to 10% discount on special fares. Event Code: MICE188 / Corp ID: 126005

[More information...](#)

Jet Airways offers 10% discount on Basic + YQ for Domestic and 10% on Base Only for International. Code for Domestic flight: 9WSKALD. Code for International flight: 9WSKALI

[More information...](#)

Emirates Airlines

Save up to 10% on Emirates flights
Emirates Airline has proudly been selected as the partner airline for the Skål International Congress.

Use your Promotion Code to get special fares on Emirates. Promotion code: EVE6KAL

[More information...](#)

TRANSFERS

For transportation from the airport, we suggest you book your transfer online through the congress website; the link will be available shortly.

OPTIONAL EXCURSIONS AND PRE-& POST-TOURS

Experience an array of day excursions and pre- & post-tours to famous sites in India. Whether you want to see the incomparable Taj Mahal in Agra, experience Kerala's palm-lined beaches or witness the majestic Charminar, there is so much to see and do in Hyderabad and beyond!



Full details on the proposed excursions and Pre- & Post-tours are available on the Congress website.



GENERAL INFORMATION

Visas

All visitors to India require a valid visa to enter the country. Tourists wishing to visit India are normally granted short-term tourist visas, effective from the date of issue. Tourist visas are non-extendable and non-convertible. The Embassies, High Commissions and the Consulate Generals of India, will be happy to help you obtain Visa to enter India. More information can be obtained [here](#).

Currency

The Indian Rupee is the national currency (INR). International Credit Cards are widely accepted for payment in most hotels, restaurants and shops, particularly American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa; MasterCard and Visa are the most widely accepted. Exchange offices and ATM machines are available throughout Hyderabad.

Electricity

The electricity supply in India is 220 Volts.

Time

India has only one time zone which covers the entire country. Indian Standard Time (IST) is 5 hours and 30 minutes ahead of GMT.

Weather

The month of October is characterised by gradually falling daily high temperatures, with daily highs around 26°C throughout the month.

Insurance

Participants are advised to take out their own personal travel and health insurance for their trip.

Full information available on the Congress website: www.skalcongress.org

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact the Local Organising Committee by email at skalhyderabad@gmail.com.

COUNCILLOR'S CORNER

At the recent Skål International United Kingdom AGM I was delighted to be unanimously re-elected as the UK International Councillor.

This position, however, comes with some pretty serious challenges as we have been experiencing a steady decline in membership numbers and Clubs for a number of years.

It really is a slippery slope when Clubs end up being composed of mainly retired members. In these circumstances, it is difficult if not impossible to attract active Tourism Professionals to join the Club so we have devised the strategy below to combat this.

Whether there is a chance to create a new Skål Club in an existing Skål destination, needs to be explored where new active members would not be joining a Club with retired members but starting a new Club with active members.

We would also identify new destinations where it is felt a new Club could be developed.

We agreed that there needs to be “Local Champions” who are active and well-connected who could develop a new committee and start recruiting from their active networks.

There would be a strong support package made available to the champions with visits from active Skålleagues and funding to achieve our goals.

We have already identified several locations where we feel we can implement this strategy but we know we have our work ahead of us.

In Skål Northern Ireland we were able to recruit 10 new members last year and we have just elected our 2017 Club President who is 28 years old and was originally a Young Skålleague. We also hosted a very successful National Assembly in 2016 when in addition to President Nigel and Vice President Susanna, we had three other Past World Presidents in attendance!

In my first year as International Councillor in 2015, I was pleased to head up a Task Force within the International Skål Council which looked at attracting more members

to Skål by making the organisation more commercial and providing real benefits for members businesses.

Specifically, I felt we needed to make more people aware of the huge benefits of the global reach of Skål and in particular when a destination hosts our World Congress with Skålleagues from all over the World coming together to “Do business amongst friends”.

To achieve this, we proposed making the B2B element of the programme much more like industry business networking events and exhibitions which we are so familiar with in our working lives. We were also aware that many other organisations often generate income from trade/business events attached to their annual congress and we could really do with developing a Membership Development Fund to support membership growth.

The goal was to create a “Global Market Place” event in conjunction with the World Congress, explore running a trade show, invite world class key note speakers and invite non-members in the destination, who would qualify for Skål membership, to attend these events and learn about our wonderful organisation.

We managed to move towards this goal during our congress in Monaco in 2016 and I am delighted to say that plans are progressing really well for our congress in Hyderabad in October this year. So make sure you register and be part of the future of Skål.

As Mark Twain said – “Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than the things you did”.



By Mark Alexander,
Councillor, Skål International United Kingdom



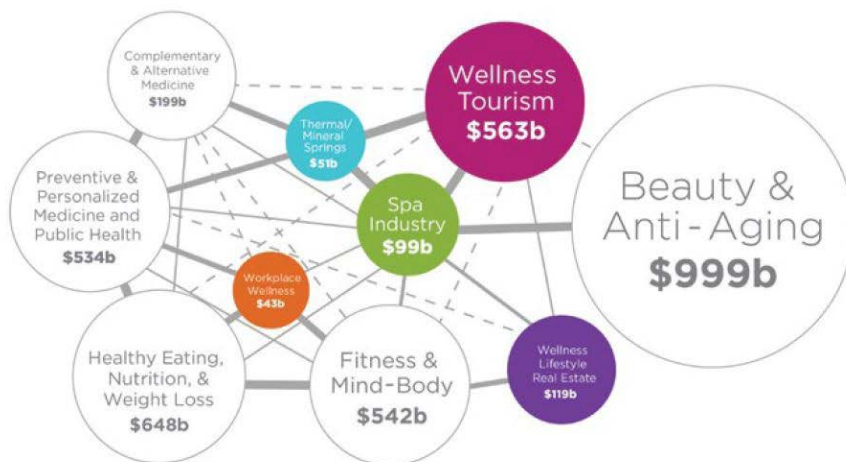
WELLNESS TOURISM IS HERE TO STAY

IS YOUR BUSINESS READY TO TAKE ITS SHARE?

The past years have seen the development of the wellness industry i.e. spas and wellness hotels around the globe. It seems that words like “downshifting,” “mindfulness,” “well-being” and “wellness” fill the media, while stressed out people seek new ways of living healthy and full lives.

Wellness has become a megatrend. The capacity to prioritise wellbeing is becoming a status symbol sought by consumers across the industry and beyond. The global wellness economy is now valued at \$3.7 trillion – a 10.6% growth over the last two years representing more than 5% of global economic output. It is time to all Skålleagues to look at this niche tourism sector and see whether there is potential for them to have a slice!

The [Global Wellness Institute](#) defines wellness as “the active pursuit of activities, choices, and lifestyles that lead to a state of holistic health”. Wellness tourism is not the biggest part of wellness economy but clearly a sector where Skålleagues can also seek growth. The estimated size of global wellness economy is seen below.



Note: Numbers may not add due to overlap in segments. The thickness of the lines in the chart indicates the strength of the relationships and synergies between sectors. Source: Global Wellness Institute

Wellness tourism continues to grow faster than global tourism as a consequence of three trends. Firstly there is an emerging global middle class with rising, disposable income for lifestyle spending, including travel. Secondly there is an increasing consumer desire for all things related to wellness and a healthy lifestyle, and finally a growing interest in experiential travel.

As the industry is evolving one might get confused about the terminology. The “umbrella term” used for the phenomenon is “health tourism”. This is broadly divided in two spectra: wellness and medical. Skål International covers both in its membership categories and it is good to notice that wellness is not synonymous solely with spas.

Wellness is seen as the proactive side of health tourism. It is travel associated with the pursuit of maintaining or enhancing one’s personal well-being. The various hospitality and tourism companies that can avail themselves of this business vary from food and lodging to activities and more. So Skålleagues working for spas, hotels, resorts, cruise lines, even events and festivals should be out there looking for new business. In addition, those members offering more “generic” services (e.g. transportation) can also have their share of this lucrative market.



The wellness customer segment includes two types of wellness tourists. Those who take a trip entirely for wellness purposes are called “primary wellness tourists”. They are the high-yield tourists spending much more per trip than non-wellness travellers. Again those who seek to engage in wellness activities as a part of any kind of a trip are called “secondary wellness tourists”. This segment has been growing faster than the primary group since 2013. Skålleagues should also have a close look at their domestic markets as in both categories this is a market driven by short-haul and weekend trips.

Sources:

[Global Wellness Economy Monitor](#)

[Developing a Competitive Health and Tourism Destination](#)

The author is Senior Vice President of Skål International., Susanna Saari. She is a Senior Lecturer at Turku University of Applied Sciences and a Doctoral Candidate at the University of Lapland working on a dissertation on “Urban wellbeing destinations”.

Pictures: WelDest project and Global Wellness Institute

SUCCESS CORNER

MEMBERSHIP IS THE LIFEblood OF SKÅL

We need an active, engaged and growing membership to ensure that Skål International remains an active Association in the world of travel and tourism offering and delivering benefits to members.



Skål International Australia (SIA) is focussed on recruiting new members and, most importantly, retaining existing members. Like in most other countries, membership in Australia has declined from the peak of 1,219 in 2013 to the current level of 960 and we currently enjoy the third highest membership in the world of Skål....not bad for a country of only 26 million!

While this reduction in membership is a disturbing trend, the good news is that the rate of decline is reducing and SIA is confident of growing membership and reaching, retaining and exceeding the 1,000 member threshold. To this end, SIA was delighted to welcome our 23rd Club, Skål International Mackay in February and we are actively working on establishing new Clubs in the tourism centres of Alice Springs, Port Macquarie and Byron Bay. Concurrently, SIA has adopted a four

part approach to assisting Clubs to grow membership. This involves:

RESEARCH ▶

- Establishing the age profile of each Club
- Establishing the gender profile of each Club, male members/female members
- Establishing how many members are in each membership category and identify membership gaps
- Establishing member type, e.g. active/retired

SET TARGETS ▶

- Reduce age profile of each Club over a two year period by 5 years (Nigel's Niggle)
- Improve the gender balance to a set target for the next 3 years.... E.g. 30% female in 2017, 35% in 2018, etc.
- Reduce non-renewals by maintaining existing members – set a realistic target e.g. non-renewals to be no greater than 10% of members in 2017 and 5% in 2018
- Recruit 5% new members each year
- Increase the membership categories represented in each Club

STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE TARGETS ▶

- Ensure all member records are correct in the data base
- Increase engagement with all members at local, national and international levels through e-newsletters, etc. and encouraging attendance at Skål events held nationally, regionally and globally (the World Congress)
- Suggest targets for each Club as outlined above and seek their active support
- Ensure a member on each Committee is responsible for membership development
- Feature at least one member case study in each EDM on accessing the benefits of Skål membership (e.g. Skål Greeter, business links made, special offers accessed by Skål members etc...)

- Promote use of membership promotion tools available on Skål website

REVIEW ▶

- Publish 'scorecard' table of all Australian Skål Clubs with age and gender profile and how Clubs are tracking against targets set for review at each National Assembly. Branch Chairs to report and highlight what initiatives are working best.

The above system was launched at the National Assembly held in Adelaide in August 2016 and the first Review will be conducted at the upcoming National Assembly and AGM held in Port Douglas later this month.

By Alfred Merse, Vice President Membership Development, Australia

SKÅL RETURNS TO ETHIOPIA

SKÅLLEAGUE AND ETHIOPIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES, HIS EXCELLENCY GIRMA BIRRU ANTICIPATES EXCELLENT TOURISM EXPOSURE FOR THE REESTABLISHMENT OF SKÅL INTERNATIONAL ADDIS ABABA.

In an enthusiastic conversation about the return of Skål to Ethiopia, His Excellency Girma Birru, Ethiopian Ambassador to the United States and a two year member of Skål International Washington, focused on the opportunity for his country to work with tourism leaders worldwide as a key feature of the re-establishment of Skål International Addis Ababa #311.

"Ethiopia will benefit from being part of Skål, as it was in the past during the time of Emporer Haile Selassie. We are not well known with tourists and anticipate that Skål will help to be exposed to the rest of the world."

"We Ethiopians want people to know about our history in ancient cities like Axum, Yeha, Gondar, and Lalibela - and about our safaris, too!," the Ambassador said.

"In joining Skål, I have access to the heart of tourism by being with our Skål Club in Washington and have gained much tourism knowledge. I am very thankful for the Skålleagues who encouraged me to join, especially Dr. Yohannes Zeleke and Steve Richer."

Ambassador Birru has had a distinguished career in both public service and the private sector in Ethiopia prior to serving in his key diplomatic post. Among his previous posts were Minister of Trade and Industry (2001-10), Minister of Economic Development and Cooperation (1995-2001), and Deputy Minister of Finance (1992-94).



He has served on the boards of the Ethiopian Power Corporation, Development Bank of Ethiopia, Ethiopia Investment Agency, Ethiopian Road Authority, and Ethiopian Social Rehabilitation Development Fund. He has been an alternate governor of both the World Bank and the African Development Bank. He has a master's degree in economic policy from the Institute of Social Studies at the Hague.

Ambassador Birru is married with two children.

THE PRINCIPLE "THINK GLOBAL - ACT LOCAL"

ITB IN BERLIN

Skål International was very well represented this year at the ITB in Berlin from 8 to 12 March. Every day Skålleagues from all over the world visited Stand 113 in Hall 18, with the Happy Hours on Wednesday and Thursday. Special guest was Skål International Vice President Susanna Saari. ITB guests from Zanzibar, Uganda and Oman visited the booth and more than 30 visitors were interested in membership in Skål.



The big meeting place during the ITB was the annual Get-together held on Friday 10 March in the CityCube. After the opening remarks by the President of Skål Berlin, Hartwig Bohne who, with his team, organised the ITB stand for Skål, Rolf Wenner, President Skål Germany, highlighted the importance of Skål in the world: "I took a look at the statistics.

According to the database of skal.org, we have 14.360 members at the moment, plus local members worldwide", he said. "The USA with 1.879 and India with 1.040 members are the two countries with the most members, which equals 20.53%. They are

followed, in numerical order, by Australia, Turkey, Germany, Switzerland, Canada and Mexico. The remaining 75 countries represent approximately 47% of the membership". Everybody in the Club takes care in getting new members, since Skål lost members in the last few years. "A great potential is provided by journalists for travel magazines as well as the suppliers, for example, to the hotel industry, the many car rental companies, and gastronomy", Wenner said. He wants to become "more modern and more organised".

Skål International CEO Daniela Otero commented on the strategic plan that was being drawn up and said "It

will focus on concrete plans that will allow us to take action. It identifies the three targets of our association and our action plans will concentrate on trying to meet the needs of each of them. It will focus on members; Young Skål and new members. It will be presented for consideration by the International Skål Council in May during its meeting in South Africa and will be officially presented at the World Congress in Hyderabad, India.”



Otero mentioned Russell Ackoff (1981), a strategic planning guru: “The future must not be predicted but created. The goal of planning should be to design a desirable future and invent the way to achieve it. And there we are.”

Vice President Susanna Saari and CEO Daniela Otero represented the association at the General Assembly of The Code, of which Skål International is a member of the board. The Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism is an industry-driven initiative with the mission to provide awareness, tools, support and prevention.

They also attended the inauguration, in the presence of the Secretary General of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation, Dr. Taleb Rifai, of the Responsible and Sustainable Travel Pavilion, where they had the opportunity to talk to Mr. Suman Billa, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, about the 2017 World Congress of the Association which will be held in Hyderabad, in October this year.



Finally, they were invited to attend the “2nd Celebrating Her Global Awards for Empowered Women” ceremony, an international award by IIPT India, supported by ITB Berlin to honour women who have played an extraordinary role in developing sustainable tourism.

YOUNG SKÅL

WEEKEND OF NETWORKING AND ACTIVITIES IN TORONTO

Toronto is one of the best cities in the world to see, explore, and discover. Young Skål invites you to come and join us for an amazing weekend of networking and learning activities that are sure to ignite your travel and tourism appetite (www.seetorontonow.com).

There are many hosts for the events from June 15-18th with your opportunity to participate in both the 2017 North American Skål Congress and the Young Skål program. Thursday evening is a welcome cocktail party at the host hotel, the Chelsea Toronto, located directly on Yonge Street (the longest street in the world!). This will give you a chance to meet other Young Skål members and together the group can next join in to the main cocktails and hors d'oeuvres party that officially opens the 2017 North American Skål Congress that evening. Friday has a keynote speaker, Dr. Richard Schuttler on his book, the Laws of Communication. Other guest speakers for the day include a talk on food terroir and hospitality success strategies in the breakout sessions. The afternoon offers a drive to Niagara region to visit a local winery including dinner.

The next morning, a visit to the world famous iconic CN

Tower that spans a view of the entire city (including a special talk from the Executive Chef on how they run the 360 degree revolving restaurant). Saturday continues with lunch back at the hotel, then an afternoon of guest speakers on the hospitality and tourism industry from a global perspective located at George Brown, Canada's largest hospitality school. The final congress evening will be a gala event just a short walk from the hotel at the Carlu with tables organised just for Young Skål to socialize together.

Sunday morning will offer an optional tour to the AGO, the Art Gallery of Ontario. Stay for the afternoon to partake in the optional visit to the Skydome to take in a baseball game as the final activity.

Rates are for Young Skål only, with your choice at \$1475 (double occupancy hotel accommodation and two congress registrations) or single room congress at \$875, and the congress only at \$695 Canadian. All prices are subject to HST. We encourage you to sign up quickly to show your enthusiasm to be part of this exciting North America event [here](#) or for more information on Young Skål contact Audrius Valiulis audriusvaliulis@gmail.com.

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AWARDS

Skål International is proud to announce the call for submissions to the 2017 Sustainable Tourism Awards.

New category for **TOURISM DESTINATIONS** on the occasion of the 2017 UNWTO International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development

DEADLINE: 30 JUNE 2017

In its 16th edition, the Sustainable Tourism Awards, while highlighting best practices in tourism around the world, also serve the purpose of acquainting the world with this new concept that puts emphasis on the importance of the interaction of the physical, cultural and social environment, the traveller's responsibility and the need for active community participation for Sustainability.

Any company from the public and private sector, NGOs and government agencies worldwide are welcome to submit an entry in one of the nine available categories:

- > Tour Operators
- > Urban Accommodation
- > Rural Accommodation
- > Transportation
- > Countryside and Wildlife
- > Marine
- > Community and Government Projects
- > Major Tourist Attractions
- > Educational Institutions/Programmes and Media
- > Tourism Destinations

For full information, please consult our [brochure](#) and click [here](#) to enter online.

If you have any query, please contact sandra.vera@skal.org

Check out!
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5WSnIKUmD94>
Registration - <http://nasc2017.torontoskal.org/>



North American Skål Congress

Toronto, June 15th-18th, 2017



Speaker Series
& Private
Tour of CN Tower



Joanne Gellatly



Doris Miculan
Bradley



Rachel Dodds



Annisa
Mohammed



Dario Guescini

Young Skål Program on Saturday, June 17, 2017

- *Young Skål Congress only* - no hotel (\$695 per delegate)
 - *Young Skål hotel and congress* - double occupancy and two congress delegates (\$1475 per room)
 - *Young Skål hotel and congress* - single occupancy and one congress delegate (\$875 per room)
- *Additional pricing details found on congress website*



Please note: Attending Young Skål program **ONLY** on Saturday June 17, 2017 is free. Included **ONLY** is speakers series and CN Tower Tour.

THE POWER OF CONFERENCES IN A SOCIAL-MEDIA AGE

A GUIDE TO USING TECHNOLOGY TO MAKE FACE-TO-FACE GATHERINGS EVEN MORE VALUABLE

In the social-media age, the idea of going to a conference, or gathering for several days of face-to-face meetings, seems almost quaint.



But the truth is the opposite: Social media has made conference-going more valuable than ever. The value of those in-person encounters comes not in spite of, but increasingly because of, the way we use technology and social media—from the colleague we discover on social media (before setting up a date to meet at a coming conference) to the presentation that takes one's professional reputation to new heights (because it's amplified on Twitter).

Say you met a great prospect over coffee at a conference. Who is the prospect going to remember in a month: the person he spent 30

minutes with or the person he spent 30 minutes with and with whom he subsequently exchanged half a dozen tweets? Knowing how to make smart use of social media in connection with conferences is the secret to being the person who gets remembered.

Here are some tips on how you can use digital tools to boost the value of a conference—before, during and after the gathering.

Pack your schedule. When I go to a conference, I put at least as much time into one-on-one and small-group meetings as I do into attending sessions. I block off times when I'm going to make myself available for meetings, and put those into a bookable calendar such as Calendly or YouCanBook.me. Instead of getting into a prolonged back-and-forth over when to meet up, I include my calendly.com/awsamuel link in any messages I send out asking for a meeting. To decide who to reach out to, I not only look at the conference schedule or attendee list, I search Twitter to see who is tweeting about the conference. If I'm sending a meeting request to someone I don't know, I look them up on LinkedIn and follow them on Twitter so that I'll know more about them before we meet.

Play host/hostess. Mealtimes are one of the awkward parts of traditional conferences—so be the hero who saves your fellow attendees from lonely meals. The tech tools you use to organize parties or social get-togethers can help with conference convening, too.

Start by booking an 8-to-12-person table in a restaurant for each night of your conference; I use the geographic search tool on OpenTable to find restaurants near the conference venue, and then read reviews on Yelp to decide which restaurants look best. Consider choosing a theme for each dinner. I find that a notional focus like “women in tech” or “writers and publishers” helps bring a gathering into focus. Create an evite for each dinner, so you don’t have to manually keep track of who is attending; allow people to bring one to two guests and set a limit for RSVPs that is equal to your number of seats at the table. Finally, use Bitly (a URL shortener) to set up a memorable URL for each night’s evite (for example, “<http://bit.ly/MarketConApril12>”). When you email people to set up individual meeting dates, include an invitation to one of your dinners. Or enlist a few co-conspirators and ask each of them to bring three interesting people to dinner.

Use business cards to showcase your work. Like most people, I exchange a lot of business cards at conferences—something that’s become a lot more valuable since I started using my business cards to showcase my work. I’ve created short links to all the articles and webpages I frequently share with people. I then order custom-printed stickers for the short links that I share most, and when I hand out a business card, I attach a sticker related to whatever I’m discussing. It turns out that even grown-ups get excited when you hand them a sticker, so I recommend creating short links and stickers for any assets (like blog posts, specific service descriptions, reports or videos) that you frequently recommend.

Engage with new contacts. It’s easy for that stack of business cards you collect to turn into a whole lot of nothing. That’s why I try to go through my freshly collected cards on the plane home, snapping an image of each card with an app like Evernote, which offers a built-in business card reader to capture contact information. I use LinkedIn to connect with anyone I’ve really clicked with (but I’m selective), and I also follow people on Twitter. Another trick that helps me stay in touch with folks on Twitter is to

snap a selfie with them while we’re still together—then I ask them for their Twitter handle, and tweet them a message with the hashtag #nicetomeetyou and the hashtag for the conference. My #nicetomeetyou tweets are a running list of people I’ve met, with prompts for where I’ve met them and their actual photos.

Stoke interest in your presentation. If you’re presenting at the conference, my advice is to spend as much time promoting your talk as you do preparing it. (This is particularly important if you’re going to be presenting at a larger conference where you’re competing for attendees.) Create a pre-event teaser such as a blog post or infographic and share it on all your social-media channels, and include the hashtag for the conference itself so your fellow attendees see it. Add a link to your coming presentation to your email signature, especially if it’s a talk at a conference where it’s an honor just to be on the agenda. That way you’re letting all your contacts know that you’re someone to watch!

Build a following with Twitter. Twitter can help drive attendance to your talk—and your conference participation can also build your Twitter following. This will be most effective if your Twitter strategy is baked into your presentation: Include your Twitter handle (as well as the hashtag for the conference or your specific talk, if applicable) on every slide, or on the key slides that start each section of your presentation, so people know how to refer to you when they are tweeting about your talk. When you’re on stage, let your audience know that they should follow you on Twitter to get links to resources you cover in your talk. You can tweet out those resources after the talk, or you can queue up tweets with a tweet scheduler such as Hootsuite to sync with your presentation time: It always blows people’s minds when I tweet out links to the examples I share in my talks while I’m actually presenting.

Convert your audience. If you want to convert your presentation audience into sales prospects or contacts, consider setting up a webpage with some basic information on your talk, plus an email form specific to this event or topic area. Then let people in the audience know they can sign up for that list to get your slides, follow-up report or related updates. Be sure to tweet out the link to that page, using the conference hashtag, and if you post your slides to Slideshare, include the link there, too.

Source: The Wall Street Journal www.wsj.com

MEMBERSHIP BENEFIT

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS WITH THE CHINA OUTBOUND TOURISM QUALITY SERVICE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM (QSC PROGRAM)

After nearly 20 years rapid growth, China has become the largest outbound travelers generating country in the world with a total of 120 million Chinese outbound trips in 2015.



With the development and maturing of this market, Quality instead of Quantity has become the most important issue for over 3,000 Chinese travel agencies who are licensed to operate outbound tours and have urgent need to cooperate with overseas quality tourism suppliers. The continuously increasing number of Chinese F.I.T travelers has also shown great demand in finding quality suppliers for their trips abroad.

China Outbound Tourism Quality Service Certification Program (QSC Program) is a Chinese travel industry endorsed certification program aiming to recognize and promote overseas tourism suppliers (travel services, shopping centres, hotels, restaurants and tourist attractions etc.) who can provide quality services for Chinese travelers according to QSC Criteria. The implementation of the QSC Program can help Chinese travelers to choose quality suppliers in destinations and attain a trusted,

comfortable and quality travel experience. Chinese tour operators and travel agencies can have greater business cooperation with certified quality suppliers. On the other hand, the QSC Program can help suppliers win the trust of Chinese travelers and buyers, therefore it is an effective brand promoting and marketing tool for any tourism suppliers catering for the China market. As a non-profit program, QSC does not charge any certification service fee on applicants.

Skål International appreciates and agrees with the idea of QSC Program, and is actively supporting QSC program in order for Skål International members and its affiliated companies to have greater business opportunities in China. Skål International is recognized by QSC Program to issue recommendation letters for relevant companies applying for QSC certification.

In line with the QSC Criteria, applicants to QSC Program need to submit some necessary documents for the quality assessment, which usually takes about 2-4 weeks for each applicant. The certified suppliers can enjoy many benefits such as attaining QSC quality label, name listing on QSC official website and annual handbook of Chinese outbound tourism quality suppliers, which will be distributed to Chinese tour operators and travel agencies operating outbound businesses. Other valuable optional services are also available for certified QSC suppliers.

The QSC Program provides an extremely convenient and effective channel for overseas companies entering and developing the Chinese outbound tourism market.

For more information, please visit the official website www.qualitytourism.cn or contact us through:

Email: certification@qualitytourism.cn

Tel: +86 10 62279624



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SKÅL EXPANSION

ACTIVE INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP

Are you involved in a managerial position in the Travel and Tourism Industry and live or work in a country that does not have a Skål Club?

No Problem! You can join our exciting organisation as an ACTIVE INDIVIDUAL MEMBER in this growing membership category.

In this issue, we feature Poland with Lukasz Barlowski, owner of Artur Travel - www.arturtravel.pl

I have been working in tourism industry since 2006. I started as owner of the Hotel Artur in Krakow, Poland. In 2009 I set up, with my cousin, Artur Travel Barłowski Spółka Jawna, a family owned tour operator. For many years now Poland has been one of the most popular destinations to visit in Europe. Poland is taking an active part in the global tourism market and the number of visitors increases every year. The most popular cities visited by tourists are: Krakow, Warsaw, Gdansk and Wroclaw.

My company is taking an active part in organising visits to places mentioned above. Artur Travel specialises in inbound group tourism for adults and youths to Poland and Central Europe. It provides educational tours, round trips, themed tours, city breaks, religious and pilgrimage tourism and medical treatment tours. The company organises spa and wellness accommodation and golfing. The MICE department is always delighted to organise conferences, training, business meetings, events or incentive trips.

Due to fact that the company is located in Krakow I concentrate on promoting local tourist attractions. The “top-3-must-see” places to visit



in the region are: Wawel Castle and the Old Town of Krakow, Wieliczka Salt Mine and Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum.

The team of professionals is always ready to provide services of highest possible level not only in Poland, but also to neighbours.

I am a member of Skål since 2014. Since that time the company has supported over 25.000 tourists to Poland, most of them from Scandinavia. Skål gives me opportunity to contact professional suppliers all over the world and exchange experiences during our meetings at tourism fairs.



TRADE SHOWS

Skål members who will attend WTM Africa or IMEX Frankfurt are more than welcome to visit the Skål International stand and participate at the Skål activities during these trade shows.

Join SKÅL INTERNATIONAL for our WTM COCKTAILS

THURSDAY 20th APRIL 2017

At CULLINAN HOTEL, 1 Cullinan Street, Cape Town

1800 for Registration and Cocktails
COST R170 per person

SKÅL
Bonnievale WINES
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TSOGO SUN

We look forward to you joining us...
RSVP: Anne@yebo.co.za
NUMBERS VERY LIMITED - BOOK EARLY !

WTM Africa: Skål International stand W28

IMEX Frankfurt: Skål International stand G175

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL kindly invites you and your guests to their traditional **IMEX BREAKFAST**

Thursday, 18th May 2017, from 08.30 to 10.00 a.m. at the Frankfurt Messe Fairgrounds, Hall No. 9, Level 1, Room Esprit.

ENJOY YOUR BREAKFAST WITH SKÅL FRIENDS AND TRADE REPRESENTATIVES FROM DIFFERENT COUNTRIES AROUND THE GLOBE.

Ray Bloom, Chairman of IMEX Group, former Skål World Presidents Karine Coulanges and Nik Racic, and Jens Braun, Vice President of Skål International, Germany, will also be present at the IMEX Breakfast.

We look forward to welcoming you personally!

David Fisher
Skål World President

Heribert Becker
President Skål International Frankfurt am Main

Please register your presence with Coordinator H.J. Thien at Thien@thienconsult.de or Tel. #49 172 6162691

WORLD TRAVEL MARKET AFRICA

THIS YEAR'S SHOW PROMISES TO BE EXTRAORDINARY!

With WTM Africa just around the corner, excitement is building! Taking place at the Cape Town International Convention Centre from 19 to 21 April 2017, WTM Africa is set to once again showcase local and international travel sectors as well as trending content delivered by global experts and speakers.

Always looking to innovate, WTM Africa has worked in close partnership with the industry over the last 10 months to gain trade, media and buyer insights. Working together with the travel trade has given WTM Africa a better understanding of key industry needs, therefore promising an enhanced, bigger and better WTM Africa 2017.



WTM Africa 2017 will focus heavily on creating an ideal environment in which business deals can be brokered. For this reason, the following innovations have already been made ahead of 2017:

- A host of international speakers from across the globe will focus on pertinent topics affecting the modern travel industry, as well as look to identify trends in the African travel market
- New to WTM Africa in 2017, the Outbound Conference Theatre will invite travel agents to learn more about the international destinations that are right on our doorstep
- Enhancements have been made to the Speed Networking programme, with each session extended to 90 minutes from 60 minutes in 2016.

- The matchmaking and diary system has also been improved with the functionality to request meetings with fellow exhibitors and the ability to block out times in the diary.
- Exhibitor workshops ahead of WTM 2017 have been conducted early in the year, while a White Glove Service means that training can also be done right in your office.

With only 5 weeks until WTM Africa opens its doors, members of the travel trade and its associated media are encouraged to register for WTM Africa 2017 by visiting www.wtmafrica.com.

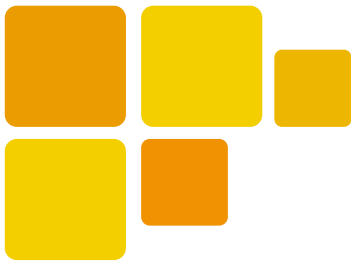
THE CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

The WTM Africa Programme features trending topics and events over three days, delivering thought provoking and inspiring content from a diverse and key range of sectors and speakers. Click [HERE](#) to peruse the programme and save dates and times in your diary to attend the sessions of interest.

FAST TRACK YOUR ENTRY TO WTM AFRICA

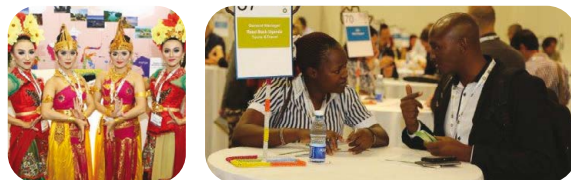
Join nearly 5000 travel industry professionals at the leading B2B exhibition for inbound and outbound African travel and tourism markets. With more than 646 exhibitors and buyers from over 77 different countries WTM Africa creates personal and business opportunities providing our customers with quality contacts, content and communities.

Register now [HERE](#) to avoid the onsite registration fee of R800 and long queues.



Discover the World at **WTM® Africa** 2017

Generate new sales leads	Network with key decision makers	Develop new and existing partnerships
Launch new products	Increase brand awareness	Gather market intelligence



Book your stand today at wtmafrica.com

Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC) 19 - 21 April 2017

Contact

To book your stand or should you wish to discuss any participation at WTM Africa, please contact:

Penny Snodgrass Sub-Saharan Africa Sales Manager pennys@thebereed.co.za +27 (0) 11 549 8300 +27 (0) 82 859 1349	Penny Fraser South African Sales Manager penny@thebereed.co.za +27 (0) 82 855 4377	Lisa Hopgood International Sales Manager lisa.hopgood@reedexpo.co.uk +44 (0) 208 910 7961
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IMEX FRANKFURT 2017

MASTERS OF REINVENTION: IMEX IN FRANKFURT RAISES THE BAR FOR 2017

IMEX in Frankfurt, taking place 16-18 May 2017 at Messe Frankfurt, is set to provide a newly inspiring experience this year, one that's been fine-tuned to fit the needs of a variety of visitors.

Alongside a wealth of new exhibitors and networking opportunities, the IMEX team is launching a brand new education experience, EduMonday, taking place the day before the show on 15 May.

EduMonday combines contemporary learning styles with hot industry topics and the latest personal development teachings. With [registration free of charge and open to all](#), this new pre-show day will offer training in event design, critical thinking, industry trends as well as education specifically for suppliers. This new IMEX EduMonday programme delivers a contemporary, interactive approach with experts from the new Zeus Eventtech Academy, GCB (German Convention Bureau), Meetology® Masterclasses and Play with a Purpose all taking part.

PCMA Business School also returns on EduMonday following its launch into Europe at the show last year. During an interactive session participants will learn the importance of emotional intelligence and critical thinking from renowned Executive Coach and educator Tremain du Preez. She will teach attendees how to improve their understanding of how they – and others – make decisions, recognising how emotions drive decision-making. *'We can't make completely rational decisions,' explains Tremain. 'Emotion is like a cocktail – each one has a different effect on the body. In the same way that a Long Island Iced Tea has a different effect to a Mojito!'*

From Tuesday 16 May, a wider programme of free education runs across the three days of the trade show with 150 sessions, including workshops, campfires and bite-sized show-floor education. Participants can choose from carefully selected tracks to build a bespoke schedule that complements their daily exhibitor appointments.

The future of events will once again be a hot topic at IMEX with the IAEE exploring Global exhibitions and events industry trends. MPI will also be offering a deep dive into the industry's business trends based on their most recent Meetings Outlook research. The German Convention Bureau (GCB) will share the latest impact trends, innovations, and societal developments as part of their Future Meeting Space project. The future of destination marketing will be covered by DMAI, and ILEA's global panel of 'Global Event Summitters' will share their views on how the economy is shaping the event business.

An industry hot topic and new IMEX Talking Point, Purposeful Meetings,

will be explored in a session by Janet Sperstad, recently rated as one of the top 25 Most Influential People in the Meetings Industry (Successful Meetings). She will present white paper research on the five 'pillars' of purposeful meetings: Meeting design, Wellbeing, Behavioural science, CSR/ Legacy and Event technology.

Whether it's hotel chains or hotel brands, new technologies, association or corporate meetings trends, travel legislation or even climate change, as a truly global showcase for the meetings and events industry IMEX is the best place to gain a snapshot of the whole market. With the largest global array of exhibitors from every meetings industry sector, buyers can meet 3,500 worldwide organisations and hundreds of meeting professionals and discover the latest trends under one roof.

This year's show will be bigger than ever, with a wide range of opportunities to do business and find inspiration. New exhibitors include Saudi Arabia, Meet Puerto Rico, Barcelona, Vienna House Hotels, Hunt & Palmer Air Charter, The Peninsula Hotels, Moldova and tech suppliers – Kino-Mo, Boomset and EventsCase.

Combined with over 200 networking opportunities with senior level meeting professionals, and social events including Site Nite Europe, CIM-Clubbing and the IMEX Gala Dinner, this adds up to three inspiring and productive days of business – plus one dedicated education day.



Frankfurt

16-18 May 2017

Five reasons you need to be at **IMEX 2017**

2017
**TALKING
POINT**

**PURPOSEFUL
MEETINGS**



Every year IMEX is a different experience. Here are 5 reasons why you need to be at IMEX 2017.

1. **3,500 exhibitors** from across the world, all keen to offer you a taste of their destinations, venues, hotels and more. Want to make your event unforgettable? Meet the experts.
2. It's not enough to simply be an event planner – you need to be a **purposeful meetings** planner. IMEX 2017 offers a wealth of insight on how to make meetings **more purposeful, enlightening, impactful!**
3. From apps to security, **event technology** is evolving fast – and we're on the case. #IMEX17 will showcase our largest ever TECHknowledge Area.

4. Come to IMEX as a visitor buyer and you'll get an online diary to **make appointments** with exhibitors of your choice. No RFP necessary – meet suppliers for fact-finding or research.
5. How will **global changes** affect your business? Join the event professionals, business owners and politicians who come to IMEX to discuss – and solve – the challenges facing our industry today.

Come to IMEX 2017 for insight and inspiration.

Join us and register today at imex-frankfurt.com/register

The worldwide exhibition for incentive travel, meetings and events.

imex-frankfurt.com #IMEX17



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INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

From Adams Rib to Women's Lib, Baby we have come a long way!. March 8 is International Women's Day and celebrating this day is an opportunity to appreciate the remarkable contribution of women to our Organisation.

We are highlighting the stories of some of our inspirational Skål women who share with us why they joined Skål International and how they have benefitted from their membership.

Their remarkable drive, passion and boldness have added value in their local Club, as well as nationally and internationally and we are so proud that they have chosen our Organisation to belong to.

We Salute You!

SUSANNA SAARI, TURKU | VICE PRESIDENT, SKÅL INTERNATIONAL

I have a traditional four years management training, and I knew from the beginning I wanted to work in hotels. I ended up working at Hyatt Regency Dubai in the late 90's. The work at HR/Training department gave me an idea to pursue a career as a teacher.

I moved back to Finland where I qualified myself pedagogically, then upgraded my college degree to a Bachelor and later did a Master in Social Sciences majoring in Leisure and Recreation studies and tourism. I also completed specialisation studies of Fair and Congress management and eBusiness in Tourism. I joined Turku University of Applied Sciences as a teacher first.

After a couple of years, I completely changed my career and joined Nokia Mobilephones in Helsinki where I had to learn the world of telecommunications from zero to be able to train engineers globally to use our messaging platforms. My passion and knowledge on IT hails from these days. I re-joined TUAS as a Senior Lecturer after I realised teaching and hotels are passions for me. I am currently a Doctoral Candidate for the University of Lapland majoring in tourism and working on a thesis around wellness tourism. I also started studies to gain a Further Qualification for Tourist Guides.

I was invited as a member in 2004 by Ulla Lähtevänoja, the Treasurer of Skål International Turku. I joined immediately and have never regretted it!

It is my connection to the "real industry people" hence helps me keeping up with the changes in the hospitality sector, and this is all for the benefit of my students. I can honestly say I have wider tourism networks than anybody else in my University – perhaps even the whole of academic Finland! I have true friends all over the world which I would never made have without Skål!



KATARINA HAUPTFELD, KVARNER I COUNCILLOR, SKÅL INTERNATIONAL CROATIA



Exactly 25 years ago, I founded my own company Katarina Line in Opatija, Croatia, which has been voted Croatia's best DMC agency and the premier small ship cruise company with over 55 ships in our fleet!

I joined Skål in 1992 as a member of Zagreb and in 2010 my dream came true with the formation of Skål International Kvarner where I was President for two consecutive terms of office and I am proud to be the current International Councillor for Croatia.

The reason I joined Skål is because Skål was and still is a club for professionals in tourism from all over the world. It opens your horizons and feeds you with worldwide news and ideas. At the time I joined there was no Internet, so this was even more useful to us, and because I love people and making new friends, these friends have helped me develop my company by spreading the word about us, as I have done with them and that is simply Skål... Business among Friends.

Benefits of Skål is seeing the world and other continents and cultures, helping others, making a difference to others... maybe we would never go to some of the places we have been if it was not for Skål having a congress or meeting there... This makes it so great! When travelling privately or on business you can always contact the local Skål Club and it becomes very handy for you and easier than going to research by yourself!

Our Skål family is a great one and we must all make an effort to make it grow even bigger and better with more Skål friends, but mostly by introducing Young Skål as they are our future and those who will continue our love for our Club for many years to come!

DENISE SCRAFTON, MELBOURNE I COUNCILLOR, SKÅL INTERNATIONAL AUSTRALIA

Denise has been a member of Skål International Melbourne for 17 years and is more than happy to tell everyone it was a good decision as at the time Denise wanted to join an association that gave her local, national and international exposure and introductions.

Denise started her career in the hotel industry with Flag Hotels and Resorts in the 1970's. She worked her way up through the company to be General Manager Sales and Marketing heading up the company's global business and operations. When Choice Hotels purchased the Flag Group; Denise was promoted to Vice President Asia Pacific.

Throughout her career, Denise was a Director of Tourism Victoria for six years and Vice Chairman of the Australian Tourism Export Council (ATEC) for many years.

Denise has received the distinguished award for "Outstanding Contribution by an Individual" for tourism in Victoria and also "Outstanding contribution by an Individual" to the Tourism Export industry in Australia by ATEC.

Denise has served as President of Skål Melbourne, was the first woman elected as President of Skål International Australia and is today the first female Skålleague elected to Skål Australia International Councillor. She



has met many wonderful people through the Skål world who are both friends and business colleagues.

Denise stated that the Tourism Industry needs an organisation such as Skål. She said there is so much potential for Skål to lead the way in this industry and it is exciting to be part of a new and vibrant direction.

HOLLY POWERS, BOSTON | PRESIDENT, SKÅL INTERNATIONAL U.S.A.

Holly Powers is one of the outstanding women leaders in the travel industry, earning her credentials through a 44 year career as a travel agent, tour operator, destination management company executive, wholesaler, and event management company owner. Holly has been a leading producer of tourism business through her decades long career. Even with such a strong business commitment, Holly has nevertheless made time for Skål and given it a top priority in her life. She started attending meetings of Skål Boston in 1988, but was prevented by the “one member per company” rule from actually becoming a full member – despite attending many meetings – until 1999. After that, she served as a board member and officer for nine years, including organising the presentation and film for Skål Boston’s successful bid to become “International Skål Club of the Year” in 2014.

Holly worked very hard on building a consensus for by-laws changes for Skål International USA, which brought renewed enthusiasm and commitment to the national chapter and her election as Vice President, Administration, prior to the national meeting which passed the proposed by-laws modifications by a lopsided margin. As one of the results, Holly was elected unopposed to serve as national chapter president in 2017.

In looking back, Holly says “The benefit of Skål is the friendships I have grown and cultivated around the world. Skål members are not just friends,



but wonderful business associates. Helping to effect change and provide Skål the foundation to retain and grow membership, by passing sweeping change to our bylaws in 2016, is also one of my joys in Skål. I am very proud to be only the third woman to serve as National President in the United States and the first to do so under the revised bylaws.”

JULIE DABALY-SCOTT, NAIROBI | COUNCILLOR, SKÅL INTERNATIONAL KENYA



Julie is the Managing Director and the sole owner of Bunson Travel Service – Carlson Wagonlit Travel Kenya with a great wealth of knowledge and experience. She possesses the technical travel background and analytical skills required for this post having been in the travel industry for the last 30 years. Today Bunson Travel Service is ranked as Kenya’s Leading Travel Management Company by the prestigious World Travel Award.

When a friend invited me to my first Skål lunch I felt very intimidated as I was a young Manager and a number of the members were my seniors and people I had heard of but never met. After a few lunches, I realised that they were all friendly and wanted to get to know me. My joining Skål helped to make friends and get to meet with industry leaders and that made doing business much easier and better.

I have been fortunate that after joining Skål I volunteered to become a committee member and from there I became President of the Nairobi

Club, then National President of Skål Kenya.

The benefits I have had is being able to do business with Skålleagues in a more cordial and easy way as we know each other and helped me negotiate deals. I have had the privilege to travel to congress where I have met other Skålleagues from different parts of the world and now have become friend with a number of them.

I am now the International Skål Councillor for Kenya and was appointed the Secretary. In this new role, I am working with other members to develop Skål in Africa and have started with the reopening of Skål International Addis Ababa.

FIONA ANGELICO, CAPE WINELANDS | VICE PRESIDENT, SKÅL INTERNATIONAL SOUTH AFRICA



As the Head of Global National Sales and Marketing for Dollar Thrifty South Africa, I have the privilege of working with a dynamic group of sales professionals, who are committed to driving revenue through the various channels, this is achieved by having a “can do attitude” by promoting service excellence at every touch point with our customers and colleagues. We

promote an environment that thrives on challenges and personal success. In the early 80’s my peers were members of Skål International Cape Town, they were committed and passionate members of the Tourism Industry. I yearned to be part of this amazing global organisation where they did business amongst friends.

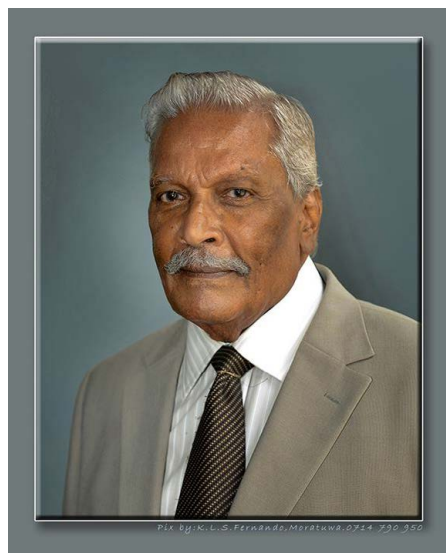
Years later I was given the opportunity to be part of the energised world of travel and tourism. Skål was alive and very active in Cape Town, I was invited to join a Skål International Cape Town Networking Lunch. The lunch was a resounding success, I met up with old friends and customers. Skål International Cape Town lived up to “Doing Business with Friends”. I was hooked and was delighted to be accepted as a member of this esteemed organisation.

Skålleagues were amazing when Thrifty Car Rental South Africa opened two new branches in Somerset West and Stellenbosch. The support and business we have enjoyed as a Car Rental company exceeded our expectations. We were referred to friends and business associates as the car rental company of choice.

Skål provides us with many opportunities to network and create business opportunities. Each member needs to use these platforms to create their own success. The ownership is on the members you just need to take that first step and you will not regret joining this amazing Global organisation.

IN MEMORIAM NOEL FERNANDO

It is with deep regret that Skål International Colombo wishes to announce the passing of one of its most loyal, dedicated and long standing members, Wing Commander (Rtd) Noel Fernando. Skålleague Noel joined Skål on 1st November 1978 and completed 38 years of Active Membership at the end of 2016. He was a very ardent supporter of Skål and spoke about Skål in any forum that he attended.



During his long association with Skål, he held the post of President Skål Colombo on two occasions in 1987 and 1988 and again from 2006 to 2009. He attended many international and Asian Area Congresses over the years and never failed to attend any Skål Colombo event.

He was also a Trustee of the Joe Neary Memorial Foundation that was set up by Skålleague Bill Pullen of the U.S.A. after the Skål International World Congress held in Colombo in 1990.

He was a very active member of the Skål Colombo Executive Committee until ill health prevented him from attending meetings. He was recently recognised for his dedication to Skål, along with other long standing Skål members at the Skål Christmas Party held in Colombo in December 2016.

He will be sorely missed by his many friends in Skål around the world.

PASSION AND LOVE FOR THE HISTORY OF SKÅL

By Antonio García del Valle, Honorary President



My love for Skål was born because of its ideals and for the enjoyable memories that have confirmed this feeling, the journey travelled which is, today, history serves to appreciate the friendship in the most natural of ways. The coincidences begin with our origins, Skål was born in 1932, the International Association in 1934 and I was born in 1935. Then, over the years, various events brought me closer and closer to Skål.

It all began in the 60s. In those days the most important tourism personalities belonged to Skål and at 26 I found my calling in Malaga. The first thing I did was to apply for membership of Skål. When I was accepted they put me straight to work, first as Treasurer and then as President in 1974. At national level I also started as Treasurer and became President in 1977 and at international level, I was first an International Skål Councillor, becoming President of the International Skål Council in 1978, then Auditor and over the eight years I spent on the Executive Committee, I held the portfolios for Extension, Congresses, Vice President Administration and President in 1985/86. I was elected Honorary President of Skål International in 2003. These are all the reasons for my passion for Skål.

The way in which I became International Auditor was rather a curious one. In 1969 in Abidjan, my long-time friend, Salvador Buendia proposed me as a candidate for International Treasurer. Bob Smyrk, Vice President Administration, via George Volckaert, son of Florimond, and International Councillor for Spain made me think that I was too young and as compensation they suggested that I become an International Auditor, something simpler at 34 years of age; a position I shared with Laurent Claes of Luxembourg, one of the first auditors. My travels to the General Secretariat in Brussels and the days



working with the Finance Vice President, John Minnaert, gave me many anecdotes and stories from the early years. John was one of the pioneers in Belgium, when the first Club was founded in Antwerp.

As Extension Director, I dedicated my time to Latin America from where Area Committees were born. I cannot list the numerous recognitions and honours I have received there. As Congress Director, I prepared the congresses in Jerusalem and Puerto Rico; they were to be the congresses where I was elected and President respectively. I can assure you that they were extraordinary. On Jerusalem, it would be necessary to ask Uzi Yalon how the election was possible.

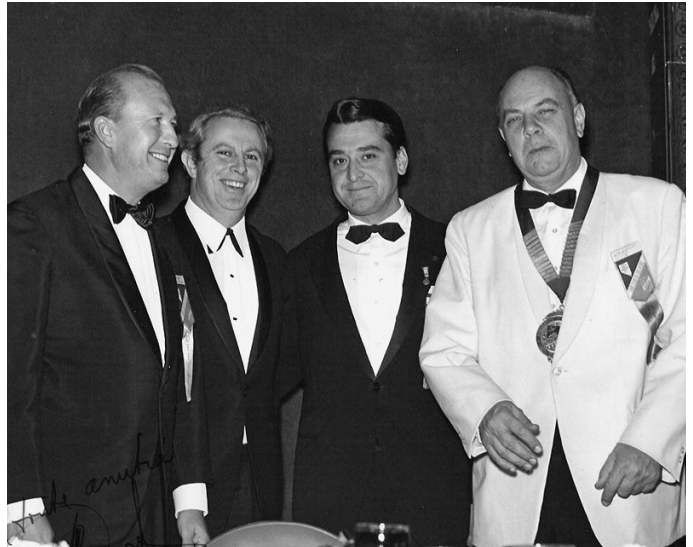
In my years as Vice President Administration, I proved that Torremolinos was cheaper than Brussels for our International Secretariat and in 1985 the headquarters were inaugurated by International and National Presidents, Jules Horowitz and Antonio Espinosa, in the offices given free of charge by Turespaña at the Convention Centre in Torremolinos.

In Malaga, my Club, I have worked on several international congresses, 1968, 1975, 2015 and on the 1992 Latin American Congress and on some national congresses, meetings of the International Skål Council and the Executive Committee and on Skål News.

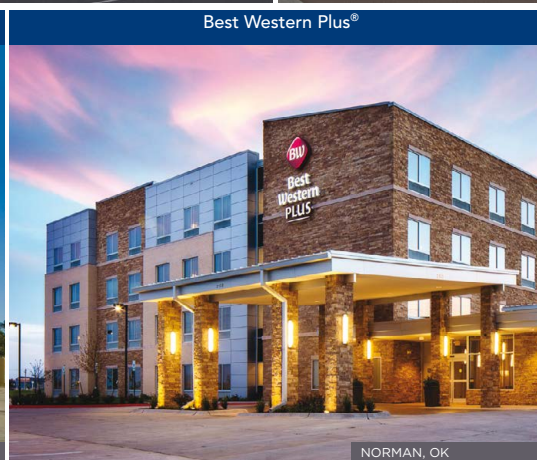
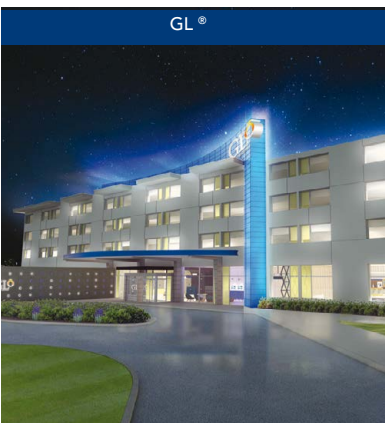
I met Florimond Volckaert at the Naples Congress in 1966 and our founder died in January 1968 and our congress in November of that year was the first one he did not attend. We gave each congress participant a gold coin with the effigy of the founder, a coin that was financed by the devaluation of the Peseta against the Dollar and it was decided to return the difference to congress participants in this golden form.

Since 1992, I have been collecting data, documents, photos and souvenirs from Skål, more than twenty years have already been dedicated to this task. My wife and my family got hooked on Skål, they enjoyed it and especially watching me enjoying it. One my children once said "Skål" before "Dad" and the smallest one, a sailor, named "Skål" his first "Optimist" sailboat.

For all these reasons, for the years I have lived, for the affection and friendship I have received, I love Skål and all my friends from all over the world.



1. 19-11-1968. Malaga. XXIX International Congress. Antonio Garcia del Valle, Antonio Franco.
2. 1985/1986 AISC. International President, Antonio García del Valle
3. 12-01-1971. Las Vegas. Farewell dinner. George Volckaert, Joe Malone, Antonio Garcia del Valle, John Minnaert.
4. 26-11-1984. Paris. XLV International Congress. Cemetery Pierre Lachaise. Antonio Garcia del Valle, Jean Robert.



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