

ROYAL SCOUTS -4-

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SWEDEN

When in Sweden the first Scouting troops were founded members of the Royal Family showed an interest and got involved. One of them was Folke Bernadotte, Earl of Wisborg, (1895-1948), a cousin of King Gustaf V Adolf (1858-1950). He was one of the first Swedish Scouts and later played an important role in national and international Scouting. He served his country as a diplomat and during the 2e World War (1939-1945). He was vice-president of the Swedish Red Cross and visited, on behalf of the International Red Cross, in Germany the camps in which the soldiers of Western Allies were held as Prisoners of War. He came in contact with the notorious Nazi Heinrich Himmler, the Reichsführer SS, responsible for the concentration and destruction camps. When in Spring 1945 Nazi Germany was on the verge of total collapse, thanks to this contact – after difficult negotiations - he was able to collect and save approximately 15.000 concentration camp inmates. With the well-known Swedish White Busses they were transported to neutral Sweden via Nazi occupied Denmark.



In 1947, he was appointed as the United Nations mediator for Palestine, where, after the founding of the State of Israel war had broken out. In 1948 he succeeded in arranging an armistice between the Israeli's and the surrounding Arab countries. But in Jerusalem, on September 17th 1948 Folke Bernadotte was assassinated by a Zionist, underground group, which considered him to be too pro-Arab. When his burial procession moved through the streets of Stockholm members of the Swedish Red Cross and Scouts marched in the procession.

Crown Prince Gustaf Adolf, who in 1950 succeeded his father as King Gustaf VI (1882-[1950-1973]) had 4 sons and 1 daughter, the latter being Princess Ingrid (1910-2000). The eldest zoon was Crown Prince Gustaf Adolf (1908-1947). As soon as he was old enough he joined a Stockholm Scout group, He was a Scout, Patrol Leader, Rover Scout and Scoutleader. He was later also chosen to act as the Chief Scout of the Swedish Scout Federation. He never considered this as an honorary title, on the contrary, nationally and internationally he was very active indeed. When in 1937, 5th World Jamboree was held near Vogelenzang/The Netherlands he acted as the very popular Swedish contingent leader. He became a member of the International (now World)



Committee. During this very successful Jamboree he and Baden-Powell introduced Prince Bernhard (just married to Princess Juliana of the Netherlands) to Scouting and managed to persuade the Prince to accept the task of Royal Commissioner of Dutch Scouting.

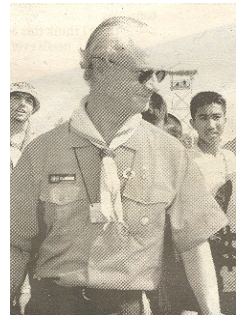
During the 2nd World War Sweden managed to maintain its neutrality. Because of this it had its diplomatic representations in all the neutral, the belligerent countries and also in the many countries suffering a Nazi occupation. The Boy Scouts International Bureau (now World Bureau) in London had lost contact with the Movements in the latter. In some an SS administration had been installed which banned, disbanded and persecuted Scouting and Guiding, whereas in others – with a Wehrmacht (Army) administration – the movements activities had been restricted. Thanks to the Swedish diplomats' reports news re Scouting and Guiding reached the Prince who passed it on to the Boy Scouts International Bureau in London.

When Nazi Germany had collapsed and World War Two was over in the European theatre he devoted himself to the revival of German Scouting (banned in 1933). Like John S. Wilson, the Director of the BSIB and many others he was of the opinion that Scouting could be used to put on the right trail the German youngsters who had been seriously brainwashed by the Nazis. He also, as a member of the International Committee, got involved in the organisation of 6th the World Jamboree – the Jamboree of Peace - in Moisson/France in 1947.

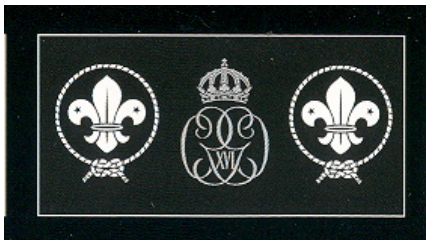
During the First World Jamboree in Richmond Park in London with demonstrations in Olympia, (1920) Baden-Powell had been proclaimed "Chief Scout of the World". After B-P's death in Kenya (January 8th, 1941) so popular had become Gustaf Adolf in World Scouting that he was asked to succeed B-P as such. He felt honoured but refused the offer. He believed that the title "Chief Scout of the World" should forever remain linked to B-P only.

In the autumn 1947 Crown Prince Gustaf Adolf was invited by his friend Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands, to attend a hunting party in the Dutch Royal Forests near the Het Loo Palace. The hunt over at Schiphol Airport near Amsterdam he boarded a KLM plane to return to Stockholm. When after a stop over on the Kastrup airfield near Copenhagen/Denmark the plane took off again, it crashed. Sweden lost its Crown Prince. The Swedish Scouts their very popular Chief Scout, international Scouting a good executive and promoter. But worse still, his son Carl Gustaf, born on 30 April 1947, scarcely 9 months old, never knew his father. As a baby he succeeded him as the Crown Prince of Sweden. But later he also joined Scouting. After having been a Cub Scout, a Scout, a Rover Scout and a Scout Leader he succeeded his father as Chief Scout of the Swedish Scouting Federation. His popularity came close to his father's; nationally and internationally.

However, in 1973, his grand-father King Gustaf VI Adolf passed on, and he mounted the throne as Carl XVI Gustaf, King of Sweden. Although this may have imposed restrictions on him, he certainly did not lose his interest in national and international scouting and he became Honorary President of Swedish Scouting. He never lost his interest in active Scouting. The King visits all World Jamborees, other camps and meetings; always in uniform and always spending the nights in his small tent. The King is also Honorary President of the World Scout Foundation and the Baden-Powell Fellowship. The WSF raises money to support Scouting around the World.



There are more than 1000 B-P Fellows members from 60 countries, all more well-to-do Former Scouts including prominent and influential captains of industry, business men, diplomats etc. etc.



King Carl XVI Gustaf's emblem.



The WSF emblem.

Princess Ingrid (1910-2000), Prince Gustaf Adolf's sister and the present King's aunt, joined Swedish Guiding. (See **ROYAL SCOUTS -5-, Denmark.**)

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