

## **Danish Folk Dancers dance at Nordlek 2018**

Again this year the Danish dance group has had another fantastic trip overseas. It is the fourth time we participate in Nordlek, a gathering for all the Nordic countries coming together doing performances, workshops and dancing and having fun learning each other's dances. This time it was in Falun, Sweden and 11 from our group attended and what an adventure that was.

Eight of us meet up at Kastrup train station for our eight hour trip to Falun and six of us had only got home from our Danube River Cruise the night before. We were catching the 6.33am train from Kastrup to Malmo where we had the first change and what happened, on the board in Kastrup, it said train cancelled, we were quite shocked especially because it was the third time Swedish Railways had changed the train times due to track works.

Second time which was while we were on the cruise they wanted us to reorder our tickets because we were now being directed to a different route to Falun. Luckily Kurt had his smartphone with him and he/we managed to get new tickets and Esmee hadn't left Australia yet, so she was kind to print out and bring our new tickets. So we thought now we are ready to go, how wrong we were, when we saw the cancellation.

As it turned out when we asked we were told to take any train to Malmo and your train will be there. The only problem was, now we had a lot less time in Malmo to get to the platform for our new train with all our suitcases and sure enough my worst nightmare that someone should fall on the escalator, happened. Allan fell backward but luckily his big backpack saved him from any really bad injury and a strong man behind him helped getting him upright again, phew, he damaged his fingers but with Dettol wipe and a band aid, he was as good as new, and we could now relax at the next train journey for some 3 hours before the next train change. I must say this train was very good and with a café carriage, just what we needed after all the dramas.

Next train change, we said no more escalators, so we headed off to the lift, only trouble there was a huge queue but we waited and we got to the platform just in time but they blew the whistle and we were still three more to get on the train with our suitcases, so I had to yell at the railway officer to stop.

Third and last train change were going to take us to Falun and when Elizabeth got on the train with her suitcase then one of the steel flaps between carriages went up and she stepped down the hole with her foot, another injury but luckily only surface scratches and another Dettol wipe and she was fine.

Falun here we come, but 15 minutes before Falun we suddenly stopped on the train track, it took a while before we were told why we stopped but eventually they said there were people on the track and they had to call the police to remove them. An hour later we finally moved on and we were told 19 people had to be removed from the train track, we don't know why but guessing it was people demonstrating for something.

Finally we got there after a very eventful trip and we were met by a nice lady in folk costume that showed us to our hotel. Luckily our return trip was without any incidents.

Falun is a lovely little town in Dalarna in Sweden and we stayed at a great hotel not far from the train station where we had both breakfast and dinner included, nice not to have to find somewhere to eat every night and dinner was from 6 – 9pm, so even if we

were busy at Lugnet, we could fit it in and they even changed dinner time for us, so it was from 5 – 9 because we had a few things happening at Lugnet from 6pm, very nice gesture from the hotel.



The event itself was 3 km from the town of Falun at Lugnet, which is a beautiful winter sports area, and we could just imagine how great it would look with the snow on the mountains in winter time. There were quite a lot of tourists camping even here in summer; there was a big swimming pool which the younger generation enjoyed very much. Walking 3 km before or after dancing we didn't feel like, so off we went to get a go card to the bus but their time table was a bit of a mystery to us as it was often changed, I don't think we never got it down pat and a few times we simply had to walk. They did eventually put some free buses on at night but it wasn't advertised very well.

We had some good trips walking around town, some had longer bus trips and some went to the mine just outside town. Some shopping had to be done by the women of course, in between all the events taking place at Lugnet and there were lots to see and do for everyone. We performed on the Thursday with the Danish National team and we managed to get two couples and their dance leader to dance with us, so we could form two quadrilles. We knew them back from Viborg in 2015 and they also visited us in 2008, very happy to catch up with such lovely people. Also Anders, Merete and little Helena came from DK to catch up with us and especially with Esmee who made great friends with them in Viborg and they also visited us at the Scandinavian festival in 2016 where they stayed with Esmee. I will never forget Helena's little face, how it lit up when she saw Esmee, she is definitely her special friend.

Saturday was the big day, again in our costumes in 30 degrees temperature; we were marching from Falun to Lugnet 3 km, us behind the Danish flag with all the Danes and all the other Nationalities behind their flags. People were taking photos of us and some even out of their car windows, so we felt quite special walking along but it was a long walk in that temperature and the bonnets and scarves went off along the way but only us Australians, not anyone else when you looked around. We did have some comment that we should be used to the temperatures, they didn't look happy to see us stripping off bits of our costumes. After the walk we had to dance the common dances, one from each country participating, which was quite hard after the long and warm walk but we

did it, some cheated though and took the bus to Lugnet and they felt ready to dance, we should all have been that smart. It was also on the Saturday when we were in costumes, that Brian sang and took a video of us dancing to the Sound of Music that was put on face book, Esmee's idea of course, but it should have been on top of the mountain but unfortunately the cable car had broken down just that day.

Sunday morning after breakfast we were ready to say good bye to Falun and Nordlek 2018 after a lovely week of dancing and socialising. We said goodbye to Pam, Brian and Mary who headed to Scotland and Ireland and us eight headed back again to Copenhagen by train.

We said good bye to Eva and Merete Kern in Kastrup and the last six of us were in Copenhagen for four days before we went on a bus trip to Maastricht in Holland to go to an Andre Rieu concert. After a long bus trip we arrived in Valkenburg 12 km from Maastricht and the next morning exploring this beautiful old town, lots of local tourists as well as a lot of people probably also going to the concert the next day. The atmosphere in Maastricht was electric when we arrived there two hours before the start of the concert; everyone was excited and talking to each other like one big family. What a thrill it was, sitting under the night sky on a warm summer's night listening to this beautiful music and being invited up to dance in the aisles. It is something that will stay with me/us forever, I am sure.



*Ready for Andre Rieu*

Experiencing Maastricht in daytime the next day and some sightseeing to The Netherlands American Cemetery and Memorial was interesting. We also went to where the three countries met, Holland, Belgium and Germany before heading back to Denmark again the next morning.

That was the end of a great and very busy holiday.

Thank you from Kurt, Pat, Esmee, Elizabeth, Allan, Merete, Eva, Pam, Brian, Mary and Tom & Lis.