



Confederation of Scandinavian Societies of Great Britain and Ireland

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Deadline for contributions to the next Magazine: 1 October 20

From the Chairman of the Editorial Board

Iain Robertson



First of all, I would like to stress the great debt of gratitude we owe to Anne Sophie Strandli for her work in raising the standard and professional appearance of the magazine during her time as Editor, and I am delighted to be able to report that she is to remain on the Editorial Board and will thus continue to contribute to the magazine.

The editorial work is shared by the members of the board – an administrative model which allows a number of people to bring a range of experiences to the magazine.

Since I am new to CoScan, it will perhaps be appropriate if I introduce myself. I am a musician by training and worked as a teacher in England before joining the number of British organists working in Norway. I retired to York in 2004, after fourteen years in Norway, and I have been chairman of York Anglo-Scandinavian Society for five highly enjoyable years.

To the current issue. As well as containing the usual reports, its main

focus is on food, and includes the regular feature ‘Anna Sophie’s Kitchen’ as well as articles on the famous Noma restaurant in Copenhagen and on the recent general increase of interest in Nordic food.

All of us who have lived in a country other than that of our birth will have experienced those puzzling situations where ‘foreigners’ do things that baffle and confuse us. In the present issue two members of the York Society reflect in their different ways on differences between Britain and respectively Denmark and Sweden. Many of you will have experienced this sort of thing and we would love to hear about it.

Closely related to culture-clashes are the ways we can ‘put our foot in it’ by using inappropriate words or expressions in languages other than our mother tongue. In this issue our guest writer contributes an article on the fascinating subject of swearing, and what constitutes ‘bad language’ in the different cultures.

I have said that we would love to hear from you, and in so saying I want to stress that we on the Editorial Board would like you, our readers, to feel that this is your magazine. Only by receiving feedback from you can we be sure that we are providing the sort of articles you want to read.

Message from the President

Mark Elliott

Fortunate timing enables me to concentrate, in this message, on the Tallinn Conference. In 2013 CoScan broke new ground in making our biennial journey to a destination outside the five Nordic countries, and we found ourselves very much at home in possibly the most Scandinavian of the three Baltic countries. The case for expanding our horizons has never seemed so strong.

The old town of Tallinn is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, full of visual delights and charm. At every turn there are fascinating architectural details from the medieval period, many buildings having been sympathetically restored and the effect enhanced by the steep and winding streets. But the modern city of Tallinn is not just a historical relic. Towering steel-and-glass structures alternate with older buildings of traditional materials cleverly incorporated into modern complexes. Estonia seems to be flourishing; one telling sign is that the British Embassy is actually expanding its staff and activities, a rare phenomenon in these days of austerity. In a number of hi-tech areas important commercial partnerships are being created. Tallinn was recently listed among the top ten digital cities in the world,



and the Estonian administration is one of the first to boast something mysteriously called e-government.

39 CoScan members were there from 19 to 22 April, and it was a most successful visit, blessed by sparklingly clear and relatively mild weather. For the first time for many years Kari Moss Wright was not our tour leader, that role being played by a team of SKOL (Lincoln) members who did a wonderful job and thought of everything in advance. We missed Kari, and Peter – our thoughts went out to them. It was a time of change also in other respects. Norman Pike stepped down from the post of Treasurer which he has filled with unfailing skill and commitment for many years; his successor is Manja Ronne of the Northamptonshire society. Anna Sophie Strandli has left the post of Editor of this magazine, which she has built up over the last decade with tireless enthusiasm and artistic skill, and Iain Robertson from the York society now leads the Editorial Board – he introduces himself elsewhere in these pages.

It was not just the weather in Tallinn which created a mood of optimism. All of us, from our widely varying backgrounds, blended into a happy company; and I think we all felt that CoScan was alive and vigorous. Eva Robards as Chairman is not only making us all better aware of each other, but giving CoScan a real voice in the world. She deserves the commitment and support of all.



A great Dane – P Rasmussen – where, according to legend, the Danish flag fell from the sky in the battle of Tallinn (1219) giving Danes the victory. Photo: A.W. Robards



Chairman's message

Eva Robards

Partnerships

Trying to consolidate CoScan as a valued and beneficial partner in relation to its member societies is crucial and must continue. Therefore, my primary focus is to meet with as many Scandinavian organisations as possible – member societies naturally being the priority; over the last year I have met with representatives from fourteen member societies.

It is encouraging that CoScan membership is growing, as is the contribution and commitment of its

individual members. Over just the past year we have four new societies joining CoScan (Grieg Society, Nordic Horizons, Scottish-Finnish Society, and the Danish Seamen's Church in Hull); I extend a very hearty welcome to them all!

CoScan also needs to extend its role in today's community through collaboration and partnerships with other organisations. There are a number of organisations around the UK which are good potential candidates for membership of

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CoScan, and these are being approached. Among them are the Nordic churches and the centres for Nordic studies. Some of these I have visited, and with others meetings have been set up.

'Voice of Scandinavia'

By mapping out what is going on in the Scandinavian/Nordic communities around the area that CoScan covers (UK and Ireland) we obtain information that can be usefully recycled to the benefit of member organisations. And not least, we develop a 'Voice of Scandinavia' in our part of the world.

Involvement

Member societies should be able to feel involved and have an influence on the running of CoScan. The Skandinavian Klubb of Lincolnshire (SKOL) has for a long time been very much at the centre of CoScan organisational activities, holding key posts including chairman, secretary, and treasurer; importantly, they have also had the professional competence for organising the CoScan Conferences abroad. At present, Coscan's administrative requirements are undertaken by our chairman from the York Society, secretary from the Anglo-Danish Society, treasurer from the Northants Anglo-Scandinavian Society, and membership secretary from the Shetland Norwegian Friendship Society, all of this with the invaluable support and mentoring from our widely experienced

president (Anglo-Norse Society). SKOL remains represented on the executive committee, and we have both our web-editor and youth and international officer in Norway. A healthy diversification of responsibilities and contributions across the CoScan network is fundamentally important.

In order to work democratically and efficiently it is necessary to come together from time to time for an effective exchange of views and ideas, and subcommittees constitute a good modus operandi. For example, this year a subcommittee in Lincoln (SKOL) organised the conference in Tallinn, and now we have the prospect of five societies in Edinburgh jointly setting up a team to organise our AGM in 2014. There are many good reasons for holding the AGM in Edinburgh, not least as this city has the highest number of societies outside London, is more easily available for our northern societies – and has a range of wonderful visitor attractions. In future years, the AGM could take place in the south of the UK, or in a country with a Scandinavian links. In any event, moving around to different locations is a very positive way of spreading the influence and benefits of CoScan to its constituent members.

All-in-all, CoScan has had a constructive and positive year and we are becoming increasingly well-placed to undertake our core role of linking and supporting member societies.

Societies Focus on Edinburgh

The Norwegian Scottish Association

by Eva Tyson

A healthy membership of ninety-eight, an active committee with an attractive meeting place and you have the vital ingredients of a lively society, in fact a snapshot of the Norwegian Scottish Association (NSA) in Edinburgh.



Back row: Myra Wattie, Neil Macaulay, David Windmill (Honorary Consul General), Michael Hansen-Just (Chairman). **Front row:** Carla Schettini, Sally Garden, Eva Tyson

Historical Background

Historically there has always been a close connection with Norway. If we cast our minds back as far as the 13th century, it was the daughter of a Norwegian king Erik II and granddaughter of Alexander III, king of Scots, who became the heir to the crown of Scotland on the death of

her grandfather. Alas, the young princess Margaret, also known as the Maid of Norway, did not survive the long sea journey and perished near the Orkneys in 1290. Fast forward to the 20th century and we find that Norwegian military personnel had been stationed in Dumfries, in south west Scotland. No surprises therefore, that one of the Dumfries contingent, Anders Tomter, became one of the founder members of the NSA in Edinburgh.

At the close of the second world war, General Sir Andrew Thorne took part in the liberation of Norway and it was therefore an obvious choice to ask his daughter, the Countess of Mar and Kellie, to be the first honorary president of our Edinburgh Association.

More Recent Times

The NSA was founded in 1966, firstly with HM King Olav V as an honorary member, later succeeded by HM King Harald V. The main aim of the association is to promote friendship and understanding, not only among Norwegians living in Scotland, but also Scots who have Norwegian connections and are therefore interested in Norway and its culture.

From its beginning, the association flourished and recruited Norwegians, who had studied at the universities of Edinburgh and Heriot-Watt and had now settled in Scotland. It was indeed fitting that the Principal and Vice-Chancellor of Heriot-Watt university was made a Commander of the Royal Norwegian

Order of St. Olav for the unstinting work for his Norwegian students.

One of the prime movers in founding the NSA was Helge L Weiby. He had also seen active service during the last war and was now the owner of the well known shop *Norway House* in the West End of Edinburgh . This shop helped to promote and raise the profile of Norwegian arts and crafts in Scotland.

The Present

The NSA usually has five meetings a year with speakers, whose topics reflect relevance to Norway be it history, painting, music or geography to mention a few aspects. Two such recent topics were the Icelandic sagas and Norwegian landscape paintings.



The Norwegian Consulate

Photo: Eva Tyson

The meeting place is the Royal Norwegian Consulate General, in Rutland Square in the West End of Edinburgh. The Honorary Consul David Windmill frequently attends

meetings and is an enthusiastic supporter of the NSA.

One event, which started recently, is the popular *pratekveld*, usually twice a year. This is an informal gathering of members and friends both Scottish and Norwegian who want to update and practise their Norwegian. There are also outings arranged, the latest in September 2012 to the acclaimed exhibition of graphic works by Edvard Munch.

The 17th of May, Norwegian Constitution Day, is celebrated in style and this is probably the highlight of the year, when distinguished speakers will give the traditional *tale for dagen*. Last but not least, the annual *juletrefest* is especially popular with the youngsters. The NSA hires the Marchmont St. Giles Centre and lays on a truly Norwegian feast with the traditional *gang rundt treet*, presents from *julenissen* and the singing of Norwegian carols.

Epilogue

The past and present are interlinked and although it was not a Norwegian who said it, T S Eliot is right when he says, ‘Time present and time past are both perhaps present in time future’. This I think sums up our association.



The Forth Bridge

The Danish Cultural Institute – building bridges between cultures

by Nina Koldby Nauer



The Danish Cultural Institute, located in the New Town area in Edinburgh since 1957, can look back on a giving and inspiring history of cross-cultural exchange between Great Britain and Denmark.

The Institute's aim is to function as a cultural bridge builder and catalyser for arts and culture and it has via its diverse projects achieved a good, stable reputation in British Society. People in Great Britain appreciate the Institute's effort to raise knowledge about Denmark and the mutual exchange it brings; recent TV series such as *The Killing* and

Borgen have also led to a greater awareness of Denmark in the country.



Furthermore, Scotland's upcoming referendum on independence makes the Scottish people take a closer look at Nordic countries such as Denmark, which is comparable in size and population; people have been taking part in various discussions and lectures on the topic all across Scotland.

The Nordic Horizons initiative with the Danish Cultural Institute as a partner and supporter is hosting many of these discussions. Recently, the initiative set up a discussion at the Scottish Parliament on renewable energy, under the title *The Great Green Danes*. One of the Great Green Danes, Søren Hermansen, leader of the Energy Academy on the island of Samsø, explained to the Scots, how the island became independent from energy from the main land by producing green energy itself.

Other great Danes whom the Danish Cultural Institute was proud to present, were the young musicians from the Danish String Quartet who stopped by the Institute on their UK tour in early March.

The Danish String Quartet is an award-winning combo that has reached incredible success since its formation 10 years ago. The four

young musicians have performed all over Europe, returning repeatedly to the UK. Their reputation preceded them, as within minutes after announcing the concert through the Danish Cultural Institute's network, the concert was fully booked. The concert was outstanding and the audience delighted.



Delighted were also the participants of the workshop on quilting held by experienced teacher and quilter Sheena Norquay; the workshop was appended to the exhibition entitled *Nordic Quilts* at the Danish Cultural Institute in December and January. The exhibition, showing a broad range of creatively handmade quilts with love for detail from all Nordic countries, was very well visited and proved to be a great success. People from all over Great Britain with a passion for quilting travelled to Edinburgh to see the spectacular *Nordic Quilts*.

People were also very keen on hearing two presentations on respectively Danish TV and Danish

film. 'What makes TV series travel' was a lecture held by Ingolf Gabold, the former Head of Fiction Drama of the Danish public TV station DR, who put his fingerprints on the making of *The Killing* and *Borgen*. The talk 'Lars von Trier – Scandalous Genius of Danish Cinema' was held by Peter Schepelern, who is a Danish writer, film expert and lecturer at the University of Copenhagen. Both events were organised by the Danish Cultural Institute in collaboration with the Filmhouse Edinburgh and attracted film and TV enthusiasts from around the country.

This success encourages the Danish Cultural Institute continually to extend its network and spread knowledge about Denmark to Great Britain and vice versa. Creativity, productivity and curiosity constitute the core of the Institute; these qualities are essential to keep developing new platforms and strategies to reach out. Future plans involve an exhibition on Greenland and the Arctic, a theatre workshop for youngsters held by a Danish performance group and the participation in Edinburgh Fashion Week, only to name a few.

The Danish Cultural Institute will be pleased to welcome you: 'Vi ses!'



The Danish Seamen's Church in Hull is for all Scandinavians on board ships and ashore

by Torben Elmbæk Jørgensen,
Seamen's Pastor in Hull

St Nikolaj Danish Seamen's Church in Hull is the oldest Danish Seamen's church abroad. Activities are held on a weekly basis and are welcomed by the Scandinavians living in and around Hull. Danish Services are held most Sundays. The River Humber with the connecting River Hull, River Ouse and River Trent, has since the year 1000 been a busy area for import and export off goods from and to the Northern part of England.



Activities:

Danish services
Weddings, funerals, baptism
Ships visiting
Christmas Fair
Danish lessons
Christmas Eve
Quiz-night
Fastelavn/Shrovetide
Film-club, Danish films
Sct. Hans, Midsummer
Barbecue with bonfire
Harvest Dinner
New Year Kur Lunch

Merchant ships from Denmark, Germany, Holland, Norway, and Iceland – and other places – have used the area for business. When the railway to Hull was finished in 18th century, it became easy for the wool trade and all the big factories in the Midlands area and farmers from all over Yorkshire and Lincolnshire to export of their goods.

From Denmark the English companies imported bacon, meat, cheese, and milk-products.

During the last century many Danish fishermen settled in Hull and Grimsby. After the Cod War against Iceland, in which UK lost the most valuable part of their traditional areas for deep sea fishing, most of these fishermen lost their jobs. Many stayed in this area, because they had married local girls and because they were satisfied with life in the UK.

A very long tradition

St Nikolaj Danish Seamen's Church has a long and famous history . In 1868 a Danish pastor was appointed and on 6 August 1870 the foundation stone to the first Danish Church was laid by C.C. Brøkner and on 10 May 1871 the church was consecrated.

The day before the church could celebrate 70 years on 10 May 1941, German bombs destroyed the church. The Chairman of the Trust sent a message to Denmark: 'Nikolaj died tonight'. A new St Nikolaj was built and consecrated on 9 May 1954.

Future

What about the future? The number of Danish ships arriving in the Humber Area is high, and will increase after the recession. The pastor in Hull is the only Danish Pastor in the UK visiting Danish ships, so it is very important that St Nicolaj survives in good condition. The Buildings are very fine, people love to join the activities, and so – I suppose – will it continue in the future too.

Proud to be 'Vikings'

The spirit from the period when the Vikings ruled still remains in this area. So strong were the Vikings, that England for some years had a Danish king: King Canute. Everywhere you will find villages and towns with the Danish word *by* (town, village) at the end of the name.

The people of Yorkshire are proud

of having Viking blood in their veins. To be a Dane is popular, and the Danish Church is looked at as both exotic and interesting. This becomes obvious when the Church is having its big Christmas Fair on the last Friday and Saturday in November. Many of the 1000 guests have their roots in one of the Scandinavian countries, though most of them in Denmark. The Danish Church is visible, well respected and well known amongst the people in Hull, the East Riding and North Lincolnshire.

The Scandinavian community is now mostly made up of seniors. They are very happy to have a church here and the possibility of joining in Church Services and cultural and social events. We are happy that there now are young people settling in this area.

17th of May Norway's National Day

Every year we celebrate the 17th of May, the Norwegian National Day. At Christmas people from Iceland have their own Christmas Service at The Danish Church.

The Seafarers

Visiting the Danish Seafarers on Danish ships arriving at one of the busy ports in the Humber area is the most important task for the Seamen's pastor. The Humber area is the biggest port in the UK, and the Pastor will visit more than 150 ships in one of the ports spread out on both sides of the Humber and the River Trent.

Most Danish ships will have 2-4 Danish seafarers – the captain, the chief engineer and perhaps a few more officers. The captain has a difficult job creating solidarity between the seamen from several

different countries such as Russia, Poland, other Baltic states, the Philippines etc. The workplace is multicultural, and it's a challenge for all on board.



Language and culture

Swearing symposium

Swearword usage has become recognised as a legitimate research area. An example of this is the fairly recent symposium dedicated to swearing in the Nordic countries, held in Copenhagen 6 December 2012. Its aim was to create 'an overview of Nordic swearing as a research theme' and it was organised by the research network SwiSca (the research network for swearing researchers in the Nordic Countries) together with the Danish Language Council.

Among listed speakers were Marianne Rathje (the Danish Language Council): *Fuck and for fanden! Swearing in the speech of three Danish generations,*

Mona Enell-Nilsson (University of Vaasa, Finland): *Translation of swearwords in the Swedish Millennium movie,*

Ruth Vatvedt Fjeld (University of Oslo, Norway): *The vocabulary of Norwegian cursing. Some of its history, meanings and function,*

Lars-Gunnar Andersson (University of Gothenburg, Sweden): *Swedish attitudes to swearing.*

Swearing in Nordic languages

by Richard Ogden – Guest writer



Note: this article contains words you might not normally say or hear. If you're easily offended, it might be best to skip it.

With the rising popularity of Scandinavian TV dramas in Britain, we are learning a lot about our neighbours on the other side of the North Sea. Most of the programmes shown on BBC4 have come after the watershed, with the usual warning about ‘strong language’; in this case the ‘strong language’ is in the subtitles, and it’s unlikely that most English-speaking viewers understand how their favourite characters in *Borgen*, *The Killing*, *The Bridge* and *Lilyhammer* are giving vent to some of their stronger emotions. So in this article, we’re going to look at how to swear in

Nordic languages. Both English and the Nordic Languages draw on religious taboos: calling on God (*Herregud!*, or *Herra Jumala!*), Jesus or heaven and sending people to hell are the basics of many swear words and curses. Across all the Nordic languages – including Sámi and Finnish, which are unrelated to the other, Germanic, languages of the Nordic region – devils appear frequently and probably more commonly than God and Jesus. *Satan* (Fi *Saatana*) is not just a name, but a swearword. Finnish also has *perkele*. Sitting on a late-night train when the passengers have had a few too many, it’s quite likely you’ll hear at least one of the devil’s names. To call someone a devil is pretty nasty in all Nordic languages, and this extends as far as Sámi, where *Birru Dáža* (literally ‘devil’s Norwegian’) matches similar constructions in other languages (for example Sw *din danskjävel*, ‘you Danish bastard’, Da *din fandens svensker*, ‘you damned Swede’): it’s not hard to find cross-border insults like these.

Devils, hell and damnation form the basis of some useful constructions in all Scandinavian languages. The word *fan* (Sw), *faen* (No), *fanden* (Da) – another word for devil – is used quite productively. This can be used as an expletive (for example, Sw *fy fan!*, No *faen i helvete!* which is roughly equivalent to ‘bloody hell!’). While in English we might ask *what the hell...?*, in Swedish you would ask *vad fan...?*

Norwegian and Danish are basically the same. This literally translates as ‘what the devil...?’, which in English sounds a little quaint, though the cultural reference is the same.

There’s a Swedish website called vadfanskajaglagatillmiddag.nu – *whatthehellshallIcookfordinner.now*, – which when you land on it makes suggestions preceded by *Du kan väl för fan laga lite...*, ‘You could bloody well make...’ It is also possible to combine a couple of devil words to make something stronger: Sw *Satans datorjävel* ‘fucking computer’, Faroese *helvitis fani* or *fandin í helviti*, No *jævla satan*, Fi *Saatanan perkele* (devil’s Satan or Satan’s devil, take your pick). In Norwegian though, to say that someone is *en jævel til å spille fotball*, ‘a devil at playing football’ means that they’re good at it: being too good at something meant an association with the devil.

Insulting people with swear words in Scandinavian is done similarly to in English, with an interesting grammatical twist. While in English we say ‘you idiot’, in Scandinavian, the equivalent is ‘(you) your idiot’, *(du) din idiot*. Otherwise, the kinds of insults are very similar, with insults related to excessive drinking (Sw *fyllesvin*, Da *spritsvin*, ‘piss-head’, literally ‘booze swine’), body parts (various words referring to penises, vaginas, anuses), foreigners, stupidity (Icelandic has *hálfviti*, ‘halfwit, idiot’), disability, comparisons with animals (I’ve found examples of pigs, dogs and bitches, chickens, mice, rats, horses

(sometimes body parts thereof) and – strikingly for an English speaker – elk and *torsk*, cod) as well as homophobic and misogynistic insults. All of these are familiar insults in English too.



Illustration: Lucy Green

Just as in English we have things like *gosh* and *sugar* as ways to avoid saying a swear word, in the Nordic languages there are also ways to avoid bad language. Mostly this involves words that sound close enough to the bad one to be recognisable, but different enough not to be swearing. Swedish has *Jösses*, (based on *Jesus*), *järnspikar*, ‘iron nails’, which begins like *jävel*, and Norwegian and Danish have *Søren*, which could be euphemistic for ‘hell’, since it means ‘south’; conveniently, it is also a male name. Norwegian has *dæven*. In Finnish there’s *saamari* and *saakeli* for *saatana*, and *piru* for *perkele*. *Voi itku*, ‘oh weeping’ replaces a much stronger expletive (see below to

guess which one), especially among older ladies. One of my favourite memories was hearing a friend who never swears hiss the very mild *piru vieköön* ('the deuce take it!', if you wanted to translate it 'literally'), though I have to admit that the most amusing thing to me was recognising a verb in the third person imperative for the first time. In Swedish there's also the very mild *sjutton*, 'seventeen', while Danish has *syv sytten*, 'seven seventeens'. The origins of 'seventeen' as a curse seem a bit unclear. One idea is that it's short for *sjutton tusen djävlar*, 'seventeen thousand devils'; another is that the number seventeen is magic in folklore.

Loans from English are used in all the Scandinavian languages. *Fuck* and *shit*, among the stronger words in English, are considerably milder in Scandinavia, presumably because as loans they are detached from their indigenous environment. In Finland-Swedish, where Swedish is often used in bilingual situations, there are some blends of Finnish and Swedish, such as *herran jes(tas)*.

Aside from words with a religious background, there are also bad words for body parts, sex, and bodily fluids in all the Nordic languages: all familiar to English speakers. In Swedish, *skit* is a particularly flexible word, and isn't as strong as its English equivalent, 'shit'. I was once asked to make a recording of me reading a text in English for a Swedish *folkhögskola*.

The teacher thought it would be fun if I did two readings, one slow, the other fast, and in between say *nu tar vi hela skiten från början igen*, 'now let's take the whole thing (shit) from the beginning again'. In English we 'don't give a shit' about something, while in Swedish you say *det skiter jag i*, 'I shit in it'. *Skit* can also join up with adjectives to make them more intense: if something is *skitbra*, it's really good; if it's *skitful*, it's very ugly. In Norwegian, it's the same thing but you can use *drit* instead (which is related to English 'dirt'). Danish does the same kind of thing with *pisse*: if it's *pissefedt*, it's 'awesome' (literally 'piss fat'). These words rarely stand by themselves, so *skit också* 'shit as well' is the more usual expletive.

Finnish is like and unlike the other Nordic languages. Devils and devilry form a core of swear words: *saatana*, *perkele* and *helvetti* are common. But the joys of swearing in Finnish are manifold. Many of my Swedish-speaking Finnish friends prefer Finnish when they want to be linguistically creative.

Finns don't just tell each other where to go (and sometimes how to get there), they also tell one another to smell mould, *haista home*, as well as other more physical things: *paska*, 'shit', and *vittu*, which is literally 'cunt'. Finns have a few lengthier curses, such as the Finland Swedish *piss och skit och gröna ärtor*, 'piss and shit and green peas' – which is practically poetic, and almost as

fruity as Finnish *paskan marjat*, ‘berries of shit’.



Finnish has a rich and productive stock of ways to alter words, to make new ones and to play with the ones you have, as well as a rather small set of sounds to play with, so it provides you with lots of possibilities for creative and sometimes alliterative swearing. From *vittu* (literally ‘cunt’ but on its own it means something more like ‘fuck’ or ‘shit’ in English) we get the verb *vittuilla* (to make nasty remarks), the adjective *vittumainen* (nasty), *vittuuntua* (to get fed up), the adverb *vitusti* (a hell of a lot) and the verb *vituttaa* (to irritate). The plural, *vitut*, can take the place of a negative verb, much like ‘the fuck I will’ in English. To say that something is *ihan perseestä* ‘absolutely out of the arse’ – or, less obscenely, abbreviated to *ihan p:stää* – is to cast pretty strong aspersions on it. *Jeesustella* – not a swear word, but worthy of inclusion just because

it’s beautiful – is a verb which means ‘to act pious’ (more literally, ‘do a Jesus act’), for example by not having a drink or by being po-faced in response to a dirty joke.

The niceties of when you swear, who your audience is, and how strongly you express yourself are of course quite delicate social matters. So while it’s fun to learn the bad words in another language, probably we should look on in admiration, but not try out our new skills in front of Sara Lund or Birgitte Nyborg.

Thanks to my Nordic friends and colleagues for examples and help: Nicolai Hansen, Martina Huhtamäki, Kaj Nyman, Rasmus Persson, Rein Ove Sikveland, Nino Wächter

Richard Ogden is a senior lecturer in phonetics at the University of York. His first degree was in Swedish and linguistics, and he has worked on Finnish phonetics for many years.

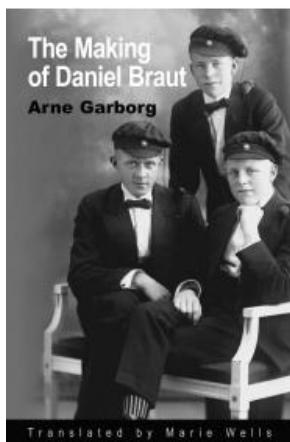


From the book shelf

New translations



Norvik Press is a publishing house that specialises in translations of Scandinavian literature. It was established in the 1980's at the University of East Anglia. Since 2010 it has been based at University College London. In 2012, Norvik Press launched a new series of 19th and 20th century classics of Norwegian literature with Arne Garborg's *The Making of Daniel Braut* (transl. Marie Wells) and works by Sigurd Hoel and Jonas Lie. Amalie Skram's *Fru Inés* (transl. Katherine Hanson & Judith Messick) is due in 2013.



Daniel Braut is an impressionable boy whose one ambition is to rise above the poverty of his farming background. He is a mirror of his age, the late 19th century, in a Norway that slowly emerges from a peasant society into a modern urban culture.

Swedish classics published last year include August Strindberg's *The*

People of Hemsö (transl. Peter Graves), a humorous novel about fishermen in the Stockholm archipelago, which may surprise many English readers who only know Strindberg as a dramatist.

The latest addition to Norvik's Selma Lagerlöf series is *Nils Holgersson's Wonderful Journey* (transl. Peter Graves), the story of a naughty boy who climbs on a gander's back and is carried all over Sweden, learning about the country as well as about good behaviour as he goes. It was commissioned as a reader for Swedish schoolchildren, but has captivated readers all over the world for over a century. New illustrations were specially created for this translation.

Norvik Press does not only publish classical literature. Benny Andersen is one of Denmark's most popular poets/song-writers. His absurdist comedy, *The Contract Killer* (transl. Paul Russell Garrett), about an out-of-work private investigator, who decides to try his hand as a criminal, was another new translation published in 2012.



www.norvikpress.com

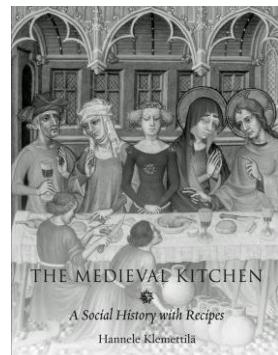
Books by CoScan members

Dr Hannele Klemettilä

Medieval Kitchen – a Social History with Recipes

A richly illustrated history of medieval food and cookery in Western Europe and Scandinavia. The book is also a practical cookbook, with a collection of more than 60 originally sourced recipes

Reaktion Books, ISBN 9781861899088

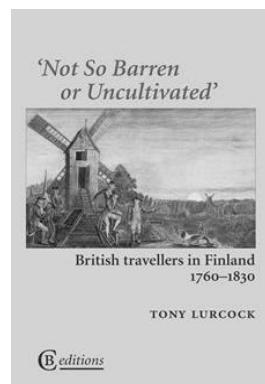


Tony Lurcock

Not so Barren or Uncultivated: British Travellers in Finland 1760-1830

Finland in the eighteenth century was not a destination for the faint-hearted. But they also wrote lyrical accounts of sledging over the ice from Stockholm, and of the idyllic beauty of Finland's lakes and islands.

CB editions, ISBN 978-0-9561073-9-8

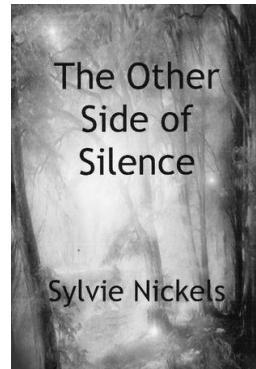


Sylvie Nickels

The Other Side of Silence

After the death of her authoritarian father, an eminent historian, Pippa finds a diary giving a vivid picture of the Finnish-Russian Winter War and how her grandfather, a Russian soldier, who was rescued by a Finnish farmer's daughter, had been identified as a Russian and deported by occupying Germans to a German slave camp.

FeedARead, ISBN13: 9781781762684



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Love in the wrong dimension

A love story, told from the perspective of a ghost, and written in the style of popular romance.

AD Publishing , ASIN: B006QLUXFY



Culture clashes when entertaining: Anglo-Swedish style

by Brita Green

Living in Sweden as newlyweds at the end of the 1950's, my very well brought-up English husband and I had our occasional differences. In fact, he would sometimes embarrass me with his very politeness. For instance, when our dinner guests began to mutter something about it perhaps being time to leave, he would make an unseemly dash – or so it appeared to me – out into the hall to grab their coats, bring them into the lounge and then start to help people on with them. This quaint English custom no doubt had its origins in the then poorly heated English houses, where the coats would be brought from the cold hall (or bedroom) into the warm living-room for the comfort of the guests.

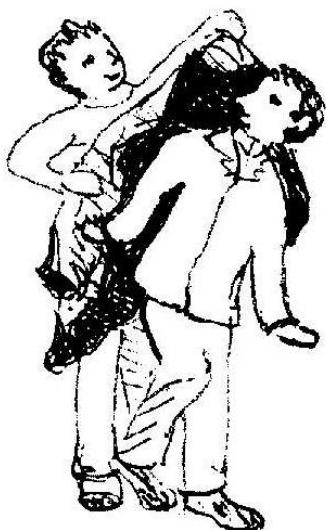


Illustration: Brenda Tyler

Not appreciating the reason (having grown up with all rooms, including the hall, evenly heated), I felt that it looked as if he wanted to get rid of them as soon as possible. And the guests themselves would tend to resist, because they – equally well brought up, but in Sweden – couldn't possibly put their coats on until they had said their thank-yous.

The attitude to food and eating is different in the two cultures. In today's Sweden, it is expected that, if you enjoy the food at a dinner party, you don't just express your appreciation in words, you also show it by eating a lot of it, keenly having a second helping, or third. The English, on the other hand, have been brought up to think that greed and gluttony are the worst cardinal sins: you must not be greedy. I often feel sorry for my English friends who can't, it seems, even once in a while indulge themselves without feeling guilty. Swedish guests on the other hand probably often shock English hosts with their enthusiastic appetites.

It used to be polite in Sweden, too, to pretend you couldn't possibly get another spoonful down, which would prompt the hostess to "*truga*" – press – her guests to have just a little bit more. That probably stems from the days of general poverty when there may not always have been enough for second helpings. Now, with more widespread prosperity, most Swedish dinner guests dig in heartily, and most Swedish hosts feel flattered, not shocked, when they do.

Sitting at the dinner-table, Englishmen are traditionally used to their mothers, or their host or hostess, serving up the food and handing round the plates. Swedes are brought up to help themselves. As a hostess, I have stubbornly stuck to the Swedish way through all the decades I have lived in England – often thereby, I’m afraid, making my English dinner-guests feel self-conscious and worried that they may take too much (and be greedy!).

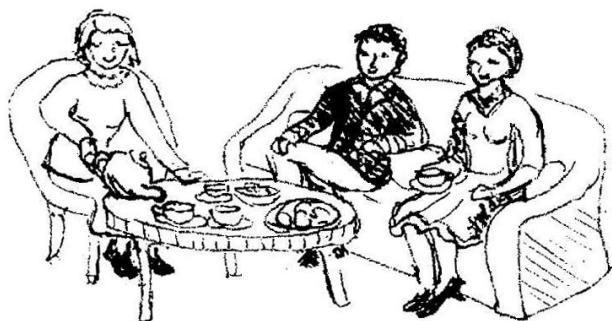


Illustration: Brenda Tyler

There are of course occasions when the English, too, have to help themselves: when offered a dish of cakes and biscuits at afternoon tea, or a trayful of finger food at a cocktail reception. There is then the small matter of how many items you put on your plate: one in England, several in Sweden. My (Swedish) mother, who was well aware of English manners, remembered such an occasion when, engrossed in conversation and having chosen one biscuit, she absent-mindedly reached out for another. It was not to be: her (English) hostess, also instinctively, pulled the dish away.

However, in this context, there is one area where I have become totally

“naturalised”: when I am the hostess, I like to be mistress of my own teapot – I like to “be mother”! If I am entertaining Swedish friends for tea and one of them helpfully (well, that’s what he thinks) reaches out and pours himself another cup, his behaviour really disturbs me. Doesn’t he realise that the pot might need topping up with water before any more is poured – or that, just generally, that teapot is mine? I feel as if my personal space has been invaded, and it is all I can do to stop myself telling him off.

Our little Swedish bridesmaid Lotta grew into a teenager, and came to spend a few weeks with us one summer when our daughter was a toddler. We all went to visit my parents-in-law, and had a meal with them, which was concluded with a cheese course. Lotta was a bright and observant girl, and she had spotted that the English didn’t slice their cheese but cut chunks instead, so that is what she did, too. What she had not observed was that you would then proceed to cut small pieces off the chunk on your plate, and off the bread, before putting them into your mouth. She put her two thick chunks of cheddar onto a large piece of crispbread, lifted it up to her mouth and opened it wide to take a bite. For some reason, we all happened to notice and momentarily fell silent at this amazing sight. She realised she had somehow made a faux pas and, with a big smile, she looked around the table and cheerfully announced, ‘The Swedish way!’

Cultural shocks: Anglo-Danish style

by David Corry

Children

All Danish children are in institutions as soon as they have finished being breast-fed – and at 4 months of age 45-60% are exclusively breast-fed, whereas the figure for Brits is 15-30%. Danes have difficulty understanding why Brits are so squeamish about breast-feeding in public. After breastfeeding finishes – when the child is 6 months to 1 year old – the full-time housewife/mother is a rarity in Denmark. Brits notice with envy the sumptuous play areas in public libraries and trains.

Farmyards

Danes boggle at the chaotic scrap-heap appearance of the average British farmyard, while Brits have difficulty understanding how such a well-manicured quadrangle could ever be used in serious farming.

Churchyards

Danes react similarly to the unkempt British graveyard – especially if the



Illustration: Brenda Tyler

method of tidying it up is to graze it off with a flock of sheep. Brits on the other hand are aghast at the resources involved in employing one or two people full-time in a modest-sized Danish graveyard to keep every blade of vegetation and every grain of gravel in its place.

The **Danish State Church** as a whole appears to Brits to be very well-heeled, and most are surprised to learn that the State collects a special church tax from all Danes who don't actively opt out. Not only organists but also church choirs are well paid. (Danish spoken with a thick English accent by some church organists reveals a number of economic immigrants into this sector).

‘Hygge’

Although the official national religion is Lutheran Christianity, most Danes actually worship at the altar of House and Garden. The watchwords are Good Taste and *Hygge*, whose inadequate translation as ‘cosiness’ neglects an almost spiritual element. Danes tend to shudder at the harsh lighting and garishness of many British homes.

Pay

The average Danish solicitor (for example) earns only about 4 times as much as the cleaner – and pays

about 50% income tax. There is reason to believe that this relative equality greatly increases the cohesiveness of Danish society. Brits who then wonder why Danes bother to go in for higher education have to be reminded that the Danish state pays all tuition fees plus a student living allowance.

Public lectures

Brits tend to be surprised when some of these start with the audience singing a communal song, often with a religious and/or nationalistic theme.

Motoring

Danish pedestrian and cycle crossings are close-coupled to all crossroads, and at the many traffic lights that have no pedestrian phase all cyclists and pedestrians have right of way to continue straight ahead! This – especially in towns – makes even right turns complicated, while the motorist turning left has scrupulously to scan the opposite pavements and cycle paths in order not to be faced with the choice between mowing down a cyclist/pedestrian or being mown down by oncoming traffic!

'Fest'

Brits who are used to one or two inarticulate and rather embarrassed speeches at weddings and who have been invited to a Danish wedding, a "round" (20 30, 40, etc.-year) birthday party or christening party may wonder what they have let themselves in for once they really get going on the traditional 6-hour dinner-party, where the 4 generous courses are interspersed with numerous long speeches, home-made songs written specially for the occasion and comic sketches. Some may even chicken out before they get as far as the beer and *smørrebrød* that the guests are assumed to need at about 2 am.

Public swimming pools

Although the sexes are separated in the changing rooms, Brits may be somewhat taken aback by explicit diagrams directing them to soap their crotch in a public shower before being allowed into the pool.

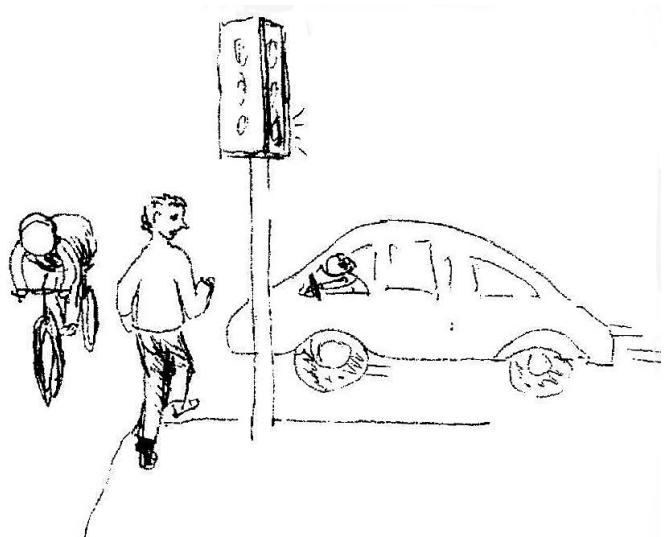
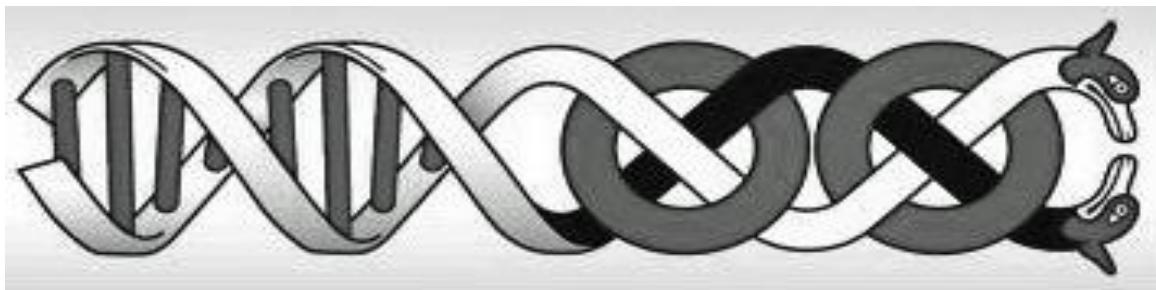


Illustration: Brenda Tyler



The Viking Diaspora

by Peter Addyman

876. In this year Halfdan shared out the lands of Northumbria, and they were engaged in ploughing and in making a living for themselves
(Anglo-Saxon Chronicle)

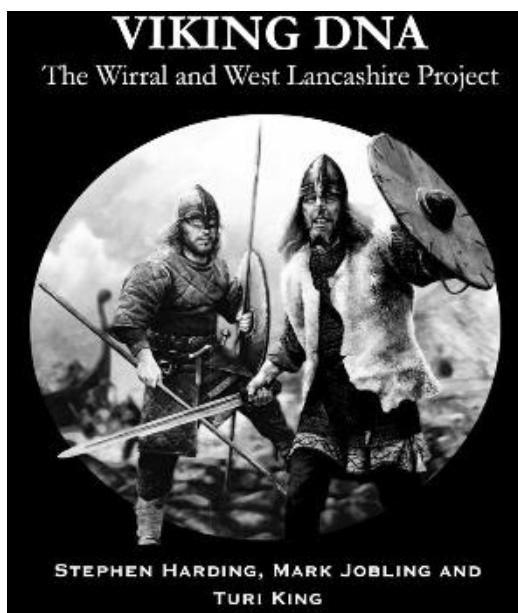
With this laconic entry the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records the moment when Viking invaders in the North of England became settlers. As well as ploughing and making a living for themselves these former Vikings, human nature being what it is, also began raising families – and the implication is that their descendants must still be with us in these areas today.

Such descendant families are most likely to be found in areas where there are placenames with Scandinavian elements. These occur over much of the area of England that became the Danelaw, north and west of a line across the Midlands from Bedford to Chester. An exciting research project by the University of Leicester has begun to use genetics to establish once and for all the proportion of Viking ancestry in different parts of the north of England and of the Isle of Man.

The basis of the new research is that most people get their surnames from their father. Men also inherit specific genetic material (DNA) from their father – that is the Y chromosome, which is responsible for making males. It seems that a Y chromosome type can relate to a particular surname – and most surnames are linked to particular regions. The research project is concentrating on areas of known Viking settlement. It identifies local men who have surnames that are known to occur in those regions before about 1600, and obtains DNA samples from them. This enables the researchers to map the different chromosome types found in different regions in the past. Concentrating first on regions where they suspect a strong influence of Norse Vikings, they are comparing the Y chromosomes types found with those found in Norway.

A pilot study has already been completed. This has found that up to 50 per cent of the DNA from men of Old Wirral and Old West Lancashire ancestry was indeed of Viking origin. The results of this exciting study have given rise to a number of scholarly papers and can be read about conveniently in *Viking DNA: The Wirral and West*

Lancashire Project by S Harding, M Jobling and T King (Countryvise and Nottingham University Press 2010).



After this success the research is being extended to North Lancashire, Cheshire, Cumbria, Yorkshire, Durham, Northumberland and the Isle of Man. In Norway itself similar studies are being made to try to pin down particular Y chromosome types to particular regions of Norway from which British Viking settlers may have come.

How do the Leicester university researchers go about obtaining their data? First, in consultation with surname geographers and surname historians they draw up a list of eligible surnames. Then, through local publicity, they invite men carrying one of these surnames whose father's father was born in the North of England or the Isle of Man to take part in the study. One person of each name is selected and asked

to attend a recruitment event to be held locally. There the assembled males are told – probably by Dr Turi King, a lead researcher of the Leicester project – what is happening and how the method works. They then provide a saliva sample on a swab, fill out a questionnaire about their ancestry and a consent form and enjoy a cup of tea. The individual results are in due course communicated to each participant, and are added to the several thousand samples already obtained from men with northern surnames.

Much of the fieldwork to collect DNA samples around the North of England was completed in 2012. A final phase of collection from men who have surnames present in the Isle of Man in medieval times is taking place in 2013.

Results are eagerly awaited. These may be a little time in coming, however, as Turi King and her team have recently been diverted onto another publicity-catching and exciting project – the identification through DNA analysis of a skeleton recently dug up on their doorstep in Leicester – now known to be the bones of the English King of contested reputation Richard III. Turi should have written this article – but Richard III took her away from it – so she has authorised your editors to plagiarise the information from her various papers, briefing sheets and websites. For The Impact of Diasporas project see: www2.le.ac.uk/projects/impact-of-diasporas.

'Love as eternal as the midnight sun'

by Brita Green



Hagbard and Signe

Photo: Alan Johansson

On the Swedish west coast – a few miles inland – there is a village called Asige. The most likely meaning of the name is ‘church on the ridge’ (Swedish *ås*), but it has also been suggested that it means ‘the oak-grove of the gods’ (*asar* being the Swedish word for the Norse gods). Either way, it is a place that has certainly been inhabited since Viking times – and much longer, as the bronze-age mounds and stone-age graves show. There are not many rune-stones in the area, but there are a lot of standing stones, which are found either on their own, or in circles or small groups. They are of varying sizes: the taller one above is about 4 m high. They are usually thought to be from the Viking period or the centuries just before.

These two stones are known as *Signe and Hagbard*, and there is a legend attached to them. Hagbard was a Viking from Trondheim in Norway. He and his brothers set out on a Viking raid south along the

coast, and eventually they reached the rocky and sandy shore about halfway between Gothenburg and Malmö. In those days the area was Danish, and the land was ruled by a man called Sigvard. When Hagbard and the other Norwegian vikings approached, Sigvard’s sons had to defend their stretch of coast – and not for the first time: there was old rivalry between the two families – and a fierce battle followed. They all fought bravely, and nobody won and nobody lost. In the end they decided to call a truce, and despite the enmity between the two families, Sigvard invited Hagbard and his brothers back to his castle for several days of feasting.

And that is how Hagbard met Sigvard’s daughter, Signe. They fell in love, and one evening Hagbard dressed up as a girl so that he could be with Signe. Signe’s handmaidens invited him (her) to sleep among them. Whilst washing before going to bed, the maidens asked their visitor why her legs were so furry,

and her hands so calloused. Being a true Viking, Hagbard quickly composed a clever poem to explain his strange appearance. But Signe, of course, had recognised him.

During the night that Signe and Hagbard spent together they exchanged promises of eternal love and faithfulness, even though they knew that the animosity between the families meant that there was no hope they would ever be allowed to marry. And, sure enough, the next morning, the handmaidens betrayed Hagbard, and he was seized by Sigvard's men. Hagbard defended himself well, and slew many of them, but in the end he was overpowered and taken to the court – the 'Thing' – in Asige to be judged, not for slaying Sigvard's men, but for loving his daughter. People at the Thing had different opinions – many thought it would be a pity to lose such a good fighter – but in the end it was decided that the King's honour had to be upheld, and Hagbard was to be hanged.

Gallows were constructed not far from the castle where Signe was sitting amongst her weeping handmaidens – presumably they were regretting their betrayal. She told them that she had promised Hagbard that if he had to die, she would also want to die, as he was the only man she would ever love. She asked her handmaidens if they were willing to follow her, and they all vowed to die with her. So she told them to set fire to her chamber as soon as the watchman signalled the execution.

Hagbard was brought to the gallows. In order to test Signe's fidelity he asked the hangman to first hang his cloak. Hagbard explained that it would please him to get an impression of how he would look when he was dead. His last wish was granted, and his cloak was hoisted on the gallows. The watchman, thinking it was Hagbard hanging, gave the signal to Signe's handmaidens, they set fire to the castle, and they all died in the flames. When Hagbard saw the burning castle, he felt more joy about his beloved's faithfulness than sorrow at his own impending death. He expressed his feelings in a poem, and then he was hanged. 'Hagbard's Gallows' are there to be seen to this day. And on the spot where Signe died, a small well sprang up, known even today as 'Signe's Well'.

If you think the story-line sounds familiar, variations of it have been told in many different parts of Scandinavia from as early as the 9th century (in fact, 'Hagbard's horse' was a kenning – an Old Norse poetic metaphor – for 'gallows'). In the 13th century, the story was recorded by the Dane Saxo Grammaticus (who also recorded the Hamlet story) – so maybe Romeo and Juliet are mere aliases for Hagbard and Signe? Later, it became a popular ballad, and in 1967 it was made into a Danish-Swedish-Icelandic film, with the title *The Red Mantle*. (It won a technical prize in the Cannes film festival.) The film poster provided the title for this article.

Quiz on Denmark

Some of the questions have multiple correct answers. For each question one point will be given if, and only if, the correct answer(s) is/are found. If an incorrect answer is ticked, or if a correct answer is missed, no point will be given for that question.



1. How many Danish Nobel Prize winners are there?

1 ten 2 twelve 3 fourteen

2. Which job did Ole Rømer have?

1 Royal Mathematician 2 Master of the Mint 3 Head of the Copenhagen Police

3. In which year was the currency unit “krone” introduced?

1 1742 2 1875 3 1909

4. How many inhabited islands does Denmark have (excluding Greenland and the Faroe Islands)?

1 between 50 and 60 2 between 70 and 80 3 over 100

5. With which other country does Denmark currently have a border dispute?

1 UK 2 Poland 3 Canada

6. Which pseudonym did Karen Blixen use?

1 Isak Dinesen 2 Boganis 3 Pierre Andrézel

7. In which year was the letter “å” officially introduced?

1 1948 2 1918 3 1848

8. What is the highest recorded temperature in Denmark?

1 35.3°C 2 36.4°C 3 38.1°C

9. When was the current law of succession adopted?

1 2009 2 1953 3 1848

10. How many grandchildren does Queen Margrethe have?

1 five 2 six 3 eight

11. Which scientist has appeared on bank notes?

1 Rømer 2 Ørsted 3 Bohr

12. Which chemical element was first identified in Copenhagen?

1 Hafnium 2 Aluminium 3 Bohrium

13. How many of his fairy tales were published during the life of H. C. Andersen?

1 159 2 163 3 168

14. During all of the Winter Olympics Denmark has:

1 won a silver in curling 2 won a bronze in figure skating 3 never won a single medal

15. Where can you see the “K-T boundary”?

1 near Kolding 2 on Stevns 3 in Greenland

Send your reply to CoScan, c/o Jens Buus, 6 Baker Street, Gayton, Northants, NN7 3EZ, or email: jbuus@btinternet.com. Closing date is 10 September 2013. The winner will be awarded a prize, which will be published in the next issue of the CoScan Magazin

A Decade of New Nordic Food

by Einar Rissvik,
Leader of the working group for New Nordic Food (2007-14)
and CSO Nofima



This is the story ...

In the beginning, in 2003, it became obvious to a few people inside the Nordic countries that these together constitute a gastronomic region with exciting possibilities. Already at that point the Nordic countries had won 10 out of 24 medals in *Bocuse d'Or*.

International media began to ask why and how this could happen – it came as a surprise to most people outside the region.

As the Nordic countries already had in place several gastronomic institutes and their own traditions for organising national food and cooking competitions, this success in international competitions came as no surprise to them. Academics had

for long been researching the characteristics of local produce, and *terroir* (a regionally centred food culture) was already an established term. It is not unfair to say that in some circles a new food culture was beginning to bud.

The following year, in September 2004, Claus Meyer, the TV food journalist and co-owner of NOMA, initiated The Nordic Cuisine Symposium, with twelve top chefs from all the Nordic countries. They took as their inspiration a resolution adopted by Basque chefs in 1973 and the *Dogme* film manifesto. This resulted in the Århus manifesto for the New Nordic Cuisine (<http://nynordiskmad.org/om-nnm-ii/koeksmanifestet/om00/>), launched in a second workshop at which the Nordic food ministers were present. They responded with enthusiasm through their common Nordic Councils initiative, and the New Nordic Food programme was born. Thus collective support was added to the early movement. Political ambitions for new jobs, prevention of disease, value creation and social leverage were now added to the background material of the Århus declaration.

The opportunity was there and in October 2004 the restaurant NOMA (short for NOrdisk/MAd) announced

on its new menu that ‘in this restaurant we will raise a new Nordic cuisine embracing the arctic, lighting up the world with its character and good taste’. The bud had produced its first flower.

In the manifesto the chefs focused on the particular qualities of the region and how use could be made of the different seasons. It was seen as essential to seek influences from the outside in order to avoid a feeling of isolation. This is not unique to Nordic cuisine, but what is typically Nordic is the desire to make gastronomy cover good health as well as good food. Perhaps the most striking change is the aim of going beyond the chefs into the whole food chain and involving everyone whose concern is with food. Collaboration between chefs, industry, academia, education authorities and the general public is a long tradition and exemplifies the egalitarian and anti-elite focus of the Nordic regions. This perspective has been central to the establishment of a new identity for Nordic cuisine.

A consequence of the discussion that led to the formulation of the manifesto has been the attempt to transform abstract formulae into food on the plate. The chefs René Redzepi, Thorsten Schmidt, Hans Välimäki, Mathias Dahlgren and many others participated actively in the debate and the results have been seen in their respective restaurants. Seen in perspective it is possible to discern a line going from Ferran Adrià at *El Bulli*, and at the same time to recognise the pure, simple

and fresh expression mentioned in the first paragraph of the manifesto. By 2005 it was possible to say that the New Nordic Food movement had established itself as a new non-dogmatic movement, at least for the high end of the gastronomy sector.

We have all seen that the development of restaurants like NOMA, Malling & Schmidt, Geranium and Mathias Dahlgren has opened the way for a broader Nordic food identity in restaurants like Maemo, Fäviken, Dill and many others. Typical for the New Nordic Food has been the focus on local ingredients and on both the aesthetics and ethics of production.

Already in 2005 the manifesto was receiving political support, and two years later the Nordic Council launched their programme for 2007-2014. This programme is not of course the New Nordic Food movement as such: the movement is much more besides. It soon became clear that the main challenge was not to support the high end restaurants – they manage well enough on their own. The aims of making New Nordic Food culture into something for the general public and of combining good food with good health are much more challenging. During the early period (2007-10) the programme gave support to approximately 40 enterprises, ranging from small and medium-sized food producers to large scale catering concerns in hospitals and schools, and networks of authorities working on improving legislation for small scale production. In the later

period (2010-14) the emphasis is still on producers and catering, but the most important focus has been on children as a target group for changing their food habits.

All this implies that the international focus on food has grown. It has become apparent to many that food as a creative industry can bring new dimensions to meetings, conventions and political conferences. The idea is a simple but effective one. A meal can underline the purpose of a meeting and reinforce it. Examples where the programme has played a role in events are: the Cannes film festival (2012) with a kitchen party (www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dx8IBIxhuV4), fairs for computer game programmers (Sweden and USA in 2012) with one-hand fast food (www.youtube.com/watch?v=l5IhnpE4OwY) and Nordic food days in Washington DC with Nordic school food (2012 and 13). During the Nordic Star Chefs in Japan event in Tokyo (2012) five leading chefs from five Nordic countries drew more media attention than a typical state visit to Japan (www.youtube.com/watch?v=2bic16-hanw). Geir Skeie, the *Bocuse d'Or* winner of 2009, Thorstein Schmidt from Malling and Schmidt, Håkan Örvarsson who signed the manifesto, Malin Söderström who prepared 2011 Nobel prize dinner in Stockholm and the avant garde chef Antto Melasniemi drew lots of attention in Japan because of

similarities between Japanese and Nordic food philosophy.

Today the movement is thriving and showing results everywhere. Never have the Nordic countries had such a wide selection of local high quality foods available. There is still a long way to go, as foods representing our cultural heritage, produce from high quality *terroirs* and the use of local raw materials to stimulate wholesome food of good quality represent only a small fraction of the total food market. Compared with established food cultures like France, Spain and Italy we are still lagging behind, but the process is one of upgrading our food culture from one of poverty to one in which we can have pride. More time is needed. New Nordic Food will take on many forms in the years to come, but it is impossible to extinguish the flame now burning in the spirits of a population in this developing Nordic food culture.



What is it about the Nordic diet?

by Mark Elliott



The reputation of Nordic food has been soaring. In the 2012 European cooking championships the top-placed four were Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Iceland, in that order. France and Belgium nowhere. The Noma restaurant in Copenhagen, serving an unusual but unequivocally Nordic cuisine, has repeatedly been voted the best restaurant in the world – see the article elsewhere in this issue of the CoScan magazine. The New Nordic Food movement, launched with its manifesto in 2004 and also covered in this issue, has enjoyed a decade of huge world-wide interest. Why?

It can't just be porridge, the basis of the Nordic diet since Neolithic times (as we were told in Anna Sophie Strandli's article on Viking food in our last issue). But the Nordic version of porridge is still an important element in the cuisine, and what is claimed to be the world's first porridge bar, *Grød*, opened in Copenhagen in 2011. And the ingredients of this Nordic staple give us a clue – essentially grain and milk, available even in the relatively less agriculturally productive areas of the far north of Europe. Quite different, for example, from French *potage*, whose etymological roots lie

in a vegetable garden. The Nordic diet is based on what you can get in the far north, on what you can grow in the short summer, or catch and shoot in the cold seas or over the wild country.

Experts have analysed this. Food in the Nordic region, they say, has traditionally been a matter of necessity, not of abundance or pleasure-seeking. They ascribe this partly to a puritan ethic, but also to the brevity of the growing season. The resultant reliance on nature, on what can be procured from the limited resources available, appears to be common across the whole region despite its geographical diversity from the Arctic wastes to the urban sophistication of Copenhagen. And there are advantages to the apparently unpromising environment. Short summers, but much longer days – and this means more light, making for better flavour. Small isolated communities, thrown on their own resources, have been creative over time in developing uses of the available raw materials. Harsh weather has also made preservation of food easier – as well as developing lusty appetites.

The differences between the Nordic and, say, Mediterranean regions are apparent. Nordics of all varieties enjoy their landscape and its primordial beauty, enjoy the outdoor life even in areas which southern Europeans might regard as unproductive wilderness. And they enjoy harvesting natural resources – gathering fungi, picking wild garlic and berries.



Harvest of golden chantarelles

Photo: Brita Green

Some of the native berries are special to the region, such as cowberries and cloudberry. Game meat too is often special – musk ox from the Arctic is an extreme example, but reindeer and elk are relatively common on Nordic menus. And they are healthy. A recent study from Tromsø University in northern Norway has

shown that reindeer is not only one of the leanest meats around, as has long been known, but also high in essential fatty acids, in omega-3 and omega-6, and even in vitamin B-12.

It is the emphasis on healthy eating, perhaps as much as anything, which has brought the Nordic diet into international prominence. Part of it may derive from an antipathy to the factory-food sameness of so much of the food eaten around the world, an obstinate Nordic wish to stand apart from globalisation. But there is a more positive component to all this, in the notion that gastronomy should be a matter not only of good food but also of good health (described in the article on the New Nordic Food movement) – thoroughly welcome in these days of international concern over increasing obesity. Some of the Nordic recipes may seem a little surprising at first. Not everyone would find appealing the combination of ‘ancient grains and pungent herbs’, mentioned in one recent scholarly analysis; and the descriptions of eating at the Noma restaurant often imply slightly alarming extensions of the clients’ gastronomic horizons. But the emphasis on locally produced and seasonal foods, on natural ingredients, on the cultural heritage of the region and the lessons that it can teach, is much more than an exercise in nostalgia. It deserves to prosper.



In January 2010, I was approached about translating the foreword to a book about Noma. The foreword was written by the Icelandic-Danish artist Olafur Eliasson, a friend of René Redzepi, the world-famous chef and co-owner of Noma. The text seemed intriguing – if a trifle odd. Entitled ‘Food is everything, but everything isn’t always food’ and beginning with the words ‘A plateful of milk skin with grass, flowers and herbs’ it explains that this strange dish was created during an experimental workshop at Eliasson’s studio in Berlin in 2007 and goes on to discuss the philosophy behind the restaurant and its ‘new Nordic’ cuisine.

Requests to translate further parts of the book – in fact almost everything other than the actual recipes – followed at intervals and included René Redzepi’s ‘voyage of discovery’ in search of new ingredients from more distant parts of Scandinavia such as Iceland and the Faeroes, an account of the daily work of the restaurant including gathering their own local ingredients, a brief biography of René Redzepi, excerpts from his diary for the week leading up to the opening in 2003, and profiles of some of his suppliers. That might have been as far as my interest went,

The Best Restaurant in the World 2010-12

by Rae Walter

but before I had finished all the translation, Noma won the title of World’s Best Restaurant for the first time – a success repeated again in 2011 and 2012. I got talking about it to a friend and colleague at the school where I was then working, who knows about my love of all things Danish and had helped me out with some questions about Chinese cuisine in another context, and somehow the idea arose that we should try to arrange a meal at Noma. Eating in world-class restaurants is not part of my normal lifestyle so this plan might have come to nothing, except that my friend just happens to have a sister who is a real foodie and who had not only eaten at Noma several times but had got to know René Redzepi and some of his team.



She offered to make the reservation as soon as the next booking period opened, and so it was that two Chinese girls from Hong Kong, a Danish friend living in England and I ended up having dinner at Noma on 30 November 2010 and being given special treatment.

Despite all I had read about it, I didn't really know what to expect. The restaurant is in a converted warehouse on a part of the Copenhagen waterfront that – very appropriately – was once the centre of trade with Greenland, Iceland and the Faeroes. The décor is delightfully simple and fresh and the atmosphere relaxed – nothing pretentious.

The food was completely unlike anything I had had before. Indeed, some of the things we ate I am unlikely ever to eat again. I am thinking particularly of the 'live fjord shrimp and butter'.



The shrimps (just one for each of us) arrived on a bed of ice in a preserving jar and appeared comatose until you tried to pick one up to eat it, at which point they suddenly woke up and went skittering across the ice. I have to

say that they were crunchy, but didn't have a lot of flavour. There were other, much nicer things in the selection we were served. The langoustines especially, served with their 'dip' on a slab of granite, remain in my memory, along with an interesting mini-dessert of Jerusalem artichoke.

I should explain, for those who haven't eaten there, that what you get is not a three-course meal, but a series of small dishes, some more unexpected than others, and served in the most ingenious ways – on a rock, in a cake tin, in a flowerpot... Each is brought to the table by a waiter who explains exactly what you are eating, and in some cases which parts of the dish are not to be eaten, as it is sometimes hard to tell.

It was a wonderful evening, quite different from the usual restaurant meal and probably a one-off as far as I am concerned, though I would jump at the chance of going again if someone invited me. It was a beautiful October evening and we walked back to our hotel in such a good mood that even now, we can't help smiling when we remember it.



The author furthest to the right



by Anna Sophie Strandli

The perfect no knead bread



300 g wheat flour
125 g spelt flour
3,5 dl of water
2 tsp salt and 1/2 tsp dry yeast

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl using a wooden spoon. The dough should be moist and sticky. Cover with cling film and leave in a nice and cosy place for 12-24 hours. Pour the dough onto a floured surface and, with wet hands, fold ends over a few times. Cover, and let it rest in the bowl for about an hour or until it puffs up. Meanwhile, put a casserole that can withstand high heat, such as enameled cast iron, into a cold oven. Set the temperature to 240°C. When really hot (be careful!) remove the pot and plop in the dough. Cover with a lid and bake for 30 minutes. Remove the lid and bake for another 10-15 minutes until the crust is golden. That's it!

Anna Sophie's Kitchen

Allium ursinum –
known as ramsons,
wild garlic, bear
leek, buckrams,
broad-leaved garlic,
wood garlic, bear's
garlic, ramslök, rams
or Vikings' garlic.



Ramsons pesto
A good bunch of
rinsed and drained
ramsons (about 250 grams)
100 g parmesan, roughly chopped
100 g almonds (or pine kernels)
1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
Freshly ground black pepper and sea
salt.

Place cheese and nuts into a food processor and blitz into fine crumbs. Add ramsons and process into a coarse pesto. Now add the oil little by little, with the machine still running. Season with salt and pepper.

Wild garlic butter
About 20 leaves of wild garlic
150 g butter at room temperature
Grated zest of 1 lemon, a squeeze of
lemon juice and a generous pinch of
sea salt.

Wash and dry the leaves and chop very finely. Mix with the soft butter, lemon zest, juice and season with salt.

Travel award reports 2012

Sorting Santa's Mail in Finland

by Caitlin Ripley



PRIZE-
WINNING
REPORT
2012

Last July six intrepid Scouts met in Helsinki to start what would become an unforgettable adventure. Their names were Susan, JJ, Duncan, Faith, Ella and their patrol leader: Caitlin. Their quest: Roverway 2012, a Scout and Guide camp for members aged 16-22.

It would be lying to say everything went swimmingly; even in the first day alarms were slept through, boats were missed and being on time was a thing of fantasy. But this did not douse the team's spirits in the slightest: mishaps are all part of an adventure.

After the initial pre-camp in Finland's capital with the rest of the

UK contingent, the lucky intrepid six were sent up on a fourteen hour overnight train to Lapland's biggest city: Rovaniemi. Now, the idea of an overnight train is that one can sleep during the journey to make the most of the next day, but why do that when the train is packed to the gunnels with other excitable Scouts and Guides? The group enjoyed an evening of fun and games with young people from all over Europe and beyond, before catching a few hours' kip to be just about fresh in the morning.

Santa Park in Rovaniemi, was where the smallest of Roverway's three opening ceremonies would be taking place, and over the course of the morning the six showed no sign of fatigue as they cheered, sang and attended elf training classes (no, really!).

In the afternoon, buses arrived to take 'Tribes' off to their paths. N05 was the one for the UK patrol along with patrols from France, Germany, Spain, Belgium, Ireland, Wales and of course Finland. They took a rather too small bus (a few small people were sitting on laps) a few miles away to Santa Village.

Every tribe had to complete a service project on their path to prepare the patrols for their own projects, which they would be planning and completing on the return to their home country. For N05 this was the thrilling task of sorting mail sent to Father Christmas. The Scouts and Guides learnt that every year Santa's Post Office would receive thousands of

letters, some with little more than ‘Santa Claus’ written on the envelope, and if they had a legible real return address, the sender would receive a reply in one of twelve languages.

That evening the tribe arrived, rather tired, at their campsite to find the luxury of ready pitched tents, dinner and a sauna. It was time to get into the theme: Finnish traditional celebrations.

Over the next few days the group celebrated everything from Shrove Tuesday to New Year with a midsummer multinational picnic thrown in the middle along with a Belgian national day. All the groups were keen to not only learn about other cultures but share their own games, songs and customs. Between all this they caught up on their sleep, which gave them the energy not only for walking, a luge run and making rafts, but also to stay up on the final Lapland night to see the midnight dusk: a beautiful amazing experience for everyone.

Then at 4 am the next day, the bus arrived and headed back to Rovaniemi train station, where a ten hour train took all the northern tribes down to the South of Finland towards Evo Camp. This time the train really was for sleep, as the endless night before had tired many of the group out. Soon enough everyone was reuniting at the main camp: all four thousand Scouts and Guides.

The camp was made up in many sections which were to be done as patrols, but mixing it up with other

nationalities was greatly encouraged, so many new friendships flourished over water activities, woodland crafts, theatre and creative performances, and developing a ‘Rover Momentum’ service project to take home.

The middle day however, was dedicated to be ‘Loverday’, an international festival where every contingent showed off the best of their country. From cream teas to a pretend bull run, the main road in the site was packed with people in all sorts of national dress, whether it was their own or swapped. The atmosphere was truly spectacular.

At the closing ceremony, there were tears all round. Hugs and email addresses were exchanged and promises to come visit each and every country or have people to stay. Everyone was sad to see the end, but they had to look forward: there would be many many more opportunities in Scouting to do similar things again. As for the intrepid six: they still had to finish their Rover Momentum project: spreading the word about international relations and opportunities abroad for young people in Scouting through media and meetings, so they’d have to meet again at least. Opportunities like this are unique, but they aren’t rare. Don’t just hear about it, be there.



Many travel-award winners go on BSES expeditions to Arctic Norway. Martin Goddard and William Sanderson took part in the same expedition, one as trainee leader, the other as a young explorer.

The weeks flew by

by Martin Goddard

In the autumn of 2011 I applied to the British Schools Exploring Society (BSES) to join their 2012 expedition to arctic Norway as a Trainee Leader on the Leadership Development Programme. Having been selected to fulfil this role, I then proceeded to look for funding support from a variety of sources, and I was kindly awarded £100 from CoScan.

A group of twelve Trainee Leaders, the Base Camp Manager and a Doctor made up the expedition's advance party. We departed for Oksfjordjokelen a few days ahead of the main expedition party in order to build a bridge across a fast flowing river, establish base camp and the mountain training camp, and conduct our own mountain training, which we would then pass on to the Young Explorers upon their arrival. It was at this point that we got wet – very wet. Four days of solid rain to welcome us to the Arctic Circle to be exact. Throughout the expedition the weather proved to be quickly changeable, and offered added challenges when poor, but glorious

conditions when the sun did come out.

Following our own mountain training, we returned to base camp to meet the groups of Young Explorers, known as fires, which we would be attached to. I and a fellow Trainee Leader were attached to Noklan Fire. The three weeks we spent with the Young Explorers absolutely flew by! The day before their departure we put on our own Olympics, made up of events such as pancake making, jam press ups and an 'It's a Knock Out' style assault course. Loppa Fire won the Gold, but I also received the Best Trainee Leader medal for organising the majority of the event. The duct tape medal takes pride of place on the mantelpiece at home!

Having waved off the Young Explorers, the Trainee Leader fire departed on an independent five day trip to explore a smaller, secondary ice cap a few kilometres north of the main Oksfjordjokelen glacier. This was probably my most enjoyable, challenging and memorable time. Our first night on the ice cap was particularly special, as we watched the midnight sun go down below the horizon for the first time since we had been in Norway. The views were stunning. The following day, in beautiful bright sunshine, we circumnavigated the ice cap, completing what we called the Five Peak Challenge, where we made it to the five tallest peaks that surrounded the ice cap in that one day. A night and day to remember forever!



Resting at a nunatak

Photo: W.Sanderson

Olympic pancake-making in the Arctic

by William Sanderson

In the summer of 2012, I went on the British Schools Exploring Society Arctic Odyssey Expedition to the Finnmark region of Arctic Norway. The expedition consisted of about 70 explorers between the ages of 16 and 20 along with mountain leaders, science leaders and trainee leaders.

All the explorers were divided into groups which are called 'fires'. This is a BSES term which comes from the belief that the number of people in a fire is the number which could comfortably gather around a camp fire. My fire had 10 members and was called Loppa Fire after an island in the region. Each fire had a type of science that they would focus on, as science was a key part of the expedition. Loppa fire would focus on glaciology, which meant that we would spend most of our time on the ice. For this reason, our

fire was the one which everyone wanted to be in!

After having completed mountain training, we were ready to tackle the glacier in order to reach ice camp on the ice field. We woke up very early though the difference this made was minimal because there was close to 24 hours sunlight due to the location being high latitude! The ascent, which took about 4 hours, was lonely at times as you are effectively by yourself, with anyone else being roughly 10m away from you attached to the rope. When we finally reached ice camp, it felt like a massive achievement.

While on the ice field, we explored as much of it as possible. Our first trek on the ice was to a nunatak. This is an outcrop of rocks which pokes out of the top of the ice. Here we carried out some sedimentology. One of the highlights of the expedition was when on a day of perfect weather, we were able to climb a peak and get a fantastic, clear view of the rest of the ice field, and fjords down below. The scenery was stunning and that alone made the whole expedition and the fundraising entirely worthwhile. Having finished on the peak we found ice caves which extended deep into the ice, further than the eye could see.

Towards the end of our expedition it was decided that we should have our own inter-fire Olympics, having left a week before the opening ceremony and returning the day after the closing ceremony. It was not entirely similar to the London

version, but definitely just as good! One of the events was a pancake making competition which our fire excelled in. This may have been down to us smuggling maple syrup into the competition! Loppa Fire won the Olympics, and we enjoyed the first prize of a single bottle of coke!



Trekking down to the ice caves

Photo: W. Sanderson

Two months in Stockholm

by Sanne Schim van der Loeff

A budding journalist, a restless traveller and a keen photographer – I managed to secure an internship with a small English-language newspaper in Stockholm, Sweden. At the end of September I set off to Stockholm, to settle in Sweden's capital for two months.

Though the newspaper – an online newssite called *The Local* – writes its news in English, it focuses on Swedish events, making it very useful that I spoke Swedish. The team at The Local is quite small, a sales team of about 8 people and a team of

about 8 journalists (including freelancers) make a grand total of about 16 people. This makes the interns valuable for research as well as offbeat articles that the full-time journalists may not have time for.

I was entrusted several times to go out and take pictures as well, which were well-received overall. I wrote several short articles as well as previews for theatre shows and the Stockholm Film Festival.

As a keen runner, I discovered the city through runs and got to know my neighbourhood pretty well. I also spent a lot of time at my favourite museum: *Fotografiska*, which is a museum any tourist in Stockholm ought to visit. As my work included previewing Stockholm events, visiting museums and the Stockholm Film Festival for example, it was a wonderful way of combining my own interests and hobbies with my work.

Spending time in different countries to broaden our horizon is an option we have today that every twenty-something-year-old should take. Every time I have spent time in different countries I have learnt something new, and met interesting people.

Scandinavia is not the cheapest place to travel to, however, and the CoScan Travel Award made it possible for me to at least fund my way there. It is these kind of opportunities that are sometimes lacking when people want to move abroad. I hope that this award remains available to people with a passion for travelling.

Travel awards: this year's applications

Report by Brita Green

Because of ill health, both Dagmar Cockitt and Alfhild Wellborne were unable to attend the meeting, so in order for there at least to be two people present, Eva Robards was co-opted. We met in York on Thursday 11th April.

We discussed the 2012 recipients' reports, and potential prize-winners for best report and best photo, both to be printed in the Magazine. Our treasurer, Dagmar Cockitt, had sent the Income and Expenditure sheet and her accounts book, which informed us that, including recent donations, we had £2675 in the bank. We therefore decided that we would be able to spend at least £1500 on this year's travel awards. Seven societies (Anglo-Scandinavian Newcastle, Hampshire Anglo-Scandinavian, Midlands Scandinavian, Orkney Norway, Scottish-Norwegian Glasgow, Shetland Norwegian and York Anglo-Scandinavian) had between them collected just over £700 for the Trust Fund during the year – well done, and thank you! Please keep up your efforts, and hopefully some more societies will join the ranks next year. We are also extremely grateful to our regular monthly contributor, and to CoScan's executive committee, for their donations.

We had eleven applications to consider this year, four of them for BSES expeditions to arctic Norway,

two girls for a science school trip to Greenland, three medical students who wanted to go to Denmark, Norway and Sweden, respectively, and two people who needed to do field-work for dissertations (Norway and Denmark). With the comparatively low number of applicants, we were able to be fairly generous, and gave two grants of £175, six of £150 and one of £100. One application was rejected. If all the offers are taken up, we will be left with £1150 towards next year's awards.

DFDS are still offering free travel to award recipients, and two people expressed an interest.

Don't forget to try to have at least one fund-raising event for the Trust Fund during the coming year! Every contribution, however modest, helps.



Martin Goddard

This year, please send donations to this worthwhile cause, to:
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www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/onfa

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