



**The Danish community of the Multinational Corps Northeast invited other members of the Headquarters together with their families for an annual celebration of Jule–Gløgg. Already on December 1st, 2008 everybody could feel the atmosphere of the upcoming Christmas time.**

### **When the lights illuminate the church**

Traditionally, the celebration of the Danish Jule–Gløgg started at the Garrison Church. The Mass was as multinational in its character as the people taking part in it. Danish Chaplain Lars Bom Nielsen, German Chaplains Zbigniew Mlak and Bodo Winkler and Polish Chaplain Ryszard Stępień celebrated the Mass together, changing languages of prayers from one to another. The initial prayer was said by Colonel Søren B. Bojesen as the Danish Senior National Representative. A traditional Saint Lucia procession of children dressed in white was the most awaited "point in the programme". The children entered the church singing the St. Lucia song and holding the candles, which beautifully illuminated the church. As usual, one girl was chosen to be the Lucia bride to lead this procession of light. For this purpose, she was wearing a wreath of fir and candles on her head. After the procession there was time for prayers and Christmas songs. An extraordinary setting was created by music played by the Danish Army Schleswig Military Band as well as a violinist, who was accompanied by the organ. The closing prayer – the Soldier's Prayer – was said by Sergeant Major Michael Frøslev:

*"Stay close to us*

*Soldiers in the service (...)*□

*Reinforce our comradeship and solidarity*

*Make us never abandon our friends in need and peril" (...)*

### **"Jule" means New Year**

Having been spiritually enriched, the personnel moved to the Baltic Barracks for a reception held in the gym. The place was specially prepared and decorated for this event. It was rather dark inside; the only light came from candles and chains of small lamps stretched all over the gym. One of the chains was even arranged into the name of the event – Jule–Gløgg. There were Christmas trees, candles and plants associated with the Christmas called the Stars of Bethlehem.

Colonel Søren B. Bojesen, Danish Senior National Officer, on behalf of Danish Community delivered an introductory speech in which he welcomed all guests and friends of the Community: "December is a busy month for all of us – and I am therefore tremendously pleased that so many of you chose to share this event with us". He thanked those who make everyday life in Szczecin easier, even their landlords. Special thanks were given to the musicians of the Danish Army Military Band, who enriched the atmosphere of the evening. The presence of cooks from the Royal Danish Army was also appreciated.

Colonel Bojesen presented the traditions related to Jule–Gløgg explaining the roots of the event, which turned out to be Swedish. However, this well-established tradition in Denmark makes a lot of Danish people think it was actually of Danish origin...In the end, he invited everybody to try traditional Danish delicacies and drinks including Jule–Gløgg, which gave the name for the whole celebration.

### **"Glædelig Jul"**

Traditional Jule–Gløgg consists of red wine and a drop of brandy or snaps with raisins, pieces of almond, cinnamon, cardamom and other spices. Jule–Gløgg is usually served with a small hot cake of batter called "apple-piece" even though it does not contain apple anymore. It is eaten with jam and sugar or icing sugar instead.

The Christmas time is naturally associated with consideration, good deeds, sharing with others and charity activities. This element was not missing in this Danish event, too. Danish ladies gathered in club called Kone Kaffe prepared a special Christmas Bazaar with homemade Danish treats, Christmas cards, candles and other Christmas decorations. The money raised during the event was donated to the Special Needs Primary School in Nowe Czarnowo.

When there was no more Jule–Gløgg, when the children have danced all their dances around the Christmas tree, when everyone tried Danish specialties and had nice chats with friends, the event came to an end. But it is just the beginning – of December and unique Christmas atmosphere. In a few weeks HQ MNC NE members will sit at the table with their families to celebrate the Christmas. Maybe some of them will remember how they had fun during

## When Christmas knocks on the door

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Jule–Gløgg and that the Danes say "Glædelig Jul" to wish merry Christmas.

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