

CoScan Magazine

2013/2



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Confederation of Scandinavian Societies of Great Britain and Ireland

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Deadline for contributions to the next Magazine: 1 April 2014

From the Chairman of the Editorial Board

Iain Robertson



As I write Christmas is approaching with its usual round of carol services, *Lucia* festivals and Christmas food. Here in York we're planning a large-scale *Lucia* festival in the Minster. There are already celebrations in St. Paul's and Birmingham cathedrals, so it would seem that the light is spreading outwards from Scandinavia!

Christmas is, of course, a special time of year for food, and at the risk of appearing to be obsessed with our stomachs, we're including in this issue descriptions of seasonal Scandinavian dishes, while the ever-popular Anna Sophie's Kitchen focuses on liquid refreshment.

Most of us who have lived abroad have experienced culture-clashes, sometimes amusing, sometimes embarrassing. In this issue we're continuing our series featuring these differences. We'd love to hear your experiences too, so please consider writing us an article – around 900 words – which you can send to iainro@tiscali.co.uk. Your article

doesn't have to be about culture-clashes of course. In the magazine we try to include anything of broadly Scandinavian interest, including things which may lie slightly outside readers' normal range of concerns. In this issue an article by Peter Wright touches on the world of international chess, while Peter Addyman keeps us up to date on the latest in Anglo-Scandinavian archaeology. There is, we hope, something for everyone.

In conclusion may we on the Editorial Board take this opportunity of wishing everyone a wonderful Christmas and a prosperous 2014.



Announcement

We have just learned with great sadness of the death of Dagmar Dahl Cockitt on 27 November 2013.

Dagmar worked tirelessly for the Midlands Scandinavians, Coscan and the Trust Fund for many years and will be sorely missed.

Message from the President

Mark Elliott



In my message for this magazine's last issue, shortly after our Tallinn conference, I mentioned briefly the case for expanding CoScan's horizons to include the three Baltic countries. During the last half-year the committee has looked briefly at this idea, but we are still far from any sort of agreement. As I fully recognise, there are arguments both for and against. Perhaps this is a good moment to touch on some of them.

There have for many years been a few advocates in CoScan of outreach to the three Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Estonia, so close to Finland and with some ethnic and linguistic links, was perhaps the clearest candidate, and the 2003 Helsinki conference included a day-trip to Tallinn. But historically both Latvia and Lithuania had been within the Scandinavian sphere of interest, particularly that of Sweden. At one time in the 17th century Riga was apparently the largest city in the Swedish Empire.

Having a Baltic seaboard and the odd historical encounter with Swedes does not prove Scandinavian-ness – CoScan has no ambition to embrace Germany or Poland. But in the 21st century the five Nordic states and the three Baltic states are building institutional links with each

other within the wider European framework. The so-called NB8 – NB representing Nordic/Baltic – hold regular Ministerial meetings, and the eight embassies in London have surprisingly frequent contacts. And just as there are large numbers of UK residents with one of the five Nordic nationalities, so too are there many with Baltic state nationality; 200,000 Lithuanians, according to the Lithuanian ambassador in London, though far fewer Latvians and Estonians. Why shouldn't CoScan move with the times, embrace our Baltic brothers and sisters, and incidentally swell our coffers (there are lots of Anglo-Lithuanian societies and no doubt -Latvian and -Estonian too)?

One reason why not, apart from sheer inertia, is the lack of linguistic and cultural overlap. Whereas nationals of the five Nordic countries can generally communicate comfortably among each other without resorting to English, none of the three Baltic languages is accessible to most of us. The NB8 may have much in common, politically and economically, but that isn't really relevant to most of what goes on in CoScan. And one shouldn't discount the inertia factor; bringing three new countries' nationals and societies on board would involve quite a lot of work by CoScan's dedicated workers (not enough of them!) as well as fundamental change to our constitution.

What do you think? We need to know – the answer isn't obvious. Please tell me or the Chairman, or any committee member, if you have views of any kind. All correspondence welcomed, as always.

Chairman's message

Eva Robards



‘A nagging missionary with a vision’ could be my job description. Again and again I am met with a big question mark on the faces of members of our member organisations, when the word CoScan has been mentioned: ‘never heard of it’ is a common reply. This clearly means that we are not doing well enough to reach out. Admittedly CoScan is known by many, but I would like there to be a better penetration of its existence into people’s minds.

To reiterate from previous Magazines, we have three main vehicles for our main objective which is linking and supporting our member organisations; these vehicles are the Magazine, the Website and Meetings.

The Magazine is, in my view, nicely developing into a membership magazine ... but perhaps we are barking up the wrong tree? If so, you should express your views! I am well aware of the fact that more or less every issue of the Magazine, for years on end, has contained encouragement for people to respond, with not much as a result. Though at present we work without an appointed editor, would a ‘Letter to the Editor’ be a good idea for

matters to be aired? Should there be a reward for the best letter?

The website is being re-developed and we hope to have a membership oriented homepage in not too long. Facebook is also important to widen the CoScan appeal and will be used to reach as many of you as possible.

Meeting up in person is, however, unbeatable. One way to meet other CoScan-members is to come to our AGMs. Not an exciting prospect? Wrong! Don’t miss next year in Edinburgh. The Norwegian Scottish Association is organising a tempting event (see page 12). We do hope to see you there.

Recruiting new member organisations is going well. Over the last 18 months we have eight new organisations signed up, seven of these in 2013. Since the last Magazine we have four new members: the University of Sheffield Centre for Nordic Studies, the Finnish Church in London, the Norwegian Church and Seamen’s Mission in London, and the Swedish Church in London. You are all heartily welcomed to our network! This network is covering Britain and Ireland –which is also the interest area of the Churches. There is every reason to work together – to focus on the **Co** which stresses the togetherness between us with a Scandinavian identity and affinity.

Societies

Hampshire Anglo-Scandinavian Society:

A fortieth birthday party

by Ingrid Brown and Yvonne Richardson



Ingrid Brown

At the end of September just over forty members and guests gathered in a Romsey restaurant to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the creation of HASS, the Hampshire Anglo-Scandinavian Society.

A bit of history and background ...

Visiting merchant seamen had long been able to count on the support of the Scandinavian Seamen's church in Southampton. In the early years the ministry was managed from Norway and after that from Sweden. The Seamen's church in the centre of the city also became a meeting point for the local Scandinavians.

I started helping out in the church in

1969. The work involved helping Scandinavian seamen to make phone calls home, serving coffee and waffles, providing Scandinavian newspapers and putting on Scandinavian films. It was also enjoyable to help the local Scandinavians to get into contact with fellow countrymen. The friendships forged during this period have certainly stood the test of time!

Unfortunately, the Seamen's Church had to close at the end of 1972 as the nature of shipping changed with considerably less time in port and most ships docking at Fawley oil terminal. As a leaving present, the minister presented me with a set of full size Scandinavian flags. We have since had a stand made and display these flags at most occasions.

Together with the local Scandinavians, I wanted to fill the gap left by the closure of the church and decided to set up something of our own early in 1973. Initially we called ourselves simply the Scandinavian Society which was later changed to Hampshire Anglo-Scandinavian Society, HASS, as this better reflected the make-up of the society.

We did not receive any financial assistance from the Scandinavian governments. We realised that we would have to manage through fund raising and membership fees. We put an advert in the local paper with an invitation for those interested to attend a meeting to form a Scandinavian society. The meeting took place and a committee was formed. The membership was no more than 20 to start off but quickly grew. Initially, my role was that of social secretary getting

started with organising the format and frequency of our meetings. To begin with, we hired a room at the University of Southampton once a month where we could have film shows and lectures and, of course, have coffee and Scandinavian cakes. Later we found other venues for our regular meetings.

As the social secretary and later as president my main objective was to carry on and promote Scandinavian traditions. At that time my own two children were young and I wanted them and the other Scandinavian children to have as much opportunity as possible to experience the highlights of the Scandinavian year. We started by celebrating midsummer in members' gardens with dancing round the midsummer pole following Swedish traditions and singing round a bonfire as in Denmark and Norway. We soon branched out and organised a 17th of May picnic in the New Forest. Our Christmas parties have been very popular from the start; the adults' traditional *smörgåsbord* has lacked none of the traditional specialities even in the beginning when shopping for the ingredients needed careful planning. The children's Christmas party saw Father Christmas coming and he has continued to do so for forty years... there are certainly plenty of good children in Hampshire! Most of our children have participated in the St Lucia procession over the years and learnt the Scandinavian Christmas songs. We always had raffles and craft stalls to try to raise money.

Over the years HASS has flourished and we now have around 130 adult members. Naturally, we have had our

ups and downs but in spite of us now being able to travel more easily and cheaply to Scandinavia, the society is still thriving. We now celebrate *fastelavn* in the spring, do fungi and berry hunts in the New Forest in the autumn and enjoy a lively crayfish party in August.



Crayfish party with special party hats

HASS has mostly consisted of Swedes, Norwegians, and Danes, though we have had some Finnish and Icelandic members over the years and one of our members comes from the Faroe Islands. We've had clay pigeon shoots, treasure hunts on Scandinavian themes, *Valborgsmässoafton* with a proper fire, Viking evening, picnics on Beaulieu Beach, walks in the forest and a coach trip to see *Mamma Mia* in London.



Valborg with singing, some in student caps

HASS provides a framework for relaxed socialising with a Scandinavian flavour. It brings us together on a regular basis to share our different Scandinavian traditions with each other and with our British members. Most importantly it allows our children to be familiar and to enjoy these traditions.

Most of us are married to British partners and we have also some totally British members who are interested in Scandinavian culture; HASS is open to all Scandinavians and to anyone interested in Scandinavian culture and tradition.

Now back to our fortieth birthday celebrations. It was a great evening with several of the founding members

present. We were very pleased to be joined by Michael and Camilla Persson, the vicar and welfare officer from the Swedish Church in London as well as Eva Robards, the Chairman of CoScan, who explained the purpose of this organisation.

After a welcome drink we settled down to a lovely meal with some singing and speeches in Scandinavian tradition. The party provided plenty of opportunity to reminisce as well as looking forward to many, many more years together in HASS!



University of Sheffield Centre for Nordic Studies

by Andrew Linn



Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Sheffield University

Background

The University of Sheffield's Centre for Nordic Studies was launched in October 2012. This marked the formal institutional recognition by the University of Nordic studies as an area where significant existing activity could be further supported and developed.

The Centre's aim is to 'support the understanding, use and enjoyment of Nordic languages and cultures' and has in the past year already established itself as a recognised presence on the University's

research and cultural landscape.

Nordic studies are poorly represented in Higher Education in the UK, as many of you are probably aware, and the Centre is a step towards improving that. The only academic departments offering full-service provision in teaching and research are at University College, London and the University of Edinburgh. These are supplemented by research centres at the University of Aberdeen and the University of Highlands and Islands, both focusing on medieval and Viking Scandinavia and its impact upon Scotland. While many local organisations work tirelessly to promote the Nordic world, at university level there was no formal body between London and Scotland working to support the study of and engagement with the Nordic world when our Centre was established in May 2012.

On a local level, the University of Sheffield has a long history of Scandinavian activities. Danish was taught in the Department of Germanic Studies from 1948 to 1974 and replaced with Swedish in the period 1974 to 2008, when formal teaching of Nordic languages ceased. However, links with all the Nordic countries remained strong and varied, encompassing student mobility in both directions, research visits and collaborations.

As well as teaching, student exchange and research, the University has in recent years witnessed a variety of cultural activities celebrating Nordic culture in Sheffield, such as the 2009 Carl Nielsen conference and

the 2010 Nordic Spring concert series. The student Scandinavian Society currently has around 130 members. In short, the University of Sheffield has had and continues to have strong links with Scandinavia, and profiling and coordinating this activity through a formal Centre has proven beneficial and productive. The University's Modern Languages Teaching Centre, for example, has added Danish to its MA programme in Translation Studies.

Activities

The Centre is directed by a group of three co-directors (Prof. A. Linn, Dr C. Roth and Prof. R. Stern) and acts as a sort of clearing-house for any activities related to its mission by supporting and profiling them as effectively as we can.

On an academic level, we act as an anchor for a range of research projects which include *Ola Nordmann Goes West: Using Virtual Worlds in Studying Migration from Norway*, *The Music of Björk*, *Danish Identity* (see R. Jenkins (2011) *Being Danish: Paradoxes of Identity in Everyday Life*, Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press) and *Danish Philosophy* (see R. Stern (2012) *Understanding Moral Obligation: Kant, Hegel, Kierkegaard*, Cambridge University Press). Nevertheless, our aim is to appeal to a broad audience not just from the University but across the region and the first six months of operation witnessed a full programme of activities.

The October 2012 launch event was followed by a talk by Richard Jenkins in November on 'Being Danish'. In

early 2013 we marked the bicentenary of the philosopher Søren Kierkegaard's birth with talks by Hugh Pyper (Department of Biblical Studies) and Robert Stern (Department of Philosophy). This varied programme of events continued in March with Oliver Johnson's 'Physical Fairytale: Finland's Jukola Relay' before concluding in May with a talk by Louise Sørensen on the 'Ola Nordmann Goes West' project jointly organised with the University's Arts Enterprise initiative.

In addition to the talks mentioned above, the Centre has also hosted a visit by the Norwegian Language Council and a Scandinavian Christmas Party in December 2012. In February 2013 its 'Northern Lights Festival of Ideas and Music' presented 4 concerts and 3 talks around the city.

Future plans

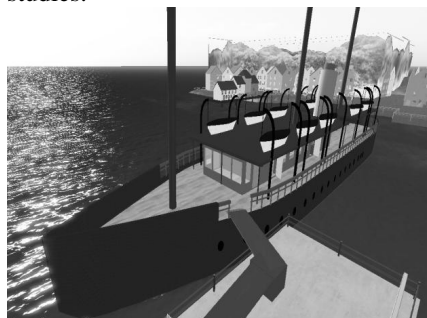
The Centre for Nordic Studies is already well-known in the Sheffield area, but we anticipate that being profiled by CoScan will draw interested parties from a wider region to our events. Three talks are arranged this autumn on the Danish Golden Age, Nordic Noir, and Norwegian language policy, and in 2014 we are hoping to launch a research project on ex-patriate Scandinavians in the North of England.

Our level of ambition is only tempered by a lack of guaranteed funding – a problem with which all our associations are familiar!

The Centre's ultimate aim is to provide staffing, both to support activity and also to provide teaching.

The University has Centres of Dutch Studies and Luxembourg Studies, funded by the respective governments, which serve to teach the languages and promote the culture in the UK, and it is our ambition to be able to make similar provision in Nordic Studies.

To find out more about the Centre for Nordic Studies, please visit our website: www.sheffield.ac.uk/nordic-studies.



North Sea from our Emigration project

'Ola Nordmann Goes West' is a University of Sheffield research project funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. At its centre is a purpose-built 3D virtual world recreating the journey of a typical late 19th-century Norwegian emigrant, 'Ola Nordmann' as he makes his way from Bergen in Norway to Hull and then Liverpool, before finally boarding the ship to New York. The aim of the project is to investigate whether an immersive 3D environment can bring a static historical event to life and garner personal insights of that event from those engaged in family and local history research.

Anglo-Swedish Society



On 25 October 2013 the Anglo-Swedish Society held a ball at the Mansion House in the City of London, by kind permission of The Rt. Hon. The Lord Mayor. The hosts were the Chairman of the Society, Alexander Malmaeus, and his wife Jackie Appel-Malmaeus. Their 293 distinguished guests wined, dined and danced the night away until the small hours.



Photo from left: Countess Jill Bernadotte, Sir Alan Beith MP, Jacqueline Appel-Malmaeus, Lord Mayor Roger Gifford, Chairman Alexander Malmaeus, Lady Mayoress Dr Clare Gifford, Baroness Maddock, H E Nicola Clase (Swedish Ambassador), Count Bertil Bernadotte. © Anglo-Swedish Society



The Chapter of York and York Anglo-Scandinavian Society

invite you to *Sankta Lucia* on Thursday 19 December at 7.30 pm in York Minster.

It is the first time that this traditional Swedish Festival of Light will take place in York Minster.

The service will include a traditional procession consisting of Scandinavian and British singers from around York as well as the 'Vaxholm boys' choir' from Sweden.

No ticket is required.

Swedish Church in London

Ulrika Eleonora Church offers Lucia services on several occasions in December. These are followed by coffee, saffron buns and ginger bread, when also *glögg* and items from the Christmas fair are being sold.

In addition, the Ulrika Eleonora church choir is participating in the Lucia celebration in St Paul's Cathedral.
www.svenskakyrkan.se/london



Photo: Karl Liljas

and

Lucia is also celebrated in many other of our member organisations, as here in Hampshire Anglo-Scandinavian Society.



CoScan AGM 2014 in Edinburgh

You are invited to join us for a weekend in Edinburgh

Friday 25 April – Saturday 26 April



Preliminary Programme

Friday 25 April, evening

Reception at the Norwegian Consulate, 12 Rutland Square, Edinburgh

Saturday 26 April, morning

Annual General Meeting next door to Masson House

After the AGM the Vice Chairman of Norwegian Scottish Association
Kirsti Dinnis will give a free guided tour of part of the historic Royal
Mile in Edinburgh.

Saturday evening

Dinner at the Royal Scots Club, £35 exclusive of wine
29-31 Abercromby Place, Edinburgh EH3 6QE
(www.royalscotclub.com)

After dinner a short programme of music and some sing-along.

Sunday 27 April

No official programme

Accommodation

Hotel Masson House (18 Holyrood Park Road, EH16 5AY, tel 0131 651298
www.edinburghfirst.co.uk, click on Masson House)

Double room £92 double occupancy per night

Double room £72 single occupancy per night, 5 single rooms £72 per night

These prices include full breakfast.

(Alternatively, you may want to find your own accommodation.)

Further information and booking form will follow in the new year.

Organiser: Norwegian Scottish Association, Edinburgh

Contact: eltyson@hernar.co.uk.

Culture

Marketing Norway: The Forgotten Story of Henrik Steffens

by Peter Fjågesund
– Guest writer

History is full of great names that through the merciless process of history itself are transformed from greatness to insignificance. Some few are recovered from oblivion, more or less by coincidence; most are not. One of these faded figures is Henrik (or Heinrich) Steffens (1773–1845).

In the early decades of the 1800s, and largely as a result of the Romantic movement with its interest in untouched nature and people living in close communion with it, Scandinavia and especially Norway acquired considerable interest in Britain and on the Continent. In the course of the whole century, around two hundred travel accounts about Norway were published in Britain alone. In the eighteenth century there were hardly any, with Mary Wollstonecraft's wonderful *Letters Written in Sweden, Norway and Denmark* (1796) as an exception from the rule.

As to the British discovery of Norway, it is difficult to pinpoint one person in particular who opened the modern and more tourist-based connection across the North Sea. In the first couple of decades after Waterloo, the so-called 'salmon lords' seem to have arrived in gradually increasing



Peter Fjågesund is Professor of British Literature and Civilisation at Telemark University College, Norway. He has written various books and articles on 19th and 20th century British literature, with particular focus on Anglo-Scandinavian relations.

numbers, soon also attracting other groups. When it comes to the Danish and German discovery, however, one man deserves special attention.

Steffens was not just anyone. First of all, the son of Danish-German parents who lived in Norway but moved to Denmark when Steffens was six, he was the cousin of another great Scandinvist, Nicolai Frederik Grundtvig (their mothers were sisters). As a young man he went to Germany to study geology, and here he rapidly developed into a natural philosopher of considerable repute, knowing all the central German artists and intellectuals, including Schelling, Fichte, Novalis, Goethe and the Schlegel brothers, and

through them he adopted the new Romantic gospel. At the age of twenty-nine, he then returned for a period to Copenhagen, where he delivered a series of mesmerizing lectures – most of them from the top of his head – which gathered huge audiences and essentially introduced Romanticism to Scandinavia. One of his most enthusiastic disciples was the young Adam Oehlenschläger, who at the age of twenty-three went home after an all-night discussion with Steffens and wrote *Guldhornene* ('The Golden Horns'), the poem that marks the inauguration of Romanticism in Danish literature.



Henrik Steffens

Despite his ambiguous national status, Steffens came to be regarded as a German philosopher, and he taught at a number of German universities, eventually taking over the chair of Hegel himself in Berlin at the latter's death in 1831. Still, he always spoke German with an accent and called himself 'der Norweger', and throughout his career he visited the country of his birth altogether three times. After the second visit in 1824, he then embarked

on a new career, which would have a direct bearing on Norway's reputation abroad: he started writing novels, or as he himself called them: cycles of short stories. The first of these is *Familierne Walseth og Leith* ('The Families Walseth and Leith') which was published simultaneously in Denmark and Germany in 1827. The second of the novels came out the following year and was called *Fire Nordmænd* ('Four Norwegians').

Familierne Walseth og Leith has an intricate plot with several narrative voices, and it moves geographically between Turkey, Corsica, Tunisia and several countries on the Continent. It also involves the English Leith family, thus weaving together a truly international plot. But at the centre of the novel, and covering the first eighty pages, is Rjukan, a place of a handful of farms in the remote mountains of Telemark, which would later become the site of the world's greatest hydro-electric power station and the scene of the heavy water sabotage actions during the Second World War.

The Rjukan waterfall and the neighbouring Gausta mountain (the highest in southern Norway) had only been discovered as a tourist destination in 1810, and by the 1820s the number of foreign travellers was still minimal. This is where Steffens made the great difference. First, despite the fact that he had never been there, he gave a description of the Rjukan scenery that was detailed, vivid and realistic. Second, he offered an enthusiastic celebration of the local Norwegian farmer, who was depicted not only as an incarnation of honesty, wisdom and

physical strength; in the aftermath of 1814 and the Norwegian Constitution, he was also elevated into a political idol, whose love of freedom pointed back to his Viking origins. Indeed, Steffens's heroic farmers are direct and highly conscious descendants of these forefathers, who at the time were increasingly being used in the various nation-building projects in Britain, Germany and elsewhere.



The Rjukan waterfall from a German travel account by August Moritz, *Tagebuch der Reisen in Norwegen in den Jahren 1847 und 1851* (1851)

With his novels, in other words, which became a major literary success in Denmark as well as Germany, Steffens appears, almost single-handedly, to have laid the foundation for the almost obsessive German fascination with Norway. Not only did a number of German writers and artists visit the country in the years following the book's publication; they also frequently

made direct references to it and made use of elements from the novel, suggesting that Steffens was the immediate inspiration for their journeys. Danes, too, flocked to Norway, and especially to Rjukan, including such 'Golden Age' painters as Martinus Rørbye, Wilhelm Marstrand, Louis Gurlitt and Frederik Sødring. By the end of the century, Rjukan was one of the most important tourist destinations in the country. Even Jules Verne wrote a novel, *The Lottery Ticket* (1886), set in Rjukan, after a visit several years earlier, which was illustrated by the famous Gustave Doré himself.

As suggested above, Henrik Steffens is now a faded figure, even though a chair named after him has recently been established at the Humboldt University in Berlin. Even in descriptions of his career, his fictional works are often hardly mentioned, and the novels themselves are still only available in their nineteenth-century editions, in Fraktur (or Gothic print); they, too, are fading away in libraries and, occasionally, in antiquarian bookshops, with hardly anyone reading them. The fact remains, however, that once upon a time this man, who knew the Danes and the Germans from the inside, proved that fiction can do unexpected things. Without Steffens, Kaiser Wilhelm II would hardly have been coming to the Norwegian fjords almost every summer between 1889 and 1914, and raised the giant Fridtjof statue still towering on a promontory at Vangsnes in Sogn. In fact, when on 25 July 1914 he received the telegram which informed him that the Austrian-Serbian ultimatum had

expired and that war was inevitable, he was sitting in a log chair in Balestrand in the Sognefjord, in the studio of the national romantic painter Hans Dahl, trying to enjoy the world that Steffens so effectively had conjured up nearly a century earlier.



Rjukan valley, with the Gausta mountain in the background, by W. M. Carpelan in *Voyage Pittoresque aux Alpes Norvégiennes* (1821-23)

The extraordinary Magnus Carlsen

by Peter Wright

Adapted by Anna Sophie Strandli

My interest in chess started in the 6th Form at the Birkenhead Institute Grammar School where I established a school chess competition and later at the Rock Ferry High School where I introduced lunch time chess. Participants paid 1penny to hire a chess set and when we had sufficient funds more chess sets would be added. This of course was quite some time before Magnus was born and in the interim period a cousin of mine, Peter Cloudsdale, became Chess Champion of Cumbria. With a Norwegian wife it is absolutely natural that I should be fascinated by the emergence of this shooting star in world chess.

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of Cumbria. With a Norwegian wife it is absolutely natural that I should be fascinated by the emergence of this shooting star in world chess.



Magnus Carlsen
2013 ©
Tata Steel

Magnus Carlsen was a quite extraordinary boy, born in Tønsberg, on 30th November 1990. His father had a passion for chess and taught Magnus at the age of five, and Magnus soon regarded chess as a great personal challenge. His first aim was to beat his sister on a regular basis. And then his father was next in line to face some of the remarkable mating combinations that already were being created in the mind of the young Magnus. It suffices to say that he became an international Grand Master at the age of 13, the youngest

ever at that time. His progress continued and at the age of nineteen he became the youngest chess player to be ranked the world number 1! How this was achieved was remarkable, for Magnus had also a very high regard for his personal fitness, something which stood him in excellent stead throughout some extremely long and potentially exhausting tournaments.

In his early days he was noted for his very aggressive and exciting style. His determination sometimes led him into positions of difficulty where he needed his developing skill in the end game. An interesting point about his early games was that he did not seem to mind how they opened. He then started to develop a passion for the control of the middle game, a fact which disconcerted some opponents! It is worth noting that he was a most prolific participant in tournaments all around the world from a very young age and that with his passion for football and other sports he continued to maintain his high level of fitness. I always visualize Magnus, like myself, doing press ups first thing in the morning before chess life begins.

The great English player, Grand Master Jon Speelman, analyzing several of Carlsen's endgames from the 2012 London Classic describes what he calls 'the Carlsen effect': '...through the combined force of his skill and no less important his reputation, he drives his opponents into errors. He plays on forever, calmly, methodically and, perhaps most importantly of all, without fear: calculating superbly, very few

outright mistakes and a good proportion of the very best moves. This makes him a monster and makes many opponents wilt'.

Following his activity in the world of international chess the March 2010 FIDE (World Chess Federation) rating list showed Carlsen with a new peak rating of 2813. A figure that only Kasparov had bettered at that time. The FIDE ranking list in January 2013 made it official that Magnus Carlsen had achieved the highest rating in the history of chess. His new rating of 2862 is 10 points higher than Gary Kasparov's legendary record from 1999.

Sponsors in general are not interested in individual players, though Magnus Carlsen is an exception to this rule. Andrew Paulson, the Chief Executive of Agon which markets the World Chess Championship, says that Carlsen presents a corrective to the stereotypes of chess stars as 'old, cranky, strange Russians whose names all start with a K'.

As the winner of the Candidates tournament 2013, Magnus Carlsen was the official challenger of reigning World Champion Viswanathan Anand. The match was in progress while this article was being written, but just before going to press we learnt that Magnus is now World Champion!



From the bookshelf



The Bone Thief and *The Traitors' Pit* by V. M. Whitworth are the first two novels of a trilogy whose third book has yet to be published.

The setting is the turbulent world of tenth-century England, a country witnessing ferocious and complex power struggles between the factions of Mercia, Wessex and the most recent invaders, the Vikings.

In the first novel we quickly become involved with the young cleric Wulfgar as he undergoes many adventures in order to wrest the bones of St Oswald from Viking-held territory. In the second he is forced to confront powerful forces in order to prove the innocence of his unjustly condemned brother.

Both novels are an excellent read, but they are more than just that, for the author is a distinguished historian in the field of Anglo-Scandinavian studies, so the background is as well researched and authentic as you could wish. Highly recommended.

Published by Ebury Press
2012, ISBN 9780091947231
2013, ISBN 9780091947194



Danish-Norwegian Kim Leine was in October awarded the Nordic Council's Literature Prize for 2013 for his novel *Profeterne i Evighedsfjorden*. This is the story of the Danish priest Morten Falck who travels to Greenland at the end of the 1700s. Leine has lived and worked in Greenland for 15 years.

Published by Forlag Gyldendal 2012
526 pages (Danish)
ISBN/EAN 978-87-02-10902-3



In this book from new knit designer Eline Oftedal, four iconic Norwegian knitting patterns (*Marius*, *Voss*, *Setesdal* and *Fana*) are given new shapes and forms. Stories about the inspiration and traditions behind each of the patterns are included, charting their origins and exploring what it is about

these patterns that so appeals to knitters all over the world. We are used to seeing these patterns on sweaters, but here is a collection of twenty contemporary projects, such as iPad and phone cover, a teddy bear, a toilet roll holder and even a pair of hot pants.

Published by Anova Books 2013

112 pages

Language: English (also available in Norwegian)

ISBN 9781908449474



55 Christmas Balls to Knit by Arne Nerjordet and Carlos Zachrisson: inspired by traditional Norwegian knitwear, these designs for holiday ornaments integrate the old with the new. With crafts based on the authors' original designs, this guide gives knitters the chance to make their very own versions of these playful decorations. Each pattern can easily be adapted to hats, mittens, or even sweaters by the creative crafter.

Published by Search Press Ltd 2011

144 pages

ISBN 13: 9781844487813

ISBN 10: 1844487814

Books by CoScan members

Anette Darbyshire

Gowns of the Haunted

Welcome to an emporium of mystery and secrets, where even the ghosts aren't what they seem.



Kate Hardy can't believe her luck when a stranger inadvertently hands her a lifeline. This leads her to 'Gowns of the Haunted', a mysterious, quirky emporium of fashion ranging from modern day goth outfits to vintage dresses and accessories. She is overjoyed when offered a job and free accommodation in the small flat above the shop but soon realises that something isn't quite right; she learns that the owner's sister was recently murdered in the shop and traumatised by her night terrors, Kate seeks comfort from her new friends. As nothing is quite what it seems, and her safety increasingly threatened, Kate no longer knows who to trust: the living or the dead.

Published by AD Publishing 2013

141 pages

ASIN B006QLUXFY

A Swedish sightseer in London, 1890

by Alexis Säfström

Translated and introduced by his
great-niece, Brita Green

In May 1890, two brothers from Kalmar in south-east Sweden, set off by train to Gothenburg, in order to board a ship for England. The brothers were en route to Australia, where they were hoping either to set up in business or 'dig for treasure'. In a letter home one of them describes his impressions of London:

The North Sea crossing was quite calm. On the second day we had fog and were nearly rammed by a sailing-ship, which veered off at the last minute so that it only damaged a couple of plates.

We had booked accommodation in the Sailors' Hostel, and we had a friendly welcome there by the host and hostess. The Sailors' Hostel is an excellent institution, and all emigrants to Australia should contact it both for help with buying tickets and for their stay in London. The food was simple but all clean and good-tasting, and one could find no fault with the beds or the room. The only unpleasant thing was a few cockroaches, but it is almost impossible to get rid of them.

On the North Sea we had had the company of a young businessman from Gothenburg called Berlin. He could speak English, and we went out with him to have a look at London. We were just in time to see the big workers' demonstration in Hyde Park on 4th



The Scandinavian Sailors' Hostel in West India Docks in the East End of London, which from 1888 to 1929 offered a haven to thousands of Scandinavian sailors and emigrants passing through London.

May. We stood in one place for three hours, while the demonstration passed by. It was amazing to see that not one single person in such a large crowd was drunk. In the procession itself there were about 100,000 workers, every union with its banner and a band playing, about 600 unions took part. On the way to Hyde Park we passed St Paul's Cathedral. The most beautiful thing in it was the fine stained glass in the windows. The church itself is a beautiful building, but almost all buildings in London are blackened by smoke, which quite ruins their appearance.

On the Monday we went to Kensington Museum (*now the V&A*), an excellent collection of antiquities: statues, paintings, musical instruments, tapestries etc. We also went to see Madame Tussaud's wax cabinet of royalty and famous men, but that was not worth a visit, although the English themselves think it is marvellous.

On Friday 9th May we went on board the *Liguria*. If we had known how unpleasant third class would be, we would most certainly have bought second class tickets. Let me tell you what we had to eat. For breakfast bread and butter and a gruel or porridge that was impossible to eat. For dinner soup, meat and potatoes. The soups were inedible except when it was pea-soup. The meat was not so bad, and with bread it was quite palatable, but the potatoes had sprouted and were rotten, impossible to eat. In the evening we had bread and butter. The tea and coffee were undrinkable.

Fritiof had a very difficult voyage, and I thought he would not get through it alive. From London to Aden the weather was fine, but from Aden to Melbourne the weather was quite hard. I myself was not seasick the whole time, but towards the end of the journey – along with the other third class passengers – I suffered tummy upsets because of the bad food.

The whole voyage was most unpleasant, firstly because of the lack of hygiene with the food and the cleaning of knives, forks and plates; secondly mattresses and pillows were so hard that you woke up several times in the night; thirdly there were third-class passengers who behaved like hooligans and we had many unpleasant experiences. We were helped on several occasions by a Dane who has lived ten years in America.

I have nothing to say about Plymouth and Gibraltar except that we saw magnificent fortresses in both places. In Naples we could go ashore and do some sightseeing. Naples has a grand

situation on the Bay close to Vesuvius, and the Italians have every right to boast about it and its beautiful situation. Port Said, Colombo, Albani, Adelaide – we saw all these only at a distance.

Finally, on 21st June, we arrived in Melbourne. You can imagine how happy we were to be among good honest people again.

The demonstration the brothers witnessed in Hyde Park was one of many in the 1890's. They eventually led to the formation of the Labour Representation Committee, which in 1906 became the Labour Party.

Alexis settled in Australia, but his brother returned to Sweden after two years.

Vikings in the British Museum – a new exhibition

CoScan Members are offered to join a group lecture package, arranged for the Anglo-Danish Society, 10.30-16.00 on 20 March 2014.

The cost will be £29.50 per person which includes coffee & biscuits, the curator's lecture, ticket to the exhibition and guide (printed).

NB: lunch is not included in the cost.

If you would like to take part, please email Lisbeth Ehlers (ehlerslisbeth@me.com) before 15 February 2014.

Culture clashes

by Iain Robertson

Every country has its own culture and customs – those practices and expressions which are taken for granted but which may not apply elsewhere. Here in Britain we ask people ‘How are you?’ but would be surprised if we received in reply a detailed account of someone else’s state of health. In Britain it has become increasingly common to say a cheery ‘All right?’ to people you meet casually. This surprises and bewilders foreign visitors. As a surprised and slightly indignant Danish student said recently, ‘Why should anyone think I’m *not* all right!’

I lived in Norway for fourteen years, and no Brit can live in Norway long without being aware of cultural differences, though these need not be quite so dramatic as those exposed in the television series *Lillyhammer*. In this an American gangster moves to Norway in order to avoid being caught by a rival gang. The series is hilarious precisely because it focuses on culture-clashes between America’s gangland, in which the toughest and most ruthless always wins, and Norway’s liberal democratic culture with its gentle emphasis on equal rights and consideration for all. Transposed to small-town Norway, the gangster causes havoc and quickly learns to exploit the system to his own advantage.

I experienced a particularly striking example of just how democratic Norway is very early in my Scandinavian career. A musician by

training, I readily accepted an invitation to become accompanist for the local choral society which was rehearsing a tuneful and relatively undemanding cantata in preparation for a trip to Denmark. All went swimmingly until it came to a passage where there was a change of time from four beats in the bar to six. The conductor, a local ambulance driver and a delightful man, had not grasped this change, and in consequence the choir never managed to sing what was in the score. As accompanist I gently contrasted the score version with what the choir had been singing. People noted the difference, but this did not mean that they agreed as to what they were going to sing. A serious dilemma existed. Some thought we should sing what was in the score, while others thought that this was being permickety and that we should sing what came easiest. Norway being a democratic land, the issue required a democratic solution. The next rehearsal was given over to allowing everyone to air their views. The composer, had he been present, would have been allowed his say, but his view would have carried no more weight than that of the lowliest choir member. For more than an hour and a half discussion went back and forth, until finally the matter was put to the vote. In a show of hands the choir decided to sing the version *not* in the score, as this was easier and less likely to go wrong. I could not help wondering how Beethoven would have fared if he had been required to submit the last movement of his choral symphony to a similarly democratic choir.

Perhaps the most obvious cultural difference between Britain and Norway is over the thorny issue of alcohol. Brits are horrified at the sky-high prices, and even more surprised when they read calls in the press to send them even higher. Wines and spirits are of course only available in the state-controlled *Vinmonopol* shops, and these seem to operate on the principle that they should be closed whenever you're most likely to want to shop there. One Whitsun I was due to have guests to lunch on the Sunday, and without thinking popped down on Saturday morning to the nearest *Vinmonopol*. To my dismay it was firmly *stengt* (closed). No-one had told me that wine and spirit outlets are not allowed to open on the eve of major festivals. Or on Sundays. Or on days when there is an election. Or after a certain time on Saturdays.

But enforcing virtue is not so easy. Despite – or perhaps because of – the tough licensing laws Norway has a vigorous culture of illegal *hjemmebrenning* – making your own spirits. There is little of this in Britain where alcohol prices are comparatively low. In rural Norway, on the other hand, there is an official battle between the forces of law and order and home distillers, though one suspects that sometimes the forces of law and order are not unwilling to turn a blind eye to what they know is going on. The rule is not to do it blatantly and not to get caught.

There are times when a British immigrant can find Norwegians – well, a bit childish! Though maybe this is because in Britain we've grown cynical and have lost much of the freshness of

childhood. We do not for example on social occasions go in for the sing-songs which are a *sine qua non* of any Scandinavian celebration. I recall a choir tour in which the social committee had been entrusted with the task of keeping spirits high on a long coach journey. There was (of course) lots of communal singing, people told jokes, they invented limericks and there was even the odd period of comparative silence. There was one activity, however, for which I was wholly unprepared. As spirits were beginning to flag towards the end of the day, packets of bubble gum were distributed and everyone was invited to partake in an orgy of mastication before competing to see who could blow the biggest bubble. The sight of choirmen, some of whom looked as fierce as Eric Bloodaxe, and their highly respectable wives chewing on the bright pink gum and blowing bubbles like five-year-olds is one which will linger in the memory.



Illustration: Brenda Tyler

A former foreigner's frustrations

by Eva Robards

Britain is a nation of foreigners. Some have arrived early, so to speak, as they are descendants from immigrants generations ago. When I arrived from Sweden only a quarter of a century ago, I found myself struggling with some of the habits that I encountered. Here is a selection.

Habits in the community

Oh, those bare legs in the winter! And no coats when partying in the evening! Little girls, and also a little older girls, walk around in the cold with not much clothing to protect them. There may be snow on the ground, but that doesn't seem to deter the courageous ones, who would be regarded as mad if they were dressed like that in similar conditions in Sweden. I have come to understand that, mentally, cold weather doesn't happen in the UK.

It still feels awkward, after all these years in this country, to turn my back towards people when passing them in a theatre row. In Sweden we think that is rude and pass people face to face. And my etiquette book has men letting women go downstairs first, and upstairs last, to avoid any looking under the skirts. The Englishmen being gentlemen keep below the woman to support her, and get their view.

Measuring

Soon after my arrival here, I wanted to make a sponge cake for some friends.

That cake didn't rise – it couldn't because I had set the oven temperature according to Celsius, but the oven was made to work in Fahrenheit. Another temperature problem I had was when my kitten was poorly and the vet said its temperature was 104°. I had no feel for what that could be in my Celsius gradation which, in turn, that vet refused to know anything about.

A Swedish colleague of mine got her measuring shock when she was to write her height in feet and inches in a form, before she started working in the laboratory. I helped her with the calculations, but we were both flabbergasted when the next question was her weight: in stones and pounds. Coming from a country where stones can be all sizes, we had some difficulties with the answer.

Eating

Something I really like in the UK is the heated plates for warm food. Going back home, it seems so uncultivated with cold plates all over – a bit shocking actually.

Alright, Bovril and Marmite may be good for you, but my taste buds shiver and my digestive system makes a somersault already at the thought of these culinary overkills. Then (in a health shop!) in Sweden I found a small jar of marmite, and it cost a fortune – a double whammy-shock in my own homeland.

A confusing matter is that here chips are not chips but crisps. In many other countries crisps are chips. Why not ban them all – they are not good for you anyhow.

House and home

Plumbing: I won't say a word about outdoor pipes, or boiler tanks on the first floor causing indoor flooding. I'll confine myself to taps: why are mixer taps so rare? My hands freeze up and cook alternatively when I wash them having to move back and forth between extreme temperatures.

Electricity ... those ever so safe plugs.

Heavy and bulky they are when travelling

and with modern technology it's necessary to have a number of them – plus adaptor plugs – in the luggage. If only plugs could be slimmed down!

Oh dear, I think I'd better stop now.

Otherwise you will think that I am complaining, which I am not. Actually, I do love this quirky country!



Two Viking disasters in England

by Peter Addyman

As 2013 comes to an end it is worth remembering that exactly a thousand years ago, at the end of the year 1013, Anglo-Scandinavian relations reached what has turned out, after 1000 years, to have been an all-time rock bottom low.

Ethelred, the English king, after three decades of Viking attacks and the payment of ever-increasing Danegelds to buy off the invaders, fled to the Isle of Wight at Christmas, then to Normandy and left England under the rule of Svein king of Denmark. 'At this time' remarks the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 'nothing went right for this nation, neither in the south nor in the north'.

The story of the previous thirty years, mainly told through the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, is one of constant raids, treaties, tribute payments, duplicity and disasters. The Scandinavian raids started

in Southampton and the West Country in 981. In 982 three pirate crews landed in Dorset and ravaged in Portland. By 993 Olaf Tryggvason, later king of Norway, was leading the substantial force that defeated the English at the battle of Maldon, an heroic disaster commemorated in the famous Anglo-Saxon poem. In 1002 the king ordered the English to slay all the Danish people in England on St Brice's Day, 13th November. An Oxford charter records that the Danes there were slaughtered in St Frideswide's Church. In 1012 the Vikings, by that time ravaging everywhere, perhaps replied by martyring the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Two archaeological finds have recently added some dramatic archaeological verification of this mayhem of 1000 years ago. Both are mass burials of young men of

Scandinavian origin who met a violent end. One was made near Weymouth, Dorset, not far from where the 982 pirate crews landed. The other was found under St John's College in the University of Oxford and may relate to the St Frideswide massacre. Both have been the subject of intense research, the results of which are now becoming available.

The Dorset find was made by Oxford Archaeology in 2009 during the construction of the Weymouth Relief Road at Ridgeway Hill north of Weymouth. 51 decapitated skeletons had been buried in the top of a long-disused Roman quarry pit. Radiocarbon dating showed that they belong to the



Beheaded Vikings found in the top of an old Roman quarry at Ridgeway Hill near Weymouth, Dorset © Oxford Archaeology

period AD 890-1030. Strontium isotope analysis of their teeth enamel showed that they had lived in various parts of Scandinavia in their youth. Strontium isotopes, naturally occurring in local rocks and soils, are taken up by growing teeth and reflect the geology of the area of origin. One of the Ridgeway men may have come from north of the Arctic

Circle. Others had had a high protein diet typical of contemporary burials in Sweden. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that the Ridgeway find represents an execution cemetery from the Ethelred period, perhaps even victims of a St Brice's Day massacre, or perhaps one of the pirate crews of 982, and that the victims were Vikings. Interim conclusions from research on the find will be presented to the Royal Archaeological Institute in February 2014 but it is already clear that we have here a Viking disaster.

Very similar evidence came from the Oxford find. It was made when St John's College was building its Kendrew Quadrangle in 2008. Thames Valley Archaeological Services here found 37 skeletons buried in the ditch of a previously unknown Neolithic henge monument. These were mostly robust tall men aged between 16 and 25. Once again strontium isotope analysis showed they were of Scandinavian origin. Collagen from their bones and teeth showed that some had had substantial amounts of seafood in their diet – unlikely if they had been Oxford locals.

Careful examination of the skeletons showed that most of the individuals had been stabbed many times before death, and some had older scars which suggested they may have been warriors. Some of the skeletons had been partly burnt before burial. The remains have been the subject of intense study and analysis by the Oxford University Research Laboratory for Archaeology and the History of Art. The laboratory's conclusions can be read in the Oxford Journal of Archaeology, 2011 (<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1>

111/j.1468.2011.00380.x/ abstract). The researchers suggest that the remains may be the result of the St Frideswide massacre of St Brice's Day 1002, brought outside the city for disposal (St John's College lies well outside the early medieval town). They also suggest, however, that, because the remains seem clearly to be of a group of battle-scarred warriors rather than the rounded-up local Danish population, they may represent a slaughtered group of professional warriors. Another Viking disaster, anyway.



Viking burials in St John's College, Oxford: three skeletons lying where they were thrown into the grave. Photo: Thames Valley Archaeological Service

The happiest country in the world

In September, the 'World Happiness Report', published by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), crowned Denmark the happiest country in the world. The report identifies the countries with the highest levels of happiness:

1. Denmark, 2. Norway, 3. Switzerland, 4. Netherlands, 5. Sweden.

A large GDP per capita, healthy life expectancy at birth and a lack of corruption in leadership are three factors that the happiest countries have in common. But also essential are three things over which individual citizens have a bit more control: a sense of social support, freedom to make life choices and a culture of generosity.

But why Denmark over any of the other wealthy, democratic countries with small, educated populations? You can see a few things Danes do well that any of us can lobby for on page 29.



Quiz on Denmark

From CoScan Magazine 2013/1:

The happy winner with all answers correct is Beverley Lane, Sheffield. She has been sent a prize (a DVD), given by the Danish Embassy. Congratulations!

Answers

1. *How many Danish Nobel Prize winners are there?* **3** Fourteen (not all of them born or living in Denmark)
2. *Which job did Ole Rømer have?*
1 Royal Mathematician **and 3** Head of the Copenhagen Police
3. *In which year was the currency unit 'krone' introduced?* **2** 1875
4. *How many inhabited islands does Denmark have (excluding Greenland and the Faroe Islands)?* **2** Between 70 and 80 (the number varies between sources, but all are in this range)
5. *With which other country does Denmark currently have a border dispute?* **3** Canada (the dispute involves Hans Ø, between Greenland and Canada)
6. *Which pseudonym did Karen Blixen use?* **1** Isak Dinesen **and 3** Pierre Andrézel (the pseudonym Boganis was used by her father, Wilhelm Dinesen)
7. *In which year was the letter 'å' officially introduced?* **1** 1948
8. *What is the highest recorded temperature in Denmark?* **2** 36.4°C (in August 1975)
9. *When was the current law of succession adopted?* **1** 2009 (as a change to the previous law of 1953)
10. *How many grandchildren does Queen Margrethe have?* **3** Eight
11. *Which scientist has appeared on bank notes?* **1** Rømer **and 2** Ørsted **and 3** Bohr
12. *Which chemical element was first identified in Copenhagen?* **1** Hafnium **and 2** Aluminium (Bohrium is named after Niels Bohr, but it was not identified in Copenhagen)
13. *How many of his fairy tales were published during the life of H. C. Andersen?* **2** 163 (5 more were published later, while the most complete English edition contains 159)
14. *During all of the Winter Olympics Denmark has:* **1** Won a silver in curling (the only medal ever won by Denmark at any Winter Olympics)
15. *Where can you see the 'K-T boundary'?* **2** on Stevns (this boundary separates the Cretaceous and the Tertiary geological periods)

Puzzle: Where am I?

Which Scandinavian town?

Answer on page 36



1. ‘Man and Pegasus’ (see picture) by a famous sculptor, is in one of the parks.

2. There is an old castle, in which the Earl of Bothwell, third husband of Mary Stuart, was incarcerated for several years.

3. The name actually means ‘pile of gravel’ – although that would not be obvious to today’s native speakers: they might think it was something to do with an island.

4. There is a theatre, which had its heyday in the 1950’s, when the film director Ingmar Bergman was its artistic leader.

5. This building (see picture) is a fairly recent landmark and known by an alliterative (English) name.

The Happiest Country, cont. from page 27

- Danish families receive a total of 52 weeks of parental leave.
- Danish children have access to free or low-cost child care. This frees up young mothers to return to the work-force if they’d like to. In Denmark 79 % of mothers return to their previous level of employment.
- Danish citizens expect and receive health care as a basic right.
- While no country in the world has yet achieved gender parity, Denmark and other Nordic countries are coming close. That is in no small part because of the strong presence of women in leadership positions.
- In Denmark’s most populated city, Copenhagen, bikes account for 50 % of its residents’ trips to school or work. Half of commuting happens on a bike in Copenhagen!
- In Denmark there is a real sense of collective responsibility and belonging. More than 40% of all Danes do voluntary work in cultural and sports associations. They also take pride in their involvement with the democratic process. In the latest election, in September 2011, 87.7 % of the population voted. (from *The Huffington Post* and www.unsdsn.org)

Christmas

Switching the lights on in Newcastle

by Alfild Wellborne

In Newcastle upon Tyne, Christmas starts on the last Thursday in November, which marks the presentation of the city's Christmas tree from Bergen and the ceremonial switch on of Christmas Lights by both mayors. This is a very long tradition, going back at least 60 years, when it was given as a thank you for Britain's support in the Second World War, in the same way that Oslo sends one to London and Haugesund sends one to Sunderland.

Here in Newcastle we very much enjoy the celebration. We gather in the Grand Entrance of the Civic Centre: the City Chaplain together with the two Mayors, other representatives from the city, as well as Scandinavians from around the district. We take part in a short service, with readings, prayers and carols, well supported by the Youth Brass Band.



We also have a group of Norwegian singers who perform two carols in their

native language: 'Du grønne glitrende tre god-dag' and 'Deilig er jorden'. I also read a translation of the first hymn so that all can understand our greeting to the tree.

We then move outside to switch the lights on, an exciting and magical experience on a dark November night, to remind us that the light of Christmas will soon be here.



Greeting To The Tree

*We greet you today, green glittering treasure,
A welcome sight that gives us much pleasure.*

Your branches are decked with Christmas light

*And on the top is a star shining bright.
When the star is shining,*

*It is reminding us
Of our loving God.*

*The first Christmas in a far off land,
A great star was lit by God's mighty hand,
This was to show us that Jesus was born
A saviour had come to a world forlorn.
When the star is shining,*

*It is reminding us
Of our loving God.*

(translation Alfild Wellborne)

Christmas food and drink

Denmark

Most Danes will attend one or more Christmas lunches in December. Christmas lunches are a traditional way to extend Christmas celebrations beyond the close family, to friends and colleagues, and to get Danes in the festive mood nice and early! Menus might include traditional foods such as smoked salmon, herring or liverpâté with bacon and mushrooms. Wash it all down with a Christmas beer, a celebratory glass of wine or, if you're really brave, a shot of Christmas *snaps*.

The traditional Danish Christmas meal is roast pork, boiled potatoes, red cabbage and gravy, although in recent times roast duck and goose have become popular. For dessert, the classic dish is ris à l'amande: cold rice pudding with whipped cream, vanilla, almonds and hot cherry sauce, or *risengrød* (hot rice pudding). A peeled almond is hidden in the dessert bowl and the lucky finder of the almond gets a present.
(from www.visitdenmark.co.uk)

Christmas baking –

Karen Christmas writes:

There is evidence that, since the Middle Ages, every caller or guest to the house is offered something from the Christmas baking. If not, the saying goes that they carry away the 'Christmas Spirit' from the home they have visited. The tradition of Christmas baking continues and we still make *klejner* (deep fried 'twists'), *jødekager* (Jewish cakes), *brunkager* (spicy brown

cookies) as well as a variety of special breads – *rugbrød* (black bread) being a favourite.

But most important are the *æbleskiver*, even though they are not only served at Christmas. For me, the smell of *æbleskiver* being prepared always brings to mind Christmas and Christmas Party times. In years gone by the cook or the mother would start making *æbleskiver* at lunchtime on Christmas Eve. These were then put in the hay box to keep warm for the evening's card games, especially for the children, when they were used as prizes for games.

I also remember in the late 50s or early 60s the family making a special point of stopping off at '*Æbleskivehuset*' near Lillebæltsbroen, on the way back from holiday visiting family, and sampling them as a special treat. They used to be made with small pieces of apple inside, but these days we tend to eat stewed apples at the side, or we open them up and put apple or jam inside and dip them in sugar.



Jens Peter Rasmussen writes:

Æbleskiver (ebel-sku-wyr) are traditional Danish pancakes (formed

like a small tennis ball) and are a common delicacy all over Denmark over the Christmas period. They're a bit crispy on the outside, soft and doughy on the inside. Being a Dane, perhaps I am biased, but they are really delicious (and thankfully therefore available all year round!). Why not try making them at home, it's fun to do and also easy. I would recommend investing in an *æbleskiver* pan but of course you can also make them without.

- 2 apples, peeled and chopped into 1/2" pieces (optional)
- 2 tbsp butter (and butter to grease æbleskiver pan)
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- 2 eggs
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 2 cups flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 1/2 cups buttermilk

Place the *æbleskiver* pan on a hot plate and bring up the heat to the point where butter sizzles on the surface. If making with apple pieces, place these in a separate pan, lightly sauté them in the butter until softened but still firm. Sprinkle with the cinnamon.

Separate the eggs and beat the whites until they stiffen. Whisk the yolks and sugar together until creamy. Sift together the flour and baking powder and gradually stir flour and buttermilk, alternating with each 1/2-cup addition, into egg mixture. Gently fold the beaten egg whites into batter.

Reduce the heat under the *æbleskiver* pan to medium. Place a drop of butter into each well to grease and coat the surface of wells entirely. Spoon batter into each well filling to about half-way

(about 1 tsp). Place an apple chunk on the batter, then spoon enough additional batter over apple to cover and fill well to the top. Allow to cook until the edges of each 'pancake' begins to brown and pull away from the sides of the wells. Lightly run a knife or (in true Danish traditional fashion) a knitting needle around the edge of each ball to loosen, and then flip over to cook through (for approximately 2 minutes).

Remove the *æbleskiver* to a plate, sprinkle with powdered sugar and a side of raspberry jam to serve.

Enjoy! *Værsgo!*



Finland

Many Finnish Christmas dishes have come from other countries, with most originating from other Nordic countries.

However, there are some typical Finnish delicacies, from appetiser to dessert, that you are likely to find on a Finnish Christmas table.

Rosolli is a cold salad typical of the North. Fresh vegetables were once unavailable in winter, but root vegetables stored in cellars produced a tasty, colourful salad. Rosolli often includes herring and sometimes finely

diced meat. Apples and salted or pickled cucumbers provide the salad with a delicious sweet-and-sour taste.

Roe, the Finnish caviar, is an undeniably Finnish delicacy on the traditional Christmas table. The custom of serving it with sour cream is the result of eastern influence. It tastes best with finely chopped onion and thin slices of rye bread.

One of the miracles of Christmas takes place when the starch in the potatoes turns to sugar and sweetens an unassuming **potato casserole** into heavenly fare that simply vanishes along with the ham.

A very old and traditional dish is **Christmas porridge** baked crispy brown in the oven. It is served with mixed fruit or raisin soup, but there are those who may consider milk and cinnamon-laced sugar better accessories. And if you find an almond in the porridge, your wishes will come true in the new year.



These are just some samples of Finnish Christmas foods, but normally the Finns eat at least ten different dishes and drink some schnapps, beer and good wines.

(text from the Finnish Embassy)

Iceland

In Iceland the Christmas Season has traditionally been centred around food. It is a time when people eat a lot of good food and meat has traditionally been a mainstay of people's diets during this season. Some common Christmas dishes include Rock Ptarmigan, Smoked Rack of Pork, Leg of Lamb, or Turkey in recent years, but there can be no exhaustive list as the possibilities are endless, and people's tastes differ.

Many people also bake cookies for Christmas, and make the so-called **leaf bread**. It is still common in many households to bake numerous types of cookies and for many it is important that the cookies are homemade rather than storebought even though a great variety are available at the shops.



The tradition of leaf bread stems from the time when it was difficult to obtain the raw materials needed to make the bread, especially during the time of trade monopoly. Therefore, bread and other grain products were only eaten at holiday times. Leaf bread is a wafer thin piece of bread baked at Christmas in order to make it possible for everyone to have a bite, as it says in the traditional poem:

*At Christmas children should be given a
bite of bread*

*Candlelight and red clothing so that
they can get out of bed*

In the olden days the last few weeks before Christmas were called the 'Christmas Fast' due to the Catholic custom of fasting at this time of year, and abstaining from meat. This term was used for centuries, in spite of the fact that no actual fasting took place.

Today this term hardly applies as Advent is generally characterised by more eating than other times of year. It is, however, interesting to see that one custom related to the Catholic fast is still going strong, and this is the habit of eating skate on St Thorlákur's Day (December 23rd).

*(text from the National Museum of Iceland,
edited by the Icelandic Embassy, London)*

Norway

Ribbe: Roasted pork belly, usually served with sauerkraut and boiled potatoes, Christmas sausages, meat balls and gravy. A clear favourite, eaten by six out of ten households, mainly in Central and Eastern Norway.

Pinnekjøtt: Salted and dried, sometimes smoked, lamb ribs. These were traditionally steamed over birch branches – hence the name (pinne=stick, kjøtt=meat). Served with sausages, boiled potatoes and mashed swede. Norwegians' second most popular choice on Christmas Eve,

particularly among people on the West Coast.

Lutefisk: Stockfish that has been lying in water and lye (a way to preserve fish in the old days), then cooked in the oven. Typical accompaniments are potatoes, bacon, mushy peas and mustard. Although the wobbly fish is traditionally the centre of Christmas time feasts, the season is getting longer as *lutefisk* enjoys greater popularity.

Kalkun: Turkey is also eaten by some for Christmas in Norway, as in so many other countries. With or without stuffing. Usually served with Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, apples, grapes or prunes, or even Waldorf salad; and Port wine sauce.

Torsk: There is also a long tradition for eating fresh cod on Christmas Eve, particularly along the coast in Southern Norway. The fish is simply boiled in salted water, and served with boiled potatoes, root vegetables and red wine sauce.

Juleskinke: Not necessarily eaten on Christmas Eve itself, but a Christmas ham is likely to feature at one stage or another on the table during the Christmas season. Can be eaten cold, or roasted in the oven.

Svinestek: Some Norwegians also like to eat roast pork in the festive season. Usually served with red cabbage, boiled potatoes and gravy. Additional vegetables can include broccoli and carrots.

On the side

Julepølse: The Christmas sausage is a pork sausage, sometimes made with cloves, mustard seeds, ginger and/or nutmeg, often served as an accompaniment with ribbe.

Medisterkaker: Fried minced pork meat and flour patties. Another popular accompaniment for ribbe. The leftovers are often eaten the following day(s).

Kålrotstappe: Mashed swede, usually served with pinnekjøtt.

Something sweet

Småkaker: Tradition dictates that seven different kinds of Christmas biscuits should feature on the table at Christmas, and that all should be home-baked, although today's busy families often make do with the ready-made variety. The *pepperkake* (gingerbread-man) is arguably the most popular of them.

Multekrem: Dessert made of cloudberry and whipped cream.

Kransekake: A popular almond ring cake that shows up for all big occasions in Norway – including Christmas. The cake consists of 18 wreaths of decreasing size stacked on top of each other to form a conical pyramid. It is usually decorated with miniature Norwegian flags.

Risikrem: Rice porridge mixed with whipped cream and served with red sauce (berries).

Julemarsipan: Marzipan is a popular Christmas treat in Norway. Chocolate-coated marzipan is a favourite, but you can also buy coloured marzipan to make your own marzipan shapes at home.

(from the Norwegian Embassy)

Sweden



Christmas, and the run up to it, is all about one thing: the famous Swedish *smörgåsbord* that is called *julebord* (pronounced – roughly – ‘yuleboard’). This is where you get practically 101 dishes elbowing for space on a table, or a series of tables. And, as in Swedish society, there is a proper order involved in how you negotiate your way through the meal. There should be five courses: start with the pickled herring, move on to the cold meats, ham, meatballs, patés and reindeer sausage, then the hot dishes including *Janssons frestelse*

(potato, onion and anchovies), hot meat stews and various cabbages, then cheeses and sweets. There should be a fresh plate each time. There should be lashings of schnapps and beer. And there should be a full belly at the end!

Julbord is generally enjoyed with the family at lunchtime on Christmas Eve, with friends on the weekends in December, and with work-mates for the client/office Christmas parties. In the evening of Christmas Eve, it is time for the traditional *lutfisk* (ling fish). It is a simple speciality, stemming from hard times when fish was preserved by drying and then soaked before cooking. The fish is served with potatoes and mustard sauce.



For pudding, traditional hot rice ‘porridge’ is served with milk, cinnamon and sugar, or a red-berry sauce. If you find the hidden almond, you must produce a (preferably witty and topical) rhyme – to get a prize or to get all your wishes granted you would have to spend Christmas in Denmark or Finland!

(text adapted from
www.visitsweden.co.uk)

Brita Green writes:
Swedish Christmas cabbage comes in

many varieties – red, brown and green: *rödkål*, *brunkål*, and (a speciality of the province Halland, on the west coast):

Grönkål (also known as *långkål*: ‘long cabbage/kale’):

2 heads of kale
400 ml stock (e.g. ham)
2 tbsp butter or marg
4 tbsp cream
pepper
(salt? depending on stock)
smidgen of sugar

Bring stock to the boil and add the chopped kale. Simmer without a lid until almost all the liquid has gone (usually about 20 minutes).

Gently brown the butter in a frying-pan, add the kale and fry, stirring. Add cream gradually, season and serve.

Answer for **Where am I?**

(from page 29):

Malmö, Sweden’s third largest town, c 280,000 inhabitants.

1. Carl Milles’ sculpture from 1949 is in Slottsparken.
2. Bothwell was held at Malmöhus Castle 1568-73, on the orders of Frederik II of Denmark. Malmö is in Skåne which was Danish until 1658.
3. *Malm* once could have the meaning ‘gravel’ or ‘sand’, and *ö* is a reduction of an older *hög* = mound, small hill.
4. Ingmar Bergman worked at Malmö stadsteater 1952-58.
5. ‘Turning Torso’, built in 2005, is the tallest skyscraper in Scandinavia (190 m).

Anna Sophie's Kitchen

Winter drinks



Photo: Aina C Hole

Ypocras, Glühwein, glödgaat vin, gløgg, gløgg, glögi, mulled wine!

The idea of consuming sweetened, spiced and heated wine is ancient and the various recipes that have evolved throughout history are endless. The most common ingredients in today's mulled wine are red wine, port, sherry, cinnamon, cloves, cardamom, ginger, star anise, vanilla, lemons, oranges, Seville oranges, saffron, chopped nuts, almonds, raisins, cranberries and dried fruit. It is customary to add some spirits such as vodka, cognac, rum, brandy or aquavit. The alcohol may well be replaced with red grape, blackcurrant, or blueberry juice.

Suggestion:

2 bottles of dry red wine (the better the wine, the better the *gløgg*)
1 cup of port and 1 cup of brandy
2 seedless oranges, sliced
2 lemons, quartered (seeds removed)
4 cinnamon sticks
10 cloves
10 cardamom pods, roughly cracked
4–6 star anise
1 piece of fresh ginger (5 cm)
1/2 cup of brown sugar or honey
2 cups of dark raisins
2 cups of blanched almonds



Boil spices and fruit in wine (2–3 cups) or fruit juice and any optional additions, such as dried fruit and nuts, to a base which ultimately will amount to about a third of what you will be using. The longer it simmers, the more flavour and concentrated the base. You may well leave it for one hour, stirring occasionally. Season with brown sugar or honey and add some water if it gets dry. Pour in the rest of the liquid, warm up again and strain. If you use wine and spirits and want to keep the alcohol, it must not be heated above 70°C at this stage. Serve with raisins and almonds in each glass.

White mulled wine

1 litre of good quality apple juice
1 bottle of white wine (e.g. Riesling)
1 cup of Calvados or white aquavit
3 cups of water
1/2 cup of honey
12 cloves
1–2 cinnamon sticks
1 vanilla bean
Slices of lemon and apple
Bring juice, water, spices and honey (or



Photo: Anna Sophie Strandli

sugar) to a boil. Simmer for 20 minutes and leave to cool (preferably until next day). Add wine and spirits and heat gently. If you do not use alcohol just increase the amount of (unsweetened) apple juice.



Eggnog

(serves four)
4 eggs
75g icing sugar
1 cup of dark rum
¼ litre of cream
1 nutmeg

Beat eggs, sugar and freshly grated nutmeg. Stir vigorously until the

mixture is almost white and the volume has increased three -four times. Heat the cream to just below boiling point, add the rum and in a thin stream, pour into the egg mixture while stirring gently. Grate a little nutmeg on top and serve in heated glasses.

Winter Pimm's

One bottle of Pimm's Winter Cup
Apple juice (No 3)
Apple chunks
Orange slices

Heat 3 parts apple juice to one part Winter Pimm's in a large pan. Add apple chunks and orange slices. Serve hot. Some say it beats mulled wine!



Nissedrikk

1 litre apple juice,
½ 1 blackcurrant juice,
1 cinnamon stick,
½ cup sugar, 5 whole
cloves, 1 cup yellow
raisins and lots of

tangerine 'boats'.

Mix everything except the fruit in a pan and simmer for 10 minutes. Strain the mixture and add raisins and tangerines.

Christmas Punch

½ – 1 bottle (750 ml) dark rum
1 bottle dry red wine
4 cups strong, brewed tea
2 cups sugar
1 cup fresh orange juice
½ cup
lemon
juice

Heat the wine, tea, lemon and orange juices. Do



Photo: Anna Sophie Strandli

not allow to boil. Pour the mix into a heat-proof bowl. Place as much of the sugar as possible in a large ladle and saturate the sugar in the ladle with rum. Ignite the rum and sugar and pour into the bowl while still aflame. Extinguish the flame and stir well. Pour the remainder of the rum into the punch.

Champagne Cocktail

Place a sugar cube (preferably Demerara) in a Champagne flute. Add a few drops of Angostura bitters to saturate the sugar and then a splash of brandy. Decorate with a twist of orange (or lemon) zest. Carefully pour in the Champagne or sparkling wine and watch the sugar cube dissolve in a fountain of bubbles.

'Not too dry, not too sweet, with just the right amount of bubbles and buzz.'
(Mark Twain)



Travel awards

2012 expedition to Øksfjord, Finnmark

The 42-square-kilometre glacier Øksfjordjøkelen is the ninth largest glacier in mainland Norway. Several of our grant recipients took part in the 2012 British Schools Exploring Society's expedition to the glacier. Here are extracts from some of their reports, covering various aspects of the expedition. Wikipedia helps us to understand some technical terms used.



Photo: Anne Stefaniak

Eerie beauty

Anne Stefaniak: When you think about the Arctic you imagine cold, desolate, white open space, but within that you begin to see all the colours of the ice: the blue of the sky amplified by the white pristine snow and glacial ice lying below. The sounds of the Arctic, so quiet and peaceful, yet you hear the birds and rumble of the glacier opening with new crevasses.

Richard Bailey: It was a three and a half hour hike, and the majority of this time was spent in a white-out. As we were roped up for safety and had no one to talk to for the entirety, this was an eerie experience.

We travelled all the way to the south, stopping on various rocky outcrops on

the way to soak up the awe-inspiring views, which were made even better as all the valleys below us were filled with cloud, leaving only the higher peaks and ridges visible to us.

Once we were all rested to an extent, we set off on a five kilometre trek to that evening's bivi spot, an amazing ledge two metres away from a 400 foot sheer drop. The view from here was unbelievable. We could see down the valley to where our base camp and mountain camp were, we could see down the extensive fjords and we could also see over the entire ice cap – all while watching an incredible sunset, and all from inside our sleeping bags.



Photo: Anne Stefaniak

Activities

Anne Stefaniak: At the beginning of the expedition the weather was against us, constant heavy rain and mosquitos eating us alive! It was going to be tough, and the idea of spending six weeks out there was a challenging one. Once base camp was set up, we moved further up the mountain. The view of the ice was spectacular and we couldn't wait to get up there and explore.

Catherine Voysey: Week 1. We learnt how to live in an expedition environment, acquiring many new skills which we would need throughout the three weeks, and bonding as a group. For example we learnt how to use the stoves, put up the different tents, how to cook the perfect dehydrated ration pack, and how to use the radio, which we used every day to report back to base camp and the Chief Leader.

Week 2. Mountain training. This involved learning a variety of new skills

both on and off the ice. We first learnt how to use harnesses, and the different types of knots needed to rope up. On the ice we learnt how to use crampons and ice axes, including self arrests (to prevent a fall) and making anchors (which can be used in crevasse rescue).

Week 3. The science phase. In the valley of Fjorddalen we saw a variety of features, all of which showed evidence of a previous glaciation. During a 24 hour science collection period we investigated how changes on the glacier affected the glacial stream running down the valley into the fjord. This involved taking meteorological observations and river discharge readings every hour, on the hour.

Food

William Sanderson: Our main food would be dehydrated meals, to which you added boiling water. At first they weren't hugely tasty, but as the expedition progressed, we learnt to appreciate them. The curries in particular were very nice! The vegetarian meals weren't quite as good, and some wag named them 'Shepless Pie' and 'Chilli Non Carne'!

Misfit streams, nunataks and Brocken spectres

Catherine Voysey: We saw a variety of glacial features, a U-shaped valley, a **misfit stream**, erratics and striations.

Wikipedia: A misfit stream is a stream or river that is either too large or too small to have eroded the valley in which it flows.

William Sanderson: While on the ice field, we explored as much of it as possible. Our first trek on the ice was to a **nunatak**.

Richard Bailey: From a central base on a **nunatak**, where we stayed for several nights, we explored some ice caves.



Wikipedia: A nunatak is an exposed, often rocky element of a ridge, mountain or peak not covered with ice or snow within (or at the edge of) an ice field or glacier. Nunataks present readily identifiable landmark reference points in glaciers or ice caps and are often named. Nunataks are generally angular and jagged and contrast strongly with the softer contours of the glacially eroded land after a glacier retreats. The word is of Greenlandic origin and has been used in English since the 1870s.

Richard Bailey: For our last night on the glacier a small group of us set off to a ridge above the cloud line, which meant that the conditions were just right for a **Brocken spectre** to appear. This is an enormous shadow of ourselves projected onto the clouds, and encircled by a rainbow.



Wikipedia: The phenomenon is named after the Brocken, a peak in the Harz Mountains in Germany, and was first described in 1780. The 'spectre' appears when the sun shines from behind the observer through the mist. The apparent magnification is an optical illusion that occurs when the observer judges his or her shadow on relatively nearby clouds to be at the same distance as faraway land objects seen through gaps in the clouds, or when there are no reference points at all by which to judge its size.

CoScan travel grants

are given out once a year, in the spring, to young people aged between 15 and 25, who are planning a journey of an educational nature to Scandinavia. As always, the deadline for applications is 31 March.

Applications – and donations, please! – to Brita Green, 103 Long Ridge Lane, Nether Poppleton, York, YO26 6LW
Cheques made out to CoScan Trust Fund.

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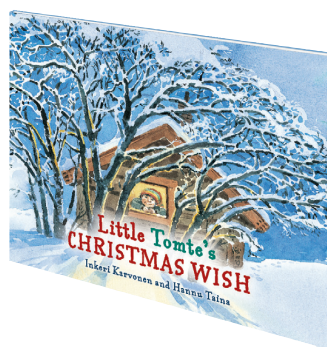
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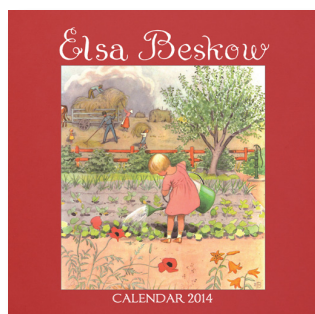


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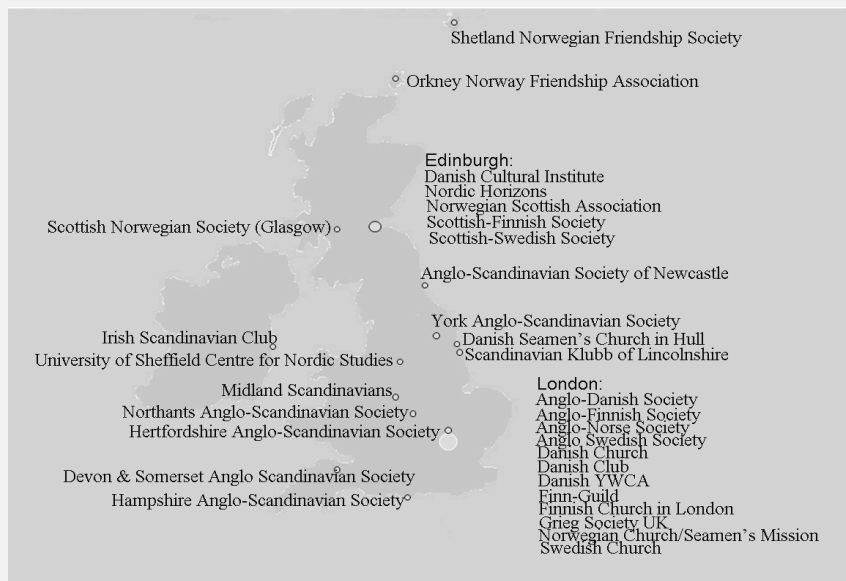
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