



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

Use of the Emblem of the Convention for Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage under Patronage

PATRONAGE REPORTING FORM

This document is available at the following web address:

<http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/forms/>

1. Name, venue, date and organizer of the activity:

Main rituals:

-The Abraham Celebration (Abrahamdag) at various locations throughout the city of Leuven (Belgium) including the Sint-Donatus Park, took place the 31th of August 2013.

- Birth Year Day (Jaartallendag) at various locations throughout the city including the Saint-Peterschurch, took place the 8th of September 2013.

Organizers: vzw Koninklijk Verbond der Jaartallen Leuven and the Leuven Age Sets

Others:

-9/08/2013 planting of the 'Meyboom' (maypole) by Birth Year 1969;

-each third Saturday of the month the town hall cellars (where part of the collection of the Leuven's Age Sets is shown) are open for visitors;

-01/06/2013: youngest Birth Year 1973 created a new giant for Leuven, Fiere Margriet, presented in a big procession throughout various locations in the city

Organizers: vzw Koninklijk Verbond der Jaartallen Leuven and the Leuven Age Sets

2. What is the particular relevance of the activity to purposes and objectives the 2003 Convention and its compliance with the principles of the Convention?

In general these activities create visibility for the rituals and the phenomenon of the age sets in the city. Abraham Celebration: Birth Year 1963 passes on to the next generation, Birth Year 1973

- Open house of the town hall cellars each month: tourists and visitors of Leuven are introduced to Birth Year Life of Leuven via the artifacts presented there
- Youngest Birth Year 1973: created a new big event to get attention to their Birth Year and in addition to the Birth Year Life of Leuven in general

In short; they stimulate visibility, awareness-raising and dialogue.

3. Who were the audiences of the activity? (Please tick the five most relevant)

- UNESCO network (e.g. commissions, chairs, associated schools, clubs, national committees)
- Development agent (e.g. Intergovernmental Organizations, UN system)
- Policy maker (e.g. ministries, parliamentarians, local authorities)
- Civil Society (e.g. private persons, NGOs, companies)
- Scientists / researchers / academia
- Educators / teachers / trainers
- Youth / students
- Mass media

Specialized media

Other (please specify) inhabitants, , , invitees, Leuven (heritage) associations, city guides, the Abraham committee (Netherlands) ... _____

4. **Was there any media coverage for your activity?** (Please specify the number of features)

Type	Local	Natio nal	Regional	Internati onal
Print	4 (Info Leuven, Uit in Leuven)		8 (Het Laatste Nieuws, Het Nieuwsblad Vlaams-Brabant)	
Radio			1 (Radio 2 Vlaams-Brabant)	
Televi sion			2 (ROBTV) http://www.robtv.be/nieuws/vlaams-brabant/leuvenmeyboom_09/08/2013 http://www.robtv.be/nieuws/leuven/kermis-voor-iedereen_kinderdag_11/09/2013	
Interne t	Websites: jaartallen.be, leuven.be, erfgoedcelleuven.be, mannenvan73.be Blog Leven in Leuven: http://leveninleuven.be/tags/meyboom/ http://leveninleuven.be/tags/jaartallen-stoet/ http://leveninleuven.be/2013/05/08/kleur-teken-en-schrijfwedstrijd-rond-de-fiere-margriet/ http://leveninleuven.be/2013/05/02/1ste-editie-reuzeleuven-op-1-juni-2013/		Facebook: Koninklijk Verbond der Jaartallen, Mannen van 73, Erfgoedcel Leuven Twitter: Erfgoed Leuven Erfgoedplus: http://www.erfgoedplus.be/dossier/fiere-margriet/het-jaartallenleuven	

5. **How many people have been reached approximately through the communication about the activity?**

250.000

6. **What was the effect of your activity for the Convention's visibility?** (Please tick the two most relevant)

- The name and linked logo of UNESCO and the 2003 Convention were made visible to new audiences
- The purposes and objectives of the 2003 Convention were made known to new audiences
- The achievements of the 2003 Convention were promoted to new audiences
- UNESCO's publications (www.unesco.org/publishing) were promoted to new audiences

Please send this questionnaire to the Secretariat of the 2003 Convention, together with, if relevant, the following materials:

Information materials (especially those featuring the name or logo of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage), press clippings, radio recordings, television and video footage, statistics.





How it started

1890: in café De Biekorf some men discover they were born the same year (1840). They want to celebrate this fact. This was the launch of the 'Jaartallen'. Since then every year in the month of March a new circle of friends of men who will celebrate their fortieth birthday the following year originates. Between their 40th and 50th birthday they organise activities and ceremonies. This culminates in a major celebration of their fiftieth birthday.

The 'Jaartallen' are a male domain, yet the Men of 1906 are the first to accept a woman in their circle. She is the 'marraine' (godmother) and plays a central role in the organisation of the social activities

1961: the 'Verbond der Jaartallen' (Association of Birth Years) is set up as an umbrella organisation of the Men's Age sets. In 2010 it receives the medal of honour from the city of Leuven. Since August 2011 the 'Verbond der Jaartallen' has been around for 50 years and is now officially called 'Koninklijk Verbond der Jaartallen' (Royal Association of Birth Years).

2009: the 'Jaartallen' are included in the 'Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage Flanders'. This is an official recognition of a unique tradition linking many generations of men to one another.

2011: UNESCO recognizes the 'Jaartallen' life of Leuven by inscribing it on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

The 'Jaartallen' in the city

The Men and their activities are mainly visible in the city during the months of July and August. The annual climax occurs in September with the Abraham celebration and the 'Jaartallendag' (Birth Year Day). The new fifty-year-olds, also called 'Abrahams', are celebrated every Saturday before the first Sunday of September. This also marks the official start of the new forty-year-olds, the new birth year to be inaugurated. Birth Year Day is celebrated on every second Sunday in September, with an anniversary celebration, an academic session and the Birth Year Parade. However, throughout the year you can discover locations in the city that are closely linked to the Birth Year activities in Leuven. Let us guide you!

1. Under the town hall you will find the **raadselders (town hall cellars)**. Since 1997 they have been the 'seat' of the 'Jaartallen'. They house the collection of photo frames of the 'Jaartallen' from the start in 1890 to the present day. The flags and costumes of Fonske are also stored here. You can visit the town hall cellars on one Saturday a month.

2. On the **Rector De Somerplein** you will meet **Fonske** or Fons Sapientiae (source of wisdom), a creation of artist Jef Claerhout. The university donated the statue to the city in 1975. It refers to Leuven as a 'wise' university city and a pleasant and joyful student city. This is not only demonstrated by the book Fonske holds in one hand, but also by the knowledge he continuously pours into his head with his other hand. During the annual anniversary celebration Fonske is dressed in the costume of the celebrating birth year, i.e. that of the Men who turn 50.

3. Some of Fonske's 'Jaartallen' costumes are stored in the museum depot of M.

4. On the **Herbert Hooverplein** you will find the **Friendship Balloon**. The statue by artist Danny Tulkens was created at the request of the 'Verbond der Jaartallen' (Association of Birth Years) in 1988. The balloon symbolises friendship, one of the basic characteristics of Birth Year life. In September Leuven Fair is located on the Monseigneur Ladeuzeplein and the Herbert Hooverplein. Here also the 'Jaartallen' play a role: since 1974 together with the fair travellers they have organised a special children's day at Leuven Fair for less fortunate children.

5. In the Saint Donatus Park or municipal park you will find another two statues that are linked to Birth Year life. At the entrance there is the statue of **Abraham** by artist Freddy Janssens. The statue refers to the 'Abrahams' of the 'Jaartallen': on their fiftieth birthday the Men become 'Abraham', a symbol of wisdom. The celebration takes place before this statue. Originally, the statue stood in the Broekstraat, but it did not receive enough attention there. That is why the Men of 1937 kidnapped the then Chairman of the Association Arthur De Wit in 1980. In exchange for his release they demanded that the statue be moved to the city centre. Burgomaster Vansina subsequently had the statue moved to the municipal park.

