

Newsletter May 2018



The Time Travel method – In the Service of Society and its Development
International Seminar in Kalmar, Sweden in the honour of Ebbe Westergren



A gift from colleagues at Linnæus University

In late February Kalmar county museum/ Bridging Ages, in cooperation with Linnæus University and Nordic Centre for Heritage Learning, arranged a week in Kalmar, Sweden with seminars and workshops on the Time Travel method – the past and the future. The week was in honour of Ebbe Westergren, the founding father of the Time Travel method, Senior Curator at Kalmar county museum and Honorary President of Bridging Ages. Now also Honorary Doctor at Linnæus University.

The international seminar explored how the Time Travel method and Applied Heritage can meet the challenges in today's society. Focus were on three key topics: 1/ social cohesion/ integration/ peace; 2/ education/ work; 3/ health/ environment. There were also university lectures, workshop on international collaboration between schools, a public program and several informal gatherings in the week.



Linnæus University



The week in February in Kalmar, Sweden was surrounded by a heavy snowstorm covering the ground with half a meter of snow, which made the experience magical and exotic. Here are some of the guests outside Kalmar county museum.

The Time Travel method – The Past and the Future

1960s, 1970s, A world of change

1960s/ 1970s was a world of change in Sweden and in many parts of the world. There were slogans like: Power to the people! Education to the people! Culture to the people! Museum, Heritage and Society were tied closer together.

Crucial years in the history of the Time Travel method

1. The start in the 1980s

The Time Travel method started in the mid 1980s in the Kalmar region, Sweden. Kalmar county museum supported the schools in implementing the curriculum, using local historical sites and stories.



Ebbe Westergren in 1971

2. In **1997 the Kalmarunion**, 600 years, was celebrated with hundreds of historical events and Time Travels in the Kalmar region. In the year 2000 Kalmar county museum got a **National Commission for three years** from the Swedish government, to spread the Time Travel method all over Sweden.

Schools, museums and local communities were involved. The Time Travel team at Kalmar county museum grew bigger. The first university courses on the Time Travel method were held in Kalmar.



Two buses and museum staff ready for Time Travel events.

3. In **1999 Kalmar county museum** were invited to **go abroad** with the Time Travel method to Ostrobothnia, Finland and to Minnesota, USA. This was the start of international cooperation and the spread of the Time Travel method to many countries: to the Åland Islands, Estonia, Italy, Latvia, Turkey...



There are Bridging Ages groups in more than 20 countries.

4. In **2004 Bridging Ages was formed** at an international seminar in Vimmerby, Kalmar county, Sweden. Eight countries decided to create a network with the office at Kalmar county museum. In 2007 Bridging Ages was made into a formal organization. Since then Bridging Ages has grown. There are international conferences every year and national chapters in several countries.

5. When Kalmar county museum was invited to South Africa **2006, the Time Travel method gradually changed.** Key questions and safe spaces for reflections in the events were introduced. Focus became more and more on contemporary issues. There was a **paradigm shift** from learning about history to learning something of today, through history.

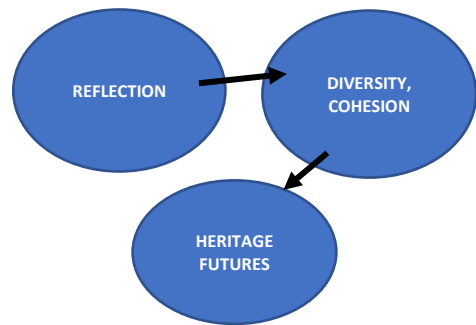
In an expert seminar in Pretoria 2016, the Bridging Ages countries agreed on the definitions, principles, process and event of the Time Travel method.



Reflection, together with others, is the focal point of a Time Travel event.

The Time Travel method

is an educational method, using local heritage in a learning process, to create reflection on contemporary issues, and provide tools for community building.



Kalmar county/ Sweden

Kalmar county museum has a team at the educational unit that focus on the Time Travel method, in workshops, trainings and events. Kalmar county museum do more than 100 Time Travels every year. Crucial Swedish partners are Linnaeus University, Centre for Applied Heritage and the Nordic Centre for Heritage Learning and Jamtli in Östersund.

Results over more than 30 years

- The Time Travel method has **expanded** from one region in Sweden to more than 20 countries all over the world.
- **The concept has widened** and includes today many programs, using the heritage to reflect on contemporary issues.
- There are **many engaged persons** in the Bridging Ages groups.
- There have been **successes** over the years, but also **challenges**.
- It is still to discuss **the role of museums**, heritage institutions and schools in learning, cohesion and community building.
- We are on the right track but most is still left to do.

"Time Travel is such an empowering method. It gives recognition to ordinary people, boosts their self esteem and make them realize that they too can make a huge contribution to democracy in South Africa."

Gulshera Khan, Social worker, Port Shepstone Twinning Association, South Africa

"You have established a powerful pedagogical method that found many followers!"

Cornelius Holtorf, Professor in Archaeology, Linnaeus University, Kalmar, Sweden

Thoughts for the Future

- Meet the needs of the local society, rooted in an ever-changing heritage
- Have a common vision. Listen more and lecture less
- Engagement and hard work.
- Be in the service of society and its development

Important words: Cohesion/ Together; Peace (of mind); Serve



Our time is now!

Ebbe Westergren

Kalmar county museum, Sweden

Bridging Ages, Honorary President

Sweep away the snow in Kalmar

I responded immediately to the invitation to Ebbe Westergren's retirement farewell: Yes, I shall surely come to Sweden. Preparations and constant emails culminated in me and my wife's arrival in the unusually big amounts of snow covering every inch of the Kalmar surface.

International seminar at Kalmar county museum

There were several high profile presenters and participants at the seminar. I put forward two main points on the session considered social cohesion and integration. The first point was, that one could not responsibly discuss social cohesion and integration until considered the causes of social discord. In South Africa colonialism and Apartheid were the major issues that sow separateness and left the legacy of disintegration. The second point was the fact that instead of foregrounding the end, we have often foregrounded the means towards that end, which is social cohesion.

University lecture at Linnaeus University

My presentation at the university showed how through the use of Oral History and the Time Travel method one can communicate difficult heritage. I demonstrated how heritage has both temporal and spatial relevance. The relevance of statues and monuments are determined by the people who live during a specific time period in a specific geographical location. The statues of Joseph Stalin and Vladimir Lenin fell down when Communism



photographed by @ Krystian Madejski

lost its appeal in some Soviet republics, those of Hendrik Verwoerd and Cecil Rhodes fell along with the appeal of Apartheid.

School seminar in Oskarshamn

The Oskarshamn seminar was a wonderful experience that my colleagues in Mumbé Primary School in KwaZulu-Natal enjoyed listening to, when Kholisile and I came home. It was an opener to learn that there are countries which do support their school adequately.

Final words

Kholisile Ntsimane wishes to add on the hospitality demonstrated by the organizers, especially those on Kalmar läns Museum staff. Coming from a country characterized by racial divisions Kholisile was surprised when one of the museum employees took a broom and swept away the snow from her shoes at the entrance of the museum.

Radikobo Ntsimane

KwaZulu-Natal Museum Services, South Africa

Peace Building and Time Travels in Kenya



photographed by @ Krystian Madejski

In Kenya today, we need to work more towards the notion of **positive peace**, which means a peace that promotes reconciliation and coexistence on the basis of human rights, social, economic and political justice. Peacebuilding refers to the process whereby the goal is to strengthen the capacity of societies including social solidarity. Solidarity is when members of the society begin to recognize each other as fellow human beings and share a concern in the common welfare and well-being of each other.

Cultural attitudes and values provide the foundation for the social norms by which people live. Song, art, drama, dance, sports and technology are cultural tools used in traditional peace building initiatives and are still relevant today.

In most African communities, when there was a serious conflict, the elders would call a **traditional peace conference**. The whole community would gather with one common objective, i.e. to restore the broken relationship and invigorate the process of healing. Such a meeting would be open-ended so that all the participants have time and opportunity to air their views. The meeting would be held in a “carnival” atmosphere, punctuated with stories, songs, dance, proverbs, etc. The name of God and the spirits

would be invoked during the meeting. A bull would be slaughtered and its blood collected and sprinkled into the air as a way of binding the community to the peace covenant. As a gesture of reconciliation the whole group would eat the meat together. Thereafter, feasting, singing, dancing and celebration would continue for several days. The whole society would thus be part of the agreement.

There is need to borrow from our traditional practices to build the future community we wish to have, and this is the essence of using the Time Travel method in peace building activities in Kenya today.

*Mildred Ayere, Maseno University, Kenya
Chairman Bridging Ages Kenya*

The Time Travel method, New Mexico, USA and Yukon, Canada

Our earliest Time Travels, with New Mexico State University at the Farm and Ranch Museum in Las Cruces, New Mexico, were small. Five university students transported small school classes to 1889. The next year, our Time Travels to 1776 were much richer and thought-provoking. Children explored such topics as religion and its effect on the native people, disease, death, and caste hierarchies. When the students left, it was with much to think about and explore back in their classrooms.

This second Time Travel course inspired me to teach. I moved to Tucson, Arizona and utilized Time Travel and role-play to enhance both primary and secondary learning. When I returned to Las Cruces to work at the Farm and Ranch Museum, I taught an annual week-long living history camp which inspired many students.

The Time Travels we have done in New Mexico and the Yukon territory, Canada have connected school children across the region with the past in a relational and immersive manner, creating indelible historical learning and increased social consciousness. Ebbe Westergren’s instruction and motivation to better society through the Time Travel method



has inspired this innovative learning in these varied North American locations.

Future goals

- 1) Continue to explore and promote the use of the Time Travel method in New Mexico and the Yukon Territory, especially among Native Americans and First Nation People, to empower communities.
- 2) Utilize the Time Travel method to engage and spark the imaginations of underserved and at-risk youth in schools throughout New Mexico and the Yukon Territory.
- 3) Formulate a strategy for utilizing the Time Travel method to further the mission of New Mexico’s Department of Cultural Affairs and Parks Canada.

Scott Green, New Mexico and the Yukon Territory

Social cohesion and challenges

photographed by @ KLM



The uncertainty in the world today is high. Who would have thought that the UK would vote to leave the EU and that

Donald Trump would be the president of the United States? What will the world look like in five years? No one knows.

The political focus has shifted in many regions, from economy and ideology to identity and culture. Technology and social media are reshaping our world in an increasing speed. We also live in a more and more segregated world. According to Oxfam 86% of the world's growth goes to the wealthiest 1%. Many people are mistrusting the political system and democracy is wilting away.

How can we enhance social cohesion when our societies become more fractured and segregated? How can we as a heritage institution be part of the solution? Do we want to? Further questions arise:

- How do we integrate our institutions in a diverse and pluralistic society?
- Are we independent? How independent can we be when we have to follow the money?
- Who are our institutions excluding and why?

These are some of the questions we need to address. If we are serious about the challenges ahead, we need to allocate resources and make a collective effort. It's a new, fast-moving world and the old solutions are not applicable anymore. Museums around the world need decide on how to be in the service of society and its development.

Mattias Lunn, Kalmar county museum, Sweden

Time Travels addressing community needs in South Africa

South Africa is one of the world's youngest democracies. The primary task in 1994 was to rebuild, prioritise and address the country's infrastructural needs, including eradicating inequality, poverty and unemployment.

In researching for Time Travel sites at local community level, and with particular oral history recordings, oftentimes the deep wounds of the past resurface. The Time Travel method is a supportive tool for education, but is also **addressing community needs**, providing therapy and used for developing community sites for tourism.

One of the most repressive laws of the apartheid government was the Group Areas Act of 1950. Almost 4 million people were forcefully removed overnight to areas with no basic resources. In 2010, Ebbe Westergren, working with a committee in **Gamalakhe, a township** arising out of the Group Areas Act, realised that there was no information about the township at the local library. The purpose was to expand the Time Travel method to this township affected by apartheid. As a result, one of the families' story on the day of the



forceful removal was the focus in a Time Travel event. The Port Shepstone Twinning

Association has continued to work with other families in this township, to **restore dignity**. Their needs are addressed through supportive services and their space respected. Oral history continues as this is being documented for future generations.

This is one of many examples whereby the intervention by Ebbe Westergren and Kalmar läns museum is supporting our need and course for reconciliation and social cohesion through the Time Travel method. A legacy that we should all emulate. In his retirement, we thank Ebbe for this contribution.

Gulshera Khan, Port Shepstone Twinning Association

Life time competences and time travelling

What may time travelling be for **older adults in the third age** – the period post labour life until the health situation deteriorates? This is an age group which is growing rapidly in western society. With life time competences I refer to the knowledge, skills and attitudes which develops through a lifetime based on experiences and biological development. Such competences are personal but there are also commonalities between people.

In museums and archives many elderly people are volunteering. In this way new memories are preserved and the elderly grow as she or he feels valued. At the same time the heritage organisation provides a place for a social setting. The heritage organisations, when successful, are almost archetypical places to stimulate self-directed-learning.

At Jamtli museum we have permanent environments from 1940s, 1950s and 1970s with complete buildings, interiors and actors

Ebbe – End of an era

It's time that we put aside all the usual words of appreciation. Words that are so frequently spoken, when we celebrate the deeds and achievements of a professional man on the brink of retirement. No, I will take on the tough task of saying the truth no matter how unpleasant it will be. So, let's concentrate on Ebbe's failures, shortcomings and weaknesses.

He's far to charismatic, playful, inventive, entertaining, humorous, smart and successful for being a true man of science. But if you can overlook all of these negative things with Ebbe – then you are in for a ride.

Ebbe – comrade in arms, we have worked with one another for many years, sometimes close and sometimes more distant. Back in the late eighties Ebbe and I were trying to establish a **Stone Age scientific and visitor's centre at Tingby**, west of Kalmar. Never in my professional career have I been part of such immensely successful presentations, when Ebbe demonstrated Stone Age high tech for media and politicians. These occasions were a mixture between a historical seminar and an

re-living the time. We observe how the memories of our guests are tricked by the total bombardment of all senses and how they play along. The elderly in the museum become both teacher, learner and co-producer of the experience.



The Time Travel method as developed in Kalmar and with the many followers has as Ebbe Westergren emphasises the focus on contemporary issues in a learning process, by using the local past. For elderly at heritage organisations such as Jamtli, the time travel may be about "contemporary past", as it is a life time memory.

Henrik Zipsane, Jamtli, Östersund, Sweden

amusement park, when he showed the Mesolithic weapon technology by letting a real Stone age hunter plunge his arrow deep into the carcass of a dead pig in front of the astonished audience.



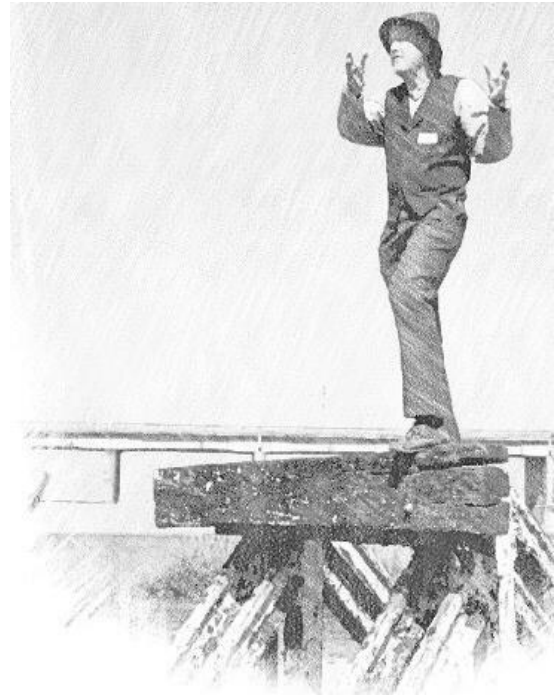
Ebbe had a unique quality which many are very skeptical to: the ability to be serious and at the same time have fun and entertain others.

Some years later I found a new playground, the **600th anniversary of the great Nordic union**. 1397 – 1997. That summer of 97 Ebbe and his gang got the whole Swedish nation to play along – and learn along. By the tv-program "Salve", the Middle Ages became hot stuff for the Swedish youth - and their parents. It was a bright, hot, wild summer. A medieval summer. Salve Ebbe, historical mesmerizer and realizer of ideas!

Jan Herstad, Kalmar

Tribute to Ebbe Westergren

a brilliant, creative mind
traversing from country- to- country
town- to- town, village- to- village,
across continents too
he shared
gave credit to the forgotten
empowered and embraced our stories,
learnt about us, our past, present and future.
made it come alive- a living heritage
he cascaded the Time Travel method,
gave recognition, brought togetherness and
focussed on the present and future
contemporary topics
a holistic approach beyond education,
community building and social cohesion
You created a legacy that we shall follow
Forever grateful
"We will never forget even if we try"
Port Shepstone Twinning Association



Honorary Doctor at Linnaeus University



The Faculty of Arts and Humanities at Linnaeus University, with the support from Department of Teacher Education has appointed Ebbe Westergren as honorary doctor at Linnaeus University.

"Ebbe Westergren has made outstanding achievements in society, related to the disciplines of heritage environment, archaeology, history education, pedagogy and educational science. He has for many years promoted development of research and education at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities. Ebbe Westergren, as an inspirational and dynamic partner, has had a crucial influence on the development of collaborations that tie together Linnaeus University and Kalmar County Museum with various local, regional and international partners."

The Vice Chancellor at Linnaeus University, Peter Aronsson, announces the appointment of Ebbe Westergren as Honorary Doctor at the university



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