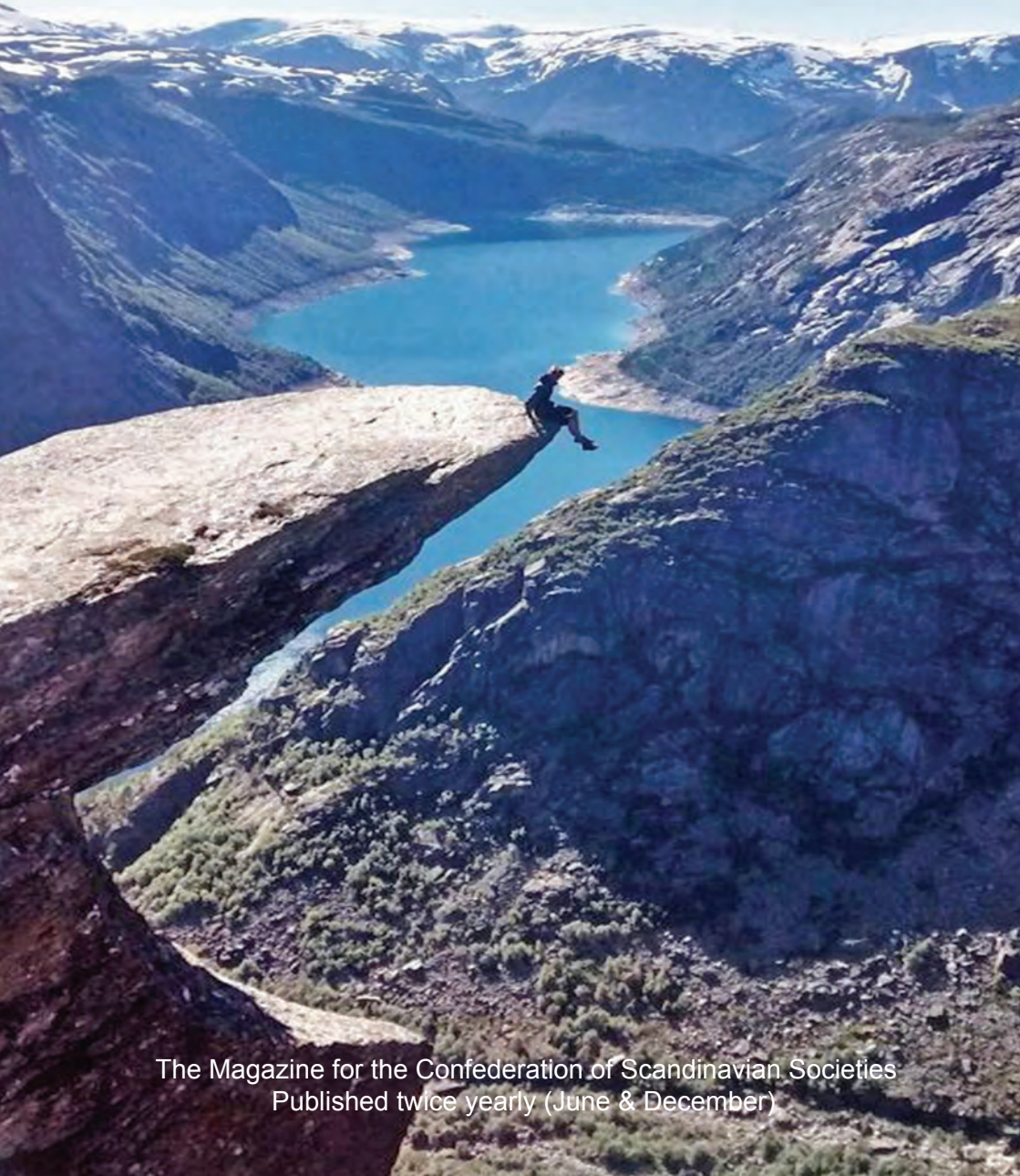


CoScan Magazine

2016/1



The Magazine for the Confederation of Scandinavian Societies
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CoScan

Confederation of Scandinavian Societies

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'Sitting on the edge of Trolltunga (Norway) – Please don't show my mother this!'
© Samuel Black (see report on page 30)

Message from the President

Mark Elliott

CoScan in Aarhus 2016

Eva Robards, as Chairman, looked forward to our 2016 Conference in the last issue of this magazine. I am happy to do the looking back – Aarhus 2016 achieved what it had set out to do and was enjoyed by everybody.

The tone was set by our Welcome gathering on the first evening. Karin Buhl Slæggerup, a senior member of the team organising the programme for Aarhus 2017 – European Capital of Culture, enthralled us for nearly an hour, as we sat amicably around small tables in the hotel breakfast room with drinks in our hands. It really will be a feast of inventiveness – new art forms, new solutions to social and environmental challenges, to city and village life. Food, nature, sport and play, history, belief, are among the themes. There is particular emphasis on children. Denmark's special charm should be experienced by hundreds of thousands next year, and they will be the better for it.

We saw this charm in its historical dimension vividly reconstructed at *Den Gamle By* (the Old Town) next morning. Clear winter sun highlighted the medieval facades, horse-drawn carriages and costumed citizens paraded the cobbled streets. There were artefacts, traditional crafts, grandly-furnished rooms. There was even a section portraying the 1970s,



which didn't seem like history to some of us. Our guide Jørgen Hulgård was a star, with an impossible task keeping us all in order.

Dinner at *Restaurant MellemRum* that evening translated the inventiveness and charm into gastronomy. Each course had unexpected ingredients, mouth-wateringly described in advance by the chef; all were delicious. Even the less ambitious restaurants which individuals visited on other evenings were of astonishingly high standard. But of course Denmark is like that.

It all came together on Sunday afternoon at our formal AGM. No space here to give you the details. But the mood was positive, there was serious debate about future plans and (most importantly) about what CoScan should be and do for its members. One can't always rely on a good atmosphere even when many old friends (and a few new ones) are gathered together – but this time it worked, and we were all happy.

It had been hard work, beforehand; especially for the Chairman, and all those from SKOL in particular who contributed time and expertise. But it was amply worth it.

Changes to the Editorial Board

We are delighted to present two new members to the Editorial Board: Professor Rory McTurk and Dr Bridget Morris.

Rory, Emeritus Professor of Icelandic Studies, taught at the University of Leeds, having taught earlier at the University College Dublin, the University of Lund and the University of Copenhagen. He holds degrees from the University of Oxford and the University of Iceland, Reykjavík. Professor McTurk's research interests span Old and Modern Icelandic language and literature, Old and Middle English language and literature, Irish (Gaelic) language and literature, Old Norse mythology, Viking history, and modern literary theory. He has published extensively on Old Norse literature and its connections with Old and Modern English literature.

Rory is a Knight of the Order of the Falcon (*Hin íslenska fálkaorða*), a national Order of Iceland, established 1921 by King Christian X of Denmark and Iceland.



Rory McTurk

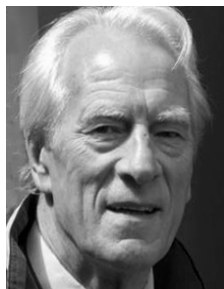
Bridget was for fifteen years Senior Lecturer in Scandinavian Studies at the University of Hull, where she taught modern and medieval languages. She was Editor-in-Chief of an international translation project published by Oxford University Press, New York, and started work as Executive Director for The Rowntree Society in 2009.

Further, she is the author of a number of articles and books on St. Birgitta and medieval Swedish literature.



Bridget Morris

It is less than a year since we recruited S. A. J. (Sid) Bradley, Emeritus Professor of Anglo-Saxon, University of York and formerly Professor in the Center for Grundtvig-Studier, University of Aarhus.



Sid Bradley

The team has been significantly strengthened by our newcomers and we are most grateful for their involvement.

Swedish Church in London Licence to preach

In January, at a ceremony in Southwark Cathedral conducted by Bishop Michael, The Very Revd Michael Persson and Curate Kristina Andréasson were licensed to officiate within the Church of England.

Michael Persson is responsible for the Swedish Church in the British Isles, Deputy Chair of the Lutheran Council of Great Britain, Lutheran representative in Faith & Order, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, and Lutheran representative in the Joint Liturgical Group, and was Chaplain to the Most Worshipful and Right Honourable Lord Mayor of the City of Westminster 2014-2015.



Michael Persson and Kristina Andréasson to the right of Bishop Michael

Award for Marjatta Bell Anglo-Finnish Society (AFS)



Marjatta Bell's tireless work as Chair of the Society was marked on Independence Day 2015 by the award of Knight (First Class) of the Order of the Lion of Finland. The

formal investiture was carried out by the Ambassador, H E Ms Päivi Luostarinen, at her Residence on 16 February. The award was made in recognition of over 30 years of work in Britain for Finland and the Fenno-British community and their organisations. The authorities had in mind her contribution to the great series of events in the centenary year of AFS, in particular her negotiations to get approval for a commemorative plaque for Edward Westermarck and the international conference honouring his work which she organised more or less single-handedly, and more recently the leadership which she has shown in planning public events for next year to mark the centenary of Finland's independence. Congratulations to Marjatta on her well-earned honour!

York Anglo-Scandinavian Society

Karen Christmas

by Brita Green

YASS has lost one of its most active, and most loved, members. Our Vice Chairman Karen Christmas died on 29 December. She had served on the committee on several occasions, and was always the person behind events involving any catering, ensuring that what was on offer was not only tasty and plentiful but also attractive to look at. She helped to produce the YASS recipe book to raise money for the CoScan Trust Fund. She was a very keen gardener and allotment enthusiast, which gave her many friends.



Karen Povlsen was born in 1949 in Odense, and was christened in St. Canute's Cathedral – as Hans Christian Andersen had once been. After school she began work as a 'girl in the house' for a local family, and when they moved

to Esbjerg she moved with them. The friendship lasted throughout her life.

She attended Snoghøj Folk High School in the late sixties and planned to train as a kindergarten teacher. In 1968 she came to England as an au pair to broaden her experience and improve her English language skills. That was when she met John Christmas, now the CoScan Trust Fund treasurer, and they got engaged the following year, by which time Karen was helping to set up and run a Scandinavian Design shop in Wimbledon. They married in 1970. John's teaching job took them to Dorset, where Karen qualified as a nursery nurse and helped to set up a playgroup, but she also worked as a cook in a friend's bistro and as a seamstress in a clothing business.

Two children were born, Steffen and Hannah, and after a year in Denmark, which was a great experience for the whole family, they moved to Sussex, and then twenty years ago to York, where Karen completed a horticultural course. They soon joined the Anglo-Scandinavian Society, which widened their friendship circle. Wherever Karen lived, she soon settled in, found things to do, and made friends. Her life was based on enjoying the simple things in life and helping others.

CoScan participants at the meeting in York in 2012 and at the conference in Tallinn in 2013 will remember Karen. She also, together with her husband, contributed to this magazine (Christmas in Denmark, CoScan Magazine 2011).

Devon & Somerset Anglo-Scandinavian Society History

by Dawn Watts, Secretary

The Devon and Somerset Anglo-Scandinavian Society was founded on 21 April 1981. Mrs M-L Newsome, who is Danish, had decided to see if such a society could be founded in the Taunton area and so had put an announcement in the Somerset County Gazette to see if anyone was interested. Enough people responded to encourage her to go ahead with the idea.

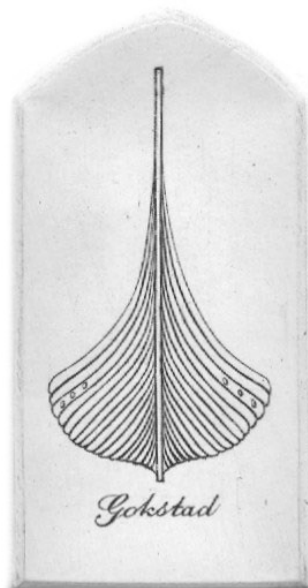
There was enough interest for a committee to be formed and a programme of events was arranged.

On 10 May 1982 the first Annual General Meeting was held in West Buckland Village Hall; twenty-four people attended and there were also some apologies. The minutes of that meeting record that there had been seven meetings in the intervening months plus Midsummer and Christmas parties. Mrs Newsome said that this was 'a very encouraging response to the new venture.' A draft constitution was drawn up at that time. The programme for 1982 was to include a Quiz Evening, the Midsummer Party, a *Smörgåsbord* Luncheon and an Arts and Craft Exhibition.

The last of these events seems to have been particularly successful as it is reported at the AGM for 1983 that it 'was attended by some seventy members and friends'. It was also mentioned that there had been forty members at a Members

Evening in November 1982, but that the 'Committee was somewhat disappointed by the shortage of members offering to contribute to the entertainment'.

Some of those attendees at the very first AGM are still members of the society all these years later, including Roy Cooney and his wife Jean. Roy recently wrote a wonderful article for the CoScan Magazine (2015/1) about their search for his Norwegian heritage; the article included some of his beautiful copperplate engravings. His engraving of the Gokstad ship from a Norwegian church is our society logo.



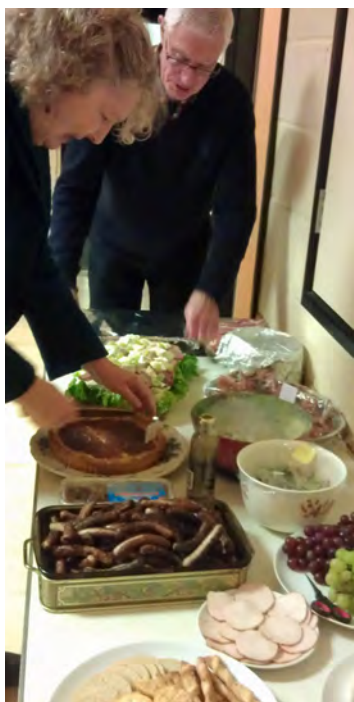


Skt Hans party

Our programme still contains some of the well-loved traditional events such as a *Skt Hans* bonfire and a *julfest* but, now, we also do more visits and film nights to give us a varied programme. Some of the most popular meetings are those when people can share memories of their 'home' countries by introducing

traditions, foods and artifacts to the other members.

So, thirty-five years later Devon and Somerset Anglo-Scandinavian Society is still going strong and we would like to think that some new, younger members will come along to continue the traditions for many more years to come.



Julfest



'K' in London – A home away from home

by Louise Sørensen

In North London's leafy suburb of Hampstead lies 43 Maresfield Gardens, a grand Victorian mansion, which houses the Danish KFUK ('YWCA') hostel, affectionately known simply as 'K'.

For over a century this Danish establishment in London has housed young people and more generally been a centre for advice and support for all Danes in the country.

K is an institution whose history reflects socio-political and cultural developments of the 20th and 21st centuries. It was founded in 1907 when Pastor Axel Berg and his wife invited a group of young Danish women working in London to a meeting at the headquarters of the English YWCA, thus recognising the need for a place in the city where young Danes could meet and socialise. The first decade and a half was characterised by several moves and an involuntary hiatus during the war, but some stability was reached in 1921 when the first paid secretary, Ellen Brostrøm, was put in post.

The economic difficulties of the 1920s and 30s resulted in a political crackdown on young foreigners working in Britain without the appropriate permits. The authorities warned that all ports would be monitored and anyone found without a work permit would be sent home. Visas would only be issued for jobs which could not be filled by an English person and work permits were rarely granted for the London area, so most Danes sought work

in the countryside, meaning a reduction in the number of K's residents and visitors. The reduced numbers, however, did not put a dampener on Christmas celebrations which have always been special at K (the annual *Julebasar* is visited by 1500 people over two days). Christmas Eve was the main event of the year with 250 young women dining and dancing around the Christmas tree at a Piccadilly restaurant booked especially for the occasion.

As the threat of war loomed in the late 1930s, K's leadership had to re-evaluate its role in the Danish community. All staff were told they were free to return to Denmark and many did, catching the last ferries home just in the nick of time. An agreement was made with the Danish Council in London that K should provide free lodgings and meals to all Danish volunteers involved in the war effort, and in 1944 alone over 5,000 overnight stays were recorded.

The 1950s mark the beginning of K's modern period – a period where its role as an advocate for young working Danes was established in earnest. Danish girls enjoyed a good reputation among British employers and the demand for them in positions such as 'mother's helps', servants or kitchen maids was higher than ever. Despite only having 16 beds, K had 1,200 people through its doors in 1952-53. Realising that the current premises were too cramped, the board finally purchased the current premises in

Maresfield Gardens, also called ‘Nutley Court’, in 1958 for £18,000.

The au pair system was introduced in the 1960s and has continued to be a popular choice for young Danish women (mostly) to spend time abroad as part of a family. The manager of K at the time, Edith Moisgaard, campaigned for a minimum age of 18 as she feared those younger lacked the required maturity. The British government ignored her wishes and set the minimum age at 15, meaning that K’s role as a place where home comforts could be sought was ever more important.

The 1960s was also the decade where K opened its doors to young men as lodgers. Strict measures were put in place to separate the two genders’ accommodation but some chose to ignore this, resulting in a number of marriages later on. Christmas was as always a central event in K’s calendar, now also

accommodating the around 150 people who wanted to go home by chartering a plane.

With Denmark joining the EEC in 1973, it was generally straightforward for young people to come and work in Britain for a period of time, and their numbers increased steadily in the decades to follow. A new record for overnight stays, 20,000 in a year, was reached in 1990, and a waiting list was put in place.

In an expensive city like London, K’s relatively low rates of less than £100 per week (including breakfast and some other meals) continue to appeal to many. K no longer has any ties to KFUK but is part of the Danish Church Abroad (*Dansk Kirke i Udlandet*). One does not have to be religious to stay at K and there are only a few house rules: tidy your things so the cleaners can do their job, keep noise to a minimum after midnight, do not drink alcohol on the premises.



Manager Palle Baggesgaard Pedersen (top right) with his present team

As K nears its 110th birthday, Denmark has in many senses ‘got closer’ and those back home are easily reached via mobile or the internet. When I was a resident there in the late 1990s, the pay phone in the hall used to be constantly occupied in the evenings and most wrote letters home. The availability of low-cost flights now means that going home for a weekend is easy, and very few choose to stay for what used to be the event of the year, Christmas Eve. Long gone are the

days of serving Christmas dinner for 250 people.

While the world around K may be changing, it continues to be a constant in the Danish community, a welcoming ‘home away from home’ that has helped thousands of young people find their feet in the hustle and bustle of London.

Thank you to K's management for the materials relating to its history.

Reprieve – or stay of execution? Skt Nikolaj Kirke, Hull

by Hanne Hamilton, Secretary

Well-known is the fact that placenames in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire’s East Riding containing such elements as *by*, *thorpe*, *toft*, *holme*, *kirk*, and *ness* and even the name Riding itself witness how, more than a thousand years ago, Danes embedded themselves on either shore of the great river Humber. Less familiar is the witness of the 3000-line poem Havelok the Dane, written in English in the late 13th century. Havelok is the (legendary) heir to the kingdom of Denmark but on his father’s death his guardian treacherously plots to murder him and seize power. Havelok escapes to England, then ruled by Athelwold, an exemplary Christian king, who names his daughter, the beautiful Goldboru, as his heir. She too is cheated out of her inheritance, by the evil Earl Godrich. After many adventures, Havelok’s destiny and Goldboru’s converge.

Everything comes out right and they marry. Between them they rule both England and Denmark – and raise fifteen children of whom all the sons become kings and all the daughters queens.

Havelok owes his survival to the loyalty of a humble fisherman, Grim, who is hired to kill the boy but instead shelters him and brings him up with his own children. For safety they flee to England. There Grim settles on the south bank of the Humber Estuary and there, so skilled and successful are he and his sons at fishing, he grows prosperous. Eventually the settlement takes its name from him: Grimsby.

The poem is important in the history of the English language for the evidence it shows of the large-scale assimilation of Danish words into English use. And ever since the bonding of the two peoples and their cultures was celebrated in the

legend of Havelok, the Humber, fishing and Denmark have remained closely linked.

The Danish Seamen's Churches (there are nine worldwide) were established (say the Minutes of the Inaugural Meeting in 1867) out of concern for the spiritual needs of Danish sailors away from home for long periods and therefore unable to hear the word of God in their own language and to receive holy communion according to the rites of their own Church. Unminuted, but no doubt also in mind, was the concern to distract the sailors away from immoral contacts with the local ladies ashore. The first such church was established – in Hull – in 1868. The pastor's role was foremost to preach the Gospel, hold weekly services – and bring the sailors up from the docks to the church. There they could read Danish newspapers and (from the end of the century) telephone home. The housemother would serve them coffee and homemade Danish delicacies they had missed whilst on board ship. The pastor or the assistant would take them into town shopping or on trips into the countryside.

Today the quick turnaround of ships makes much of this impossible. Even so, the pastor still takes fresh newspapers to the varied nationalities that form the crew, and offers anyone on board the opportunity to talk in confidence – a provision appreciated by the seamen. The pastoral framework remains broadly the same. The Board of the *Danske Sømands- og Udlandskirker* (DSUK; the Danish Seamen's and Overseas Churches) in Denmark funds the pastor through tax

paid by the seamen in Denmark, but Danes and other Scandinavians living in and around Hull play a major role in the upkeep of the church, raising funds to maintain the building and meet daily running costs

What is it, then, that makes Skt Nikolaj Seamen's church special? Increasingly significant, though perhaps less clearly focused, is the service delivered by the church in maintaining the presence of Danish culture and Danish values in the north-east of England. Over time, Skt Nikolaj has evolved into an important meeting place for 'overseas' Danes, indeed Scandinavians in general, settled and living in the North-East. It cultivates an outreach to contacts as diverse as, for example, London and Newcastle, York and the moorland parish of Kirkdale. Many non-Scandinavians from various walks of life have also been attracted to join 'the community' – feeling that it is like 'stepping into a little piece of Denmark'. As they participate in all the varied events of the community's year so they can also get to know something of the ways and the values of modern Denmark. Thus, fishing and trading links have left a feeling of historical bonding which is also to be found reciprocated in Denmark. And isn't this rooted sense of kinship and shared history, nurtured by the community at Skt Nikolaj Kirke and opened up to their neighbours, something rather valuable, to be held on to and nourished?

From the outside the church is a clean red brick building reflecting the building style of the nineteen-fifties when it was re-built after the devastating

bombing of World War 2. Within, thanks in part to various generous donations from Denmark, it reflects both Danish tradition and the best of Danish design in its architecture and its furnishings and fittings. Ultimately, however, it is the people who make this church so special as a centre in which a living and lively Danish culture is nurtured, secular as well as religious, and informally as well as formally.

Our housemother – of Danish descent and Danish-speaking – has worked full time for at least thirty years at the church. Visit Skt Nikolaj (which is open most weekdays as well as Sundays) and you will be welcomed with a cup of good strong coffee and home-baked cake. There is a library of Scandinavian literature, with magazines and papers. Many members and friends drop in casually during the week and on certain days small groups gather for a talk, a discussion or just a chat. Once a week former fishermen, their wives and children meet and exchange news, an important day for them. Denmark has a rich treasury of songs and many Danes

enjoy getting together at the church to sing. There is a social committee which organises events such as the programme of visiting speakers, and celebrations of occasional national events and, of course, Danish Festivals – *Fastelavn* at the start of Lent, *Sankt Hans Aften* at midsummer, and above all *Julen*, Christmas. Traditionally the church was opened on Christmas Eve for any who wished to come up and celebrate Christmas and, perhaps poignantly, think particularly about their families back in Denmark. Nowadays a late afternoon service is held on 24 December followed by a traditional Danish Christmas dinner, dancing round the tree, the singing of Danish carols, exchanging small presents – and, in short, lots of *hygge*. In November a festive Christmas Market is held, promoting Danish foods and goods made to Danish design, which attracts visitors from far and wide. Moreover, most Danes living here see it as important to maintain the Danish language. Language classes are held weekly and are well subscribed. Many grown-up children from Danish families who have forgotten the language



Bålfest with song, 2014

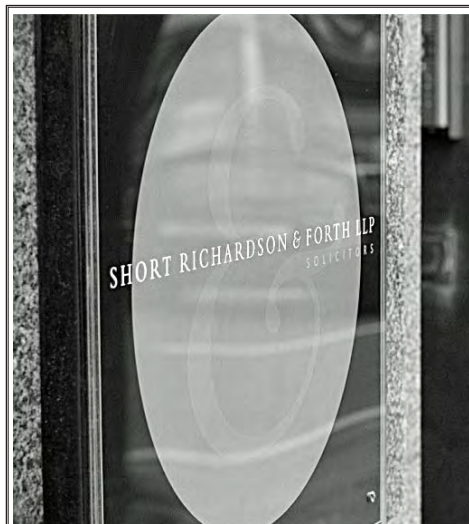
Photo: Anders Alwall

are returning to learn and reconnecting with their past in this way. Readers of the article 'Finn Guild' in CoScan Magazine 2015/2 will recognise how precious and enriching these maintained cultural ties can prove to be. And so – the inevitable question pushing its way to the front in these times of austerity and social change: What about the future?

In recent years there has been steadily more emphasis on the financial side and how we can continue to balance the books. The church committee have implemented various methods of increasing income – but recently, the reality of closure came very close. In 2015 the Board in Denmark informed us that we will only receive funding for a pastor who is already in receipt of a pension and that we ourselves will have to top this up to a standard salary level – and this only until 2018. After that date the church faces having to fund everything itself. But for the enormous

efforts of all members and friends of the church we should probably not have secured even this much: but now we are hopeful that with such continued support from our membership we shall be able to carry the church forward to that date and beyond. We see many young families arrive here – some in connection with the growth in wind turbine energy on both sides of the river.

So it is with a kind of defiant optimism that we look forward to many more years. There may have to be changes, but as a cultural hub, the church continues to have a vital role to play, serving a community on this side of the North Sea and thus – so we ourselves believe – serving the interests of Denmark as well. Skt Nikolaj remains an important and irreplaceable centre in the UK for the promotion of Danish culture and history and a well-respected asset to the City of Hull as it prepares for its year as UK City of Culture 2017.



SHORT RICHARDSON & FORTH LLP
SOLICITORS

Max Winthrop and David Gibson are both recognised as lawyers who are making a difference in the provision of legal services for companies.

David is a member of the Employment Lawyers Association International Committee and he and Max regularly advise employers with interests in the Nordic states and beyond. Recognising that UK employers can learn from Nordic companies, Max and David offer a range of bespoke training packages looking at how to improve levels of engagement and flexibility in the workforce.

Contact Max at mw@srflegal.co.uk, David at dg@srflegal.co.uk or join our LinkedIn account 'SRF-The Emerging Workspace'.

Wunderkammer of new Danish architecture

The contribution to the Venice Architecture Biennale 2016

by Tyra Lea Amdisen Dokkedahl
Architect, co-exhibitor Venice Architecture Biennale 2016

The Danish Pavilion ‘Art of Many and The Right to Space’ at the Venice Biennale 2016 (28 May - 27 November) affords a snapshot of a new humanism in Danish architecture. This *Wunderkammer* (as it has been called) will feature analogue models of Danish architecture 2010-2015, to various scales, in a diversity of materials and representing a range of aesthetic ideals, which together not only

universe that exhibits the diversity of innovative thinking and architectural development of new Danish humanistic architecture.’

Humanism, Danishness and architecture are notions that harmonise with Scandinavian self-perception and with the core values of the socially liberal welfare state, crossed with the Danish cultural-radical movement within the arts, especially architecture.



Vinge – sustainable lifestyle in human scale

Photo: Henning Larsen Architects and Effekt

exemplify a long-standing humanistic tradition within Danish architecture, but also show its present currency. Thus the Danish Pavilion will present (say the curators, Boris Brörmann Jensen and Kristoffer Lindhardt Weiss) ‘a dynamic

– ‘the breakthrough of modernity’ – which began in the later 19th century. Such, at least, was the national narrative until the start of this millennium, before the introduction of the so-called ‘war of values’ launched by Anders Fogh

Rasmussen (former Danish Prime Minister, Secretary General of NATO, Founder and Chairman of Rasmussen Global), with the strong support of the nationalistic right-wing party (Dansk Folkeparti).

The exhibition's curators are appointed by the Ministry of Culture, Realdania (a private association supporting philanthropic projects in the fields of architecture and the built environment), and the Danish Arts Foundation's Committee for Architecture Grants and Project Funding. Together, these bodies form a political, financial and artistic group which sets the frame and underwrites funding for the venture. The proclaimed purpose is to promote the values of Danish architecture and strengthen its international position – culturally and economically. Perhaps, then, the curators and their backers are also trying to reassert the Danish brand of a nation with a libertarian, humanistic spirit and a strong social consciousness – or, indeed, conscience. This will not be the first time the Danish contribution to the Biennale has served a political agenda. In 2012 Denmark exhibited 'Possible Greenland', which sought to position Denmark as the natural legitimate power, if not political then at least cultural, in the emerging discussion on the Arctic. The declared aim was 'to give the audience – architects, urban planners, investors, politicians and others – an insight into Greenland as having great political, cultural and business value in a globalized context'. Human scale in architecture and the ideals of Jan Gehl (b. 1936; renowned Danish

architect and urban design consultant based in Copenhagen) are core values in Danish mainstream architecture; but, combined with increasing environmental concerns and societal challenges, architecture is again becoming political through updated specifications of user involvement, new technologies and circular economy (the generic term for an industrial economy producing no waste or pollution). No individual architect by name is heading this movement. Instead, it seems to be supported not only by eminent architectural offices, but also by political organisations and popup groups collaborating on single projects.

For example, The Danish Architectural Association (equivalent to the British RIBA) has focused upon the potentials of sharing space and economy. In 2015 its annual policy-committee, under the banner 'To create by sharing', set out to develop a number of recommendations which would influence the association's political agenda. Among the rest, it proposed an open competition for new ideas on the use of shared space in housing developments, with the aim of generating discussion of approaches and solutions to new lifestyles in respect of consumerism and the concept of ownership. It also proposed ways of working towards the objective of shared financing, particularly in rural areas threatened by urbanisation; it suggested development of a tax-policy, whereby sharing is promoted by economic incentives; and it aired the idea of citizen-controlled budgets in city councils with architects as facilitators.

In Frederikssund, an hour's drive from Copenhagen, is located the

largest city planning project currently under development: Vinge (see www.byenvinge.dk). It is planned as a commuter suburb covering 370 hectares – but in 2016 the planning emphasis is upon the human scale, spatially, socially and economically, with a dedicated environmental and energy-conserving perspective. Plots are sold to individual families who may build their own houses, thus generating individuality of expression and human presence. All the properties are laid out around a flood delta which facilitates rainwater harvesting but also serves as a huge shared spatial asset. Vinge is also a ‘smart’ city, running its own Internet of Everything and using big data to bring machines and people closer to each other. And already it is proving a great success, as the plots are sold to young families, living in apartments or individual houses.

Besides these strategic and large scale approaches are the independent, individual projects concretely embodying these concepts. At the Danish Pavilion, ‘The Art of Many’ features more than 130 individual projects by over 70 firms and groups from the past five years, whereby the curators aim to ‘present a dynamic snapshot of Danish architecture and urban planning’. One of these represents a project, *A Model*, conceived by the present writer, together with three colleagues, the idea of which was to investigate an architecture defined structurally, programmatically and aesthetically by the life which is to be lived within it. It is built upon imperatives which relate to the shared use of space as well as to the relationships

facilitated between residents, rather than to ownership boundaries. The aim is to use the model as a tool of communication between architect and layperson, partly to generate discussion as to how we like to live in the city – together and individually.

In short, the present architectural scene reintroduces the social values of the nineteen-seventies, but yet is onward-looking in its adaptation of these values to meet the social and environmental challenges discerned in 2016, and to combine them with present technology and shared economy. This represents a movement also reflected in the political system with the rise of *Alternativet* (The Alternative) – a Danish-based political party ‘for those who want to work for a sustainable, democratic, socially just and entrepreneurial world’.

The curators of the Danish Pavilion, however, intend to dig deeper than the



***A Model* - architecturally modelling the life lived within the building**

Photo: Niklas Adrian Vindelev

overview provided by the exhibition and the two examples, Vinge and A Model, mentioned above. It is their ambition to explore, dissect and discuss some of the paradoxes and conflicts that come with a new humanism in contemporary architecture. And as the contribution is not limited to the architectural scene, but extends to the international dimension as well, the discussion is also seen by many as being extremely important in a current political context.

One might conclude that reintroducing Denmark as a nation characterised by a humanistic culture is specifically the political agenda here – combined with a marketing strategy for exports. It might even be nothing less than the international reputation of Denmark that is actually at issue here, at a time when we are becoming painted as a narrow-minded, islamophobic country, rather than as a socially liberal, open-minded and tolerant culture known for its high level of social equality and its defence of human rights.

In all fairness, it must be said that Denmark has a number of excellent architects creating high quality

architecture for the common good. It is no coincidence that the Danish firm Schmidt Hammer Lassen won the global competition to fulfil the design brief of The International Criminal Court in the Hague: ‘To be grand and formal enough to instil a sense of respect in the court and faith in the justice process as a whole, yet also able to communicate trust, transparency and hope; and to create an “open” building that was physically welcoming while meeting some of the world’s most stringent security measures’. This focus upon humanism is timely, and it is right that it should extend to the contradictions in the political sphere, so that it presents a critical portrait of contemporary Denmark through the lens of Danish architecture.

Some useful online sources:

www.dac.dk/en/dac-life/exhibitions/2012/possible-greenland-1

www.byenvinge.dk/

www.labiennale.org/en/architecture/exhibition/

www.arkitektforeningen.dk

<http://en.alternativet.dk>

www.wallpaper.com/architecture/schmidt-hammer-lassen-complete-the-international-criminal-court-at-the-hague

English Proficiency

Adults in Northern Europe reportedly have exceptionally good English skills compared to other non-native English speakers. Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden have all been among the top five countries in every English proficiency index – the world’s largest ranking of countries by adult English skills. Estonia and Finland also post consistently strong results.

Proficiency score in 2015:

Sweden	70.94
Netherlands	70.58
Denmark	70.05
Norway	67.83
Finland	65.32
Slovenia	64.97
Estonia	63.73

Singing in Scandinavia, the UK, and worldwide

Soprano Ylva Kihlberg

Interview by Eva Robards

Opera North in Leeds is England's national opera company in the North and one of Europe's leading arts organisations. Several Swedish opera singers have performed there over the years. Among them is Ylva Kihlberg, whom I met after her acclaimed performance of *Jenůfa* which went straight to the heart. Having both been born and educated in Stockholm and then living in a foreign country (she in Denmark, I in the UK), we agreed on the beauty of our home city and how much it came to mean when only returning for a visit now and again. On a whim, I asked her for an interview for CoScan Magazine, to which she most generously agreed.

It wasn't obvious that Ylva would become an opera singer – her first occupations were as an economist, a ballet-dancer and a rock-singer – but the spell of opera settled her career. Admittedly music had been there from the early years; she was, for example, a pupil of Adolf Fredriks's Music School – a starting point for many professional musicians.

Immediately after her opera training she was engaged at the Royal Swedish Opera (1997-98). However, personal reasons (Danish baritone Palle Knudsen, soon to be her husband) drew her from Stockholm to Copenhagen. From 2000 she has been a company principal at the Royal Opera in Copenhagen, where her debut was as Mimi (*La Bohème*).



Photo: Line Mirella Knudsen

Subsequent roles have been Liza (*The Queen of Spades*), Vitella (*La Clemenza di Tito*), Wellgunde, Gerhilde and Guttrune (*Wagner's Ring*), Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*), Poppea (*The Coronation of Poppea*), Marie (*Wozzeck*), Xenia (*Boris Godunov*), Michaela (*Carmen*), Lady Billows (*Albert Herring*), Jeanne (*The Devils of Loudun*), Leonora (*Maskerade*), Emilia Marty (*The Makropulos Case*), Tatjana (*Eugene Onegin*), Countess Almaviva (*The Marriage of Figaro*), Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*), Marie (*Wozzeck*), Rosalinde (*Die Fledermaus*), and the title roles of the operas *Rusalka*, *Tosca*, and *Genoveva*. Selma Jezková (*Dancer in the Dark*) was written for her by Poul Ruders, based on the film by Lars von Trier.

So what would be on her wish-to-do-list, when extending her wide-ranging repertoire? 'Káťa Kabanová', was Ylva's reply, 'Janáček's music suits my voice.'

Anyhow, the direction of the voice, how it develops, determines future roles.'

Ylva is a frequent soloist not only on opera stages but also at concerts. Particularly memorable for her, among such events, was the celebration in Reykjavík last year of the world's first woman President, Vigdís Finnbogadóttir, where she performed together with her husband Palle Knudsen.

'How is it to sing on stage with your husband as often as you do?' I asked. From Ylva's reply I gathered that this is entirely a good thing. Difficulties in the life of an opera singer are more likely to be the huge contrasts between everyday life and performing on stage, and the fact that you are never totally free: you always carry your instrument with you. It is also hard when a production comes to an end: you are left with a massive void. After having developed as a family the group is scattered, though there is some consolation that contact can nowadays continue through Facebook.

Numerous are the awards and scholarships received by Ylva, including the Cross of the Order of Chivalry (*Dannebrogordenen*) presented by Queen Margrethe II in 2011. Ylva explained that there are two Crosses, the larger of which is used when the Queen is present and the smaller for other events.

Obviously I wanted to know what she thinks of working in different countries (Sweden, Denmark, and the UK). We didn't analyse this in any depth but she said she was inspired by the ambience when she arrived at the Danish opera house, and she was readily employed. Ylva also praises the environment

at Opera North in Leeds which she finds creative, and compliments the management on nurturing this supportive climate.

We also discussed nationalities. 'When on stage, nationality doesn't matter,' Ylva said. 'You are part of a professional team aiming for the same goal. Opera is the highest form of art; it is a most complicated undertaking as there are so many components which have to be right, and all these have to come together for the final product. When this happens, the result is pure magic. But there is also a place for other kinds of music, such as pop music and indeed the Eurovision Song Contest. Whichever art form, though, the importance of culture is paramount; politicians have a huge responsibility, especially in times of financial hardship.'

Something I find intriguing is why there are so many successful Swedish opera singers. Ylva suggested, as reasons for this, the nature of the Swedish language, music training at schools, the status of folk music, the strong tradition of choir-singing, and a good opera school. There is also a long sequence of Swedish opera singers, from the 'Swedish Nightingale' Jenny Lind (* 1820) and Christina Nilsson (*1843), via Birgit Nilsson and Jussi Björling, to Anne Sofie von Otter, Nina Stemme and Peter Mattei, among the many active Swedish singers today.

In the autumn Ylva is returning to Opera North in Leeds for the third time when she will play the Marschallin in *Der Rosenkavalier*. There will be twelve performances – so a good chance to see and hear this leading Swedish opera star!

The Winter Camp of the Viking Great Army at Torksey, Lincolnshire

by Julian Richards, Professor, University of York
and Dawn Hadley, Professor, University of Sheffield

AD 865 marked the start of a momentous ten years in English history. According to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (ASC), a Viking Great Army, or *micel here*, landed in East Anglia. It was much larger than earlier forces and unlike previous Viking raids, which had generally focused on vulnerable coastal sites, the army seized horses and moved rapidly across England, taking advantage of divisions within the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. There was another difference too – the Vikings were here to stay. Whereas previous raiding had usually been a summer activity, with

the warriors returning to their farms and families in Scandinavia each winter, the Great Army made camp in England, scavenging the land and waiting for the spring before embarking on a new phase of raiding.

From East Anglia the Great Army marched on Northumbria, capturing York in 866. Next it overwintered in Nottingham in 867-8, and after a return to York in 868-9 it moved back south, camping at Thetford in 870-1, and then on to London in 871-2. Next its attention turned back to Mercia, and it overwintered



Rescue excavation of Viking burials disturbed by modern ploughing on the camp site
© The Torksey Project; reproduced with permission

in Torksey in 872-3 and Repton in 873-4. At that point it divided, with one group,



Location of Torksey Map data 2016 Google

under their leader Healfdene, returning to Northumbria, where the ASC famously tells us they seized the land of the Northumbrians and proceeded to plough and support themselves. The other group, under Guthrum, continued fighting in East Anglia and Wessex, until they were finally defeated by King Alfred, at the Battle of Eddington in 878. Nonetheless, the subsequent treaty, which ultimately led to the establishment of what became known as the Danelaw, left much of Eastern England in Scandinavian hands, with further land partitions in East Anglia and Mercia.

This was therefore a key period of transformation. A Viking army, which had first come to rob the Anglo-Saxon church of its silver and to capture slaves,

ended up seizing land and settling and establishing its own kingdoms. It established trading and manufacturing towns, minted coins, and converted to the Christian god. However, beyond the bald account of annual overwintering in the ASC we know little of the army that brought about this transformation. We know the names of the places where the army overwintered, but until recently only one – at Repton (Derbyshire) – had been investigated archaeologically. Now a collaboration between

archaeologists at the

Universities of Sheffield and York and metal detectorists has changed all that. The location of the camp at Torksey (Lincolnshire) has been discovered, and is gradually giving up its secrets.

For the last twenty years a series of fields on the east bank of the River Trent between Torksey and Marton have yielded a wealth of Viking treasure, as each ploughing brings new objects to the surface.

Working with the detectorists we have now catalogued 1572 finds, of which we believe 58% are Anglo-Saxon or Viking and were lost during the over-wintering. Over 350 early medieval coins have been recovered, including forty English silver pennies, with a notable concentration from the 860s and early 870s. There are also 124 Arabic *dirhams*, the largest

concentration on any English site. The *dirhams* were in a fragmented state, indicating bullion transactions, and there are 60 further pieces of hacksilver, and 12 pieces of hackgold. A bullion economy required the weighing of the metal, and over 350 weights have been recorded.

Metal was being used not only in exchange but also in various forms of processing and production. The recovery of three strips of lead on which decorative punches had been tested suggests the production of silver jewellery. That base metal working was also undertaken is supported by the recovery of copper-alloy and lead melts, and over 200 fragmentary copper-alloy artefacts, presumably collected to be melted down. The metalwork clearly indicates that the members of the Great Army were processing their loot, gathered over the previous year's raiding. The winter camp was occupied by manufacturers and merchants, as well as raiders. No doubt they were trading slaves too, although these are archaeologically invisible.

The distribution of finds demarcates the area of the camp – some 55 hectares in total, utilizing an area of higher ground, above the flood plain of the Trent. Boats could have been beached on the flood plain whilst the Army was protected by what our geomorphological survey has demonstrated was effectively an island, with the river on one side, and marshland on the others, and which gives the site its name: 'Turoc's Island'. Our geophysics has shown that there was no need for extra defences, and no trace of the ditched enclosure seen at the camp at

Repton. But Torksey is also much larger than that recognised at Repton.

Our research has demonstrated that without doubt, the Great Army and its followers, including women, children, traders and craftworkers, comprised at least 2-3000 people, and the ASC references to fleets of several hundred ships were not exaggerations. The pre-Viking population of York is estimated at being in the region of 1000, and the urban places known in Scandinavia are considerably smaller in the ninth century than Torksey. The winter camps may have given many of the members of the Viking armies their first encounter with urban living. Clearly they played a key role in the process of Scandinavian settlement and urban development in England. Over the next five years we hope to do more excavation at Torksey, to discover more



More than 300 lead playing pieces have been found, demonstrating that the warriors also could enjoy leisure time.

© Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge; reproduced with permission.

2016 Biathlon World Championships

Holmenkollen – Oslo

by Anna Sophie Strandli



Biathlon in its modern form had its first World Championship in Saalfelden, Austria in 1958, and was included in the Olympic programme in 1960. These first championships comprised an individual 20 km event and an unofficial relay and only men could participate.

The sport has its origins in an exercise for Norwegian soldiers, and the first known competition took place in 1767 when patrols along the Swedish-Norwegian border competed against each other. Eventually, the sport spread around the Nordic countries as an alternative training for the military. Ski and shoot! The combination of cross-country skiing and shooting was demonstrated during the Winter Olympics in 1924, 28, 36 and 48, but was not accepted as an official sport because of very few participating nations and disagreement over the rules.

In 1978, the transition from large-bore rifles and a distance of 150 metres to the targets, to small-bore rifles (.22 Long Rifle) and the distance to the targets reduced to 50 metres, represented a huge change for Biathlon. Other important changes were the women's entry in 1984, and the introduction of the skating style in addition to the classical style in 1985.

From 3rd through 13th March 2016 the world elite in Biathlon came to Holmenkollen and Oslo and we experienced twelve tense days, whether

experiencing the drama up close at the arena or glued to the television. 12 days with 11 exciting competitions and a great atmosphere for both spectators and athletes.

The opening race was the mixed relay, which is always an immensely popular event, and then followed 10 exciting competitions consisting of: sprint women/men, pursuit women/men, individual race women/men, mass start women/men and relay women/men. Distances are varying from 6 to 20 km. Penalties for missed targets are imposed either as one minute of added time per missed target or as a 150 m penalty loop.

Much of the focus of the athletes is to have control of heart rate and pulse and to master the risky balance between running too fast, which makes you miss and lose – and running too slow, that makes you lose even if you hit the targets. There is much to pay attention to and each race must be carefully planned and calculated in relation to wind and weather, temperature and humidity in the snow, the other athletes' training programs and recent results, probability calculations, psychology and of course – the skis! Preparation of skis has evolved into a science in itself and large troops are working frantically behind the scenes. Nothing is left to chance.

324 athletes, representing nearly

40 nationalities, 1,350 volunteers, 450 media representatives transmitting to 25 countries and 140,000 spectators from all over the world have all contributed to make this Championship a spectacular *folkefest* in addition to the amazing sporting achievements.

Holmenkollen is a magnificent ski arena and for more than 120 years cheering crowds have celebrated unforgettable skiing moments in Norway's national sports arena and the 'Kollen roar' is something one never forgets. Having won at Holmenkollen, whether it is in cross-country, ski jumping or biathlon, has a special sound and meaning for athletes from all nations.

The 'Kollen crowd' appreciate great sport and the athletes express a sense of being carried forward by the amazing crowd in the arena or by those lined up along the trails – many having set up camps with tents and camp fires. And the best, second best and last person home are cheered equally!

Norway is the country that has won most World Championship medals over the years (62 gold, 58 silver and 55 bronze). However, in 1958, when the Swedish competitor Adolf Wiklund took home the first ever Biathlon World Championship gold medal, the Norwegians crossed the finishing line a full hour after the winner.

France established itself as the world's top nation this year with a total of eleven medals, followed

by Norway, Germany, Austria, Italy; and then Canada, Finland and Ukraine tied for sixth place.

The Norwegian Ole Einar Bjørndalen still bears the crown of all the athletes, and with his incredible 43 World Championship medals and close to 100 individual victories he has defeated Ingemar Stenmark's legendary series of 86 victories in the Alpine World Cup. Together with Swedish Magdalena Forsberg he is the world's most victorious biathlete of all time. He is the top ranking in the world for a period of 18 years and no one has achieved, as he has done, to master what is completely contradictory: to shoot with shaky legs and a high pulse! Also the ability to continue, fully focused, even after missing one or more targets, is a tremendous strength that all the athletes are constantly working at developing and perfecting. This 42-year-old perfectionist and super-veteran, the grand old man and King of Biathlon, was hailed by ten thousand spectators at University Square when he and the team received the gold medal for men's relay. To be awarded



Norwegian Tiril Eckhoff

Photo: CC-licencing

the gold medal on home ground is a dream for all athletes, especially in the relay, and the Norwegian girls were also overwhelmed at having managed home gold in the relay after a brilliant team effort.

Finnish Kaisa Mäkäräinen was one of the big favourites this year, and in Finland the interest in Biathlon has increased in line with the 32-year-old's sporting merits. Unfortunately she had trouble with her shooting throughout the championship, but managed to get a bronze medal in the final race, women's mass start, and the ski arena exploded in Finnish flags and delighted fans and followers.

And that's Biathlon! It only takes one miss or a full house to change the competitors' positioning in the race completely, and in principle it is possible for all participants to reach the top. This gives the sport a sense of both unpredictability and opportunity for all that without doubt is a basis for its popularity. There is good reason why Biathlon is known as the 'number one spectator sport', *publikumssport nummer én*. Biathlon is a far more popular sport than, for example, cross-country skiing and especially in Eastern and Central European countries people are crazy about it. While Biathlon initially appeared on TV on rare occasions, it has now become hugely popular and in Norway it is the most watched televised sport. With its complexity and two sports in one dynamics it makes excellent TV. It is thrilling and nerve-racking, and then the knowledgeable, highly professional,

and at times completely bonkers, commentators add to the excitement.

What a great championship it has been! The organisation was superb down to the smallest detail and even the dreaded Holmenkollen fog decided to give its apologies for absence.

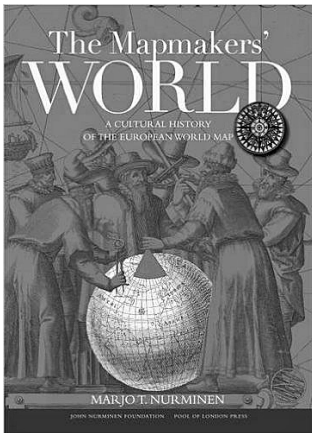
Victory and defeat, joy and tears, revenge and sportsmanship at the highest level. Endurance, precision, tactics and strategy. Magical atmosphere, fantastic audience, superstars and great sporting achievements. All in the presence of HRH King Harald, Norway's sports-crazy king. All winners are welcome to his tribune to Royal hugs, handshakes and a brief talk. The 79-year-old Monarch uses every opportunity to show his support and his presence is invaluable and widely appreciated by athletes and spectators alike. – No wonder we love this sport!



King Harald and Ole Einar Bjørndalen

Photo: Vidar Ruud/Scanpix

From the bookshelf



‘A magnificent book which is a monument to the effort and ingenuity that Europeans have devoted to understanding the wider world, a quest continuing to this day, and one that still relies on maps.’ The thousand-year ‘journey’ includes painters, mathematicians and seafarers, as well as cartographers. The enormous number of colour illustrations make this a many-layered work that includes rarely seen portraits of leading mapmakers, exquisite enlargements of map detail and expositions on the evolution of map-making techniques. ‘The book is written as an exciting, flowing narrative, rather than a catalogue or an encyclopedia, and it takes the reader on the ultimate voyage of discovery.’

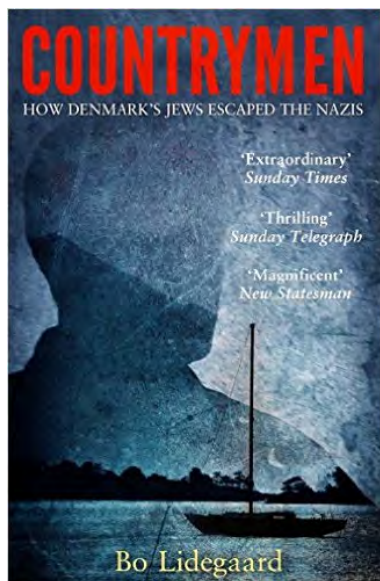
Marjo and Juha Nurminen, *The Mapmakers' World: A Cultural History of the European World Map*. Published by Pool of London Press, Sept 2015.

ISBN : 978-1-910860007



How will the Nordic values of fairness and equality stand up to future challenges and crises? This is the question asked in a newly published book, with answers provided by international greats including Gro Harlem Brundtland, Martti Ahtisaari, and Jan Eliasson. From the abstract of the book: ‘According to the Secretary-General of the UN, Ban Ki-moon, the countries of the Nordic Region are the strongest countries in the UN’s 70-year history. The individuals in this book, all of whom are active in various international arenas, are testament to the great interest in the Nordic Region and the fact that the global Nordic voice is now perhaps more important than ever.’

Bodil Tingsby (editor), *Nordic Voices – The Global Voice of the Nordic Region*, Published by Nordisk Ministerråd (Nordic Council), Copenhagen Jan 2016. ISBN: 978-92-893-4441-8
ISBN: 978-92-893-4442-5
ISBN: 978-92-893-4443-2
Can be downloaded as pdf: <http://norden.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:897759/FULLTEXT02.pdf>



Review by Louise Sørensen

This book provides a rare glimpse of light in the dark chapter of history that is the Holocaust. The historian Bo Lidegaard weaves official historical sources together with the diaries of private Jewish families, the latter previously unpublished. He creates a captivating account of the events of October 1943 where Danish citizens, politicians and civil servants came together to help some 8,000 fellow countrymen escape German-occupied Denmark.

The build-up to the event is told chronologically. Lidegaard takes great care to explain the somewhat unusual relationship between the Danish government and the 'peaceful occupiers'. This much maligned *samarbejdspolitik* (policy of cooperation) benefited both parties in the early war years. The Danes

saw staying on the Germans' good side as the lesser of two evils, and the Germans worried that if they broke off the policy, the Danes might stop supplying food to the German war effort.

Prior to 1943, the 'Jewish question' had gone largely undiscussed. The perception that this community was Danish first and Jewish second was cultivated by the Danish authorities despite German pressure. Because of this most Danes simply did not believe that action would be taken against the Jews and rejected outright the elimination of people because of race, creed or political conviction.

The first third of 'Countrymen' focuses on setting the political scene which makes it a bit heavy-going, but as we reach the summer of 1943 and the more personal stories, it becomes a very engaging read.

In August 1943, encouraged by German defeats at the front, the Danish resistance embarked on several waves of sabotage across the country. When the Danish government refused to introduce martial law and the death penalty as a response, the *Wehrmacht* ended the policy of cooperation, imposed martial law and disarmed the Danish forces. However, they could not impose direct military rule because they were not officially at war with Denmark, they were 'peaceful occupiers'.

With no real government in place, the growing realisation in the Jewish community that their days of protection were numbered, and the subsequent escape to Sweden in small fishing boats in the dead of night are experienced

poignantly through the eyes of ordinary people in the book.

When the Gestapo finally moved to arrest Danish Jews on 1 October 1943, they found that many had already fled. A remarkably risky evacuation effort organised by ordinary Danes determined to help their fellow countrymen resulted in 7,000 Jews making it across to Sweden where they were received with open arms. The diary entries describing the escape together with the accompanying photographs make Lidegaard's book a compelling contribution to the body of works on this period.

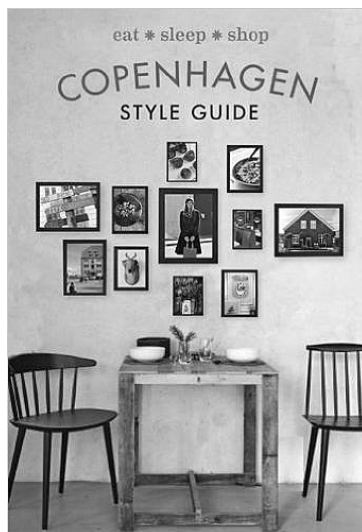
Bo Lidegaard: *Countrymen: How Denmark's Jews Escaped the Nazis*. Paperback published by Atlantic Books, May 2015
ISBN: 978-1-782391449



Danish author Lene Kaaberbøl's prize-winning Wildwitch series has come to the UK. January 2016 saw the release of *Wildfire* – the first book in the series. The second book, *Oblivion*, appeared in March. The books feature illustrations by Rohan Eason and are published by Pushkin Press Children's Books.

ISBN: 978-1-782690832

ISBN: 978-1-782690849



Sparkling waterways, world-famous interiors and friendly well-dressed people on bicycles – welcome to Copenhagen, capital of Denmark, and home to the Danes, the happiest people on earth.

Copenhagen effortlessly combines the latest trends in fashion, design, furnishings and architecture with a refreshingly relaxed approach to life. And, while this is a city that enjoys an international reputation for culinary excellence, dining out can be as inexpensive as it is thrilling, if you follow some insider tips. The authors share the secrets of their spectacular city: the shops, cafés, restaurants, galleries and hotels that exude a uniquely Danish sense of style and serenity.

Anna Peuckert and Søren Jepsen. *Copenhagen Style Guide*. Published by Murdoch Books, Australia, Feb 2016.
ISBN10 174336732
ISBN13 9781743367322

Anna Sophie's Kitchen

by Anna Sophie Strandli

Photo: Søren Rud/Henrik Freek

A Thistle with a Heart of Gold



An Artichoke (*Cynara scolymus*) is a strange delicacy. The small portion that is edible is wrapped in huge quantities of rough leaves, and deep down there is an inedible brush. To trim an Artichoke requires a good sharp knife and a steady chef. But when you reach the heart, nothing beats this thistle.



- Squeeze the juice of two lemons into a large bowl of water (+ zest).
- Remove the hard outer leaves until you get to the lighter green layers.
- Remove the hair (the brush) with a spoon or knife.
- Leave the cleaned artichokes in the *lemon-water*, while you make the pasta, to avoid them turning brown.

You can use frozen artichoke hearts. They do not give the same fresh taste, but only need to simmer for a few minutes and are ready to use!



Pasta with Artichokes and Pancetta



600 g fresh pasta, or 350 g dried pasta (Penne/Fettuccine goes well)

6 artichokes

1 yellow onion, thinly sliced

4-6 slices pancetta or cured bacon

1tbs butter

1 cup grated Parmesan

½ cup white wine, (½ cup cream)

Olive oil

Parsley for decoration

Thinly slice the rinsed artichokes. Sauté the onion and pancetta/bacon (cut into small strips) in about three tablespoons of olive oil over medium heat, for about five minutes. Add artichokes and wine (+ ½ cup of light cream if you like) and season with a little salt and black pepper. Simmer on a low heat, covered, for about 20 minutes. Toss the drained pasta (keep 1 cup of the pasta-water for the sauce) with the artichoke mixture. Gently mix in the parmesan and butter and serve! Artichokes naturally contain the acid cynarin which causes the next thing you eat, or drink, to taste sweeter than it otherwise would. That strange sweetness that lingers...

CoScan travel grants

are awarded once a year to people aged between 15 and 25 who are planning a journey of an educational nature to Scandinavia.

Further information on our website,
or contact

travelaward@coscan.org.uk

Deadline for applications:

31 March each year.

CoScan Trust Fund

2016 report by Brita Green

We met in York on 5 April to discuss last year's travel award reports and, most importantly, to decide on this year's awards. Some of the reports and photos from 2015, including the prize-winning ones, can be seen in this issue of the magazine, and others will follow in the winter issue.

We had just over £2400 in the kitty, having received £815 in donations during the year. We are most grateful to our regular donor Mr Smith and to York Anglo-Scandinavian Society who, between them, provided the bulk of that sum, but we have also had contributions from three other individual donors and from the Newcastle Anglo-Scandinavian Society and the Scottish Norwegian Society (Glasgow), and we thank them for their generosity.

There were ten applications for 2016, planning trips to Norway, Denmark, Finland and Iceland. Two of them came from groups, one group of schoolchildren

from the Shetland Isles to join other parties from around Europe for a week of educational activities in Norway, and one group of folk musicians from Orkney, also going to Norway. We decided to give the groups £300 each.

Of the individual applications this year, several were from students attending medical or pharmaceutical summer courses, conferences or electives. The most unusual project was that of a zoology student who will be studying 'wolf pack ecology'. After deciding to reject one individual application (because he had been given an award in 2015 for a very similar project), we divided the remaining available money equally and gave them £125 each. If all offers are taken up, it will leave us just under £1000, in line with our usual policy. That will give us a start for next year's awards – but it will not be enough. The more you give us, the more we can give away!

If you approve of the travel award scheme, please try to think of a way to help us, through your society or as an individual.

Did you know that you can now donate

by making a one-off transfer or by a regular standing order?

Download a form from
www.coscan.org.uk/travel-award.

Or just drop Tony Bray a line
tony.bray@coscan.org.uk
for a form to fill in.

Or send a cheque made out to
'Coscan Trust Fund' to our treasurer:
John Christmas, 22 Hobgate, York,
YO24 4HF.

**CoScan Trust Fund
PRIZE-WINNING REPORT 2015**

A cycle tour of Norway 20 July – 28 August 2015

by Samuel Black

It was on a beautiful sunny day in June 2015, during my sister's graduation ceremony in Aberdeen (I promise I clapped for her!), that I hatched a plan to combine my final-year thesis work with a true Scandinavian adventure – a solo cycle tour of the west coast of Norway. I had spent the previous year on Svalbard studying Geology and Biology. As June passed by I carried out a lot of research (it became a bit of an obsession) into cycle touring, bought all the gear I needed on a shoe string budget and planned a rough route. I also developed a project outline for my final-year thesis. The study involved some seaweed collection for which I was invited on a short cruise in and around central Svalbard.

After posting my bike to Tromsø in northern Norway, I headed up to Svalbard on the 21st of July and spent the first week there, collecting seaweed. Then it was time to start the real adventure – my cycle tour of Norway!

I arrived in Tromsø in glorious weather and hitch-hiked into the city. Tromsø is a great little place built on an island connected to the mainland by various bridges and tunnels. I grabbed some supplies and headed out to pick up my bike. After tracking it down to a postal depot south of the city, I walked 10 km across the bridge and located my bike. With no documentation of postage I had to convince a friendly Norwegian

that it truly was my bike, describing every aspect of it in great detail. After some time he caved in and gave it to me – what a relief! I built up my bike outside of the shop in a car park, packed my panniers and set off at midnight under the midnight sun. As I crossed the city bridge to the north-west I looked ahead into the distance wondering what might be in store for me over the next five weeks. It was really happening, the trip I'd been planning and thinking about for so long was actually going ahead. Now fully loaded, my bike creaked as I rode the first 20 km. Would my bike survive the trip? Not including buses and trains I had around 2000 km of cycling between me and Stavanger in the south of Norway. As doubt crept into my mind I did the only thing I could do – kept on turning the pedals and set out into the wilderness.

Over the first four days I had great weather. Using an old 1980s road map a friend's mother had given me I made my way west and south along the coast cycling up mountains, through tunnels and on two ferries. It was truly magical! My legs and bike felt strong and I had all the gear I needed. I fished in the evenings after I made camp and ate cod and mashed potato for dinner. The roads were in great condition and very quiet and I truly felt out in the wild. After five days, two ferries, one hitch-hike and 500 km of cycling, I arrived in Lofoten.

Through a bit of luck and a bit of planning I met up with some close

friends in Lofoten who I'd studied with in Svalbard earlier in the year, Matt (Austria) and Linn (Norway). I arrived pretty tired and hungry to a big bowl of pasta and a cup of coffee. They even let me sleep in-between them in the tent for warmth (what great friends I have). Matt played and sang an awful song on his most recent purchase (a ukulele) whilst I fell asleep. It was wonderful to meet up with them and we spent five days exploring Lofoten. We hiked, climbed and fished, moving further south every day when I would cycle as they hitch-hiked. All too soon it was over and I headed for the mainland on the ferry from Moskenes to Bodø. As Lofoten disappeared over the horizon I realised that I'd found my new favourite place in the world.

One morning I woke up to the sad news that there had been a bus crash in the main tunnel out of Flåm the previous evening resulting in a complete closure of the tunnel for the following 6 weeks. This 14 km tunnel was the only way out of Flåm besides the now fully booked railway. With no money to spare and little energy to cycle the 350 km detour to bypass the tunnel I pleaded with a cruise ship to take me round the headland to where I could re-join the road. Luckily the captain agreed and after a free three-

hour cruise (including coffee) I was back on the road and headed for Voss. My old map hadn't been doing me any favours up to this point, often surprising me with new roads and long tunnels. However, after rounding the headland of a fjord I was amazed to find a huge 150 m high suspension bridge in the place of a 40-minute ferry ride that I had anticipated. It was a great surprise and I sailed across the bridge with a big smile on my face.

- - Eventually I reached Stavanger. A friend met me in the centre of town and picked me up. We went straight to the beach, ate ice cream and played Frisbee – this is the life! For the next three days I chilled out and recovered. It was incredible getting a shower every morning and sleeping in a double bed. We had planned some mountain hikes but high winds kept us at sea level. We did however do a lot of fishing and ate fresh mackerel every night. The three calm days in Stavanger gave me time to reflect on my journey. I thought back to the early days of the trip where I was blissfully unaware of what I was about to undertake. I thought back to the times spent cycling in the rain and wind, drenched in sweat and grit. I thought of the cold nights I'd spent in my wet sleeping bag and the



(See also cover photo)

horrible amounts of tinned mackerel and porridge that I'd consumed, and came to realise that I'd loved every second of it and wouldn't change any of it for the world. The trip made me realise that you can achieve anything that you set your mind to. Over the 5-6 weeks I'd come to learn so much and found a second home in Norway. I can't thank CoScan enough for the travel grant, as without the money I may not have been able to complete the trip. To anyone who has that adventure that they've always wanted to do or dreamed of, make it happen!

The final part of my journey involved boarding a ferry headed for Denmark with the plan to cycle to Copenhagen to meet a girl I'd met, funnily enough, on Svalbard. Long story short, things went well and I now live with her – but that's another story!

On board a tall ship

by Tom Chivers

What better present can there be for a boy's fourth birthday than a model ferry? That's what I decided and I began to collect toy ships, soon having my own fleet and a Lego harbour. The family's subsequent move to Shetland with its strong maritime heritage served to boost my interest and a desire to have a career at sea was sparked. As part of my school studies for the past two years I've been attending a Maritime Skills course, but this is mostly college-based, so seeing an advert for Nordic 2015 with Training Shetland was very interesting, especially as I visited Helsinki in 2013 and wanted



to see more of Scandinavia. I applied and was delighted when told I'd been accepted.

At our first crew meeting a week before setting off we all sat nervously around the table, no-one daring to say much, which now seems very amusing seeing how close we became during our voyage. There were ten trainees who had never sailed before, accompanied by five experienced crew: Rory the Skipper, Linn his Norwegian fiancée, Peter from the Swan Trust, Scott the First Mate and Loïc who'd been on similar trips.

Sunday 28 June was the day we were due on board and I was quite anxious as I finished packing, but this turned into excitement as I travelled to the harbour.

Swan is a former 'fifie' fishing vessel built in Shetland's main town of Lerwick and launched in 1900. Since the Swan Trust took her over in 1998 she has operated as a sail training ship, taking hundreds of people like me on the experience of a lifetime. Once on board my mum and dad were shown around the boat but I simply stood there listening to people's conversations to discover more about them until it was time for our parents to leave. The crew had a cup of tea while Rory told us about the trip and some sailing basics, after which we played a few games to get to know each other. We were divided into three watches named Casio, Seiko and Rolex, then settled down to the first night in our bunks, even though we were still tied up in port.

At 2pm the following day our parents returned to wave us off. After practising raising the sail (while trying to avoid two large cruise ships visiting Shetland that day) we headed out into the North Sea. With the winds against us we faced three days of motoring to Denmark, witnessing some beautiful sunrises and sunsets, passing close to large oil rigs and even being visited by a friendly pigeon we named Patrice as we passed the Norwegian coast on our way to Hirtshals in Denmark.

Using the engine rather than sails meant we arrived on 2 July, a day early, and had plenty of time to

explore. Hirtshals is a lovely town, probably my favourite location of the trip. We shopped, ate a lot of ice cream, played football golf and took part in the race opening ceremony.

The semi-serious job of racing to Norway took place over the next few days, at which Swan didn't do particularly well, but taking part was tremendous fun and we enjoyed some acts of 'piracy', including waterbomb fights with some of the other boats.

When we arrived in Grimstad on the evening of Tuesday 7 July all the crews paraded, many waving flags, but we were the only ones to have temporary tattoos and an inflatable swan! Everyone gathered for a meal, and then each boat had to perform some form of entertainment and our sea shanty went down very well. The local newspaper featured an interview with me in a story about the race, the first time I've been famous like that. Linn was able to translate and tell us all the lovely things they'd written about us.



Wednesday morning saw us leaving on the next leg. We had a chance to experience life on other vessels with most of our crew joining the Norwegian Sea Scouts' vessel, *Christiane*. The work was harder and we were impressed with their efficiency as they seemed to run everywhere to get things done. They told us to just sit down, watch our heads during tacking and even gave us lunch. Our destination was Tromøy and on arrival a huge barbecue was held at which we were awarded the third-place prize for the tug-of-war we'd taken part in at Grimstad and we were honoured to be named the friendliest crew.

We were back on *Swan* the next day to take our final crossing to Kristiansand where we would leave her for a new crew to participate in the Tall Ships' Race. As the other boats headed home they sounded their horns and it seemed the most noise

was made by us and the Norwegian ship *Mohawk*, which was very pleasing as we'd forged strong links with her crew. On the way the wind picked up and we made our top speed of 9.7 knots with water running over the side and a lot of roll, but it was a thrilling experience.

At 4am on Friday 10 July we waved goodbye to *Swan* and travelled to catch a flight to Oslo, then onwards to Aberdeen and the NorthLink ferry back to Shetland.

This was the best experience of my life, with a great crew, all-round fun, travelling to different places, making new friends and sailing on different boats. Leaving *Swan* for the last time was sad as, although I'd been looking forward to getting home, when the time came to go to the airport I wanted the trip to last a bit longer. If I ever had the chance offered again I would definitely take it. And I still want a career at sea.

My week with Asger Jorn

by Helen Shaw, PhD candidate in History of Art at the University of York

Broadly, my research explores the ceramic art of Lucio Fontana, Asger Jorn and Wifredo Lam made in Albisola, Italy, in the 1950s and 1960s. It was therefore essential for me to visit Asger Jorn's archives, which are permanently housed in Aarhus and to also see his wonderful *Large Relief* (1959) in situ.

In all, I spent ten days in Aarhus, splitting my time between the research archives and library at the Asger Jorn Museum and visiting the secondary school Aarhus *Statsgymnasium* (ASG) to examine the *Large Relief*.

With the help of curators and research staff at the Asger Jorn museum, I was able to browse through the museum's extensive collections of Jorn's personal photographs, manuscripts, hand-written letters to friends and artists, as well as the general ephemera that he collected. Jorn was a prolific writer as well as an artist and many of his essays are concerned with contemporary international politics, economics and philosophy. His writings on these topics informed much of his artistic practice, including his ceramic work. The staff at the Asger Jorn museum

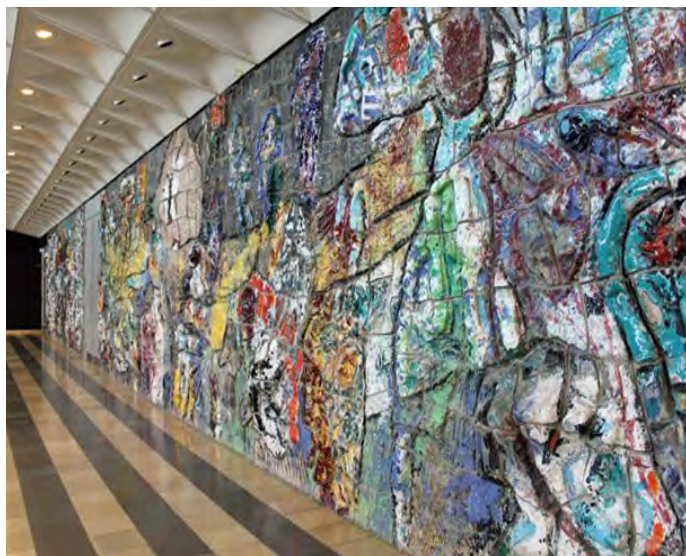
helped me to translate most of the texts, which were all written in Danish.

Jorn's Large Relief was made in Albisola, Italy, and then transported to Aarhus where it is permanently on view. The relief is considered an extremely ambitious and experimental piece of ceramic work for the period it was made. Jorn did not conform to traditional ceramic forms, such as the vessel or plate, but slapped, stomped and pounded large mounds of clay onto the floor. Bright, vibrant glazes were then poured and painted onto the volcanic surface. It was then fired in chunks and transported to Aarhus to be installed as a wall relief. It is so big that it takes up the entire length of the school's hall, and so tall that it connects the floor to the ceiling. It was important for me to see the Large Relief in situ so that I could analyse the material surface in more depth.

During my visits I was fortunate enough to talk to Janne Yde, Head of Art and a leading expert on the relief. She took me on a tour around the school and grounds and showed me the other, previously undocumented, ceramic works that were also made to fit in with the school's architecture. Yde imparted some essential information about the Large Relief regarding its manufacturing process and instalment in the school and showed me where Jorn rode across the relief's surface with a motorbike, creating the famous tyre imprints.

I am grateful to CoScan for enabling me to conduct this research which I am so passionate about. Completing this research has enabled me to travel to Albisola earlier than anticipated, which has meant I can begin to research more ceramic work. My extended thanks to the Danish curators and researchers at the

Asger Jorn museum, and school staff at ASG, for being so friendly, generous and accommodating during my visit to Aarhus.



Detail of the Large Relief by Asger Jorn, in the entrance hall of Aarhus Statsgymnasium

Hospital experience in Örebro

by Maddy Whyler

For the past five years I have studied medicine at Glasgow University. In 2013 I completed a four-week placement in a Welsh NHS hospital and was shocked at how different my experiences were, given that both hospitals were part of the same United Kingdom health service. Medication choices, staff patient ratios, waiting times and the epidemiology of illness were quite different.

This year I was offered the chance to take part in an exchange with Swedish medical students at Örebro University. Remembering how different healthcare was within the UK, I could barely imagine what the differences would be like in Scandinavia. I jumped at the opportunity! The aim of the exchange was for students to learn about the medical practices and education in the exchange country, and then to feed back to our own medical school, along with adding to our own educational and cultural experiences.

The hospital experience was similar to what happens in Glasgow. There was a morning meeting, followed by a ward-round where each patient was assessed by the medical team. During my first ward-round, I was surprised to see everyone stop after an hour or so and head to a small seated area. I was very confused and was told it was *fika* time. Having no idea what this meant, I followed suit and was pleasantly surprised to see that this was essentially a coffee break with a selection of cakes, bread, cheese and pickles to eat! It was an interesting and

enjoyable experience. I thought back to the countless times I had seen junior doctors work 12-hour shifts in the UK, barely taking time to eat, and realising how lovely *fika* was!

The way the Swedish students learned on the wards was particularly interesting to me. They were integrated into the medical team with specific administration duties to complete, such as writing discharge letters. This was a huge contrast to the UK where a medical student's day usually consists of a ward-round, followed by specific pre-arranged teaching sessions with doctors, often at the patient's bedside. I felt that although the Swedish students were much more integrated and useful on the wards, it must mean that they end up spending much more of their evenings studying the theory of medicine than is needed in the UK.

In addition to learning about the medical practices and education, I was eager to learn more about Swedish culture. I saw the Swedes as kind, welcoming and at times, very reserved. Everybody I spoke to had excellent English, which made me feel guilty about my own language abilities. During my time in Örebro itself I tried to immerse myself (with the help of the Swedish students) in the local happenings. I cycled around the city instead of walking, bought herring rye-bread sandwiches in the Christmas market, watched a local ice hockey game and much more. The

Swedish students were very friendly and taught us how to make saffron buns (a Christmas-time staple), drink *glögg*, and fed us a *smörgåsbord* which had some strange foods that I had never heard of before, and some typical Swedish dishes, such as herring and meatballs.

I also visited Gothenburg and Stockholm – two very interesting (and very different) cities. Gothenburg had beautiful architecture and a very laid back, alternative vibe. It was a big contrast to the bustling city of Stockholm where I very much felt like a foreigner beside the stereotypically beautiful, tall, blonde-haired men and women around me!

During our visit, some of the other students and I decided to experience the very North of Sweden. After much research, we chose to venture to Kiruna, located within the Arctic circle. When we told the Swedish students where we were going, many of them laughed saying 'It's

so cold, I've never been there!'. So we wrapped up warm and flew out for four days. On arrival, everything was covered with snow. It was so different to anything I had experienced before. The town itself was almost deserted and the buildings were so brightly coloured, compared to the white snow. It felt like a scene from a fairy tale! We visited Abisko National Park, the most beautiful park I have ever seen, with snow-covered hills and valleys, enormous frozen lakes, and partly frozen waterfalls. We spent a lot of the time simply sitting and gazing at the natural wonders. The Swedish students had got one thing right however – it was very cold!

Overall I had an amazing experience in Sweden – I believe I have learnt a huge amount – both medical and cultural. It amazed me how vastly different areas of the same country can be, and how small Wales feels in comparison! These experiences will remain with me forever.



Brightly coloured houses against white snow, in the town of Kiruna (Sweden)

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CoScan Travel Award – Prize Winning Photo 2015: Freya Muir

Iceland, snorkelling in glacial meltwater: 'clean enough to drink, cold enough for brain freeze'

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