

25 Years of International Federation of Mountain Soldiers (IFMS)



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IFMS

Formal signing of the Statutes of IFMS in Mittenwald, Germany, 1985



Badge - The memory of the time, when idea of IFMS was born

The formation of IFMS happened on May 24, 1985 at the Officers club of the 1st Mountain Division in Mittenwald, West Germany. Co-initiators and hosts of this conference were Brigadier General (Ret.) Werner Daumiller, President of the Kameradenkreis der Gebirgstruppe and M.N Mac MacKenzie, President of the National Association of the 10th Mountain Division. President MacKenzie opened the meeting and welcomed delegates from five countries: The Federal Republic of Germany, Austria, France, Italy and the United States of America. Leaders of the Delegations were General Werner Daumiller (Germany), Lt.Col. (Ret.) Karl Preuner (Austria), Jean Minster (France), M.N. Mac MacKenzie (USA) and Dr. Leonardo Caprioli (Italy).

General Werner Daumiller was elected by anonymous votes as Chairman of the Conference. After that Chairman Daumiller welcomed all the guests and described the purpose of the conference. Then he described the aims of the IFMS and promoted it as federation which will promote peace, friendship and understanding between people of free world countries. Each delegation leader got an outline of the Statutes of the IFMS in his own language. After that a delegation leaders formally signed the Statutes and the IFMS was legally established.

Then they make a decision to form an Executive board. Its function was to consist of an elected representative who will serve as Secretary from each country to the IFMS. The elected ones were: Brigadier General (Ret.) Fritz Rosenhauer (Germany), Captain (Ret.) Franz Eidenberger (Austria), Prof. Egidio Furlan (Italy) and William Cruickshank (USA). In France, the election of a secretary had to await the formation of the National Union of Former Mountain Soldiers of France which took place on September 30, 1985.

Members of the Executive Board (the Secretaries) then elected a Secretary General who will serve a two year term. Professor Furlan was unanimously elected for the next two years 1985-1987. He accepted with gratitude and had a speech about the importance and necessity to have young mountain soldiers in an organization like IFMS. They resolved that a meeting of Executive board and Presidency should be once a year which would constitute the Annual meeting of IFMS. All delegates agreed that the first meeting should take place at the next earliest National reunion of one of the Associations and that would be the Nationale Association Alpini in May 1986 at Bergamo in Italy.

The next discussion was about which other countries of the free world should be invited to join IFMS. It was decided to ask: Argentina, Great Britain, Finland, Greece, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and Spain. Prof. Furlan contacted each of these countries. The next discussions were about IFMS badge or insignia, a decision about it was made in 1986 at Bergamo, Italy. The next decision they made was about IFMS bulletin or magazine. They decided to postpone a decision, since most of the member Associations publish their own newspaper.

Signatures of the IFMS statutes

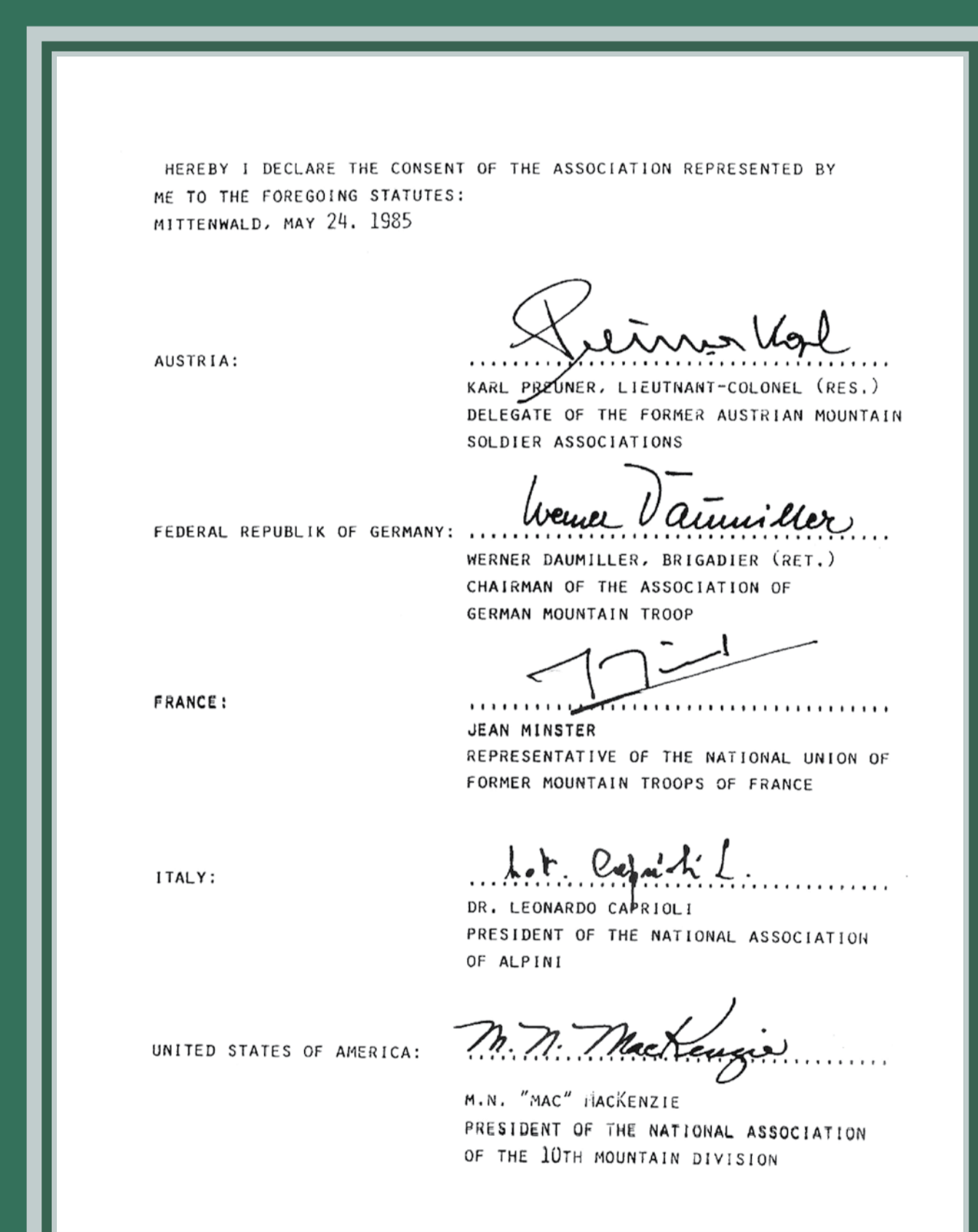


Plate in the memory of the mountain troops soldiers (Mountain Mont-Blanc)

Hymn of the IFMS



IFMS

STATUTES OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF MOUNTAIN SOLDIERS



Symbol of the IFMS



IFMS Banner

1. DEFINITION, CAUSE AND PURPOSE:

DEFINITION: The International Federation of Mountain Soldiers (IFMS) is an union of officially recognized legal associations consolidated in federative form of both former and now active soldiers of mountain troops of free world countries, regardless on which side they stood during time of war.

CAUSE for the consolidation is the consciousness of the solidarity through the love of the mountains, through the pride of achieved military and alpine efforts and through the comradeship especially marked in mountain troops.

PURPOSE of the consolidation is to promote understanding between the member associations for peace, freedom and human rights.

2. AIMS:

THE FEDERATION PURSUES THE FOLLOWING AIMS:

- To make a common contribution for the continuance of peace and freedom and for protection of human rights.
- To conserve the memory of our fallen comrades during war on order to insure that their sacrifices helped to create a world of lasting peace, brotherhood and justice.
- To generate comradeship among mountain soldiers.

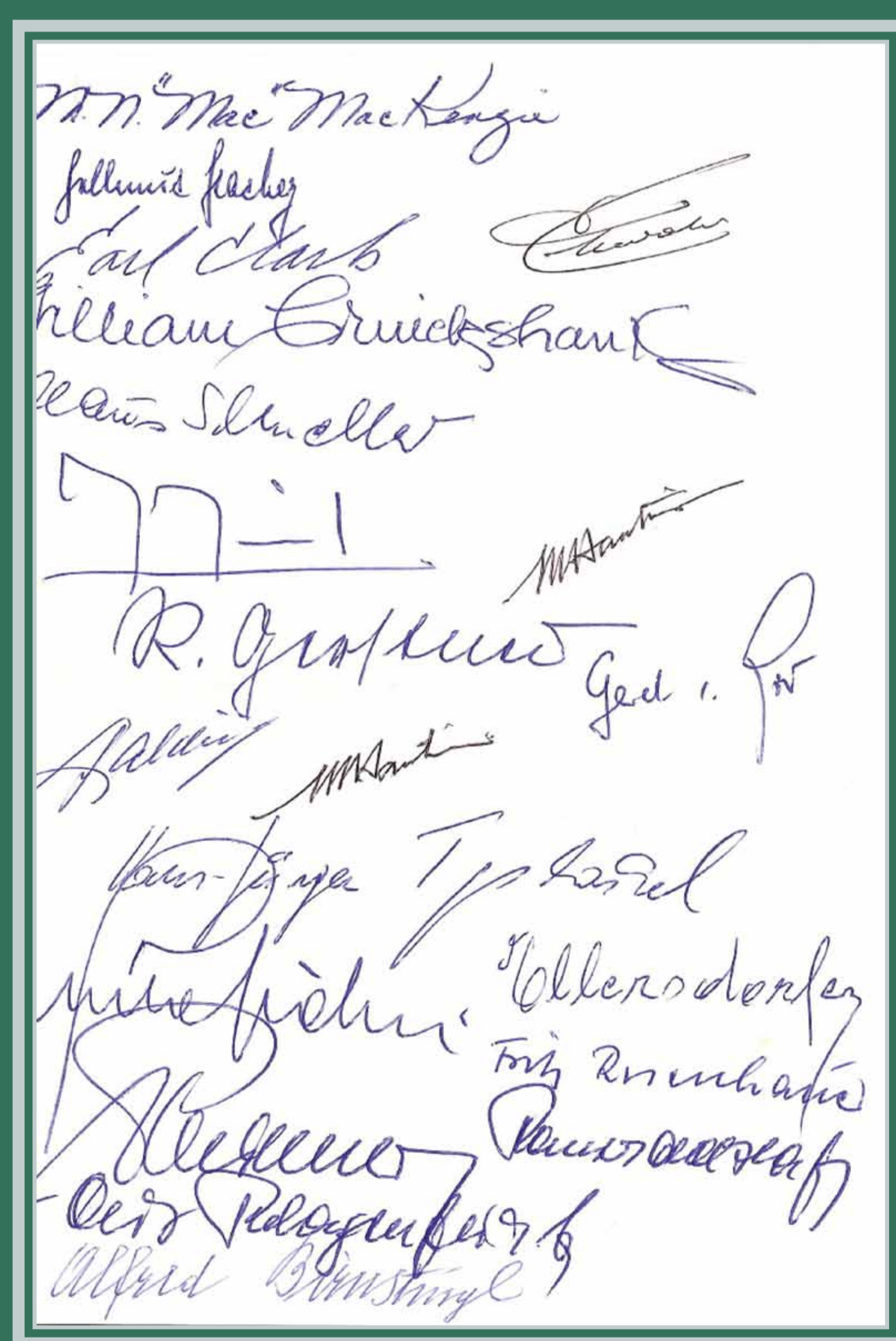
3. MEMBERSHIP:

The federation consists of national associations of mountain troops of free-world countries. Application for admission in to federation is to be made to the presidency by submitting their national statutes and declaring their consent with the statutes of the federation. The presidency decides if an application is approved or refused by unanimous vote. The membership ends by withdrawal or by disbandment of the federation.

4. ACTIVITIES:

The member associations pledge themselves to promote the aims of the federation in accordance with their national statutes and to carry out the decisions of the presidency. The member associations will participate. So far as possible, with a delegation to a federation reunion which should be organized by a member association in conjunction with a national reunion and which should take place every year in a different country. A delegation should not have more than 4 persons. The member associations are responsible for the expenses of travel, lodging and meals of their delegations. The host association will provide an official dinner for the visiting delegations.

Signatures of the menu of the foundation of IFMS in Mittenwald, 1985



Menu of the foundation of IFMS in Mittenwald, 1985



IFMS

IFMS Congresses



Congress in Grenoble, 1988



Congress in Grenoble, 1988

1st Congress: Bergamo, Italy, 1986

The first annual meeting of IFMS was opened on 16 May 1986 by Professor Egidio Furlan, Secretary General of IFMS. Delegates that participated were: Karl Preuner, Gebirgsjagerkameradschaft, Austria; General (Ret.) Alban Barthez, Union Nationale des Troupes de Montagne; General (Ret.) Werner Daumiller, Kameradenkreis der Gebirgstruppe, Germany; Dr. Leonardo Caprioli, Associazione Nazionale Alpini, Italy; M.N. MacKenzie, National Association of the 10th Mountain Division, USA. Other delegates from USA were Hugh Evans, William Cruickshank and H. Newcomb Eldredge. Observers were Sherman Smith from USA and Colonel Hans Schmidt from Switzerland. Delegate from each country reported about the activity in which they were engaged in the promotion of the aims and goals of IFMS over the past year. It was voted to accept the invitation of the Austrians to host the next meeting in Salzburg in September, 1987. At the end of the meeting it was resolved that each nation should continue its efforts over the next year to enlist additional membership in IFMS and to strengthen its message especially to the young.

2nd Congress: Salzburg, Austria, 1987

The countries that were present on this meeting were five member countries Austria, Germany, Italy, France and the United States. Japan and Switzerland were also present, Japan was admitted to the IFMS as a member nation having met all the requirements, Switzerland was there as an observer. Karl Preuner, Austrian IFMS delegate was host and chief planner of the conference. Others involved were Werner Daumiller and Karl Griessinger of Germany, Alban Barthez and Robert Motte of France, Dr. Leonardo Caprioli and Edigio Furlan of Italy and Hugh Evans, Mac MacKenzie, Newcomb Eldredge and William Cruickshank of USA. Prof. Furlan was re-elected as the Secretary General of IFMS to another term. Discussions were about a number of topics that included community service projects within the individual member nations, as well as assistance to other member nations to other member nations times of natural disasters, floods, earthquakes etc. They voted and decided to accept the invitation extended by the U.S delegation to hold the 1989 IFMS conference in the United States.

3rd and 4th Congress: Aspen, Colorado (USA), 1988 and Grenoble, France, 1989

In June 1988, the third Congress was held in Grenoble, together with celebrations of the centenary of French Alpine troops. In 1989, the fourth Congress was organised in America in Vail, Colorado, where Jean Minster from France was appointed Secretary General to replace Furlan, who ended his mandate. The need to extend IFMS to other States became increasingly urgent. In Vail, all of the representatives committed themselves to promote the Federation to mountainous countries such as Canada, Argentina, Spain and above all, Switzerland. As a matter of fact, Switzerland had always participated in the congresses as an observer, but could not become a full member as it did not have a single comprehensive association representing all mountain troop veterans.

Congress in Vail, 1989



Congress in Vail, 1989



IFMS



Congress in Feldkirchen, 1994



Congress in Feldkirchen, 1994

5th and 6th Congress: Mittenwald, Germany, 1990 and Bozen, Italy, 1991

In 1990, the fifth Congress was organised in Mittenwald to coincide with the celebrations of the 75th anniversary of Kameradenkreis der Gebirgstruppe.

Bolzano Valley and Renon plateau were a wonderful venue for the participants of the sixth congress, held in 1991. During the congress proceedings, the German General Ernst Coqui was appointed Secretary General and Switzerland became a new member undertaking to organise the next Congress in Andermatt.

7th and 8th Congress: Andermatt, Switzerland, 1992 and Briançon, France, 1993

The 1992 congress was organised in Andermatt, Switzerland, by USSM, a new member association founded thanks to the commitment of the Italian-Swiss Egidio Coos.

At the 1993 congress held in Briançon and organised by the French member UTM, the IFMS banner called the “standard” was proposed. The idea came from former Secretary General Furlan, and Riccardo Giudici, an Alpine soldier who received the merit award. The award was the second for Furlan. The cost for the standard exceeding two million Italian lire was borne by the wives of some Alpine soldiers from Azzano San Paolo. The standard was inaugurated on the IFMS Days and given to UTM by Secretary General Ernst Coqui.

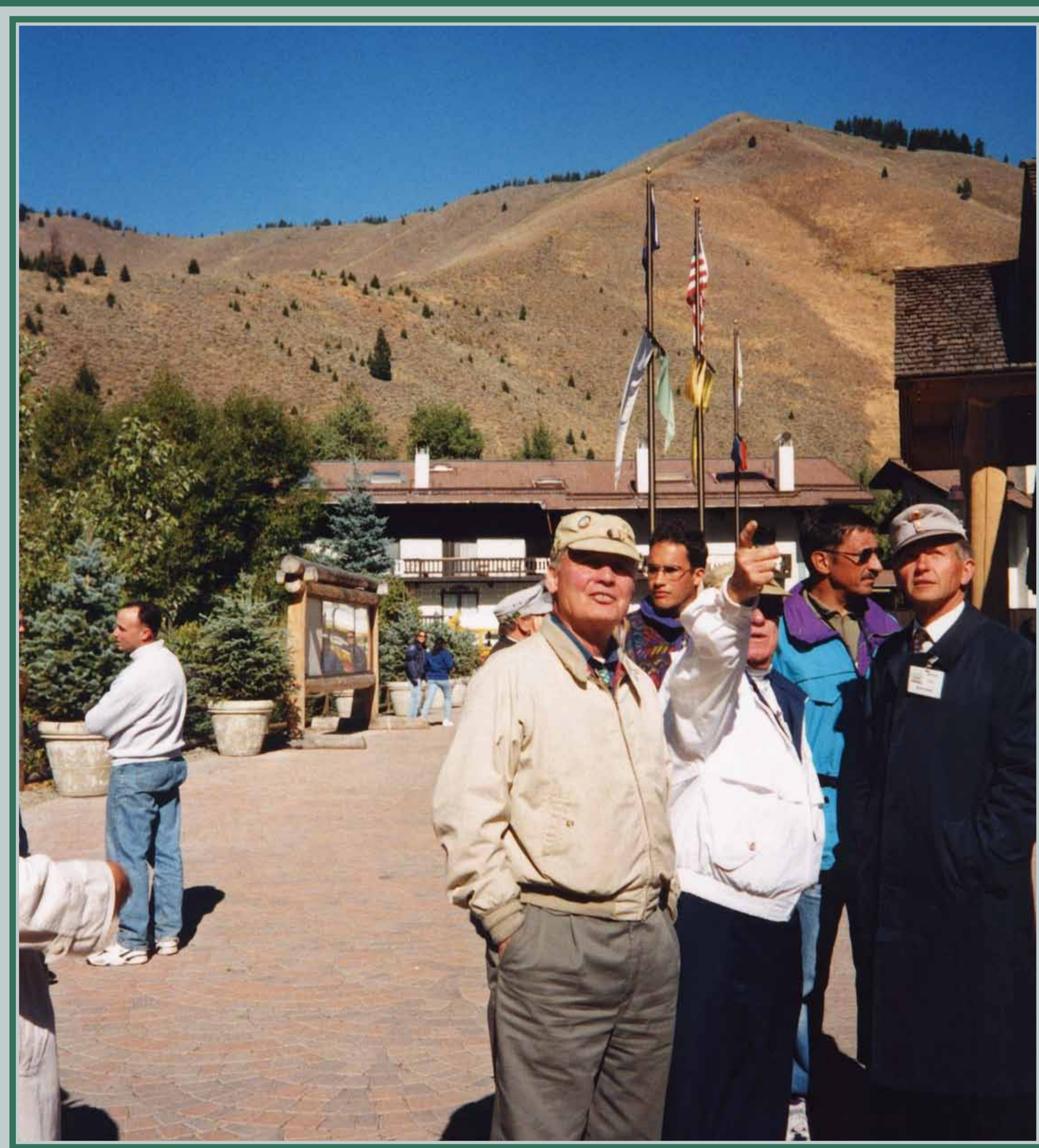
9th Congress: Feldkirchen, Austria, 1994

The Japanese did not attend the 1994 congress in Feldkirchen, Austria, for reasons of age and because it was too far away. The Federation was joined by the Polish from Carpathia. Riccardo Giudici, supported by Alpine soldiers Giuseppe Paris, Claudio Vitali and Marco Cimmino, launched the idea to set up an “IFMS Prize”. The National IFMS Commission was set up by the National Management Board on 18 June 1994.

10th Congress: Sun Valley, Idaho (USA), 1995

Participants were Germany, France, Switzerland, Italy, Austria, Poland and USA. Observer was Slovenia (Association of Slovenian Officers). Delegations of national organizations of Spain, Norway and Japan did not attend the congress.

IFMS resolution on supporting peace endeavours in the Balkans was adopted. It was addressed and sent to the UN Secretary General and NATO HQ. The initiative on participation of active duty personnel of mountain units in joint training activities was adopted. The activity should become a constituent element of congress events. Mountain training should involve mountain squads consisting of 1 officer, 1 non-commissioned officer and 4-5 mountain soldiers.



Congress in Sun Valley, 1995



IFMS