

Dear

This last day of 2011 we will as usual take stock and report on the year.

The immediate family still consists of Olga (9 years old, the best, most harmonious, law-abiding dog you can imagine, and still full of energy), Bjørn Lillemand (Bear Little Man) (10 years), Helle, active retiree, and Søren, still active in the labor market.



For us the year's big event, one we have been working on ever since Britt introduced us to the island in August 2008, was the acquisition in June of a cottage on Sejerø, the small island which lies parallel to and slightly southwest of Sjællands Odde, an hour with ferry from Havnsø. The house, the upper floor of which we have arranged for guests, lies in the northwestern end of the elongated approx. 12 km long island. The cottage is a deliberate project to make it easier for Søren to resign from employment in a few years and will hopefully be a gathering place for the extended family and friends. The house is situated in a lovely spot, only a few minutes walk from the best beaches,

of which Sejerø has over 20 km.



By the way, Danish television was over at the house in November to record an episode of "Hammerslag". We have been told that it will be transmitted at 8 o'clock in the evening of the 14th of February in DR1. Whatever the real estate agents say we are very pleased with what could be the start of an entirely different, more contemplative way of life.

Søren cycled from work to Sejerø in the autumn, a trip of about 100 km. Along the way, he paused at Holbæk Bådcenter to look at the boats, and in a moment of excitement he ended up buying a green [Terhi 385 Tender](#), which the day after was transported to Havnsø and onwards with the Sejerø ferry to Sejerby where we stood ready to receive. The trip from the port to the cottage was in the way that Søren was in the trunk and held the handle of the trolley, while Helle drove away very gently (they have no permanent police on Sejerø - when the police occasionally comes over by ferry, the convention is that the captain howls three times the horn when approaching the harbour, so

that we all have a chance to fasten our seat belts, etc.). Now we are looking for the water to get warmer, so we can come out with flatfish nets and eel-traps.



Sejerøe is for us also: coal-black nights and brilliant starry skies (Helle's Christmas gift for Søren was a star tracker); views of fields and hills to the east; deer in the corn fields, hares and pheasants everywhere (there are no foxes on the island); the ferry (fresh air and nostalgia); beaches (always a beach with an offshore wind somewhere); walks along the beach to the lighthouse (or one of the countless other trails); Gorm and Britt, Sixten and Tristan visits; the purchase of fish from the island's only commercial fisherman; island artisans (right now we have had business with Hans Kristian and his son René, the island's carpenters, Rie, the island's house painter, and René, Garden & Landscape); beach stones with holes; again soon, time for more reading and talking .

From the past year, and years to come, otherwise:



Gorm and Britt are still doing well in the house at Gråbynkevej, next to Utterslev Mose; Sixten is now 6 and has started school (0th class), and Tristan of 4 is in kindergarten. We are lucky to see our grandchildren often when we babysit or when their parents come to visit. It is really nice, exciting and stimulating to be Grandma and Grandpa.



Grethe and Ejvind are "still going strong." They visited us at Sejerø in July, we visited them in Hodsager in October, we celebrated Christmas together in Fredensborg. Furthermore, we see each other at family birthdays throughout the year.



Tommy and Tanja celebrated Christmas in Thailand at 31 degrees Celcius. Tommy has apparently (according to Facebook) had his feet taken care of out there:



We look forward to hearing more.

Søs (Anne Christa) still lives in her apartment in Valby, where she has lived almost since Tommy was born. Ida's house in Gevninge was sold in June, and there was so much money to each of us that Søs has considered moving. It will be interesting to see if 2012 means more travelling for her or moving? Already we know that she will be going to the Faroe Islands on a motorcycle vacation this summer.



Helle has now been retired for 5 years, and she is almost as busy now as when she was a teacher. Swimming, water aerobics, decoupage, book club, grandchildren are just some of her many activities. Moreover, it's become such that it is Helle who takes care of all the daily chores - Søren is frankly pretty tired after a long workday. Age catches up with even the freshest, especially in the evening. He is still a morning person and is serving the breakfast, so we can eat together before he takes the bike to work.



From April first Søren goes down to a four-day workweek. So there will be more time for work and fun at home, especially the cottage. And he can slowly adjust to

retired life - where he once again faces the prospect of taking his share of cooking, washing and cleaning.

This summer the Rich family meeting will take place. We will be staying at the hostel in Ringkøbing June 2-3, have the annual general meeting during Saturday and be together until Sunday. The Board hopes for a large turnout. Already now we can report that our two cousins in Canada, Annelle and Judith, have announced their arrival through the Richerne closed Facebook group.

Finally, a little politics: There are major problems in the world right now. The two most talked about are the economic crisis that we are probably all going to feel, directly or indirectly, in the form of unemployment and lower living standards, and climate change, which is more insidious. The solution to the first problem is apparently growth, whereas the solution to the second especially is less resource consumption and lower emissions of carbon dioxide. Those who are working for growth and more jobs are usually not the same working to stabilize the climate, and it is obviously very difficult to work simultaneously on both fronts. It seems pretty obvious that we should work for more jobs in businesses that help to reduce resource consumption and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. Also that the individual will have to take responsibility, not only when there are elections, but also in the daily life.

As an example, Søren is thinking of installing solar panels on the cottage roof.

The solar cells generate electricity, and if more is produced than we need, we'll simply return it to the grid, so others can enjoy it. His hope is also that it may inspire others on the sunny island to do the same, so maybe we can even become a pioneer island in green energy. If there are many solar power installed on the island there will perhaps even be basis for one or more permanent jobs on the island, who is struggling every day to survive as a society.

This was the New Year letter 2011 from us to you.

We hope you are well and get a really nice 2012, and that we will see each other in the new year.

Love

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