

17th December 2013

Dear All,

Hasn't 2013 been a great year for us, the Ray Conniff fans? Many of us managed to make the Convention in Brussels and Bruges, and both Vera and Tamara gave us the honour of their attendance. There were fans from England and Wales, Belgium, France, The Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, Russia, The Ukraine, Brazil and the United States. For the first time, we had Doug among us, the creator of the original Ray Conniff Page on the Internet, and Jorge, who launched the Ray Conniff Lyrics website. (Thanks for making it!)

During her dinner speech, Tamara revealed some great news: Her dad's Christmas Show was to be broadcast in test markets on public television in November and December 2013, and chances looked good it might become available on a DVD throughout the world in 2014. At the time of writing these lines we know that the show has been aired many times in the US. It was complemented with interview segments by Tamara so that the broadcast lasted 90 minutes.



Again, I would like to express my sincerest thanks to all participants of the 2013 Convention and especially those who contributed to it – ranging from Francis, who made the tribute concert happen, to Marc, who played a great trombone solo on “My Cha Chornia” (one of Vera's favourite songs) during the concert; and most of all, I think we owe thanks to our “hundred million dollar lady”, Claudine, for organizing the whole event so meticulously.

At the end of the convention I asked the fans for suggestions concerning the place of the next one in 2015. They named Prague, Nice, and Düsseldorf. I said I would send out a questionnaire soon, which I did some time in late September – but never revealed its result – until now.

Before I do, let me tell you this: I must admit that only after my return home it dawned on me that **2016** would be perfect to celebrate “100 Years of Ray Conniff”, but that would mean a change from the bi-annual schedule. Should be postpone the next convention for one more year?

Well, to make a long story short: The majority favoured Düsseldorf in September – but the questionnaire referred to 2015, not 2016. So, what now?

I have discussed this matter with quite a few people, and all of them agreed that celebrating 100 years of Ray Conniff was a wonderful idea, which would also draw the attention of the media. Besides, quite a few said that the right place should be the one where it all began: Hamburg.

But what about the result of the survey? Could we disobey it just like that? Well, the fans from that area that would be in charge of the next convention (i.e. Barbara, Bernd, Irmi and Jürgen) told me they would be ready and willing to organize another so-called “mini-convention” in 2015 for all those who would not like to wait one year more – provided that the number of people interested justifies the efforts involved. So, if you would like to attend a get-together in Düsseldorf in 2015, please send me a message saying whether we can count you in, and I will provide you with information some time in 2014. I hope you can find these decisions acceptable.

Thank you for your loyalty concerning Ray's music. Let's do all we can to keep it alive. I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all the very best for 2014 – and, of course, a very merry



CHRISTMAS WITH CONNIFF.

Yours, Manfred

<http://www.rayconniff.info/> & <http://mthoenicke.magix.net/public/conniff/index.htm> & www.rayconniff.com