

Scandinavia trip 1982

25 May

First a weekend in Guelph and Toronto for Herman's wedding to Kathy, including visits with Steve and Joan Nessner and with Wisconsin relatives. Uncle Hank went to the hospital and we visited him there also. With Clarence and Jean and Mother went to Kleinburg, saw part of McMichael collection, and then also Ontario Place and the Ontario Science Centre. Children had a great time, and we were tired when we got to the airport on Tuesday afternoon. Elaine and Grandma left for Edmonton, Elaine not feeling well, and we left also, after calling Jack and Avlyn, Leida Van Beilen, and Ann. Good trip to Amsterdam, including the Jewish lady who was not allowed to sit beside her husband because of her religion (at certain times) so she and her baby sat by us for a while.

26 May

Arrived in time and met Bill and Bertha soon after. Put our suitcases in a locker and went by bus to pick up the camper. Soon arranged and we drove back to the airport for our luggage. Stopped at ANWB for some maps, ate some lunch at Bussum (croquettes and beer) and found campground at Voorthuizen. Called tante Gijs and had a nice visit with her and the uncles. They are getting older (75, 80, 81) but seem to be keeping well still. Next morning went back, looked over the garden, had coffee, and left two empty suitcases there. Borrowed some towels and two pillows also. In Barneveld we bought table and four chairs, some cups and dishes, and then drove as far as Bremen. Camped at Everinghausen. So far the weather has been sunny and hot. A thunderstorm cooled things off a bit and next morning it was dry again but not too warm. Phoned Ole Gottrup in the meantime (DM 7) and told him we would arrive Friday evening. Most Germans (and Dutchmen) drive very fast. We cruise at 100 and they zip by at 130-150 in their Mercedes and Audi or BMW or VW.

Passed Hamburg on the freeway—lots of cranes in the harbour and a lot of smokestacks. Crossed into Denmark soon after lunch. Had a stand-up lunch in a German shopping centre—Schinkenwurst, Kartoffel salad, Reibekuchen. Also sampled a few German wines in the store.

Arrived at Gottrup's about 5:45, had a beer, and got settled in at campground nearby. Near ocean (bay) but cold wind and water. Dinner at Gottrup's was very good. Herring (pickled) or in curry mustard—good. Also bread, cold pork, cheese, Snaps (45% alcohol) and more beer. Later some coffee. Next day visited two pig farmers and saw a small weed control trial. Denmark economy is poor, we are told. Farmers are taxed heavily. VAT up to 25 % now. Foot and mouth disease outbreak (from Poland or East Germany?). Probably 2000+ cattle and hogs killed, and a ban on export to Japan. Hog prices down. One farmer (200 ha) pays about \$12,000 tax per year (property tax) vs. less than \$1000 for Bill Groot. He had 170 sows, average litter 10, and sells them after weaning. Also about 35 acres potatoes. Young farmer, about 30-35, seems to be doing OK on farm bought (inherited?) from father. Spoke excellent English (was 1.5 years in US, in Montana and California)/ Place was very neat and clean.

Gottrup's house was extensively remodeled and land and barn rented out. Daughters Lene and Berit. Annelise works half days in quality lab of fish dish factory in Fredericia.

Farmers use a lot of fertilizer (200-300 kg/ha N, sometimes plus chicken manure. Also a lot of K.

30 May (Sunday)

[*Dixie*] Drove to Odense in late afternoon, too late to visit any attractions. Found a very good campsite, with many sites partitioned off by lilac trees in bloom. Went downtown, walked past the Hans G. Anderson house, took a long walk all around the downtown area, saw some old churches from the outside, walked in a beautiful park, ate supper at campsite (soup), and played a boring game of Scrabble.

31 May

Got up to beautiful sunshine and lilac fragrance and birds singing. Had breakfast and then headed to a pioneer museum, till about 11:30. Had ferry reservations for 12:45 [made by Ole] so there wasn't any time to visit the Hans Anderson house.

[*Bill*] Ferry trip (45 minutes) to Zealand was uneventful (cost Kr 174 = 102 + 3x24). Ferry was full of returning weekenders (from Copenhagen area?). There were small mobile gas trucks in the ferry lines. At Roskilde we saw Viking ships (5) excavated from around 1000 AD, and preserved in a museum. Also the cathedral (Domkirch), about 800 years old, in which 37 or 38 kings and queens of Denmark and also Norway have been buried. Very large impressive church. No stained glass windows but very ornate organ, royal box (up high, right across the pulpit) and altar piece (gold?). camped at Absalom campground in suburb of Copenhagen, 15-20 minutes from downtown. Not as good as Odense but quite acceptable (Kr 88). Met some Canadians stationed with the army in Germany, who had lived in Edmonton also.

1 June

Today was long day in Copenhagen. From the tourist information place near Tivoli we went to city hall (spacious, with fine decorations including sculptured wood and brass handrails along stairs and some fairly good murals of old Copenhagen. National Museum had all kinds of old Viking things, including weapons, tools, drinking horns, old church pieces, including gold altar pieces, lots of fine wooden carved things, chests). A tour of Bing and Brøngare Porcelain Factory impressed us with all the hand labour that goes into casting and painting figurines, before glazing and firing. All piece work, with good working surroundings, individual work stations with radio (headphones), plants and pictures. Painting takes a quarter to half day for each piece. One big turkey takes a month.

Visited the 'lille havfrue' and walked along the harbour and in the park. In town saw one topless girl in the grass, and two came walking by on the promenade, shocking even a Danish girl on the bench. It looks like some of them enjoy flaunting their wares.

A fish meal downtown and later a rich dessert in Tivoli was very good and also fairly expensive (Kr 437 for the meal and Kr. For the coffee and pastry). Tivoli is an attractive place, right downtown, not just amusements but plenty of flowers (beautiful tulips), trees, performance places (Haydn cello concerto was very nice) and coloured lights to enjoy after dark. A police detour on the way back to the campground had us temporarily lost but a friendly Dane came out of his house to rescue us and show us the way. The camp

gate was locked, however, so we set on the parking lot where it was very noisy after we went to bed and again early in the morning.

2 June

Left for Hillerød and saw Frederiksborg Castle. Very ornate chapel. Coronation of most Danish kings and queens has taken place here. Full of paintings, mostly of kings and queens and other VIPs. Also some war scenes, mostly with Sweden. Museum in castle full of carved chests and cupboards. Very impressive but after a while saturation sets in (about 60 rooms full of things). On to Helsingfors for a short (20 minutes) ferry ride to Helsingborg, Sweden. The banks were closed but we found the post office willing to change some money. At least now we can buy a map and some gas.

Camped at Ängelholm, near the beach. After supper we rode out of town 4-5 km and met a farmer who had spent 6 months in Lethbridge in 1960. He invited us to his farm and house, showed us his pigs (about 400) and his huge 90-year-old house. (250 m²). Nicely furnished, with a low of work. Windows with 2x2 panes, for air force plane noise. He farms 50 ha, a bit larger than average, wheat, barley, rapeseed. He buys 8-week-old pigs and raises them to 100 kg. Interesting visit, purely by accident because we stopped on the road to take some pictures and blocked his way. Daughter (14) Anna Wettergren, (father Hans?), Karlslätt, 26200 Ängelholm, Sweden (Sverige).

3 June

Northwest of Ängelholm, towards Torekov, saw some nice potato fields and many neat-looking farms. Beautiful old church (1759) in Försörv. The caretaker spoke no English. Drove across to the east coast, mostly on secondary roads, through forested areas, to Kalmar, once the capital of Sweden. Some very old buildings. Also a long bridge, 6070 m, to Öland, where we camped. Drove around town a bit and later played a three-hand game of Scrabble that took a long time to finish and left Bertha waiting impatiently. The night before she was badly frustrated by the washer and drier at the campground at Ängelholm, perhaps also partly because she stayed behind while we went out riding.

4 June

Up early, warm in the sun. A hot and muggy day. First to Orrefors and the glass factory. Beautiful stuff. Bought eight wine glasses (sent to Mark and Ann) and two bowls (sent to Mother Wierenga) and a heavier glass bowl. Glasses @ kr. 30 less tax and kr. 60 shipping. Larger bowl kr. 192. Then a long drive via some back roads, even some gravel, and then main highway and freeway, to Stockholm. Most of the country was forest and rocks, with some farms in between. Much like northern Ontario and Okanagan area for rocks and trees. Found Sättra camping at Bredding just outside Stockholm. A busy place this time, mostly filled, and not quite so peaceful as the last two sites. Watching the glassblowers and handlers was impressive. Few tools are used, but a lot of skill. In the display area some beautiful pieces of glass art work. Some also quite expensive.

5 June

On to Stockholm, a large and complicated city on many islands, with bridges and with overpasses that the map doesn't show. A bit of shopping today—looking at textiles, furniture, and some glass. It was very warm (31C) in the afternoon and we got quite tired.

Ate a good fish dinner in an outside restaurant, serenaded by a small band. The ladies went to a handicraft museum and Bill and I went to a 'Nordiske' museum with old things from houses in city and on farm. Very interesting. Watched part of the Stockholm marathon (about 11,000 participants). It messed up the traffic and parking a bit. Walked around in the old town for a while and then we called it a day and headed back to camp for a couple of games of euchre and for showers. Thunder and lightning and a cool breeze turned into rain for a while, until 1 or 2 am.

6 June

Sunshine again but quite a bit cooler. No church today so to Stockholm again for a guided tour of the City Hall. Very impressive. Built (finished) in 1923, "for the people". Large halls can be rented for nominal amounts for various occasions. Also used for all sorts of important official visitors to the city. Nobel prize dinners take place in the gold room.

On Saturday afternoon we also visited the *Wasa*, gone down in 1628 on its maiden voyage because of inadequate ballast (to keep it high enough in the water). Top-heavy, it went over, and 30 to 40 lives were lost. The ship was salvaged in 1956 and now is mostly restored. Very impressive warship (was to have a crew of about 130 and 300 soldiers). Back to Sunday now. A 2-hour boat tour was nice but a bit disappointing after the City Hall tour. Walked around by the Koncerthuset, admired the fountain, saw a hat exhibition, listened to part of an outdoor church service, then visited the Carl Miller garden, full of all kinds of sculptures. Very nice.

We were running low on Swedish money (on Sunday!) so had to watch the spending, also on gas. Drove on to Uppsala and camped at a small place on a lake. Very quiet. A cold wind blew from the northeast and during the night it was a bit chilly, down to about 8 C.

7 June

Went to the bank, bought gas, and had lunch at a cafeteria near Uppsala University. Drove around new university campus (Agricultural University of Sweden, or Swedish University of Agricultural Science, at Ultuna, established about 1976. Tried to make out the names of the different departments but it was not always easy. The Domkyrka (cathedral) was very impressive and beautiful. Built about 1270 to 1425, over a 150-year period, renovated a few times, including 1976. Stained glass windows—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Father above the organ. Uppsala was very important in old Sweden. Saw the main university building, where graduation of doctoral students had taken place June 4. Program booklet looked interesting, complete with gun salute, church bell ringing, and surviving graduates from 50 years ago (1932). It would have been nice to see. Visited the library, Carolina Rediviva, and saw old books including the silver Bible. A note by one of the old books referred to a councilman Johann von Born but I cannot remember the year. Took a picture of the note so perhaps can check there. Then to Gamla (old Uppsala), saw the old cathedral, including a brief funeral procession, and also some old burial mounds. Filled up with gas and headed west to Oslo. At Arjä (?) ate supper in a dog park, quite pleasant. Camped at Karlstad, at a large place with 'free beaches', i.e., no bathing suits needed. We did not stay to make use of it. Along the road mostly rocks and trees, after some nice farm country.

8 June

From Karlstad we soon crossed into Norway (no one even checked our passports), ate coffee snack in a parking lot in town, changed to Norwegian money and went on to Oslo. Made a small detour to Ås and ate lunch in the middle of town. In Sweden we had trouble locating wine but finally found a government wine store. Västerbotten is a good hard Swedish cheese.

Arrived Oslo about 2 pm. Saw some of Vigeland statues and the Nordisk Folk Museum. Very impressive, with old houses and other buildings from various parts of Norway. Supper at a classy place, Holmenkollen Restaurant, including wine to celebrate anniversary. Also expensive (\$110 for four). Camped nearby, at Bogstad camping. Quite a bit more expensive than in Sweden, at NK 50. Sweden was SK 28-32, Denmark DK 80-88. Facilities at Oslo OK. Clouded over, with a cold breeze, but next morning the sun was out again, with clear blue sky.

9 June

Made a ferry reservation for Sunday at 13:30 (about \$125), saw part of City Hall (closed for congress dinner in the main hall). Norwegian hamburgers for lunch, quite good, with onions, on a piece of bread, in a semi-open lunch place. Cost \$27 for four, including coffee (NK 10 each). Bill and Bertha went to the National Gallery while Dixie and I went to a store and bought a second candle holder and pewter salt and pepper for Herman and Kathy. Saw the Kon-Tiki, Ra II, and Fram. All very impressive. Fram went to North Pole twice (around 1900) and to the South Pole. Put in museum 1935. Solid ship. Nearby a monument about Norway ships (?) in WW II.

Filled up with gas (at 4.30/L) and headed out of Oslo about 3 pm. Ate supper at roadside and drove on to Gol, about 9 pm. A game of Scrabble, a walk to the falls near the campsite, some wine and cheese, and pictures in pajamas at 11:30 pm outside, still quite light (but camera setting 1 sec at f/1.8). Nice peaceful camp. A bit cooler than we have had but we traded beds now, and it is a bit warmer downstairs.

10 June

Many small farms on mountain sides east of Geilo, a ski resort area. After that lots of snow and ice and rocks, and no trees. Height of pass 1250 m, but no trees. Ice in some lakes is just breaking up. A few sunbathers in the snow, a sidewalk sale of reindeer skins and antlers, some switchbacks, then at Fosshi (Vøringfoss) a magnificent waterfall. we paid NK 5 for parking, or driving up the 1-km 'private road'. But the view was beautiful if not a bit scary because of the absence of guard rails in most places. Beautiful along the Hardangerfjord (the part we saw) and the Sør fjord. Along the fjord curvy narrow roads (one to one and a half lanes). Once or twice we had to stop to let oncoming traffic pass. [Dixie] Stopped near Eidfjord for a delicious lunch of bread, cheese, yogurt, etc. Got supper supplies in Kinsarvik, not a very large store so it didn't take long. More traveling along curvy roads—came to Odda situated in a beautiful valley at the end of the fjord. We then followed the river and came across twin falls where we stopped for some picture taking. Saw Dutch car in ditch, stopped but there was lots of help so we went on. Went through several long tunnels, checked the distance on several—one was 5 km. They seem to cut right through the mountain.

[*Bill*] Tunnels were very dark, some with yellow (sodium) lights quite far apart, and a few with no lights at all, only reflectors on both sides. Pitch-dark without car lights. No pedestrians or bicycles allowed in. Camped at Haukeligren where the sun went behind the mountains early, and a chilly breeze blew in from the west. The wind died down later and during the night it was not bad. Altitude 540 m. In the early morning turned the heater on for a while to warm the place up a bit, then it was OK in the sun. Pretty cool when the sun was hidden behind clouds.

11 June

South towards the coast. Some farming here and there but it does not look like they are doing very well. Stopped at Byklestige, a steep path used in earlier years before the road was built. Quite a climb. At a small silversmith shop bought a ring for Elaine. Some nice marble things were there also. At Evje went to the bank and got short-changed NK 153. Fortunately I caught it before we left town so the error was corrected. Also some more groceries. Lunch by an old bridge, built 1915. Now a new one beside it. There was an old lock at the same location. Stopped by a church (locked) and looked at some old (1890+) and newer gravestones. Old metal crosses and new wooden ones. Arrived Lillesand about 4 pm and found a campsite (Molstebrø) nearby, on a small farm, 'large' for at least this part of Norway) with carrots, beans, cabbage) and very new facilities. Very talkative lady who once was in New York and was very proud of 'her farm' and facilities. Also very helpful. Dixie and Bertha did some washing. Apparently there is some kind of festival in Grimstad so we'll go check it out. It turned out to be a sort of fund-raising fair for the local sports club so we didn't go. Instead, walked around town a bit, window shopping. Interesting old town, with narrow streets going every way. Stopped by a group harvesting cabbage, planted mid-April (2 moths ago). Beans will be put in later. Back at camp played some euchre and went to bed about 11:45 pm.

12 June

Camp facilities good enough for a joint shower. Lady farmer showed us her nice modern house with all the trimmings, including some fancy heirlooms and a NK 30,000 piano. In Kristiansand did some grocery shopping and bought a sweater to be custom-knit and sent. About a month to knit and a month to sent. Should be nice. Very busy in Kristiansand until 1 pm. Then the stores close (Saturday) and the town goes dead, it seems. Looked at art gallery in the public library. Quite nice but not a very extensive collection. Lunch in a cafeteria—pea soup and a bun—was good. Ferry office closed 2-4 pm so had a nice walk in the park up on the cliffs above the city. Very pleasant. Changed Sunday 13:30 ferry tickets to 8:00 am so we'll have to get up early. The campground at Kristiansand had mostly young people in it. Quite a change from what we have seen. It is a messy place, with the dirtiest washrooms we have seen this trip. Also the most expensive at NK 58. A few more games of euchre passed the time. Wine is hard to come by on the trip so we settle for crackers and cheese. One bottle of German wine we bought in Sweden was not particularly good. Camp seemed to be hangout for some noisy parties including a drunk who got into a fight. A few card games later the noise died down and we had a peaceful night.

13 June

Got up early (6:30) and left at 7 for the ferry. Loaded at 7:30 and got under way at 8. It was cloudy and windy and the ferry crossing (4 hours) was rough. Many passengers (more than half, it seems) including three in our party, threw up. Anyway, ferry arrived safely but it was windy and cold. Changed some money in a hotel (banks were closed) and drove on. Stopped to see a small church at Sahl (golden altar, men and women's pews separate, fancy pulpit) and found campground at Herning. Meanwhile the wind died down a bit and the night was fine. Campground was very nice, right in town. Sampled some 'Snaps' from the lady in the office, ordered fresh bread for the morning and had her put a bottle of wine in the fridge for us.

14 June

Bill and Bertha's 27th anniversary. Campground lady had arranged for a visit to Sajyka (potato 'factory') where we talked with Sten Jorgenson, manager (?) who showed us the operation. Deals much in seed potatoes and contracts for 150 ha other potatoes (or more?). They use even the very small ones. Very interesting. Efficient operation. Early potatoes under plastic are lifted early morning, packed unwashed in late morning, and are in shoes and restaurants the next day. Can store 1000 tons of potatoes.

Then on to Thyragod (Norlyk and Sons) who produce 70% of potato harvesting equipment in Denmark. Export to England, Germany, Japan, Cyprus. Build and design everything except bearings themselves. Very impressive operation. They also make beet harvesters and rock pickers.

Spent about 1.5 hours at Legoland (Billund) where fantastic arrangements of houses, castles, churches, and other buildings, including also people, animals, ships, all made out of Lego blocks,, can be admired. Very well done. Must have taken a lot of work. Had an excellent supper at Postgården (since 1668) in a small town, Ribe. Probably the best meal out we have had. Beautiful rainbow trout (whole) with sauce. Total cost, with wine, DK 335. Cheap compared to Oslo.

15 June

Got up early because this is the day we want to reach Holland. We had camped near Husum in Germany where we had arrived late, about 10:40 and had trouble finding a campground. The place was officially closed and I got a talking-to from the manager in German. I did not understand much of it, perhaps just as well. I spoke a little German to him and that seemed to appease him. Anyway, on south past Hamburg, Bremen, a stop for gas, and into Groningen where a couple of friendly fellows looked us over carefully and welcomed us back to 'het beloofde land'. Weather continues fine. At Hoozeveer about 5 pm we got the address and phone number of Henry De Moor from local pastor Penning and phoned tante Gijs about our likely arrival. First (7:30) we went to see tante Eef in Nijkerk and spent a pleasant 1.5 hours there. She is 87 now but in good spirits. Hurt her knee in a fall but is recovering quite well. Difficulty walking, though. She did not want to let us go before the hour was up. With a few gaps, the conversation went OK. Dixie talked a bit of Dutch also and tante Eef appreciated that. At 9:30 we were in Barneveld and had a good visit for about an hour, with a cup of coffee. Picked up the 'stoof', with the 'vuurtest' that tante Gijs had dropped in the meantime and glued together again. Also persuaded them to make a phone call to mother in Edmonton (10:15

in Barneveld, 2:15 in Edmonton). Tante Gijs and oom Jan both talked a bit. It seemed quite a surprise for mother. Oom Willem did not want take a chance on talking to her. We said our good-byes about 10:30 and went looking for a campground after dark at Putten. Got a girl out of the bathtub and settled down after using the washroom in the dark because they had forgotten to turn the lights on. An expensive place this time (fl. 24).

16 June

Fog and misty rain this morning, for the first time. What do we do now? Breakfast inside is crowded this time. We leave for Amsterdam via the polders (flat, good crops of grain and rapeseed, relatively small trees but large fields). When we get to Floriade, little or no rain and we decide to go in. Some of it is inside on the 56-hectare area and it does not rain. In fact, the fog lifts and the sun comes through once in a while. Not too busy because of the weather. Just as well for us. All kinds of beautiful flowers, including flower arrangements, all types of landscaping and also commercial flower production. Some use 12-15 cm mesh heavy wire for plant support. Saw beautiful cream-colored carnations, various amaryllis lilies, and other plants too numerous to mention. Colorful begonias. I hope I can identify most of the slides when they come back. Four hours was about enough and we went to Hilversum to do some shopping. Vary good place for that purpose. Lots of things available, not too crowded, and stores open till 6.

On recommendation from a passer-by ate supper at 'De Kabouter', a not too fancy but good quality restaurant. An excellent meal, including French onion soup, a bottle of German wine, and liqueur in the coffee, for fl. 120 total, excluding tip. I would say, cheap by Canadian standards.

The map showed campgrounds at Vinkeveen but these turned out to be on islands accessible by boat only. So, back to Bussum and 'Het Fransche Kamp', run by some conservation organization. Not bad for fl. 12. The toilets come without paper here but the office kindly supplied a roll. Seems rather essential. It took about 1.5 hours to organize our things back into suitcases and bags, including some time next morning but that also got squared away. A bit cooler than usual during the night but we managed all right and woke up to sunshine again.

17 June

By 9 am we were on our way again and reached Schiphol in quiet traffic at 9:30. We were able to check in right away, put our hand luggage in a locker and drove off to return the camper. All was in good order, we were paid the fl. 124 we had spent on our table and chairs, cups and teapot, and at 11 headed to the Kalverstraat for a bit more shopping, a bit under pressure of time now because we needed a 1 pm bus to Schiphol. No time for museum or canal trip—too bad but not possible. We said our good-byes to Bill and Bertha whose flight was at 4:30 (ours at 2:10), did our shopping including some nice carnations and roses and headed out. It had been a good three weeks.. Saw many fascinating things, talked to many people, and had some good experiences. And, marvelous weather.