

Balloons and bye-bye Berlin Wall

“Thud, thud, thud”. That was what it sounded like 20 years ago, when thousands of people flocked to the German metropolis armed with a hammer to knock down the Berlin Wall. November 9th is the date for the 20th anniversary for the fall of the Wall. In Fladså School of Næstved, Denmark, this day was marked by sending 99 balloons on a flight to the south.

Ballooning towards Berlin

As the only school in the kingdom of Denmark, the Fladså School marked the reunited Europe by launching 99 balloons into the air on November 9th.

On that day, 20 years ago, the Berlin Wall was torn down. At that time it was a huge event that made the world take notice, but today hardly a topic of conversation for the students of the Fladså School.

Just before the balloons were sent off carrying the message of dialogue between people, the newspaper Sjællandske met with three students from 7th grade. They could not quite agree on why the Berlin Wall was built through the German metropolis in the first place.

Was it to keep someone out, or someone in?

Sabrina Drewsen, Simone Adolfsen, and Line Kvick learned a lot about the historical facts, when they after lunch recess were told about the cold war and the reasons for the grey concrete wall.

Setting a course for Berlin

“It is very important that our students know of the history, the consequences of many years of division and last but not least how we can focus on future dialogue between people. Dialogue and courtesy unite cultures and people”, are the words from Leon Lindevang, headmaster of Fladså School.

“The balloons are at the mercy of the winds, but landing near Berlin is not so improbable. The sender’s address is attached to each balloon.

If these helium balloons stay inflated and the journey is relatively smooth, our school hopes that the finders will send a response back to our school.”

Picture 1: A goodbye to 99 helium balloons and hopefully a hello to openness and dialogue. On Monday the Fladså School marked the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Picture 2: Line Kvick (left), Simone Adolfsen and Sabrina Drewsen, 7th grade, have a clearer understanding of why Berlin was split up and what the Cold War really meant.

Picture 3: 20 years since the fall of the Berlin Wall.