

## Danes are the first to celebrate Christmas

Written by AG

Tuesday, 24 November 2009 11:56

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**On 23 November 2009, the Christmas atmosphere filled up the Baltic Barracks. The Danish community of the Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast (HQ MNC NE) organised a traditional Jule-Glögg event to spread the unique Christmas magic.□**

### Early Christmas

Even though the autumn still reigns outside the windows, all Danes in Baltic Barracks decided to set the Headquarters' minds for the upcoming Christmas time. The MNC NE calendar filled with exercises and training preparing the HQ MNC NE servicemen for the mission, which actually caused such an early date for Jule-Glögg, was a good excuse for all longing for Christmas.

### Traditions are to be cherished

The event started at the Garrison Church where the Danish Army Rural Dean Ole Brehm Jensen led the Christmas service. There were prayers, sermons and carols sang by the Headquarters personnel to the accompaniment of the Szczecin Garrison Orchestra. The culminating point of the service was a procession of light led by Saint Lucia Bride, wearing a

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wreath of fir and candles. Children dressed in white were following the Bride singing the Saint Lucia song.

After the church service, the Headquarters personnel, their families, friends and invited guests gathered at the Gym in Baltic Barracks waiting for Colonel Søren Bo Bojesen, Danish Senior National Officer, to deliver an opening speech. *"This afternoon we will socialize and enjoy the Jule-Gløgg, the food and the drinks – and this in a way mark the beginning of the Christmas season"* , said Colonel Bojesen. In fact, a huge Christmas tree, lots of lights and decorations hang all around the Gym made the Christmas atmosphere present.

*"This event serves not only the purpose of setting our minds for the upcoming season. It also gives the Danish community an opportunity to thank all our 'external beneficiaries' – all you who make our life in the lovely city of Szczecin so much easier"*, Colonel Bojesen continued indicating the importance of events like this Jule-Gløgg. Afterwards, the buffet was officially opened and everybody could taste various Danish delicacies prepared by the Royal Danish Navy under the command of the experienced Chef Corporal David. Lots of people were standing in a long queue to get famous Jule-Gløgg, wine-based drink with a drop of brandy or snaps, raisins, pieces of almond, cinnamon, cardamom and other spices. It 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.

As soon as the stomachs were getting full, all participants began chatting and really enjoying the time. The atmosphere was warm and nice also thanks to the Szczecin Garrison Orchestra, which played lively music, often carols, which will accompany everybody in the upcoming weeks.

### **Sharing the goodness with others**

Jule-Gløgg is a real family event with children joyfully playing around the Christmas tree. However, the Danish community did not forget those who were not that fortunate and needed help. The Danish ladies organised the Christmas Bazaar selling home made and hand made gifts, crafts and goodies. All the proceeds will be handed over to the Primary and Secondary Special Schools in Nowe Czarnowo.

### **Waiting for Christmas to come**

The Jule-Gløgg event, just like everything what is nice, fast came to an end. The advantage of having it so early was that everybody could feel the Christmas atmosphere already in November. However, it also means that everybody has to wait a few more weeks for Christmas to come. This effort will hopefully be rewarded as soon as the first Christmas star appears in the sky.

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