Editorial

The theme of this last issue in 2001 is the knowledge about the Viking Age that has come to light through recent archaeological excavations in seven localities around the Viking world.

From Greenland you can read the exciting story of how the Norse settlers of a farm in the Western Settlement adapted to harsh living conditions for hundreds of years until the climate changed and “a little ice age” made living there untenable.

Who were the first settlers of Iceland, the Norse or Irish monks? Last summer an international team of archaeologists started an investigation of man-made cave structures in hope of getting proof to answer this question.

And in Russia, a project initiated by Thor Heyerdahl has started in the city of Azov with the aim of clarifying the history of the city and to see if there is any connection to Snorre’s account of the native place of the Æsir god, Odin.

In archaeology we learn about life through death. Graves have so much to unveil about conditions of life, as becomes evident in the article about the excavation of Kumle Mound in Denmark. Here you will meet some humans that we don’t usually associate with the image of the proud Vikings. It is also very interesting to read about people’s conception of the specific nature of the place, known from the stories that have been told throughout the ages.

Through the excavations of early urban settlements in Norway (Kaupang) and in Sweden (Fröjel, Gotland) we gain insight into how these places were characterised by craft activities and trading. The artefacts found both in Kaupang and Fröjel and also those from the excavations going on in the ancient town of Staraya Russa in Russia, reveal important production centres, trade links and the widespread cultural contacts that existed in the Viking world.

We are very happy to be able to pass on knowledge from these research projects to you, and wish you all pleasant reading!

Marita E Ekman
Editor

E-mail: viking@hgo.se

Words of Wisdom

“The fool who fancies he is full of wisdom
While he sits by his hearth at home.
Quickly finds when questioned by others
That he knows nothing at all.”

From Hávamál
(“Words of “The High One””)

About the front page
The Viking Age well, excavated in Fröjel 2001, with its interior wood construction still preserved. Read more about it on page 20–22. Photo: Roland Hejdström.
The Farm beneath the Sand

BY JOEL BERGLUND.

The find
One of the most important Norse archaeological investigations began in the early autumn of 1990, when two hunters from Nuuk went to their hunting-grounds to bag their first caribou of the year. During the hunt they caught sight of a couple of biggish pieces of timber sticking out of a riverbank. This made the alert hunters pause and take a closer look. For it so happens that wood of that size does not occur naturally in Greenland.

On closer scrutiny they were able to ascertain that the wood had been worked, so they reported their find to the Greenland National Museum & Archives when they got back to Nuuk. The museum made an inspection of the find, and it could then be established that we were probably looking at the remains of a medieval building buried under a thick layer of sand.

The location
The site lies in the innermost reaches of the branches of the Ameralik fjord, some 75 km east of Nuuk on a high plain about 60 m above sea level surrounded by low mountains. The plain is today a desert, criss-crossed through by a network of meandering waterways which drain a leg of the inland ice. The ice bounds the plain to the east, and to the west it is demarcated by a waterfall which gathers these watercourses in a fall into the fjord arm Naujat kuat. Around the plain there is a swathe of sparsely vegetated land of varying width, some 3 m above the level of the plain, and on the eastern side this is subject to constant erosion from the biggest of the rivers.

It was precisely on the eastern strip, a few kilometers from the ice sheet, that the find was made. Here one is at the core of the Norse area known as the old Western Settlement. The distance from the nearest sites is not great: about 1.5 km from the find-spot lies another Norse farm, Nipaitsoq, which was excavated in the 1970s; the church site Sandnæs can be reached by boat; and the neighbors in the 20 km long valley Austmannadalen were within reach.

Environment and climate
The distance from the outer coast is about 80 km, which means there is an inland climate with temperature extremes from a winter minimum as low as −50°C to a maximum of +25°C in the summer, and it is unlikely to have been much different in the Middle Ages. The plain was not a desert, since the Farm beneath the Sand was in operation. Quaternary geology analyses suggest that it was a largish meadow and wetland, which was undoubtedly the reason the Norse farmers chose to take land there. As the excavation progressed, it indeed emerged that the front of the farm was oriented towards the plain; towards the most important resource, just as we find in other cases in the Norse settlements in Greenland.

At some time in the 1300s the situation changed, the plain was flooded by water from the ice sheet, and the subsistence basis of the farmers changed crucially. It became impossible to continue the breeding of domestic animals, the water rose, and they had to abandon the farm.

Some time later the farm was under water, and as it slowly disappeared the farm was left partly buried under finely deposited silt. The plain had become a desert, and sand drift from there and from the dune areas by the ice sheet in the end covered the whole farm complex.

The archaeological excavation
The excavation was conducted in the period 1991–1996 with participation by archaeologists and other specialists from Canada, Greenland, Iceland and Denmark, as well as students from Greenland and Denmark and other

View of the northeastern part of the plain; white marks the excavation field. In the foreground the archaeologists' camp can be seen, and the wheel tracks from the overland vehicle used to fetch the water for the camp. Note too the narrow strip of land along the river, which is subject to constant erosion.

One of the many so-called counting sticks, beautifully decorated with the Kerbschnitt technique.
assistants from Nuuk. Work was done in the field from mid-June to mid-July and the average number of participants at any given time was 15. A whole little tent town was thus set up every spring on the desolate plain, which is otherwise only crossed by small herds of caribou.

The project began as a rescue excavation, but just a few years later it became part of the project “Man, Culture and Environment in Ancient Greenland”. Besides the field workers, many other researchers have been involved in the project, for example in the determination of bones, textiles, wooden objects, insects, palaeobotany etc., just to mention a few.

To get at the culture layer it was necessary to remove up to 1.5 m of sand, and we are talking about a length of a good 70 m and a width of about 18 m, or almost 1300 square metres. The culture layer itself had a thickness of more than 1 m and was locked fast in rock-hard permafrost. This turned out to be a blessing in disguise, since the organic material was on the one hand so incredibly well preserved; but on the other hand it took a long time to thaw the layer out. We could reckon on getting through about 25 cm a day, which was one reason why the excavation lasted so many years.

The thawing process inevitably released a lot of water, and every morning it had to be bailed out like a leaky boat, which left the field as pure mud. The river, which ran alongside the excavation field, rose more and more as the summer went on, and by the end of the field season it was more than a metre higher than when we came. It gradually became necessary to fend off the river with sandbags, to keep the water out with a pump, and to change the current gradient to reduce the erosion. In short, the excavation involved rather a lot of ‘building contractor’s work’.

Since the building structures and the culture layer would inevitably be eroded away within a couple of years, it was impossible to think of preserving anything at all. Instead, for the first time in Greenland Norse archaeology, we had a unique chance to follow the processes in the building-up and development of a farm complex over several hundred years.

What was carried out was a controlled destruction which released information for the understanding of the building structures in purely technical terms, and of the construction of the social landscape made up of rooms and partitions, communication among rooms, the relationship between animals and people, and changes in the location of the house body in relation to changes in volume and function. In other words, we had a developmental series starting in the middle of the eleventh century and ending around the middle of the fourteenth century – in fact most of the Norse period in Greenland.

The buildings
The landnam or first settlement here took place around the middle of the eleventh century, and the building that was erected was in accordance with the custom of the time a three-aisled longhouse with a centrally placed fireplace. It was primarily built with stone and turf, but wood was also used in the construction to some extent – for example in roof-bearing posts, panelling, partition walls and an alcove-like structure. There were also benches along both long sides and a possible cooking pit was seen at one gable end.

Inside, the house measured 12 x 5 m and was furnished with walls up to 1.9 m thick. Apparently the house was only used as a dwelling for a brief period, after which it changed function to an animal shed, as evidenced by a layer of animal dung which among other things covered the fireplace. Shortly afterwards the whole building burned down.
However, there was more building after this, and this time it launched a process that led to the specialized type of farm known from the Greenlandic Middle Ages, the centralized farm, where all functions are gathered under the same roof. It has been possible to distinguish eight phases and to identify more than 63 rooms, but only a small number of these were in use at the same time.

The interesting thing is the way the parts of the building were displaced and changed in the course of time almost as if the building was a living organism. The orientation of the house remained the same, and the rooms mainly seem to have been oriented at right angles to the longitudinal axis.

Unfortunately the front of the house towards the plain had been eroded away by the river, so the excavation in fact went straight down into the interior of the house. It is characteristic that the rooms changed their functions, and that in this connection their volume and access points also changed. It was also clear that material from one demolished wall was re-used to build up another. The walls could be built in turf and stone, or turf alone, and with fill in the middle like cofferwork walls.

Changes in the number and volume of the rooms reflect changing needs in terms of the number of people and domestic animals, and perhaps external conditions. Often there was a change to an animal shed function, but almost always the result was a smaller room or a partitioning of a larger one. The roof was not one large roof, but many smaller ones which covered individual rooms. It was borne up by wooden posts standing on flat stones and consisted of loose joists, branches and turf.

It was possible to determine the function of several rooms, for example a weaving room, as a result of the many finds of spindle whorls and warp weights, as well as part of a vertical loom and a wealth of textile fragments. Another room could be identified as a living room with many finds of objects that can be related to eating and housework. Primary animal sheds were seen, with stall partitioning stones set on edge and stone dressing; another room, before conversion to an animal shed, had functioned as a kitchen, as indicated by the remains of a fireplace/oven with three stoking openings.

Fireplaces were also found in several other rooms, as a rule positioned just inside a door opening against the wall. Since fireplaces that had fallen into disuse were also noted, we can view the fireplace as a movable element that should perhaps be counted among other ‘loose’ inventory like doors and threshold wood. The fireplaces were built up from stones set on edge, forming a box-shaped fire chamber with stoking access from the free gable end.

No true inventory in the form of remains of furniture was found, but several finds of keys and a single bolt lock suggest the presence of chests which, besides holding things, could also be used as seats. It is incidentally remarkable that among the amount of wood that was found and studied, no fragments have yet been found that can be identified as parts of loose inventory. In the weaving room there are traces of earth and stone benches which may have been clad with wood, and in other rooms vertebræ of whales have been found, which were probably used as stools.

Byres and living rooms, as well as rooms with other functions, varied of course in volume and number through the lifetime of the complex, but in general the rooms were quite modest in size. The height of the rooms is unlikely to have been much more than standing height, as suggested by the preserved walls.

In the light of the climatic conditions the layout of the complex, as it appears now, was a heat-preserving strategy. The possible fuels for the fireplaces were of course branches and scrub from the surroundings, but given the fact that the farm was occupied for a good three hundred years, this resource must have been exhausted relatively quickly. Nor is it inconceivable that dried dung from the farm animals was also used, as well as turf and blubber. At the same time it is worth noting that more than 80% of the heat from an open fireplace disappears with the smoke with no heat storage other than the few stones around the fire chamber. The radiant heat from the fireplaces cannot have been enough; there must have been other supplementary factors – for example the small rooms, low ceiling height, and body heat from the stalled animals.

We do not know anything about the window situation, but there can hardly be any doubt that it was rather dark inside the building complex. Small
In 1995 the excavation had reached down to a level that was below the surface of the river in the month of July. The water flowed irresistibly into the field and put most of the area under water. For the last year we had to dam off the water with a structure of sandbags and bale out with a motor pump. The picture shows among other things how we built a small point out into the river to divert the current gradient so it did not strike the field head on.

Crudely carved soapstone lamps suggest portable sources of light, and the fuel was undoubtedly blubber from seals or other sea mammals.

In the winter the farm animals would also find shelter under the farm roof, and the bone finds tell us that it was mainly sheep that were kept, but there were probably also goats among the flock. Larger animals like horses and cattle were also represented, but in considerably smaller quantities, and finally there were also dogs.

However, the bone finds also suggest that the meat diet primarily came from wild animals like caribou and seal, which suggests that the sheep were first and foremost kept for their milk and wool – this might also explain the many small enclosed stalls in the house. One of the most frequent find categories is staves from coopered wooden vessels of various sizes, probably for the storage of milk and milk-based products. The many finds of implements for textile production such as spindles, spindle whorls and warp weights, as well as remains of woven textiles, underscores as clearly as one might wish that some of the sheep were kept for the sake of the wool.

The people on the farm
We do not know how many people lived on the farm, but it is not unlikely that on average 10–15 people lived there. Finds of locks and keys suggest that there were social differences; some people had the power to decide that there were some things not everyone should have access to. On a few objects one could see owner’s marks, which can be interpreted along the same lines. This is of course not surprising, given what we know about the social landscape of the North Atlantic Middle Ages.

Finds of wooden crosses and objects with carved crosses suggest a popular Catholic piety which is also expressed by the fact that several owner’s marks have a cross as the basic figure.

We know that two of the male occupants of the farm were called Thor and one was called Bardr; we also know the name of a girl who may have lived on a neighbouring farm. For in several places in the excavation field objects were found with runic carvings, for example with the above-mentioned names. The girl was called Björk, and her name was carved with knot-runes on the lid of a fine box that was also decorated with a dragon’s head and rigorously symmetrical plant ornamentation in the Gothic style. The lid was found in stall manure and can tentatively be interpreted as the physical evidence of a discontinued love affair, since the box was never finished. A connection with a neighbouring farm is not unlikely, since one of the owner’s marks in the find has a parallel in a find from nearby Austmannadal. There was thus also some knowledge of reading and writing.

A small number of the objects from the Farm beneath the Sand were ornamented. This is usually a very simple kind of ornamentation consisting of lines, curves and circles marking contours, and only in three cases was there any pictorial representation – stylized Gothic plant interlacing and a dragon’s head. This stuck to a particular style, but a few examples were also found of free renderings – a carving from a disused gable end, from a small wooden box showing a dog’s head, and a four-legged creature crudely carved on a small piece of wood. The latter should probably be seen as a child’s attempt to show one of the farm animals tethered to the ground.

The presence of children was also seen from several miniature objects, for example shoe lasts, soapstone vessels and wooden knives that can only be regarded as toys, which in turn suggests the care of children and an introduction to the grown-up world. Dice and game pieces tell us that life was not all toil, but that
there was also time for amusements; these also point to links with the rest of the Norse world, where board games were common.

**The interior environment in the building**

The building complex was a cultural landscape occupied by living beings at various levels. At the top were human beings and farm animals, but at a lower level there were mice and a rich microfauna favoured by the interior environment, darkness, quantities of refuse from animals and people, and not least the huge potential for thriving in turf walls, below floorboards on the earth floor, behind board cladding, in bedclothes etc. People appear to have thrown their food remains on the floor, and when this became too much planks were laid across it to facilitate moving around in the house. Analysis of the various species of parasites has not yet been concluded, but lice and vermin that only live on farm animals and people, and not least the huge potential for thriving in turf walls, below floorboards on the earth floor, behind board cladding, in bedclothes etc. People appear to have thrown their food remains on the floor, and when this became too much planks were laid across it to facilitate moving around in the house. Analysis of the various species of parasites has not yet been concluded, but lice and vermin that only live on farm animals have been identified.

During the excavation we got some idea of the stink that there must have been in the complex. When the heat of the sun thawed out the permafrozen layers, at the same time it released a smell of ammoniac that almost made the excavators’ eyes water. The occupants of the Farm beneath the Sand lived with various degrees of this stink. Their response to the hygienic we only know in the form of combs, which were a very common find category, but from other Norse farms in the vicinity we know of bath-houses. Whether there was one at the Farm beneath the Sand is unknown, but if there was, it has now been eroded away by the river.

**The farm is abandoned**

The C14-datings show that the Farm beneath the Sand was occupied from about the middle of the eleventh until some time into the fourteenth century. The primary resource of the farm was an extensive wetland and clear watercourses in its immediate proximity, as well as a hunting area in its hinterland that supplied the farm with caribou and bird game. The results so far suggest that the farm had its greatest volume in the last 70-odd years it was occupied, which does not directly suggest any period of decline, although perhaps only a small part of the farm was occupied in the last period.

However, it is a fact that the most important resource became poorer. For the climate became colder around the middle of the fourteenth century. The ice sheet advanced, and there was thus a skewing of the balance such that the wetland gradually became a lake with glacier water that was unfit to drink for both humans and animals because of heavy sedimention. The subsistence basis simply gradually disappeared. The occupants had to abandon the farm and the plain was now uninhabited for a time.

The Thule Eskimos reached the now deserted Western Settlement in the 1300s, and some of them went caribou hunting inland. Certain finds of Eskimo objects in the upper layers suggest that the caribou hunters sought refuge in the empty building and lit fires in there. Sparks from these fires jumped into a turf wall and burned the farm down little by little. Then the fire site was flooded and the culture layer was covered by sediments deposited in stagnant water. Later the water withdrew, the culture layer froze to permanent ice, and gradually the wind helped to level everything with metre-thick layers of shifting sand. The farm vanished, and with it the memory of the people who had lived and worked on the plain for more than three centuries.

*Translated by James Manley*

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**About the author**

Joel Berglund has a Master of Prehistoric Archaeology from the University of Copenhagen, and has worked on the Norse history of Greenland since 1970. He was director of the Qaqortoq Museum from 1981 until 1991, a curator at the Greenland National Museum & Archives from 1992 until 1998, and since 1998 he has been Deputy Director of the same institution. His fields of work are primarily archaeology and antiquities.

E-mail: joel.berglund@kgbyghids.gl

**Literature:**

Man, Culture and Environment in Ancient Greenland. Editors Jette Arneborg and H.C.Gulløv.


Joel Berglund: Two Dogs and a Dragon. Fifty Years of Arctic Research. Publications of The National Museum. Ethnographical Series vol. 18

In September, a small team of international archaeologists from Canada, Germany, Iceland and Scotland investigated the area around Seljaland farm in Vestur Eyjafjallahreppur, South Iceland. The “Seljaland Project”, led by Canadian Kristján Ahronson, is concentrating investigations on the man-made cave structures at Kverkarhellir and Seljalandshellar/Papahellir. The project hopes to date the first construction and understand the later use of these sites.

Kverkarhellir and Seljalandshellar/Papahellir are but two of a large number of man-made caves in South Iceland, some of which are mentioned as early as the 11th and 12th centuries. It is interesting to remember Adam of Bremen’s fantastic 11th century account that the people of Thule/Iceland “...dwell in underground caves, glad to have roof and food and bed in common with their cattle”.

With a few exceptions, the cave structures of South Iceland have been largely ignored in the archaeology of Iceland – we do not know who used them or when they were built. It is possible, however, that these caves hold the key to understanding the earliest settlement of Iceland.

While there is as yet no secure evidence of human occupation on the island prior to the Norse Landnám, several historical sources including Íslendingabók (The Book of Icelanders), Landnámabók (The book of Settlements) and Dicuil’s Liber De Mensura Orbis Terrae suggest that Gaelic Papar (early Christian communities) may have lived on the island before the Norse.

To date, however, no reliable archaeological or paleoecological evidence of pre-Norse settlement has been found!

**Cross carvings**

In some of these caves, cross carvings have been found which appear to be paralleled by carvings in Argyll, on Scotland’s West Coast, the Hebrides and Shetland. Several distinct styles found in Iceland are strikingly similar to those cross carvings in Argyll which seem to be associated with pre-Viking-Age Christian settlements centred around Iona. One possible hypothesis could be that the earliest of the Icelandic caves are related to the pre-Viking-Age Iona tradition.

**Place-name study**

Other interesting aspects to consider are the place names with papa-element found across the Scandinavian-settled North Atlantic littoral. Specifically from the Hebrides, through to Orkney, Shetland, the Faroe Islands and Iceland.
Iceland

Cross carvings from the cave “Seljalandshellir”. The crosses are between 5 and 10 cm high. Photo: Huber

The papa-elements are understood to derive from papar, the Old Norse term for the poorly documented and poorly understood Gaelic Christian communities of this region at the time of Scandinavian settlement. An example is the small island Papey, off the coast of East Iceland.

Excavating the caves
It is likely persistent use as animal shelters over many centuries has left little undisturbed material remains on the cave floors. In front of the caves, however, aggrading sequences do occur in which the soft palagonite rock cut out in the first episodes of cave modification will have been deposited.

The landnám tephra produced by a volcanic eruption in 871 +/- 2 AD covered much of Iceland at the time of the initial Norse settlement, effectively marking the beginning of Norse occupation. Consequently, if cave spoil occurs significantly below this tephra, it is likely to predate 871 AD, making the cave occupation of great archaeological interest!

This season’s fieldwork may have identified the cave spoil in relation to a sequence of early volcanic ash falls, perhaps including the landnám layer. The results of this work are pending analysis and verification in next season’s fieldwork.

About the author:
Florian W. Huber studies Archaeology, Scandinavian Languages and Anthropology in Kiel, Germany.
E-mail: fiohlys@yahoo.de

The BC Viking Ship Project Launches “Munin”

On July 7, 2000 at the Vancouver Maritime Museum, the British Columbia Viking Ship Project officially launched the Viking Ship “Munin”. One year in the building, “Munin” measures 40 feet in length and is a true half scale replica of the Gokstad Ship (read about the building project in VHM 2/01).

The day arose with near perfect weather: a little overcast to keep the heat down and not too much wind. A large crowd of spectators enjoyed the antics and pageantry of the project members in period costumes. The event was graced by the presence of the Ambassador of Norway and the Consuls General of Norway and Sweden. Four television crews captured the moment for posterity.

The name of our proud ship was the winning entry of our naming contest. A team of costumed children and grand children of the builders christened “Munin” by splashing mead on the stem. “Munin” then launched free and clear and rode proudly in the water. The first set of oarsmen and -women then rowed her over to the dock at the Vancouver Maritime Museum, her home for the summer.

“Munin” rows well and is responsive to her rudder, especially after enlarging it below the water line. With 3000 pounds of lead ballast, she handles her sail very well. She is much stiffer (heels less) than one would expect. This is fortunate, because Viking Ship rigging in out times is based primarily on educated guesswork.

So please join me in a round of appreciation for this great team and a job well done with the Viking Ship “Munin”, a magnificent addition to Canada’s maritime history.

Preben Ormen, Chairperson BC Viking Ship Project
New excavations at Kaupang - earliest urban settlement

By Unn Pedersen

Twelve hundred years ago Kaupang was a busy urban settlement characterised by craft activities and exchange, encircled by hundreds of graves. In the 10th century the settlement by Viksfjord, near Larvik in southern Norway was abandoned. Kaupang became a quiet farmland and as time went by no remains of the Viking Age settlement were visible above ground.

In May 2000 twenty archaeologists arrived at Kaupang equipped with a mechanical excavator, spades, trowels and computers. A large excavation campaign in the settlement area from 2000 until 2002 will unveil Viking-Age Kaupang and give more knowledge about life in the Viking Age. The Kaupang excavation project is met with great enthusiasm locally, nationally and internationally. Once again the Viking-Age settlement has brought thousands of visitors to Kaupang.

Pottery from the Baltic. Photo: Kaupang investigation.
Kaupang is one of the richest Viking-Age sites in Norway. The ongoing excavation is not the first large-scale archaeological investigation at Kaupang. The Norwegian pioneer archaeologist, Nicolay Nicolaysen, excavated over 80 grave mounds at Kaupang during a month in the summer of 1867. In the 1950s and 1960s Charlotte Blindheim carried out large excavations in one of the cemeteries and in the settlement area. Blindheim’s excavations proved that Kaupang was the trading place Scir ingen beale, mentioned by the chieftain Ottar from Northern Norway in Alfred the Great’s translation of Orosius’ Histories. The documented structures from the excavation in the settlement area were interpreted as belonging to a temporary settlement without a clear structure. Solid houses with permanent hearths were absent; thus the material gave no evidence for winter habitation at Kaupang.

New excavations in other Viking-Age sites like Hedeby in Schleswig, Birka in the basin of Lake Mälaren and Ribe in Jutland have yielded quite a different picture of contemporary Viking-Age towns. They show an urban area divided into permanent plots of land, more solid houses and winter habitation. After Blindheim’s excavation Kaupang seemed to be the odd one out. But less than 2% of the settlement area at Kaupang was excavated during Blindheim’s campaign. A question that came up after her excavation was whether excavation in a more central part of the settlement would give a picture more similar to the other Viking-Age towns. This question could only be answered by new excavations.

Research orientation
Three years of excavations will provide us with important information about the character of the urban community at Kaupang. We intend to figure out what kind of settlement Kaupang was, especially whether Kaupang was a seasonal or a permanent settlement. The excavation will shed light on the size of the settlement area, dating the site, and the density and structure of the settlement. We are especially eager to determine whether Kaupang had houses suitable for winter habitation or if it was divided into plots like other known Viking-Age towns. We will also learn more about what kind of activities that took place in the settlement area and how they were organised.

The excavation
The excavation was preceded by introductory fieldwork in the settlement area at Kaupang in 1998-1999. Surveys of the tilled fields, magnetometer mapping, test screening of the plough layer and mapping of the depth of the preserved cultural deposits were done to find the area with best potential for a new excavation. During the new fieldwork period we will excavate a total of about 3500 sq.m. Large rescue excavations were conducted in year 2000 prior to the building of a sewer pipeline and a new pavement. The long and narrow trench throughout the length of the settlement area gave an interesting overall picture of the activities in the Viking Age. The main excavation site of about 1100 sq.m is located centrally in the settlement area.

The cultural deposits at Kaupang are divided into numerous and often barely distinguishable layers that must be documented separately. Water screening of all the cultural deposits yielded a large number of artefacts and faunal remains. As a result of water screening, small fish bones and glass beads only a few millimetres in diameter can be collected. A new computer system, Intrasis, developed by the Swedish Central Board of National Antiquities for the documentation of archaeological excavations, is of tremendous help in systematising and analysing all the data from the excavation.

In the area that has been excavated there are preserved cultural deposits up to 0,5 meters deep. During the excavations in 2000 and 2001 several houses, latrines, wells and ditches were uncovered, together with large amounts of artefacts. In the
waterlogged wells and latrines, wood and other organic material like bones, seeds and insects remains has been preserved. Several wells and latrines have remains of constructions either wattle, vertical planking or quadratic timber constructions.

Preliminary results indicate that the settlement was divided into plots by ditches. Several solid houses, some of them with identified hearths suggest winter habitation at Kaupang. All of the datable coins found at Kaupang so far are older than 900 AD. The oldest dated artefacts are from the late 8th century. This suggests that the settlement can be dated to the period between the late 8th century and about 900 AD. In the project’s research and publishing period from 2003 until 2006 all the data from the excavations will be analysed and evaluated. We have to wait for the final analyses of the material and the 2002 field season to confirm the preliminary results. Hopefully the last year of excavation will also give us important information of how it all started. Was Kaupang divided into plots from the earliest stage of the settlement, or were the plots a later development?

International connections
Archaeologists and archaeology students from France, Germany, the Netherlands, United Kingdom, Finland, Denmark, Sweden and Norway have participated in the excavations. The participants have contributed to an international and challenging milieu, together with the supervising research group. Many different languages were also heard at Kaupang in the Viking Age. Both people and objects could travel over large areas.

Many artefacts in the settlement area reveal trade links and cultural contacts with the outer world. The silver coins from Kaupang are mostly Arabic dirhems. Fragments of jet-bracelets and several carnelian, rock crystal and amethyst beads were exotic imports at Kaupang. Jet is hardened charcoal from the British Isles, carnelian is a semiprecious stone from the Caspian sea. Beads of amethyst might have been produced on the continent and those of rock crystal in Asia. Some glass beads are produced in the Caliphate, others in the Mediterranean area, on the continent and in the Viking-Age town of Ribe. Large amounts of imported pottery vessels have also been found in the settlement area. The material consists of shards from the Rhenish and Baltic region as well as from Jutland. A closer study of the exchanged goods will give a better understanding of trade during the Viking Age and of

Kaupang’s connections with the North European cultural community.

Production centre
Kaupang has usually been described as a trading place. The material from the ongoing excavation shows that it also was an important production centre. The wide variety of finds from the settlement area provides important information about the different crafts that were carried out at Kaupang in the Viking Age. Unfinished beads of glass and amber, production waste and raw material indicate that both glass bead production and amber work took place at Kaupang. A considerable number of the over 2000 glass beads found so far might have been produced locally. Severalloom-weights and spindle whorls of clay, lead and soapstone indicate that textile production took place at Kaupang.

Large amounts of iron slag and a few furnace stones originate from the activities of blacksmiths in the settlement area. Iron artefacts such as a pair of scissors, keys, knives, nails and frost nails for horses were probably produced in the forge. Moulds, crucibles, raw material and waste from casting prove that metal casting took place at Kaupang. A few soapstone moulds and some fragments of clay moulds reveal that ingots and jewellery like tortoise brooches were cast. Lead models for moulds of clay show a varied production of different brooches and mountings. Analyses of the material will give better insight into the organisation of crafts in the Viking Age and the role of craftsmen in Viking-Age society.

Public archaeology
The Kaupang Excavation Project has placed great emphasis on informing the public about the results from the excavation. Schoolchildren in the district are invited to special education activities. During the summer season the excavation is open for visitors. Guided tours around the excavation area are given every day by the project staff. Weekly reports from the excavations and notes about the finds are printed in local newspapers every week and published on the project’s own homepage. On this homepage you can find more information about the excavation. During the winter you will find small updated notes about the progress with the analyses. You will be able to follow the excavations by reading the weekly reports from May until September 2002.

About the author
Unn Pedersen B.A. is Research Assistant at the Institute of Archaeology, History of Art and Conservation at the University of Oslo. She is responsible for the finds unite of the Kaupang Excavation Project.

Email: unn.pedersen@ia.ku.no
http://www.kaupang.ulo.no
On the island of Langeland in Denmark many localities of Viking-Age burials with well-preserved skeletons which naturally attract attention have been examined. One more grave-site now joins the number, at the same time adding to our knowledge.

In 1885 the merchant Jens Winther, founder of Langeland's museum, was called to a small hillock, called Kumle mound, where there is a view towards Lindelse Nor. While digging for gravel, human skeletons, proving to be six individuals in total, were found. One of them was found with riding equipment: spurs, bridle, a horse and a dog. A number of years later, right beside the mound, a well-preserved Arabic silver coin minted in 801–02 AD during the reign of Harun al Raschid was found. Investigations with a metal detector in the 1990's resulted in two more coins of the same kind. They are now believed to be a part of a silver treasure from the Viking Age that has been ploughed up.

In 1998, as a follow-up to these finds Langeland's Museum undertook an archaeological excavation. It proved to be at the last minute, before ploughing destroyed the remaining graves completely. Let it be said right now: the excavation did not manage to find any more coins or locate a possible treasure find. But it did show that the burial ground was founded at the foot of an until-now unknown megalith grave from the Neolithic period – probably the reason for the name Kumle Hoje (mound). During the excavation skeletons and skeleton parts from 12 individuals were found and they are now being analysed anthropologically. There are six men, three women and three of undetermined sex. Some of the graves deserve closer mention.

The most unusual grave was situated on the edge of an enclosure, a double grave, where two men were laid front to front on top of each other. On top were the remains of a man, 20–25 years of age, about 184 cm in length, lying on his stomach. Below him, slightly displaced, were the remains of man of the same age lying on his back. This man had been about 169 cm in length. Their feet were lying so close together that it appears as if they were tied together when buried. The absence of one of the skulls and the destruction of the other may be explained by ploughing. Various archaeological observations may suggest that some kind of physical punishment have taken place before death.

Discussions were held whether it was a question of trepanation (cranium operation), but that does not seem to be the case. The man was lying on his back in an outstretched position with a 17-centimetre long iron knife as his only grave goods.

The next grave with the skeleton of a middle-aged man, between 40 and 55 years of age and about 170 centimetres in length shows how grim life could be in the Viking Age. There are traces of osteoarthritis both in the maxillary joints of the jaws and the spine, and additionally all four lower bones of the legs were broken. Healed fractures were also seen in the pelvic bone and in a bone from
one foot. All injuries had healed showing that the man survived but he must have been handicapped. Here too, this man had only an iron knife with him in the grave.

A woman, 40-55 years of age, was found lying on her back underneath three large stones. It is possible to believe that the stones were meant to prevent her from coming back to haunt, but apart from that nothing else was unusual. Once again the only grave goods was an iron knife.

The richest grave contained skeletal remains from a middle-aged or older woman lying on her back in an outstretched position. In this grave lay several objects made of iron and one unfinished piece of amber. It was unusual to find, close to her left shin, a reworked piece of gilded bronze that might have come from a cup-shaped dress buckle of double-headed construction, thus a recycled piece.

Aside from the rider, who must be seen to represent the uppermost class, it is an quite unusual burial ground. Two older men have survived serious injuries, two young men seem from an archaeological point of view to have been punished, one woman had to be kept from haunting and another had to be content with a recycled piece of jewellery.

Our image of the proud Vikings is, without doubt, quite different to these pitiful skeleton finds.

The people living in Klæsø, close to Kumle mound, have perhaps always known that the mound was something very special. A teacher, Carlin Klæsøe informed the Dansk Folkemindesamling (the Danish Folklore Archives) in 1946: “On Kumle mound between Klæsø and the main road to the south of the Klæsø road 60 years ago there was a thorn hedge where it was very dangerous to travel because a cockatrice lived there. A cockatrice is a cock with a grass snake’s tail. If a cockatrice hisses at us, we will die – If we stay away from its territory, it won’t harm us.”

And further: “There, where the Klæsø road meets with the main road, there is something else that isn’t right. This place is haunted. At least people thought so 50 years ago. Here the main road is a gorge and you get a strange feeling walking there after the approach of darkness. There was something indescribable, and people would rather not speak about ghosts here. Though I have never heard that anyone has seen anything in this place”.

Until the end of the 1950s, the children were told not to play in the enclosure (where the double grave was situated), because the place was haunted, and “here you walked on skeletons”.

Now it is not that simple to draw a straight connection from the folklore to the archaeological excavations. The story about the cockatrice normally means connections with evil, and in Christian art a cockatrice is...
understood as the devil itself. On the contrary there are ghost stories in many connections, and here at the burial ground a connection between the woman’s grave covered with stones and the strange double grave cannot be ruled out. The very name Kumle Høje reminds us of the Viking Age, and “kuml” (Kuml – an old Nordic word meaning a memorial site or a raised stone) is what comes out of it, both archaeologically and in the folklore.

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About the authors
Assoc. Research Professor Pia Bennike, Ph.d. at the Laboratory of Biological Anthropology, Forensic Institute, University of Copenhagen and curator of the osteological collection at the Museum of Medical History, Copenhagen. President of European Anthropology Association.
Field of research: Numerous studies on human variation and diseases through the ages based on Danish skeletal material from archaeological excavations.
Email: bennike@antrolab.ku.dk

Inge Kjær Kristensen. B.A. in prehistoric Archaeology with speciality in the Funnel Beaker culture, late Stone Age. Freelance work for museums since 1988. Has been directing many archaeological excavations, exhibitions and other informational activities. At present working as curator at the Skive Museum, Archaeological department in Højslev, Denmark.
Email: bhnkjaer@post6.tele.dk

November 5 was a special day for Mikael Karlsson, who operates a tractor digger, when he found a picture-stone nearly 2.5-m high close to the scrap yard in Bro parish on Gotland.

Mr Karlsson was digging a trench for the new broadband cable. All of a sudden there was an unexpected interruption in his work when the bucket hit something in the ground. This “something” turned out to be a large picture-stone on which a pattern of a sail could be discerned. The Historical Museum of Gotland will now make further analysis of the stone.

The tradition of erecting picture-stones on Gotland was active between the 6th–11th centuries, about 450 have been found. The stone now found in Bro parish is probably of the type that was common during the 8th–9th centuries. A longboat-type ship with sail is usually depicted on the lower part of the stones and on the upper part you find a horseman and a Valkyrie – maiden of war.

The symbolism of these stones and their pictures has been the subject of much scholarly debate. In any case the stones have been regarded as monuments in honour of deceased individuals belonging to the elite of that time on Gotland. The motif on the upper half of the stones has been interpreted as a depiction of the dead person arriving at the war god Odin’s hall of Valhalla, where the god gathered all the men who had fallen in battle.

Picture-stones are unique for Gotland and should not be mixed up with rune-stones that are slightly younger; the latter are mostly from 11th century and within a Christian context. The nearest equivalent picture-stones, that are roughly contemporary, are the Pictian stones from Scotland and the Hornhausen stones with horsemen from Germany.

In the next issue of Viking Heritage Magazine you will be able to read more about the unique Gotlandic picture-stones.
Sources: Gotlandi Tidningar 2001-11-06 and Viking Heritage.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

We pass this letter on to you readers:
I have been a subscriber for a long time, and really enjoy the magazine! I write screenplays, and have written a historically accurate script about Vikings and their raids on English Monasteries. The story: a Viking warlord enslaves a monk, and is later baptized by that monk. The script is endorsed by the Christian Film & Television Commission in the United States.

Question: are there any movie producer readers of your magazine who might be looking for a script about Vikings?!

Thanks,
Brad Catherman, Atlanta, Georgia USA
E-mail: mventr@bellsouth.net
Old gods are still alive

By Gunilla Wickman-Nydolf and Nils-Gustaf Nydolf

The Russian city of Azov is today a tranquil, quite prosperous country town. It is situated strategically on a height on the bank of the Don River in the enormous delta area a few kilometres from the outlet in the Azovian Sea, which is a part of the Black Sea beyond Crimea.

This is the border area between Europe and Asia where important trading routes once crossed each other. Here the Silk Road, on which exotic goods from the East were distributed out over Europe, ended.

Here the Sermatic people, a branch of the original nomadic population, ruled, as well as Greeks and Romans, Italians, Genoese, Turks and the Mongolians’ famed Golden Horde. The Vikings sailed by here on their way to the Black Sea. This is the heart of the Don Cossacks’ native country.

Today not much remains to be seen to remind us of the many facets of the city’s past. Only the fort at the river, built by Peter the Great when Azov became the homeport to the Russian Black Sea navy in the end of the 17th century, reminds of the history of the town.

Here in the centre of present Azov, an archaeological project started in April this year (2001) aimed at trying to clarify the history of Azov. The project has been initiated and funded by Thor Heyerdahl, the man who became world-famous when he crossed the Atlantic with his balsa raft, Kon-Tiki as early as 1947.

Heyerdahl has always been interested in and done research on how people have moved over long distances. This interest and studies of texts by the Icelandic history writer, Snorre Sturlason from the 13th century, are the basis for the Azov project.

Snorre gave a very exact geographical description of the country around Azov, probably using Ptolemaios’ map from the second century AD as a source. He tells about a chieftain called Odin, who lived there with his people. When the Roman army was approaching, Odin and his followers had to flee northwards. According to Snorre’s description, this must have happened around the year 60 BC.

Odin settled down in Sweden where he became a great and respected man. He was so renowned that after his death he received a mystical status and later on came to be regarded as a God by the Vikings.

Heyerdahl’s hypothesis is that Snorre describes an actual historic course of events and that through archaeological examinations in Azov it will be possible to support and date the developments that can be connected to Snorre’s statements.

Under the direction of Professor Sergej Loukiashko, the chief archaeologist

The excavation in the backyard visited by Thor Heyerdahl.
appointed by the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow, two Norwegian and two Swedish archaeologists as well as one Norwegian student, together with five Russian archaeologists and 25 students from the university in Rostov, dug test pits in 10 different localities around the city. One of the objectives of Nordic participation was the opportunity to do an investigation using western excavation methodology and also to establish contacts between Russian colleagues and students.

The Russians are experienced excavators, but in terms of methods they have not kept up with modern western progress. They dig with spades and don’t sieve anything at all. The Nordic contribution was not in terms of technology such as total station and digitalisation, but rather digging methods, where we used a single context method, that confused our hosts to start with, and sieving. Gradually they gained a more positive view of the foreign methods. Especially the students were interested in the innovations.

The Nordic participants formed their own excavation team together with some Russian students. Since the modern city is situated on top of the antique settlement, there was a limited choice of excavation areas. Our shaft lay in a small backyard of a block of single-family dwellings close to the Peter the Great’s fort, which came to influence the result of the excavation. The area was heavily affected partly by modern activity in the form of waste pits, partly by activity that could be connected to the fort in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Our colleagues were struck with obvious wonder at seeing us digging and documenting everything from the ground surface and downwards with the same high level of ambition, our reasoning being that even modern material is a part of the history of the place. Together with the modern material on top, fragments of Greek amphorae were found from the time after the birth of Christ, as well as ceramic ware from the Middle Ages. Surprisingly, both for the matruska (woman) in whose strawberry garden we were digging, as well as ourselves, we found several skeleton graves from the 17th and 18th centuries, that could be connected to the fort. At a depth of around 3 metres some fine remains of cultural layers still remained from the oldest known settlement on the locality from the first century AD.

The finds were mainly both local and imported ceramics from the century before and the second century after Christ, as well as from the Middle Ages and later, the latter called “Cossack wares”. In the chronology established by the Russians, there is a thousand-year leap from the time of the Greek amphorae to the local medieval ceramics.

One difficulty for us in our task of interpretation was that, because of the short excavation period, we couldn’t get deeper insight into the ceramics and therefore had to rely on our colleagues’ established knowledge. Spontaneously it was hard to accept a time loss of one thousand years at this place, which had been colonised by so many different cultures both before and after this thousand-year period. We hope that more thorough studies of the stratigraphic conditions and an accurate analysis of the ceramics will improve and also bridge the “findless” era.

Among the other finds of interest from the oldest, intact layers can be mentioned a fibula with high bow and a small clay figurine that could not be interpreted. Thanks to the thorough excavation method, remains of a house construction consisting of postholes could also be pointed out in the deepest deposit layers. One of the Russian excavation teams, that had its pit barely fifty metres from ours, was not as lucky as we were. It turned out that they happened to land in the middle of a filled-up moat and they didn’t reach the bottom until eight metres deep, causing

Newly-washed finds from one of this year’s excavations in Azov, observed by members of the Nordic archaeological team, Bjørnar Storfjell, Gunilla Wickman-Nydolf and Nils-Gustaf Nydolf.

The burnt clay figurine. Photo: B. Storfjell
them a great deal of practical troubles with profiles falling down and similar problems.

In three of the test pits east of the old settlement area, other Russian excavation teams found a graveyard where 10 skeleton graves with grave goods from the first and second century AD were examined. Among other things three ring pins, similar to the type of ring pins used during the Nordic Viking Age, were found. The shape is common and cannot be construed as a sign of cultural contacts with the Nordic.

In a more central place in today’s Azov excavation is being done in a bigger area of medieval settlement, where among other things, a baking oven has been found.

There still haven’t been any final results from this year’s excavations, but the preliminary results are so good that not only a continuation of the already begun excavations is planned for the coming season, but they can also result in the establishment of a Nordic-Russian Institute, connected to the University in Rostov, that will promote common projects and student exchange.

### About the authors

**Gunilla Wickman-Nydolf, B.A.**
Archaeologist with the Swedish National Heritage Board, mainly on Gotland 1974-1997. At present employed as archaeologist by the County Museum of Gotland.
Email: [gunilla.nydolf@gotmusee.se](mailto:gunilla.nydolf@gotmusee.se)

**Nils-Gustaf Nydolf, B.A.**
Archaeologist with the Swedish National Heritage Board, mainly on Gotland 1975-1997, and at the County Museum of Gotland 1997-2000. At present he handles archaeological matters, churches and preservation of ancient monuments at the County Administrative Board of Blekinge, Sweden.
Email: [niny@k.lst.se](mailto:niny@k.lst.se)

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### Staraya Russa

The Russian town of Staraya Russa, situated south of Lake Ilmen, was one of the greatest and economically prosperous centers of the Novgorod country in the Middle Ages. It was named Rusa until 16th century. The waterways, the Polist and Lovat rivers and Lake Ilmen, allowed the local population to take part in long-distance trade.

The main goods that Rusa purveyed both for home and foreign markets was salt. Archaeological data implies that the oldest settlement preceding the town appeared near salt springs. This early settlement is dated to the late 10th—early 11th century.

Staraya Russa is a place of great interest to both archaeologists and historians. Archaeological excavations have been carried out in Staraya Russa for the past 35 years. Among the remains investigated by scholars are many buildings and pavement of ancient streets. The pavement was made of wood as in other Old Russian towns. The cultural layer reaches 7 m in the oldest part of the town. Thousands of different things have been found here. Wood, leather, bones, fabrics and metals are all well preserved due to the soil’s high humidity. The archaeological investigations have provided data solving a lot of questions connected with the history and life of a medieval town.

The summer field season of 2001 in Staraya Russa lasted from July 19 until October 4. Students of archaeology from Novgorod State University, Gotland University (Sweden) and Polotsk State University (Belarus) took part in the excavations.

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### BY ELENA TOROPOVA

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The fibula. Photo: B. Storfjell


Map Novgorod area. Drawn by Sergey Toropov.
An ancient town in the early medieval principality of Novgorod

About the author:
Elena Toropova has been head of Staraya Russa archaeological expedition of Yaroslav the Wise - Novgorod State University since 1999. She is a member of staff at the archaeological laboratory of Novgorod State University. She is author of published works in archaeology and the history of a medieval town.

This summer works have been completed at the Borisoglebskiy excavation located in the oldest part of the town. The excavation area covers 225 sq. m and the cultural layer is up to 5.5 m thick. The remains of the ancient Borisoglebskaja street and partial remains of two homesteads were revealed. Archaeologists could retrace the history of their existence from the 11th to the 17th centuries. The collection obtained during the period of investigation consists of more than 5000 findings. The mass-finds collection counts thousands of fragments of ceramics, animal, bird and fish bones, pieces of leather, nutshell, nails, thick felt and so on.

In the summer season of this year the earliest layers, dated from the starting stage of this place’s settlement in the beginning of the 11th century, were examined. It is obviously that the excavated area was a part of a domestic zone. Plough traces, cow hoof imprints and some holes indicating a wooden palisade were revealed on the subsoil level in the opposite parts of the excavation.

To all appearances the settlement spread out quickly. Soon the first buildings had appeared in this place. One of those discovered was a dwelling house. All that remains of it is a row of oak logs. The building had a stove at the western wall and a porch made of planks. Lots of wood, iron and bone artefacts were found. Among them there is a large wooden vessel turned on a lathe, a spearhead and an arrowhead, as well as ornamented wooden spoons and pins from stringed musical instruments.

Another building was situated at the opposite side of the street. Only one log remains from it. This building was much larger and an extremely interesting complex of church antiquities is connected with it.

There are thin church candles, fragments of wax and a small wooden vessel (probably a scoop) with a cross on the bottom and rich ornamentation on the rim.

Among findings from the earliest layers, there are an incredible number (211) of different wooden counting sticks and a Friesian comb case, all things of great interest.

At present we are working on a scientific report. The excavation materials are now being prepared for publication. Also we plan to start investigations at new plot (480 sq. m).

The financing of the excavation was carried out within the federal program of “State support of the integration of higher education and fundamental science for the period of 1997–2001” that enjoys president program status. The investigations are also supported by the Russian Humanist Scholars Fund and by the Administration of Staraya Russa.


The exhibition “Full Circle” next year in Montreal and Vancouver

The exhibit profiles L’Anse aux Meadows on Newfoundland as the only authenticated Viking settlement on the American continent. L’Anse aux Meadows is a Canadian National Historic Site and an UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Stunning Viking artefacts made of gold, iron, ivory and wood from Nordic museums will be exhibited alongside intricately made Aboriginal artefacts made of bone, stone, ivory and wood from Newfoundland Museum and other Canadian museums. Viking sagas and Aboriginal oral history combine to tell the story of humanity.

The exhibition Full Circle has toured around Canada and is now on display at McIord Museum of Canadian History in Montreal until April. Then the exhibition will be opened at Vancouver Museum in April and continue until October 2002.

For more information: www.gov.nf.ca/fullcircle
The Viking Age harbour and trading place at Fröjel, Gotland

A summary of the excavation during the summer of 2001

By Carina Dahlström

This year’s excavation of the Viking-Age harbour and trading place at Fröjel on the island of Gotland, Sweden, is now finished. At the ancient trading place there has been vigorous activity all summer. Altogether there have been four field courses and at least 120 students from Sweden, USA, England and other parts of the world have uncovered remains from the Viking Age. During the field season participants and archaeologists have exposed an area in total 210 m², and thus contributed to the ongoing research about the harbour and trading place.

Earlier investigations and interpretations
Previous research has shown that the harbour and trading place were inhabited from 600-1100 AD, with its era of prosperity in the 11th century. Through archaeological prospecting methods we also know that the settlement area covers about 60,000 m². Of this huge area only 1200 m² have been excavated. Three grave fields have been located and about 100 graves have been uncovered. A large quantity of artefacts have also been found and at this time approximately 24,000 finds are registered in Fröjel’s database. About 500 constructions have been exposed, consisting of both settlement remains and graves.

A current issue has been to determine how the houses, market stalls and handicraft sheds were arranged in relation to each other. We have now found out that the buildings were laid out in a regular pattern between streets and alleys. This kind of building plan is known from early urban settlement, like Birka in Lake Mälaren.

The summer of 2001
One aim within Fröjel Discovery Programme has been to “open up” the excavation to the general public. Therefore everyone was welcome to visit the excavation site during the summer. This has been done through guided tours, led by archaeologist Alexander Andreeff. The visitors had the opportunity to experience an excavation site at close quarters and to see the artefacts that had just been found. The guided tours were highly appreciated and this year saw a record number of visitors.

The excavation took place in a field that has been cultivated land for centuries. It was located in two different areas some 200 metres from each other, one of the grave fields and the other settlement area. Parts of both the settlement area and the burial ground have been excavated earlier and about 50 graves and a large amount of building remains have been recovered.

Initially we had to find out more about the central part of the harbour settlement. The aim here was to excavate more remains, which could be related to the buildings and alleys that have been found during earlier investigations.

The second excavation area was situated at the northern grave field, dated to the 9th to 11th centuries. This area also contains settlement remains from 1000–1100 AD. Here the graves and traces from the settlement are mixed together at the same level in the ground. Even if the remains of buildings overlap the graves chronologically, occasionally it is complicated to interpret what came first.

The settlement area
Most of the remains from the central part of the harbour are dated to the 11th and the 12th centuries. In this region we excavated an area of 60 m². The

The excavation at Fröjel had a great number of visitors during the guided tours. Here is a group of tourists being guided by the article’s author at the north grave field. Photo Åke Hultsten
excavation resulted in approximately 15 constructions. Most of them were stone-lined postholes, both smaller and bigger ones. The small postholes probably belonged to drying racks for fishnets or, for instance, backyard fences. The bigger postholes most likely belonged to houses and sheds.

Wood remains and clay packings that originally had been foundation for floors inside the buildings were another type of construction that could associate to houses. In one of the trenches we also found an empty space where there were no constructions at all. The empty surface was about three meters wide and extended in north-south direction through the trench. We interpreted this space to be an alley because there were settlement traces along both sides of it. The other constructions consisted of dump wastes and hearths. The remains show that the buildings have covered only one time period. This can be compared with the situation on the north grave field.

The north grave field
In this area we excavated about 150 square metres. As I mentioned before this locality contains both settlement remains and graves. The building traces have the same character as at the settlement area but this year we found a construction that stood out in the crowd. Down under a heap of big stones we found a well. See the photo on the front padge. It turned out to be about two meters deep, with its wooden interior construction still preserved. It was built of logs dovetailed at corners and on the timber you could still see the cuts of the axes. In the mud inside the well we found tremendous amounts of animal bones and, among other things, pieces of a leather shoe from the Viking Age. At the moment the shoe has been sent for preservation and we will soon know more about it.

Twelve graves which contained five males, five females and two of undetermined sex have been excavated. Most of the graves were inhumation burials but two consisted of cremation burials. The custom of burning the dead on a funeral pyre was common during the Vendel period, 550–700 AD. In one of the cremation burials we found gaming pieces typical for the Vendel period. We also found bear claws and skeletal fragments belonging to a dog. The deceased had probably been burnt on a bear hide with his/her dog as a companion for life after death.

One of the inhumation burials was unusual. It consisted of a male who had been buried in a pitch, lying on his left side. The skull was missing but that was because a later posthole had been dug down right through his head. The remarkable phenomenon was that his hands looked like they had been bound behind his back. If they were tied up when he was still alive or after death, we don’t know. Maybe he had offended the law and received a punishment or perhaps it was a symbolic act that was connected to the Viking’s pagan religion.

We also found graves of a more gentle nature, for example one of the female inhumation burials. The female had been put into the ground on her back, probably dressed in her finest clothes, jewellery and tools. She wore the typical Gotlandic bronze jewellery from the Viking Age. Just below her chin there was a box-shaped brooch and next to each arm lay an animal head-shaped brooch. The brooches had several functions, both for decoration and for holding different garments together. Two dress pins were found, one on each shoulder. On her chest we also found a tool brooch with chains from which there hung a big iron key and a needle box. The woman had also two knives that had been hanging from her belt and a comb made of bone. Around her neck she wore a necklace with glass beads and right beside her head lay two spindle whorls made of stone.

Can the artefacts tell us something about the woman? Maybe they symbolise the woman’s life. Perhaps she worked at Fröjel as a textile craftsman. The objects may also be grave gifts from her relatives. Anyhow, the objects probably had a very strong symbolic value both for the dead person and for her survivors.

The finds
During the summer, objects that have been hidden in the soil for more than 1000 years have once again been brought into daylight. Almost 3000 artefacts of different materials and tremendous amounts of animal bones, burnt clay, pottery and slag have been found.

The biggest category of artefacts was made of iron. A large number of rivets and nails, tools associated with handicrafts like knives, semi-manufactured products and...
raw material have been found. Another major material category was bronze. Most dress ornaments and mountings, for example belts and knife sheaths, were made of bronze. Other artefacts that were common are beads made of glass or precious stones. In addition to this a large quantity of objects associated to bone and antler crafts have been excavated.

Samples
During the excavation we collected charcoal and wood samples from the settlement remains and graves for radiocarbon dating. By doing this we may get answers about the length of time that has passed between the burials and the settlement. We will also find out more about the difference in time between varying settlement remains.

Another analysis that is going to be done is a dendrochronological dating of the logs from the well. This is really interesting because with this method we might get a more precise dating.

This year we also collected macrofossil samples from the skeleton. This was done by the taking soil from the region around the individual’s stomach. By analysing the samples we may clarify what kind of diet the people at Fröjel had.

Conclusions
Now we have to put this year’s results together with earlier excavations and try to interpret how all those constructions fit together. In this way we may form a clearer conception about the settlement pattern and the function of each separate building.

As in previous years we haven’t found a lot of offensive weapons. Most of the finds are connected with trading and handicrafts. This seems to indicate that the harbour at Fröjel was quite a peaceful place where most of the inhabitants consisted of craftsmen and merchants. For some reason the people who lived and worked here didn’t need to defend the site and themselves against external threats. It seems as though most of the inhabitants were here for the same reason – to make, buy and sell products.

The early cremation burial shows that the north grave field has been used over an extensive period. Perhaps a few estates used the grave field and together set up a fishing village at Fröjel. Maybe it was the people at those farms who contributed to establishing what later became one of the largest Viking-age harbour and trading places on Gotland.

Read more about the Fröjel Discovery Programme on our website:
http://frojel.hgo.se

A plan drawing of the skeleton in grave 46 from 2001. The male’s hands had probably been bound behind his back. Photo Tove Eriksson

About the author
Carina Dahlström is an archaeologist living at Gotland. Since 1998 she works within Fröjel Discovery Programme as a Research assistant. Together with Tove Eriksson she has also been vice-director and field assistant during the field courses at the excavation site in Fröjel.

E-mail: carina.dahlstrom@hgo.se
The First Shipyard in America

By Olaf T. Engvig

The Ingstads' excavations at L'Anse aux Meadows showed that the Norse settlers, more commonly named the Vikings, established a permanent settlement at this site. They constructed a bloomery and produced iron. Most importantly, they set up a yard for shipbuilding and ship repairs. They needed iron tools and advanced skills to make such an outstanding vessel as a Viking ship.

Only iron rivets could keep an ocean-going Viking ship together. The fact that the Vikings used iron rivets in their lap-streak ship construction made them able to make light and swift sailing vessels that could travel far, take a lot of punishment, and stay afloat on the high seas. But a ship’s life could be short and the vessels always needed repairs and renewing. That is why Vinland, more than 500 years later renamed America, was such an important destination. The Vikings were the first Iron Age, or modern, men to establish production sites of an industrial type in this Stone Age world.

The native inhabitants outnumbered the Vikings, but they had no use for what the Vikings needed the most. The mossy moorland with bog iron ore and wooden areas including old pine trees the Europeans were looking for were not to be found in

The sleek curved lines of a traditional Norwegian longboat or “Folks boat” has become the symbol of the superior iron riveted lap-strike vessel the Vikings used to roam the northern world. This craft, from the 1870s, belong to the last generations of boats built when people were dependent on this type for transport and work. Photo: Olaf T. Engvig

Woodworking and shipbuilding in America a thousand years ago with a smithy and a nearby bloomery by the brook. The camp with temporary and permanent dwellings and the dense forest with good wood in the background. Ships are coming and going. Depicted by fourteen-year-old Håkon Engvig after a visit to L’Anse aux Meadows so far the only documented Viking Age settlement in North America.

This paper will focus on the Greenlanders' need for ships and supplies. Their skills and ventures were crucial to maintain a good standard of life in this outpost of the world. Their search for new opportunities led them to aim their exploration westwards. These were the only unknown areas to the mariners that emigrated from Norway.

The proposal of this paper is that the Vikings' voyages west were not to “raid, pillage and plunder” or to trade like they did in the rest of the known world. Relatively few artifacts have been found. This indicates that the main purpose of the travel was not trade. What could these Iron Age men be trading with Stone Age people that had more or less a similar environment?

The native skrælings lived basically in the same way as the Vikings' ancestors did in Norway 2000 years earlier. The Greenlanders were exploring the west for other reasons, first and foremost to find resources needed to build and maintain their fleet of longboats and Viking ships.

Greenland was a good place to live for the immigrants from Norway and Iceland. They had good houses, domestic animals, fish and game, and plenty of marine mammals to hunt. They had all the food they needed, and we believe they had no
neighbors that bothered them. They hunted and traded local goods and prized items with ships that came from Europe. But they lacked a few very important items that could not be shipped overseas without great effort and cost.

Shipbuilding timber and wood for construction was in high demand and in short supply. In order to produce the iron they constantly needed, they had to seek out places where fuel was plentiful. The women would not likely accept that the men use the winter fuel, gathered for heating and cooking, to make iron. To produce iron the Vikings needed lots of particularly good firewood that could produce the right heat in the furnace.

**These items were all found in Vinland,** a considerable way to sail, but far shorter than to their former homeland. Going there they had to cross the North Atlantic Ocean. Vinland was coastal sailing a greater part of the way, which could be done even in smaller ships. If they stayed close to the ice they would have had escape to the starboard.

The Vikings who came to the East Coast a thousand years ago would likely construct iron production plants with furnaces where good fuel for this enterprise were abundant. L’Anse aux Meadows gives us the clue. This is similar to what happened in the Pittsburgh area some 8-900 years later where coal supplies for a large-scale iron and steel production existed. The Great Lakes became a major shipbuilding district and Detroit the city where early automobiles were made.

**For people living on a remote island** like Greenland it was crucial to have good ships and boats. They needed numerous classic Viking *faerings.* They were always used for trips across the fjord or to the islands for gathering driftwood, fishing and hunting, egg and down collecting, socializing or other tasks. The faering was the Volkswagen of the egg and down collecting, socializing or other activities. Yards for the building of boats and ocean going vessels leaves fewer visual remains of this activity.

The site at L’Anse aux Meadows might well have been an early Viking encampment, but the area would soon have been drained for its bog iron ore. Iron production teams would set out to find new locations to produce more iron as an alternative to costly import from Norway or Iceland.

This stopover was abandoned for unknown reasons. Since their homeland was Greenland and the people at home were waiting for “the new boat” or more supplies of iron or other goods from Vinland, they would probably set up temporary camps at various production places. Several bloomery production sites in Norway from the pre-Viking, Viking and Medieval ages have few remains of a major settlement. It is the factory site and the different furnaces that are the distinctive remains, not to mention the slag heaps. After the bog iron ore was utilized or the fuel supply was exhausted, the Vikings would move on and leave the slag heaps and the round indents from the furnaces in the ground as a landmark vignette of their activities. Yards for the building of boats and ocean going vessels leaves fewer visual remains of this activity.

**The Vikings are believed** to have been too
few to colonize Vinland. The land was inhabited. Any settlement had to be defended against hostile takeover. Also, a preferred area for settlement would probably be where other people would like to live, and where people are living today. If they ever tried to settle in a popular area, which might have happened, any distinct Viking remains would likely have been destroyed long ago.

When looking for new Viking sites in America, we should not primarily try to find other settlements like L’Anse aux Meadows, but look for remote areas that would have had good pine forests with moorland where bog iron could have been collected. That would be the natural production site for a Viking-age bloomery. Ships could be built at any suitable location near the water with good shipbuilding material close by.

The Iron-age Norsemen would come, stay for a while and leave. They were always on the move. That is part of the Norwegian spirit even today. It is a culture with restless and adventurous people who like to explore new places.

Exploration of the new world started with Leif Eriksson a thousand years ago and it ended when the whole planet had been mapped. The last great discoverer was Roald Amundsen. He mapped greater parts of the only white spots left in our world, namely the Polar Regions. Between these two explorers 900 years apart, almost all the great discoveries on this planet took place.

I’m convinced there are more iron manufacturing sites and also remains of Viking shipyards on the American continent than the single one that has been excavated. Hopefully, they would be in more remote areas that have not been developed.

The preferred bloomery fuel was a dry pine tree. The furnaces were set up along a bank by water where fuel was plentiful and iron ore could be found and where they could haul ships ashore close by.

A camp at such a site could be quite primitive and leave few traces many hundred years later. But the old slag heaps from the iron production would all be there. They would be genuine proof of the Vikings’ activities. It should be noticed that the further north they could work, the closer to home they would have been.

I encourage the next generation of archaeologists in America to look for slag heaps and round traces of furnaces in order to beat the treasure hunters. New sophisticated tools and instruments would be of great help in pinpointing these locations. Pieces of forgeable iron, remains in the slag, odd broken tools or discarded old rivets could be signature items to look for. Such iron fragments could still be present, as wrought iron is a relatively lasting product.

I believe my line of thought would also indicate why the Vikings named the land: “Vinland the Good”. It gave the Iron Age man from Europe the thing he needed the most for everyday life in Greenland. That product was iron.

The sharp iron tools with a steel edge were needed in everyday life. They cut the grass and the trees, split logs and built ships. They were used for protection, in hunting, on the farm and in the kitchen. The Norse descendents used their iron tools to make wonderful artwork, superior ships and sturdy houses.

They were the nice Vikings that sailed to Vinland. Some wild youngsters might have even jumped ship to try it out on their own. Native girls could be tempting. What about some Viking-Indian lore? (Pocahontas’ boyfriend could well be a “Johnny comes lately” compared to a young Norseman being adopted into their native society, and the Chief’s beautiful daughter could have been madly in love with a blonde, blue-eyed bearded young man that came from the sea).

But first of all, we want the archaeologist to do more research and excavation. Only tomorrow’s archaeology will help us understand more about the first modern men on this continent. They came not to hunt for gold, but rather to secure and explore possibilities of a better life. That is why they established the first modern shipyard for ocean-going tonnage on the American continent a thousand years ago.

The Norse settlement in Greenland was founded before the year 1000. It existed for almost 500 years. Boats were in high demand. An average Norwegian longboat will usually last 30–40 years, sometimes longer. Many boats had a shorter life. We could simplify this and state that each new generation needed new boats.

As far as we know there was not a great export of boats from Norway to Greenland during the Medieval Age. To supply the community with this crucial item it would have been natural to use the resources in America for the production of boats. Boat-making as well as iron production would, in my opinion, be a main reason for the Greenlanders trying to keep contact with the newfound land to the west.

About the author:
Olaf T. Engvig grew up in Rissa, Norway. He holds a Cand. Philol. (graduate) degree in maritime history from the University of Oslo and has a deck officer’s license. His area of research is marine archaeology, shipbuilding, shipping (trade) and square sailing with connections to the Vikings. He has written articles and several books on maritime topics. He presently lives in Burbank, California. E-mail: omengvig@hotmail.com
The starting point for this article is the “Vikingar” exhibition at the historical museum of Stockholm, which opened in June 2001 and was reviewed in Viking Heritage nr 3/2001. The reviewer was searching for a discussion about where the first area of a unified Sweden originated. In previous works I have expressed the opinion that consistent administration and rule is dependent on competent administrative machinery, something that was supplied only by the church, which was introduced from the West. A second argumentative theme is that around the year 1000 AD there was still a heterarchy — segments of societies had separate internal hierarchies — with a constantly changing distribution of power in Scandinavia.

Geographical concepts were different and did not always refer to territorial areas, but could just likely refer to base systems used by a chieftain. The famous chronicler Adam of Bremen, who finished his History of the Archdiocese of Hamburg in 1074, states that the Götar live in a wide area extending to Birka and if you travel the land route from Skåne through the land of the Götar and over Skara, Tälje and Birka you will reach Sigtuna in one month.

Therefore, the name Gothia is defined as the central part of the two present Göta provinces and the route leading from them to the northwest Mälaren district, including Sigtuna and districts west thereof, but not Uppsala.

In one way or another, the kings and chieftains of coastal Norway and Gothia including parts of the Lake Malaren district were dependent on both the Danish kings, Harald Bluetooth and Sven Forkbeard, and his son Cnut the Great, king of England and Denmark. In the more distant wilderness, petty kings were more prevalent. Harald and his successors all had claims laid on their authority by German emperors. This coincides with claims made by the Hamburg/Bremen archdiocese to run the ecclesiastical organisation of Scandinavia and the imperial claims to supremacy over the church.

The following five basic components for society are my prerequisites:

Social structure — society was divided into a) agricultural societies, consisting of small chiefdoms, approximately 25x25 km in size, part of constantly changing systems and b) warrior societies stretching over vast distances across the sea or other routes, including settlements and market places like Hedeby and Birka, but not controlling the territories in between.

Population density — 1–2 persons per km² across regional entities. Danish land had a greater population density and consequently better-developed power structures.

Food production and patterns of settlement — farming and livestock-raising were the main source of income in a landscape that was primarily woodland and where the average distance between the settlements was a few km. The warrior society had a produce exchange, including the market places.

Sources of information — the spoken word, exclusively, in combination with human memory. I also emphasise literacy as the crucial change that led to new possibilities for establishing lasting societies.

Social ideology — differences in religion between the agricultural society with its gods of fertility and the warrior society that believed that a fallen warrior was assured a comfortable existence. A kingdom was not defined by its territorial limits, but rather the power of the king was dependent on support from his followers. The legal system was based on customary rules and lacked an executive authority. Property ownership did not exist; if by that one means that the society should protect the claims of each person. Might was right. Stationary courts — things — did not exist, instead law was administered by the chieftain in power.

This is an example of heterarchy and there was no hierarchy with obligation to obey, nor was any system of military obligations, like the ledung, forced on the peasants. We find the same institutions in Scandinavia as the ones we find documented in other pre-state societies: the king/chieftain, his followers and chiefs under him with their

http://viking.hgo.se
followers. Successful chieftains could mobilise great forces of men. Subordinates paid tribute to the chieftains and carried out given duties. The personality of the leader was essential. His most crucial ability was to provide protection, honour and booty to his followers. Harald Bluetooth was a good example of a king who succeeded in tying his chieftains to himself, while Olav Digre at Stiklastad in 1030 is an example of a king who failed.

The Stockholm exhibition’s declaration that overpopulation was one of the reasons for the Viking raids seems unlikely since the population density in the Scandinavian peninsula was only 1-2 persons/km².

Ownership rights were limited to the property one could defend alone or together with allies. Ancestral bonds were manifested in land that could not be transferred to others without approval of kin and chiefs. There were no “free” farmers. If the king wished to transfer landed property he was not likely to be exempt from the restrictions regarding transfers of family land. In the case of acquired land given away by the king, we may be led to believe that a surviving chief, ousted and deprived of his land by the king, would take any chance to get his land back.

In the case where the king had committed murder with robbery, which was a highly prized deed in the skaldic poems, there were relatives who had a duty to avenge the proprietor and recover the land. From this follows that there was no “crown estate” that remained intact independent of who was king and no “crown estate” could be defended alone or together.

Along the east coast of the Skagerrak sea, and along the route through Östergötland to the Mälaren district and up to the Gulf of Finland there is a series of villages called Tegneby (Map 1). These villages are ascribed to Harald Bluetooth as part of his route control stretching from Hedeby to these areas. They were founded at about the same time as the “trelleborg” ring fortresses that are dated by dendrochronology to a last phase ca 980. It is proposed that, while King Harald was taking control over Denmark, these fortresses functioned as his beachheads on the Danish islands and the western coast of Scania.

Finds of coins and trophy objects of Danish origin – the Hiddensee findings – can connect the Tegnebys, like Sigtuna, to Harald. Harald Bluetooth’s conquering of the eastern Skagerrak coast is dated after 970 AD by historical sources and the tegnebys along the route through Östergötland may have been established in the same period. King Harald had a representative – ubegn – in each village. Västergötland had long been under Danish influence and a similar base system was not necessary there.

Two generations later we find runic stones with the formula harda godan thegn or dræng in Gotland, Scania and on Jutland (Map 2). They are ascribed to Sven Forkbeard’s followers and the thingalad, the royal forces of Cnut in England, showing that a connection between Gothia and Jutland still existed in the beginning of the 11th century.

The formula harda godan does not exist in the Mälaren district. A conclusion drawn from the existence of the two Tegnebys, the Hiddensee findings and runic stones with the title dræng in the Mälar area, is that the area from Sigtuna westwards held a unique position in the Mälaren district. In this area there is also a runic stone at Kolsta, only 20 km from Uppsala, where a member of the thingalad called Gere boasts with this fact.

Just as Harald, Cnut had, a certain influence on a region northwest of Lake Mälaren. In a letter from 1027 Cnut entitles himself king of some of the Svear. Although many reports of journeys to England and gelds are spread on runic stones through hout the entire Mälaren district, these refer to conditions before Cnut became king of England and Denmark. After that, he ended his conquest forces. Apparently, no king of Svealand joined his activities. Instead, the “harda godan” thegns and drængs of the runic stones in southwest Scandinavia signed up voluntarily for Cnut’s thingalad, in hopes of gaining glory and property. Unlike the thegns at the tegnebys, they were not Cnut’s agents in their home regions, where their stones were raised, but they proudly recognised Cnut’s superiority.

There are no examples from those days to show any constant national power structure in the areas that later became the three Scandinavian kingdoms. The “Swedish” king Olof Skötkonung (ca 995-1022) had his base in Västergötland but he struck coins marked with crosses in Sigtuna with English moneyers like his “stepfather” Sven Forkbeard in Denmark.

In map 2, I have depicted how the power changed in the years before 1030. In the battle of 1026 at Helgeå, located in Uppland, the harda godan thegns and drængs were important to Cnut’s forces and many of them were from Denmark. Among the opponents were Cnut’s relative Ulf, also from Denmark, king Anund from Sweden and king Olav Digre from Norway. Ulf was killed soon after on Cnut’s orders. Olav roamed around in Scandinavia and Russia until he was killed in the battle of Stiklastad in 1030. After that he became an important saint, but as a king he had significant influence in Norway only between 1015 and 1026.
Even though Danish kings had a crucial influence on the development of Scandinavia and the North Sea region, there are no sources to tell us how Sven and Cnut used their power within the Danish regions. In the Viking exhibition in Stockholm it is stated that during Cnut’s time England belonged to Denmark. On the contrary Sven and Cnut conquered England and Cnut became king of England. He is supposed to have visited Denmark only a few times and it is unknown how he ruled Denmark.

Obviously the leaders in Viking-age Scandinavia had a good knowledge of how to rule. Many of them had been to royal courts in other parts of Europe and must have known about administration and tax collection. What did not exist in pagan Scandinavia was the infrastructure for such administration. The only organisation with such a structure was the church. New leaders, like Olav Digre in Norway, also used this to destroy the old power structure when pagan chieftains had to give up their positions as leaders including the cult.

The Christian church is the only organisation with a structure that can be followed through the centuries. It lasted some 330 years from the first known German missionaries in Slesvig and Birka ca 830 AD until a Scandinavian division with an archdiocese in each country was completed in 1164 with the archdiocese of Uppsala in Sweden. Pagan and Christian faith coexisted during most of this time and there were influences from the English as well as the Byzantine Church (Map 3).

The conclusion is, that around 1000 AD, there was still a heterarchy in Scandinavia with constantly changing distribution of power. Kings and chieftains of Norway and Gothia, including parts of the lake Mälaren district, were associated in one way or another with the earlier mentioned kings of Danish extraction, most of the time between 980-1035 AD.

During this period, there is no sign in any source of a Swedish kingdom with its centre among the Svear of Uppsala. In fact the Svear in Uppsala resisted the new forms of government, which appeared from the West. Not until the ecclesiastical organisation, independent of who held office, was completed could the Scandinavian kings obtain more consistent control over their lands by cooperating with the church. Uppsala as the centre for an old Swedish kingdom may be a learned construction of the medieval chronicles who presupposed that the organisation of their days was ancient.

The medieval ideal Christian prince, striving for justice and peace on Earth in theory, was irreconcilable with the Viking theoretical and practical ideals of capturing property, killing opponents in battle and hence providing carrion-eating animals with plenty of food.

In theory medieval royal justice would replace the need for powerful protection from a chieftain that existed in prehistoric times. The peasants who had to pay taxes to the church, lords and the king paid the price for this restructuring. For the peasants there were two main changes that emerged from the organised rule:

- Instead of conducting their religious ceremonies at some local chieftain’s place within a tolerant, polytheistic system they would take part in a common Christian ceremonial in a church that was part of an established system with its centre in Rome.
- Instead of an exchange of tributes for protection by their chieftain, they had to pay fees to a vague authority in exchange for only hopes of a better life on the other side.

These fees, gathered internally among the peasantry, replaced the tribute king’s ceremonial payments, in part externally gained, to the superior kings.

Hierarchy was introduced on the national level. This was enforced in Sweden approximately one century after the Viking Age, not during the time as proposed in the Stockholm Viking exhibition.

About the author
Carl Löfving PhD and a lawyer, works as a legal adviser in the City Planning Authority of Gothenburg. His dissertation Gothia som dansk/engelsk skattland. Ett exempel på heterarki omkring 1000. (Gothia as Danish/English tributary land. An example of heterarchy around the year 1000 AD) was presented in May 2001.
E-mail: carl.lofving@stadsbyggnad.goteborg.se
The Grand Finale of the North Sea Viking Legacy project

BY GEIR SØR-REIME

The North Sea Viking Legacy project is over. 20 partners from five countries and a number of associate partners have achieved their purpose. Around 100 Viking sites and attractions have been opened to the public as a direct result of the project. Illustrative and interpretative signboards have been erected at these sites. Most of them have also been presented in leaflets, booklets etc.

A number of Viking exhibits have also been produced, and the Viking legacy of the North Sea region has really been brought into focus again.

Now you can wander through parts of Norwich, England, and experience the Viking legacy of that city through explanatory signs and well-illustrated guides. You can drive through the county of Norfolk and visit a number of round-towered churches. Here your children can discover the small bronze plaques that have been set up and, by making rubbings of these, they can receive a North Sea Viking Legacy “gold” coin in exchange.

Outside Bergen, Norway, you can walk into a boat-building yard. Here you can first watch actual boat-builders at work on boats very similar to the boats used by the Vikings, and then you can visit the interesting exhibition about Viking boat-building traditions on the first floor of the workshop.

North of Bergen, in the area of Nordfjord, you can now visit Viking sites in all municipalities of the region. These sites are presented on a very exciting and newly developed website (http://www.nordfjordhistorie.no), especially designed to appeal to children (of all ages).

West of Bergen, an impressive moraine terrace with a number of huge burial mounds with rich Viking finds has been presented in a wonderful new book. A number of newly researched and designed signboards have been put up around the site, and through cooperation between the land-owners, the municipal and regional authorities, this site has been made available to the general public. From the terrace, there is a wonderful view over the inner parts of the Hardanger fjord, one of the most famous of the Norwegian fjords.

In Denmark, a huge number of runic stones in northwest Jutland have been sign-posted and presented in a well-researched and interesting book. At the Viking Centre in Ribe, new developments are continuously taking place.

In Sweden, in the municipality of Ale, the North Sea Viking Legacy project has really sparked off a huge new Viking project. Currently, a Viking house is being erected there (see notice elsewhere in this magazine). During the project, intensive research has been carried out to document the Viking legacy of Ale, which was really a border region between Norway, Sweden and Denmark during the Viking Age.

On Unst, the northernmost island of Shetland, there are numerous remains of Norse settlement. As a part of the North Sea Viking Legacy project, a number of these, foremost Viking longhouses, have been sign-posted and made accessible to the public.

And this is only a glimpse of what we have achieved. Our partners in Sør-Trøndelag, in Sogn og Fjordane, in Haugesund, on Karmøy, in Vestfold and our associate partners in the Netherlands, on Greenland, the Faroes and Iceland and on the Isle of Man, as well as our partners in the Via Viking project in the Baltic Sea, have all contributed to making the Viking legacy of the north ready to receive visitors from all over the world.

The Western Viking Route guidebook

The grand finale of the North Sea Viking Legacy project is a guidebook entitled “Western Viking Route”. Here all the sites developed by the partners of the project are presented. In addition, some sites in adjacent areas have been included to complete the picture.

The book will be launched throughout the region towards the end of November, and will be available to the public shortly afterwards.

The book is meant as a companion volume to “Follow the Vikings”, the book published by Viking Heritage and presenting the European Viking Routes. This book includes 50 major Viking attractions and a number of other attractions adjacent to the major ones. Very few of the sites from the area covered by the new Western Viking Route book are included in the Follow the Vikings book, so they really complement each other. Therefore they will normally be offered as a pair, but, of course, those of you who already have the Follow the Vikings book will be able to order the new volume separately.

The book will be available from our partners; more details will be published later.

The project lives on: Destination Viking

Although the Western Viking Route book is the final stage of the North Sea Viking Legacy project, the project lives on, now under a new title: Destination Viking. And what is even better, the new project will encompass the whole of the core area of the Vikings, both their homelands in Scandinavia and the areas west, north and east of Scandinavia where their influence was strong and long lasting.

Partners are currently working out details of the new project. The first partner meeting, this time primarily for potential Swedish partners, will be held in Gothenburg on 22 November. Similar partner meetings will then be arranged in a number of other countries. We intend to present an application for funding the Baltic Sea Region part of the project in April next year, while the application for the North Sea Region part will be presented in June 2002. We are also looking into the possibility of organising sub-projects in the Northwest Europe region (Ireland, Britain, Northern France and the Benelux countries) and in the Northern Periphery region, which comprises Scotland, Greenland, Faroes and the northern parts of Scandinavia and Russia.

New partners are still welcome to join our project, and are invited to contact the project co-ordinator, Mr Geir Sør-Reime at gsr@rfk rogaland f kommune.no
“Senās vides darbnīca”
“Ancient Environment Workshop”

BY IEVA PIGOZNE

When young people in Latvia come together and enthusiastically discuss dying yarn with lichen, use of ancient tools, construction of ancient musical instruments or how to restore the traditions of the 9th century, chances are that they are from the “Ancient Environment Workshop”. It is an organisation that unites people who are interested in ancient Latvian history, traditions, crafts and the philosophical values of our ancestors. “Ancient Environment Workshop” is an experimental archaeology group that studies, reproduces and “lives” the life of the ancient Balts. Activities of the Workshop cover a very wide spectrum, from making basic clothing and tools and playing traditional music, to exploring the worldview of ancient Balts.

People of the “Ancient Environment Workshop” talk about the 9th century as “their century”. They have chosen to focus on one particular century in Latvian history because this enables them to create as real a historical environment as possible. One can observe rather big differences in clothing, tools, ceramics and weapons of our ancestors of the 8th and the 13th centuries. Therefore, by choosing one particular century, “Ancient Environment Workshop” has achieved a certain historical preciseness when a man dressed in the clothes of the 9th century builds a house of the 9th century with an axe of the same era.

Because of their wide spectrum of activities, “Ancient Environment Workshop” deals not only with pure folklore. They concentrate a lot on its context – the environment folklore comes from. The aim of the Workshop is to study and investigate all the forms of our ancestors’ life. Therefore everybody who becomes involved in the Workshop, temporarily turns into an ancient Balt who has to possess many skills, manage various crafts (every member specialises in his/her own field) and know many things like mythology, traditions, etc. This is why the musical aspects of folklore – singing, dancing and playing instruments – are a part of all the daily and festive activities, which are carried out by a person from the 9th century (and thus by the members of the Workshop).

The fourth “Ancient Environment Workshop” experimental archaeology summer camp took place last summer. The main purpose of the camp is to relive an adventure – to experience how it is to live two weeks (day and night) in the conditions of the 9th century. To achieve this, one needs to gather all the available information on the lives of the people of that time: their spiritual beliefs, as well as the practical living conditions, like housing, tools, weapons, ceramics, food, and clothing. Everything has to be made by hand by the Workshop participants. There are five professional jewellers in “Ancient Environment Workshop” who do all the metal works. Moreover, using methods of that time, they have to build a dwelling-house. During earlier camps people used to live in a hut, but this time erection of the first house of horizontal logs was begun.

Another task is to prepare all the necessary everyday objects and clothing, which takes a lot of time and energy. Most of the girls of the Workshop are engaged in this work. All clothes are sewn by hand and they look like authentic clothes of those worn by the people of the 9th century. Shoes, bone articles (like needles, awls, knives and sash-weaving bricks), as well as ceramic and wooden dishes are made in the same way.

In their experimental archaeology camps the participants of the “Ancient Environment Workshop” try to live like people did in the 9th century. That means that everything – houses, clothes, shoes, jewellery and weapons – are handmade of natural materials: linen, wool, leather, wood, bronze and iron. Food consists of everything that a person of that time could grow, gather in the woods or hunt. Clothes and dishes have to be washed with ashes and gravel. Men chop the wood with the help of a narrowblade axe, forge jewellery or are engaged in the construction works.

Both man and the gods of the 9th century lived in nature and belonged to nature. By living in a camp that is located in the middle of a forest, “Ancient Environment Workshop” tries to achieve an environment where they are integral part of nature.

One could wonder why modern young people have such an unusual and specific hobby. The “Ancient Environment Workshop” consists of people who have a deep and genuine interest in their folk culture, history and lifestyle in harmony with nature. Besides, living in a “settlement” of the 9th century is also a great adventure. People have always dreamt of travelling in time to experience the past or the future. The activities of “Ancient Environment Workshop” are a form of time travel, back to the 9th century, a special time in Latvian history. Discovering the people of the 9th...
century means discovering the true ancient Balts before neighbouring cultures such as the Vikings or Germans had influenced them. Nevertheless, local culture and economy were highly developed.

The idea to establish the Workshop belongs to the skilled and enthusiastic adornment-forger Aris Alsins who passed away two years ago. Due to his enthusiasm he managed to bring together several people who were interested in the ancient Baltic history and crafts. More than eight years ago Aris started to build an ancient Latgalian settlement, win iron and forge metal. Gradually more and more people joined this group.

In 1999 "Ancient Environment Workshop" was officially registered as a non-profit organisation, and Uldis Brinkmanis was elected its president. There are 18 members in the Workshop at this moment, and they all take part in the studies and reconstruction of the 9th century Baltic surroundings and lifestyle.

When joining the group, every member has to invent his or her “9th century name”. Thus people temporarily become, i.e. Lapainis (Deciduous Tree), Babrulis (Beaver), Akis (Fishhook), Magone (Poppy) or Rasa (Dew). The new image also requires a story about where this person comes from, what he or she has been doing “so far” and how is their life “now”.

In addition, "Ancient Environment Workshop" tries to recreate historical events and carry out archaeological experiments not only by organising experimental archaeology camps and excursions for themselves but also by taking part in many cultural events, which promote people's knowledge of history and culture of our ancestors. "Ancient

Demonstrating medieval metal works at the First Baltic Medieval Festival in Cesis, 2001.

Environment Workshop" as a form of "real ancient Latvians" has been observed in many places in Latvia and abroad. They have taken part in the following events:

- Medieval Days in Bauska castle (1999)
- The European Day of Parks in the Gauja National Park (2000)
- International Festival of Knights "Navahrudak" in Belarus (2000)
- International Folklore Festival "Baltica" in Rauna and Riga (2000)
- Kuldiga City Festival (2000 and 2001)
- Cesis City Festival (2000)
- Viking Festival at the Arasii Lake Fortress (2000)
- International Festival of Masks in Daugavpils (2001)
- International Day of Museums in Dole (2001)
- First Baltic Medieval Festival in Cesis (2001)
- Ventspils City Festival (2001)
- Riga 800 Central Celebration "Riga Through centuries" (2001)
- etc.

"Ancient

About the author

Ieva Pigozne works at the Latvian Institute that promotes the knowledge of Latvia abroad. She has a M.Phil. degree in Peace Studies from the Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland and has also studied at the Latvian Academy of Culture in Riga and at the University of Bergen in Norway. Since 1999 she is a member of the Ancient Environment Workshop.

E-mail: pigozne@latinst.lv


Viking sword found in Oslo, Norway

A sword dated to about 850 has been found in central Oslo. When a bicycle rack was set up in an apartment block courtyard this Viking Age sword was unearthed. The finding shows that you can still make archaeological discoveries in the busy central parts of Norway’s capital.

The sword is from Oslo’s pre-urban time and the find indicates the presence of a burial mound of a high-ranking man. Authorities are unsure if the sword was produced locally or imported, at any rate it is typical for the time period and was common in the areas around Oslo.

Source: www.ftenposten.no
BY JAN PAUL STRID

Collecting source material is a time-consuming part of all research, not least in the humanities. Data often has to be gathered from rows of different records, dispersed in numbers of archives, museums and libraries. Imagine having access to all the information you need on your screen!

Topolinguistics denotes a branch of linguistics that studies languages and dialects in relation to society, social environment, and culture. In the field of topolinguistics, dispersion in time and space is important, whether place names, runes, or dialects. Language is seen as a special aspect of the cultural landscape, a dimension formed by the interaction between humans, society, and nature.

Exploiting this interdisciplinary field, the use of information technology and new geographical methods, such as digital maps (GIS), is important. This way, large collections of material can be gathered, handled and analysed in a way hitherto impossible by manual methods.

Topolinguistic research is conducted within the framework of the ORD-projects (www.tema.liu.se/ord/) at the University of Linköping, which, like Gotland University College, is situated at the centre of a cultural landscape where history is evident everywhere, not least in the linguistic heritage. Rune stones, old place-names, medieval manuscripts, dialects, not to mention ballads and folklore, all contribute to make the surroundings a mine of information about cultural and language history from prehistoric times to present day.

Until now, we have been working with three separate, but closely linked projects: the Bjärka-Säby project, the Östgöta Dialects project, and "the talking Östgöta dictionary"- project. Of these, the two first mentioned have now been completed; the Östgöta dialects-project – the main object of our interest here, to which we shall return in a moment – just this autumn. First, however, a few words about its predecessor: the Bjärka-Säby-project.

The primary aim of the Bjärka-Säby-project was to create a prototype for multimedia databases based on digital maps (GIS). Our aim was to demonstrate the ease with which you can access relevant source material about any geographical entity, be it a farm, a village or a prehistoric burial mound, by just "clicking" on the name on a digital map.

Different kinds of source material were linked to the place-names on a map of the central part of the Bjärka-Säby estate, known for its oak meadows and its beautiful scenery. As well as the derivation of the names, information about the earliest historical records of the places or settlements in question, the early owners of the estate, vegetation, geology, geography etc., maps, drawings or photos and a few recordings of the local dialect were provided. We also provided some examples of how data of this kind can be combined with data from other databases such as the demographic database, in order to give a clearer picture of the living conditions in the past. The Bjärka-Säby prototype, which was presented on CD-ROM in 1998, covers only a small area but contains an immense amount of information.

The Östgöta Dialects project deals with dialects in the region of Östergötland. In this project which is based upon comprehensive recordings made in the region from the 1930's onwards by the Dialect Archive (ULMA) in Uppsala, we made use of the experience gained by the Bjärka-Säby project to make this unique, but practically unknown material publicly accessible.

Clicking on a map of Östergötland, you can choose among recordings from different places. There are also search facilities for subjects such as crafts, cooking, traditions, etc. The author states that most of the written material in the book is derived from various articles and compilations written and collected by members of his own re-enactment society, Regia Anglorum. The chapter on shields however, is mainly an

Viking Weapons & Warfare

During the last 20 years or so the urge to learn more about historical periods has increased dramatically among so-called 'ordinary people'. It is not a new phenomenon however; the Viking Age has captivated the interest and imagination of both ordinary people and scholars for at least the last 200 years. This interest has assumed many shapes and expressions.

One vivid and growing part of these manifestations is living history, or, re-enactment. For readers who have not yet encountered this worldwide movement it can be described as an ongoing history lesson, boy scouting for grownups (?) and in many cases a highly time-consuming part of all research, not least in the humanities. Data often has to be gathered from rows of different records, dispersed in numbers of archives, museums and libraries. Imagine having access to all the information you need on your screen!

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Viking Heritage Magazine 4/01

Written by J Kim Siddorn
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http://viking.hgo.se
istics and multimedia

ghost stories etc. The project is aimed at the general public, but has a scientific bias.

Our conception of the ideal conditions for linguistic studies of this kind can be expressed in just one word: attainability.

First of all it is essential to have immediate access to the recordings. But transcriptions of them are also necessary. Besides facilitating listening to the recordings, a transcription makes it easier for you to find what you are looking for. Reading is far quicker than listening. Furthermore, written text gives you all the traditional tools for linguistic analysis (foot notes, cross-references, commentaries).

Consequently we have linked text and sound to each other so as to provide for simultaneous reading and listening with the facilities just mentioned.

Secondly, we think it is important for any student of local linguistic habits to get an image, or at least an impression of the local surroundings, i.e. the milieu in which the informants spent their lives. As was pointed out initially, the toponymic concept emphasizes a geographical approach.

Dialects, in Sweden and elsewhere, are to a large extent dependent on the framework of society, with its territorial divisions and subdivisions. The parishes, “socknar” (cf. OE ōccan), have played an important role in the forming of dialects. In many parts of Sweden, dialects change from parish to parish. For this reason we use the parish names as entries on the map. Every parish is presented with photographs of the church and (or) its surroundings and a short text describing different points of interest as regards archaeology, settlement history, the building of the church etc.

Of course, there are other ways to approach the interviews. Since most interviews deal with many different topics, the texts are divided into separate parts, each with headlines. Thanks to this, you can go “the other way round” and look for items of interest: a click on e.g. fishing, cattle breeding or ghost stories in the list of topics will take you to the corresponding interview in no time.

Unfortunately, our CD Östgotamål “Östgöta dialects” is bilingual only in the sense that it contains both dialect- and standard Swedish. In other words, there is no English translation, nor even a summary. Still, we think that you ought to be able get at least something out of it, even if your knowledge of modern Scandinavian is limited. As a matter of fact there are a samples of medieval and Runic Swedish on the CD, so if your interests lie more on the historic side, this should appeal to you.

Should you think it worthwhile to acquire a copy, the CD is available from Östergötlands länsmuseum, Box 232, 581 02 LINKÖPING, Sweden/ ostrgotamal@lansmus.linkoping.se at a price of 160 SEK.

adaptation of Dr Peter Beaton’s comprehensive and summarising article on the subject, published elsewhere earlier and currently available on the Internet.

Much of the information given in the book is difficult to obtain elsewhere without considerable effort. For example the chapter on scabbards is quite impressive with a large listing and description of archaeological finds.

A most important and valuable element apparent throughout most of the book is Mr Siddorn’s own experience of the various weapons and armour he describes. His comments are interwoven in a natural way with the descriptive texts. In addition to the text there are several good colour photographs.

The book is far from perfect though. One of the most notable drawbacks from a Scandinavian perspective is the apparently non-existent fact and language check. It seems as if the book was published in hurry; Havamel instead of Havamål and other typical misprints. Some of these misprints require a degree of knowledge to identify as errors. This could prove misleading for re-enactment beginners with a weak concept of the Viking Age who have to rely on the information given in the book.

Further: In the chapter on armour Mr Siddorn states that there are no evidence whatsoever for lamellar armour being used during the Viking Age (p. 59), even though there is a drawing of just such a piece of armour on the following page. It is called scale armour, but is clearly made up of lamellae.

Another questionable feature is how written sources are handled and presented to the reader. Referring to written sources in a text is commendable, but if these sources are not included in a book’s bibliography there is not much point in including them. Unfortunately this is the case with several of the written sources referred to in the chapter on scabbards.

Of course these errors are rather harmless in the long run, but they could easily have been avoided with a simple proofreading.

It is another matter altogether that Mr Siddorn somehow forgot an important chapter: The one on axes. If this is a slip by the editor or by Mr Siddorn himself is of subordinate interest. Excluding a chapter on axes in a book dealing with Viking-age weapons is more than serious; it is nearly criminal! It is probably unintended, but is still quite censurable and such a chapter ought to be included in the next edition. That the author and the editor would knowingly exclude axes is out of question, considering the thoroughness reflected in the description of the other weapon types.

On the whole ‘Viking Weapons & Warfare’, despite its shortcomings, gives a fairly good impression and it will probably become a valuable source for re-enactors interested in the more violent aspects of the Viking Age.

NY-BJÖRN GUSTAFSON, ARCHAEOLOGIST AND RE-ENACTOR

http://viking.hgo.se
Some time ago I was asked to give my viewpoints on the article *Give us the myths* by Hjalmar Olsson, published in VHM 1/2001, and particularly concerning his criticism of the Old Uppsala Historical Center.

I have nothing to defend regarding the final formation of the exhibition, but firstly as a Director-General of the County Administration of Antiquities and thereafter Director of the County Museum of Uppsala, Sweden, have taken part in all the inquiry and steering groups that were working to bring about a museum since the middle of the 1980s. A short background description may provide an explanation of the aim and direction of the exhibition.

**Background**

The Old Uppsala ancient monument site with the three so-called Kings’ mounds, the *Tingmound*, the large gravefield, the church from the 10th century, the oldest archbishop’s diocese as well as the terraces of the demesne of the Crown, is nationally, and even internationally, the most well-known site in Sweden. Anyways during my school days in the textbooks we were led to understand that Old Uppsala was the cradle of Sweden and thus to be revered.

As an archaeology student in the end of the 1950s and beginning of the 1960s, I became acquainted with Sune Lindqvist’s great monography *Uppsala högar och Ottsarshögen* (The mounds of Uppsala and the mound of Otta) from 1936. It told about the excavations of the East and West mounds in 1847 and 1874 and connections to the “Ynglingsaga” (the History of the Kings of the Yngling Dynasty) and “Ynglingatal” were clearly made. But Old Uppsala was hardly the centre of our interest at that time. Sune Lindqvist was a man of respected authority and there was a tendency to accept everything he said as being conclusive.

Archaeological research also took a totally different path at that time – the nationally focused archaeology of the interwar model was dead. With irony we students spoke of Birger Nerman’s demands to know the names of the kings buried in the different mounds. Now research was focused on settlement historical development and the course of colonisation. In the course of conversation, Bo Gräsland has characterised the situation as “no archaeologist before the beginning of the 1990s got a crown for digging in a big mound”.

As newly appointed Director of the County Administration of Antiquities in 1976, I came across Old Uppsala once again – now as an object for preservation of ancient monuments. Care of the ancient site, haymaking and repairing wear and tear, laid claim to almost half of the annual state grant designated for the whole county. The need to keep it in good condition was inevitable – despite the lack of good signs, exhibitions or any other information the site was visited yearly by at least 250,000 persons, which was documented in visitor statistics. Criticism about poor information occurred regularly, but hardly in the form of a heavy storm of protest that was able motivate means to make improvements. When I tried to enlist the support of the municipality of Uppsala, I got the reply that they considered Old Uppsala a state matter.

A marginal improvement was made in 1986 when the County museum of Uppsala, the National Heritage Board and Uppsala University together set up a text and picture exhibition on the ground floor of the now-demolished teachers’ house close to the East mound. Of course an artefact exhibition could not to be displayed in an old wooden house! However what got things moving at last was an initiative from the hotel and tourist business in Uppsala in the middle of the 1980s. Their aim was to get more tourists to come to the city and increase the guest nights in the hotels. This can be worth noting, as even now the Old Uppsala Historical Center is referred to in debate as a national project based on ideas from the National Heritage Board.

A group of Persons in these branches quietly worked out a recommendation for a Viking-Age village that would be located a few kilometres northwest of the mounds on the other side of the Fyris river. The proposal was presented at a tourist fair and immediately attracted a great deal of attention in the media. We archaeologists, museologists and culture workers were dismayed, to put it mildly. The idea of building a false Viking-Age village with a palisade and artificial grave fields for commercial purposes felt like a profanation of Old Uppsala – and the idea certainly disturbed us also because it in facto implied a fully well-grounded criticism of our own disability to tell the history of the site in an exciting way. What was also obvious was that while myths may not have existed in the literal sense of the word there were quite a lot of misconceptions of what Old Uppsala actually was.

Regarding the idea of Vikings and Viking Age it also became clear that the old Hollywood movie, *The Vikings*, had a greater impact than all the archaeologists’ well-mean efforts to tell the facts.

The Viking-Age village proposal failed. In the tourist business elementary cultural historical credibility is a selling argument and they didn’t have it.

However the proposal of the Viking-Age village resulted in a number of interested parties finally meeting in a first conference group to improve the information and perhaps even create a museum. The group was made up of representatives from the Central Board of Antiquities, Uppsala University, the County Museum of Uppsala, the County Administration, the Municipality of Uppsala, Old Uppsala parish, Old Uppsala Historical Folklore association and delegates from the tourist business and merchants.

Later on this group came to vary over the years. The leading groups that were finally able to bring the Old Uppsala Historical Center to fruition had Margareta Biörnstad, the ex-director-general of the Central Board of the Swedish National Antiquities (now National Heritage Board) Margareta Biörnstad and the present director-general of the same, Erik Wegraeus as chairs. The project had become firmly established at last.

Many have contributed to the content. The first concept of the exhibition was worked out by Bengt Edgren and Frands Herschend from the National Heritage Board and the archaeological institute of Uppsala University, later on by Jan Erik Sjöberg and with the support of special expert groups as well as the...
exhibition architect Stefan Ahlenius.

The content

Hjalmar Olsson exclaims “Give us the myths!” The aim of the exhibition was, if anything, “Give us the facts!” However in the discussion leading up to the exhibition it was clear that the myths were an obvious part of the history of Old Uppsala from the oldest times until now. Conceptions of the site’s meaning have their oldest bases in the sagas and over time symbolic acts have been added, giving new meanings or confirming old ones.

When Hjalmar Olsson calls attention to the rather brief information about the Nazis’ abuse of the site in the 1940s as a good thing, but obviously perceives this as something peripheral in relation to desired story of the myths, he has misunderstood the point.

When the Pope visits Old Uppsala in 1990 and performs a mass and when the Social Democrats hold a large summer meeting on the site in 1954, it is a matter of the same kind of historical use as Gustav Vasa’s speech to the Uppland farmers from the Tingmound and Carl XIV Johan’s visit when he allows himself be honoured by the students from Uppsala on the same site. I think that the encounter between archaeological facts and narratives or at least quoted myths, is quite distinct in the exhibition. This is also a scientifically correct way of going about it.

Hjalmar Olsson also criticises the lack of new information techniques in the exhibition. This is clearly a lack today. However we have to remember the starting-point. The exhibition hall in Old Uppsala is – believe it or not – a low-budget project and there was a lot on the wish list that could not become reality. When the municipality of Uppsala after many political fights decided to support the project economically there was one high priority demand: the original artefacts should be displayed, the charred remains of the magnificent burials in the mounds, the original artefacts from Vendel and Valsgärde. The primordial was these symbolic objects, not an attention to new information techniques.

Hopefully the exhibition in Old Uppsala will be renewed and changed. When this happens I will be happy to see that there is space for the narrative forms that Hjalmar Olsson is pleading for.

Stig Rydh

Encyclopaedia
of the Viking Age

Written by John Haywood
ISBN 0-500-01982-7
Thames & Hudson, 2000, New York.

The author gives us the Viking world in a broad perspective. As a Scandinavian reader it is interesting that the book also allows much room for a discussion of the Viking impact on the Anglo-Saxon world.

The book is an encyclopaedia with short but fully informative articles about different subjects from the archbishop and chronicler Adam of Bremen to the archaeological uncovering of Viking Jorvik, present-day York.

Here you discover not only how the Vikings successfully and brutally conquered vast areas of eastern and western Europe but also how they dressed, spent their leisure time, farmed and cooked, raised their children, used animals to heat their homes, and buried and celebrated their dead.

Entries explain how they built ships that could carry them across the Atlantic Ocean, established trade routes to Constantinople and Baghdad, and eventually converted from paganism to Christianity.

The book also provides biographies of leading personalities of the age, both Vikings themselves and those who opposed them.

The illustrated material is of high quality and gives a picture of everything from woodcarving tools to Gotlandic picture stones.

The Viking Heritage Staff

wishes all of our members and readers

A Merry Christmas
and
A Happy New Year

Olle Hoffman, Therese Lindström, Alexander Andreoff
Mia Göranson, Dan Carlsson, Marita E Ekman
At the time of the photo Maj-Britt Andersson was on holiday.
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Information e-mail: majbritt.andersson@hgo.se
Tel: +46 498 29 98 28, +46 498 29 98 30

The objectives of the network are:
- To develop and maintain the European Institute of Cultural Routes project.
- To co-operate with schools, universities etc. in the field of education and training in the study of the Vikings.
- To collect information of present Viking history activities, and to distribute information about Vikings and their history.

Viking Heritage acts as a monitoring and advisory body on all issues relating to an enhanced understanding of the Viking history.

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Publisher and Editor-in chief: Dan Carlsson, dan.carlsson@hgo.se
Editor: Marita E Ekman, marita.e.ekman@hgo.se
Editorial staff: Alexander Andreff, Mia Göranson, Olle Hoffman, Therese Lindström
Subscriptions: Maj-Britt Andersson, majbritt.andersson@hgo.se
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