

The Eye can See and The Heart can Love, What the Word cannot Describe



Goats in Norway
(The only photo, others are in storage)

Scandinavia Gems

By Jim Humberd

Scandinavia Gems

We spent 9 nights in **Denmark** - Aarhus, Copenhagen,
Frederikshavn, Fryshav, Hellsingor, Horsens
1979, 1985

We spent 8 nights in **Finland** - Helsinki, Vasa,
1979

We spent 8 nights in **Norway** - Andalsnes, Bergen,
Brekhe, Geiranger, Oslo, Trondheim
1979

We spent 10 nights in **Sweden** - Goteborg, Kristianstad,
Lake Vatern, Oskarshamn, Stockholm, Sundsvall
1979, 1985

We stopped at a Communist political meeting.
The Communists were very upset that since we
were still “young,” we didn’t have a job, so we
could earn money and give it to the needy.

I said I did even better than that,
“I gave my whole job to a needy person,
not just part of my earnings.”

(Stockholm, Sweden)

*It was a beautiful day, brisk, with brilliant
sunshine when we arrived.*

*We had no money for the parking meter, so the
policeman treated, put in his own coin giving
us time to get to the bank.*

*A very interesting city, if not for the cold winter
weather, this could be a great place to live.*

*We saw several houses with sod roofs.
(Trondheim, Norway)*

*A well-dressed man in the Grand Hotel said, " In
America you have
Johnny Cash, Bob Hope, and President Reagan.*

*In Sweden we have no cash, no hope,
and Parliament."*

(Stockholm, Sweden)

*We walked around the downtown area,
then visited the underground shopping area.*

*A lady was singing, as she played
“How Great Thou Art,” on a battery powered organ.*

*When we joined her in singing, she wanted us to
take the mike, but we’re not that good.*

*Recently, when that song appeared on the
CD in my car, I found I could drive, cry and
sing all at the same time.*

(Stockholm, Sweden)

*The man from the office came with some hot fresh baked
bread for our breakfast.*

*As we arrived last night, he and his wife
were ready to leave for their home, after closing the
campground for the season.*

*They decided we looked too tired to look for another
campground, so they changed their minds and stayed
another night, just for us.*

*Amazing what nice people we find.
(Horsens, Denmark)*

*We were told by former members of the German military
(and confirmed by several Danes), that when the
war ended, there were many members of the
German Military stranded in Norway.*

Sweetie's teenaged Cousin Josef, was in Norway.

*As these Germans tried to get home, dozens, or hundreds
(depending on which story you want to believe), were shot and
killed by the Danes, as they tried to cross
Denmark, on the way to their home in Germany.
(Denmark)*

*Yes, I really did conduct a sidewalk survey while
Sweetie rested in the RV for the day.*

*I talked to several ladies on the street, lady clerks in a couple
of stores, and ladies at the Post Office, and asked where
they would go for lunch if they did not have to pay the bill.*

*The more than a dozen votes were almost tied between
the Opera Buffet, and the Grand Hotel restaurant.*

*The next day, Sweetie selected the Grand Hotel.
(Stockholm, Sweden)*

The campground was new and the facilities were about the best we have seen anywhere, including some hotels.

The facilities included everything we could want — washers, dryers, showers, plenty of hot water — very clean, and well laid out.

The first year we stopped here, there was no one to collect the money, but the next visit, we paid, but only for that year, not the previous one.

*We kidded them about that, and they laughed and said,
“No cost for years gone by.”
(Fredrikshaven, Denmark)*

*The road went higher and steeper and got narrower,
and rougher with blind curves.*

*With large busses and trucks headed toward us through the
blowing snow, the road seemed even narrower.*

*The nearly strangulated, cliffhanging road, at one point was
high above a Norwegian mountain lake.*

*We have driven on similar roads in more than one country, and
it seems like which ever direction we are going, we are always on
the side of the road right next to the drop off.*

(Geiranger, Norway)

**Their National election was to be held soon, and
there are election rallies at street corners and
in the downtown shopping district.**

**We got off the subway at Stockholm University and
talked to some students about their political ideas.**

**One man, who was getting his doctorate in economics,
repeated time after time,
“Do you know how lucky you are to be living in America?”**

**Yes, we truly do.
(Stockholm, Sweden)**

We have seen a thousand beautiful scenic locations in Europe and in the US, but for pure outdoor beauty, the Norwegian Fjord coast must be number one.

We saw a huge tour bus, with an enormous windshield, coming down the road toward us, but saw no driver.

Then we noticed the bus was from England, and the driver's seat is on the right side of the bus.

We've seen that before, but we never learn, we are always shocked.

One time a man standing where we expected to see the driver, was waving his arms, with a big smile.

That was a lot of fun for him, very scary for us.
(Copenhagen, Denmark)

*When I met Bengt at the campground Sauna, he invited both
of us to visit his house and meet his wife.*

*His wife was named Eva and she teaches first grade, one daughter
is a nurse in Saudia Arabia, plus twin girls.*

Sweetie asked Eva if Bengt often brought campsite orphans to visit.

*We talked for several hours and had
an enjoyable evening.*

*He paddles the kayak, skis, hunts, fishes, and
backpacks for long distances.*

(Oskarshamn, Sweden)

*The shepherd was dressed in
a shabby old cloak.*

*We pointed and gestured, and he finally understood
we were telling
him about a straggler sheep.*

*He reached among the folds of his ancient
tattered mantle, brought out a huge old
U. S. Army surplus walkie-talkie and asked his
buddy to get the dilly-dallier.*

(Lavik, Norway 1979)

*Our lunch was a variety of herring for Sweetie,
and a hamburger for me.*

*The waiter was very unhappy that
Americans expected to be served a glass of
ice water at no extra cost.*

*The restaurant manager,
with my prompting, told him,
“No charge for ice water.”*

(Sheraton Hotel, Stockholm, Sweden)

This hotel was started in the 1800's in an old house, a new hotel was built, they finally tore down the old house.

We talked with the wife of the second generation.

She came to Geiranger Fjord as a worker in 1928, married the boss in 1933.

She told how hard it is to get good hotel workers these days, and it's even harder to get a good day's work out of them.

She suggested the caliber of the guests has also deteriorated.

Not us, of course.

(Hotel Union, Geiranger, Norway)

*The thirty minute, \$9 (for two of us and the RV)
ferry ride was really spectacular.*

*At any one time we could see 10 or 20 waterfalls, sheer rock cliffs, and
little farms hung on the side of the mountains.*

*Small children are tied to a post with a long rope when they play in the
yard, so they won't fall down the mountain.*

*Some farmers in Norway don't haul hay to the barn on a wagon, they
let hay down to the barn on a rope.*

(Geiranger Fjord from Hellesylt, to Geiranger, Norway)

We stopped to visit with the sister of our daughter-in-law, who was born in Finland.

They had recently remodeled their house and had added an indoor sauna that I enjoyed very much.

Kaj learned English by watching TV programs from the US, with English voice, and Swedish subtitles.

Margaretta, a delightful lady, is a nurse and did not get home from work until later.

They have since visited in our home in California.

(Vasa, Finland)

We found a large Esso gasoline terminal that sold cooking gas.

The regular pump had the wrong hose connection for our US built Dodge Van, the big delivery truck had the right connection, but no meter or gauge.

They put in "some" and waved good-by, no charge, as they didn't know how much they gave us.

The campground was closed, hotel was filled, so with the clerks OK, we spent the night in the RV in the hotel parking lot.

*People are so nice, everywhere in Europe.
(Sundsvall, Sweden)*

One Sunday morning, as we sailed on a ferryboat, they had a 15 piece live band to entertain the passengers, and another band with a group of young girls singing beautiful familiar hymns.

The man (with his wife) at the next table, at breakfast, was the sales manager for the Lego Toy Company, and he told us about Legoland, so we visited a few days later.

**They have the Taj Mahal, Amalienborg Palace in Copenhagen, the Statue of Liberty, Mount Rushmore, the US Capitol building, and many, many more, all built with Lego blocks.
(From Sweden to Denmark, then to Billund, Denmark)**

In a Flea Market in Denmark we visited a “peace-booth.”

They complained that the US has enough nuclear bombs to wipe out all the people in the world, 10 times over.

I said the missiles they were worried about might not be much value in a war.

Billions of dollars are spent to launch up-to-date rockets that are checked and rechecked micro-second by micro-second, and they still have problems, so what do you think will happen with the missiles that have been in underground silos for years?

(Denmark, Cape Canaveral, Florida)

*During both visits, there were young people collecting money to
feed the “poor children in America.”*

*They invited people to see a film that showed hungry children in
gutters, people being shot, and all kinds of problems in the US.*

Wonder what they really did with the money they collected.

Their hate matched their lack of knowledge about America.

*We had a large “coffee table” book about the US that
we had purchased in Vienna.*

*In Copenhagen, the young people just could not
imagine the photographs were real.*

(Copenhagen, Denmark)

“Since people who don’t work are provided all of the necessities and many of the frivolities of life, when are the people who pay taxes, going to get tired of that?”

I asked 32 people this question, on the subway, in the sauna I had a “heated” discussion with several men, at the edge of political rallies, and at a street corner.

About 25 answers were, “We are already sick of this mess and want to change it, a little.”

All agreed that even if the most conservative political party wins the election, not much will change.

(Stockholm, Sweden)

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*One evening the girls' High School band
marched through the shopping district.*

*They were an excellent band, and had visited the
US and Disneyland the previous year.*

*My love of band music (and girls) easily
persuaded me to walk all over town listening to
the band, and watching*

(Helsingor, Denmark)

*A man we talked to in Copenhagen said
the Danes complain that in the US,
we don't treat our millions of immigrants the
way the Danes say we should.*

*He then added,
"But this is Denmark,
we don't want any immigrants."*

