

Hungarians Scouts in Australia. Presence and Cultural Diplomacy Activities from the Beginning to the Present

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Abstract:

Although Hungary has a population of less than 10 million, an estimated 5 million Hungarians live outside its borders, dispersed across the globe. The Hungarian diaspora is notably large and actively sustains its cultural heritage and the transmission of its identity to future generations through various organizations. In addition to weekend Hungarian community schools and folk dance groups, scout groups play a key role in this cultural preservation. The Hungarian Scouts abroad are united under the Hungarian Scout Association in Exteris (HSAE) and organise a variety of events, large and small, where they present Hungarian culture to the majority society.

This is also the case in Australia, which is geographically a huge distance from Hungary. Many scout groups are active within the Hungarian emigrant communities, particularly in the country's largest cities such as Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, etc. Hungarian scouting in Australia was established after the Second World War in the 1950s and flourished for decades. Nowadays, with the ageing and assimilation of the local Hungarian population, the membership of Hungarian scout groups has declined, but even today they are still making an important impact in the preservation of Hungarian identity. However, they have organised a significant number of events where they have communicated the values of being Hungarian to the majority of Australian society.

In the first half of my presentation, I will provide a general overview of the development and global expansion of scouting. Then I will examine the history of Hungarian scouting, including the 4th World Scout Jamboree (1933) which was held in Hungary. Finally, I will explore the history of the Hungarian Scouts in Australia, with a particular focus on their cultural diplomacy activities, highlighting several large-scale events they have organized.

Keywords:

Scouting, jamboree, Hungarians in Australia, cultural diplomacy.