

Open air museums - in the service of collections or in the service of society?

In this paper I ask whether the traditional Open Air Museum (the Scandinavian model – known as Folk Museums) have potential for change, or whether traditional is all they are ever going to be. My belief is that they can and will change; it just takes longer than in more modern museums and ‘concept museums’. Further I will argue that if they do not change, the cost (on the public budgets) of maintaining the open air museums for the purpose of tourism and cosy family gatherings can no longer be justified. They will not then be professional museums (as defined by Icom¹) but may continue as privately sponsored theme parks and history lands in the more commercial market.

In Scandinavia, Open Air Museums have been important institutions in their communities for more than a century, through familiar activities such as collection and preservation, and as learning arenas for arts and culture on national and local level. But more and more museums - and museum workers –want to have an even clearer role in improving individuals’ lives, and in promoting social change at the macro level.² The question is how this can be done within the confines of the open air museum. The mere concept of *Open Air Museum* has a scent of mothballs to it. Both in public and private discussions, one can sense an understanding of the term as something outdated. The name evokes old-fashioned and static images of timber houses; rose painting and traditional knitting appear automatically before our inner eye. Should we therefore abandon the concept of Open Air Museums? Should they change their names to something more “post-modern” and immediately catchy? History Park? Cultural park? Or adopt any new name that is not encumbered with *Open air museum*-associations. Will this kind of museums then still, as Shakespeare’s rose, “smell the same”?

- 1) what is OAM in Scandinavia/Norway – from Skansen to local museums
- 2) the democratic heritage of the OAM
- 3) critic of OAM
- 4) OAM and eco-museums
- 5) The problem of identity, place and multicultural
- 6) In the service of society

Open Air museums – Folk museums in Scandinavia

What is a Norwegian (or Scandinavian) Open Air Museum? Many of you will perhaps associate the concept with the Eco-museum, or Living Museums. Looking back at history there are strong resemblance between them – but also differences due to different historic and cultural contexts. As with the more recent Eco-museum ideology – the Open Air museums were part of a democratization process in the Scandinavian societies. Museums used to *belong*

¹ *ICOM code of ethics for museums* (Paris: ICOM, 2006).

² See for example Richard Sandell, *Museums, Society, Inequality*, 1st ed. (Routledge, 2002). *New roles and missions of museums: INTERCOM 2006 symposium* (Taipei: ICOM - INTERCOM/Council for Cultural Affairs, Taiwan). Robert R. Janes, *Museums in a troubled world: renewal, irrelevance or collapse?* (London: Routledge, 2009).

culturally to the ruling classes, the educated and powerful.³ Both with the selection of historic topics they choose to re-present and the way they did it – it was for, by and about – the elites. It is often forgotten that when the term and concept Folk Museum (uses the word in a historic explanation, make sense...) were minted, it was within a context of extensive modernizing social processes in the Nordic countries. It was created in a time of great cultural, political and economic changes. FMs were in their beginning social actors in their communities with a more or less clear political sting. The term and concept, often used synonymously with the concept of open-air museum, is said to have been Scandinavia's most important original contribution to the international museum world.

- more on the early development of the first OAM vs the established museums
- the political role of the first OAM – role in democracy – equality –
- Examples from Sverresborg's earlier charters: to preserve the past in order to serve the present.
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In the approx 100 years that has passed since then, FMs became stagnant. It became hard to distinguish one museum from the other. They all presented a generalized and remote past, as a static and constructed artificial image. "Folk museums became introverted and isolated institutions, with no relevance for the time they exist in," the Norwegian museologist Gjestrum writes.⁴ During 1960 - and 70s which were characterized by radicalization and democratization in the universities, and with pervasive socio-cultural changes in a newly oil-rich Norway, the Open Air Museums continued as if nothing had happened. The onset of globalization, environmental and protest movements, women's movement's breakthrough - not any of this materialized itself immediately in the OAMs. Neither the shift towards social history, workers' and women's perspectives in social research in general, seemed to upset the museums. Instead, concept museums were formed, workers museums, industrial museums, museum of immigrant and women's museum, and also the eco-museum movement started in this context.⁵

More and more Open Air Museums became something for the 'special interested' only. The aim was to show the residents and tourists what and who Norwegians (or regional identities) are (or should be), how valuable the old culture and its cultural expressions are, and how laborious, frugal, innovative, creative the Norwegian people were. In the old days. With a positivistic and linear understanding of history, the progress of modernity and the nation's growth, were told in tableaux, interiors and exhibitions. OAMs had become introverted and static, they struggled to manage large collections and failed to find there relevance for the society they exist in. The old wooden house and the rose painted bowl burdened the museum workers shoulders, and limited their work with their constant demand for care and space.

Open Air Museums and Ecomuseums

Ecomuseum is a notoriously difficult concept to define – and rightly so as the term is connected to place, identity and local empowerment and gets its .⁶ In Scandinavia

³ Hanna Mellemsether, "Folkemuseum - vår tids museum for vår tids folk," in *"En Smuk Fremtid". Trøndelag Folkemuseum Sverresborg 100 år*, vol. 1, Museene i Sør-Trøndelags skriftserie (Trondheim: Tapir akademisk forl.), 179-194.

⁴ John Åge Gjestrum, "Fra folkemuseum til økomuseum," *Nordisk Museologi* 2001, no. 1-2.

⁵ Davis, Peter, "Places, 'cultural touchstones' and the ecomuseum," in *Heritage, Museums and Galleries: An Introductory Reader*, 1st ed. (Routledge, 2004).

⁶ Ibid.

Ecomuseums does not have the same meaning and position in society, as for example in China or Mexico. The two are formed in different historical contexts and the communities they serve are different.

Ecomuseums in Scandinavia have few of the markers for a museum in regards to the ICOM definition: (collect, research, preserve) they appear more like “historical societies”, outside but sometimes connected to an established museum institution (Toten Økomuseum). In China Ecomuseums are about “place, heritage and culture” of an ethnic group, and focuses on a territory where this group live and to collect anthropological information about this group in order to help the group to a sustainable development. E.g. the Sago Ecomuseum which preserves and collects the Miao lifestyle, production, religion and old ballads. I do not know to what degree they are successful.⁷ The local people – the ethnic group – own the Ecomuseums as a collective, and their work is part of a collective identity process.

In Mexico Ecomuseum were started as a rebellion against the archaeologists and official cultural politics that unearthed the heritage of the local people and removed artefacts from the territory it belonged to – to national centres and cities. In both examples it is about empowering the local people by preserving/utilizing a common proud past.⁸

Open air museums by contrast, often removed tangible heritage from the original context and keep it in a professional museum – run by professionals – re-present it to the public – the local people – in the museum professionals interpretation. In old Open air museums there will be large collections and many buildings – accumulated thorough a century or more.

Still – we can see the some of the same arguments in the discourse in which Open air museums in Scandinavia developed:

- Skansen in Stockholm – Nordic Museum – collected heritage from both Sweden and Norway: living history, education of ‘the folk’ – inclusion of ordinary people into the nation’s history and in the “Swedish identity”.⁹
- National folk museum in Oslo: protest against the removal of national heritage from Norway to Sweden, collected heritage from all over Norway.
- Regional folk museums in Trondheim, Sogn and Lillehammer established in opposition to the removal of “regional culture” to Oslo. Collected material heritage from all over the regions
- Local museums in small town and villages: opposed to the removal from the local to the regional centres, collected local heritage.
- Should each household have its museum, and every individual?

The focus then were on democratization and inclusion (two of the same...)

- 1) inclusion of Ordinary people’s history in the museums
- 2) Creating national/regional/local identity and pride in their past.
- 3) creating ‘good citizens’ of all classes
- 3) Utilizing the past (knowledge, skills, art and craft, technology etc) to the benefit of the present. (Reaction against industrialization and mass production – not to stop modernisation but to direct it in a way that reflected the local distinctiveness of the people)

⁷ Davis, Peter, “Ecomuseums and sustainability in Italy, Japan and China: Concept adaptation through implementation” in Simon J. Knell, Suzanne MacLeod, and Sheila Watson, *Museum Revolutions: How Museums Change and Are Changed*, 1st ed. (Routledge, 2007).

⁸ Mario Prado Alcivia, “A Broken Promise: Zachila Site Museum,” *ICOM News*, no. 3 (2005), http://icom.museum/pdf/E_news2005/p6_2005-3.pdf.

⁹ Sten Rentzhog, *Friluftsmuseerna: en skandinavisk idé erövrar världen* (Stockholm: Carlsson, 2007)., s. 28-29.

Whether we call ourselves Ecomuseums, folk museums, open air museums or community museums we face the same dilemma: the focus on local monoculture, the connection to a defined territory or space and the effort to create a common identity and pride in a common future that has been the implicit or explicit focus for OAM, also make us vulnerable to being exclusive. We then perpetuate an understanding of one group's *belonging* versus other groups who do not belong in the territory, the space, the culture or the past. Whose identity do we want to strengthen/build? The joint ownership that is a feature of many Ecomuseums, does not guarantee an even representation in the museum. In all societies there are always someone who represent others, who are given/or have taken the power to interpret cultural meaning – being religious or political power. Misrepresentation is therefore a risk even for Ecomuseums – as well as in the traditional museums.

What then – is the future of the traditional OAM.

OAMs in our time

“You have to be modern”. Heard that one before? To some ‘modern’ to mean widespread use of the latest and expensive in communication technology, and to some it means that the exhibition objects, artefacts, are not ‘old fashioned’. If that is what it takes to change the negative connotations to the term museum / folk museum, we are fighting a losing battle. With really old buildings and objects as our main area of responsibility, and with large and numerous exhibitions on very tight budgets limited resources we cannot jump on the latest in technology (nothing gets old as fast as new technology). Fortunately, technology and expensive installations, does not define modern museums. Modern Museums – Open Air Museums as all other museums - are museums that are topical and relevant and developing quality programmes for an ever wider audience, that are arenas for lifelong learning with implication for our daily life – that contributes towards a better society for all.

The changes are already happening, but old Open air museums with large collections and many vintage buildings are hard to change – much harder than the more modern theme museums and exhibitions. The largeness and the oldness of it all, puts constraints on both the public's expectation of what they will face when they visit us, and it also limits (implicitly or explicitly) the museum's internal development. Trøndelag Folk Museum has in recent years worked with educational projects against sexual abuse, victims of war, and a new museum of deaf history & culture. But this has mainly been either projects that take place outside the museum, or short term programs with no link to the vintage buildings, collections or to the open-air museum as a whole.

Many OAMs have opted for *living history* as a way to make themselves interesting to the audience, were the visitors are transported “back in time” by good actors. While this is an interesting and fun way to present the past, it must not become the main focus for the museums. If all OAMs develop in the same way, there is a danger that we end up as expensive but “authentic” theatre set for tourism and businesses. That is a dim view of the future of OAMs: “Perhaps the open-air museums will be left destitute and abandoned, and slowly sinks down into the soil. Turned into spectacular ruins, fascinating traces of a lost past. An invented history, as Niklas Ingmarssons provocatively writes (what might be his wish?) in his review of Sten Rentzhogs book on the history of Open air museums¹⁰

¹⁰ Niklas Ingmarsson, “Recensioner,” *RIG: Föreningen för svensk kulturhistoria tidsskrift* 3 (2008).

Whereas I agree with much of the critic of the OAMs as static and rosy places, I don't agree that they will die a slow death as cultural institutions. As a museum worker, as a historian and as a member of my community, I believe there are potential in museums for real dialogue, for developing even OAMs as an arena where meaning is constructed, debated, contested. Where prejudices are put under debate and where attitudes are changed.¹¹ But it is not easy, and there are both internal and external resistance.

One way of doing it is to stop digging for roots, and creating local identity/ies— we should look at the possibility for movement and inclusiveness in the past and in the re-presentation of the past that we as museum workers do. Fewer and fewer people are left from the generations that have memories from the past that OAMs mostly re-present – with a grandmother from Accra and a grandfather from the big European city – where do you find yourself in the history told by these museums? Are they relevant for you, as anything else than a place to take your children on a not too sunny Sunday?

We have to ask for whom the museums exists in our time.

A museum is not for museum employees, for the collections, for the educators or the businesses – not even for the culture politicians. This seemingly obvious fact is in actual fact a provoking thought for many museum workers who seems to think that the collection, the preserving and categorisation of it is the meaning of life.

The museum's legitimation must be found in its role as *stewards of knowledge*, objects, intellectual and material history, on *the society's behalf*.¹² Museums must be enabled to manage this stewardship, in the best possible way to affect social development in the *direction of a good society*. We must believe that we can influence the attitudes and actions at the time, through our stewardship of the past.¹³ We can do that by taking a step back and look at the founding fathers and mothers of the open air museum movement in Scandinavia. They believed in change, education, empowerment of new groups in the society – in their times it was integration of the lower classes into the history of the nation. Individuals need to find their place in a narrative that is relevant and important in their lives - that they “find themselves in history.” In this way, large open-air museums can be justified, and the passive collections come to life, which also gives them an existence outside of magazines.

Who are the visitors.

OAMs have always attracted certain walks of life: middle class, relatively well educated people (especially women), seniors from middle class, and young families with children. But looking around for new groups: how often does the newly immigrated family from Pakistan visit the museum? And young people have rarely a regular relationship with museums (any museum) if they are not compelled by their school to visit. How do we make museums an arena for cultural meeting with these groups? How do we reach out to young people at risk – what are their *needs* that a museum can meet?

More and more people who visit the museum live in urban areas. The part of our society that remembers a time were houses were build from round timber, before electricity, before cars

¹¹ Richard Sandell, *Museums, Prejudice and the Reframing of Difference*, 1st ed. (Routledge, 2006).

¹² Robert R. Janes, *Museums in a troubled world: renewal, irrelevance or collapse?* (Routledge, 2009)

¹³ Cameron, Fiona, “Moral lessons and reforming agendas: history museums, science museums, contntious topics and contemporary societies,” in *Museum revolutions: How museums change and are change*, ed. Simon J. Knell, Suzanne MacLeod, and Sheila Watson (Routledge, 2007), 330-343.

are getting smaller –the memory-work in museums will have to address new publics with new memories. For 100 years old open air museums this is a huge challenge. Our society is not a homogenous one. We do not share a common culture in the same degree as we did 100 years ago, when information about politics and culture came from local or regional sources, when long distant communication between people cities and countries were slow and expensive. In order to be in dialogue with our communities – we need to know who they are. Identify what is important in their everyday life, who is ‘the community’ and what are important in their lives?

What is the society – the community we are supposed to be in dialogue with?

The community we live in is often described as a knowledge society, a risk society, a globalized society, a consumer society, a post-modern society, etc.¹⁴ All these give the impression that we live in a complex and uncertain world full of choices. Media, advertising, government information, researchers, people’s own experiences, declaration, and internet - all contribute to different interpretations and recommendations for attitudes and actions. People (except school children) rarely come to the museum with the explicit aim to learn. But still they do. Museums are trustworthy learning institutions with great potential for lifelong learning. How could we combine the potential in open air museum with the aim of contributing to a ‘good society’? We need to be in dialogue with our communities to identify what is important in their everyday life, may be we have to start by identifying who this community consist of?

The dialogue

The radical ‘father’ of the dialogue concept in education theory, Paulo Freire states: “As we attempt to analyse dialogue as a human phenomenon, we discover something which is the essence of dialogue itself: the word. ... Within the word we find two dimensions, reflection and action, in such radical interaction that if one is sacrificed – even in part – the other immediately suffers. There is no true word that is not at the same time a praxis. Thus to speak a true word is to transform the world.”¹⁵ Learning (even through dialogue) has no value unless it is transformed into action – the goal of learning is to adapt to the world in which we live. (Dannelse)

If the collection of cultural heritage – whether in the form of buildings and collections, or as memories, myths and knowhow from the past, are going to have a purpose and meaning in the lives of people in our time, it must be as part of a story that communicate to as many as possible – in the dialogue rather than the elitistic monologue. By daring to detach ourselves from the "materiality determinism" of the collections, we can create something new in an open air museum. Simultaneously, the material objects visualize the more theoretical knowledge in a very good way – transforming knowledge into everyday action.

No one enters a museum as a *tabula rasa* – nor does the museum worker. It is impossible to talk to all the people all the time with the same emphasize “The word “inclusiveness” itself suggests that no one should be left aside from experiencing the benefits of museum work, in other words that the whole world – and every citizen within it – should be interested and able to see the exhibitions. In reality, this remains of course a utopian view. It is simply impossible

¹⁴ Finn Arne Jørgensen, “Grønne infrastrukturer. Kunnskap, læring og handling på miljøfeltet,” September 30, 2008.

¹⁵ Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (1972) (Continuum International Publishing Group, 2000), s. 87.

for museums to serve all their potential audiences at the same time.”¹⁶ Choosing target groups and topics is therefore necessary, thorough research in order to know the ”whos, whys and hows”. Front-end surveys will tell us about the knowledge, the prejudices, ideas and expectations of the potential visitors as well as their interests and favoured topics.

Environmental history.

I have not done any research of our visitor. But there are no lack of surveys about what do contemporary society fear the most. Of all the topics and issues that occupy people in today's society are environmental and climate issue one of the most important. ¹⁷ These are some of the issues that world leaders, economists and researchers (e.g. Hooper-Dixon and Copenhagen Consensus Centre, UN reports) have identified as one of the most threatening we face. These issues and focuses on the environment will not disappear within the nearest future, the struggle for and against, doubts and beliefs related to climate change, discussions and action plans will require our (individual as well as political) attention for a long time to come. If museums take their duties towards society seriously - as we are supposed to - this is one of the issues where museums must take an active position: should we be fighting greenhouse gas emissions and environmental problems by contributing to change, or should we be traditional and pretend that nothing is wrong and hope that the technology solves all problems?

(Surprise) I opt for the latter.

Environmental learning in open-air museums

Environmental Learning is about creating connections between material realities out there, science, political goals, collective and individual values and their everyday action patterns. If we are to achieve sustainable development, measures must be rooted in *everyday life and everyday experiences*. Many "learns" about a problem, agrees with that, but does not change its behaviour to conform to these values. There is no lack of knowledge about pollution and climate change in our society. Yes – the amount of information is so huge and the problem seems unsolvable or unrelated to our practise. Our task must be to encourage action based on knowledge, inclusion and dialogue. To break down theories and global problems to something local, concrete and useful.

Learning about environmental issues is a very complex process that ties together:

- local and global
- the concrete and the abstract
- the scientific and the everyday
- the teaching of the social
- politics with the environment

A visit to a museum whose buildings, interiors and exhibitions are based on environmental history would find the museum relevant to their own life, whether they are old or young, local or tourists, urban or rural.

¹⁶ Stephanie Wintzerith, “Inclusive without knowing it,” in *New Thinking: Rules for the (R)evolution of Museums* (Museums Etc, 2010).

¹⁷Based on Robert R. Janes, *Museums in a troubled world: renewal, irrelevance or collapse?*

Sverresborg: Trøndelag Open Air Museum in the service of society

(short presentation of the Sverresborg: old town buildings, farmhouses, hinterland – all buildings moved from somewhere else – no authentic town/landscape)

Trøndelag Folk Museum is in the process of a comprehensive re-planning, of the “old town”. We want to turn interior exhibitions and old buildings into something more than the static imaged past and have chosen environmental history as a concept. An outdoor museum with collections from town and village has unique opportunities to be an arena for a discussion of environmental and climate issues. By applying research from the field of urban environmental history, we can visualize problems and to help focus on the problems and we hopefully change attitudes.

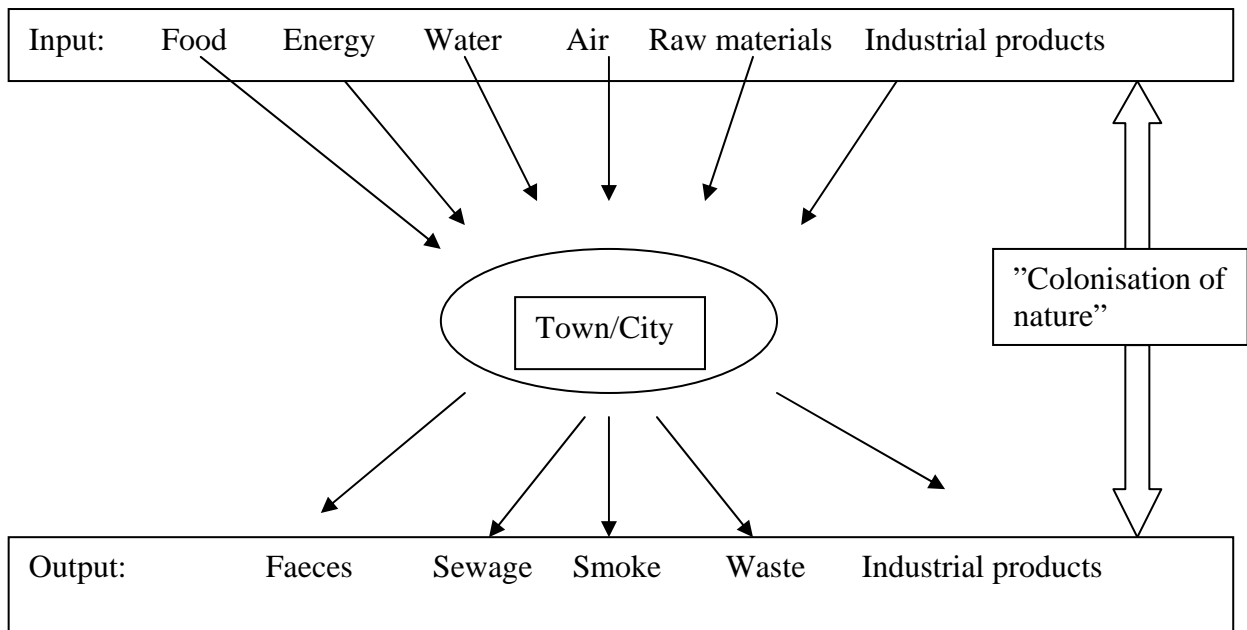
Urban environmental history in OAM

Environment history encourages understanding of the environment and nature as more than just the physical background of human activities. Environmental history is the story of human exploitation of the natural world around us. It is about the influence of agriculture and animal husbandry on soil and landscape, the exploitation of forests, deforestation and climate. It is also about the environmental impact of mining and transport routes, urbanization and industrialization. The environmental approach to learning in museum gives us many possible, multilayered stories to tell, and more important: many different ways of creating dialogue with our visitors/users:

- The constructed environment, and human activity impact on the natural environment
- Community-wise response to these influences
- Exploring the influence of the natural environment on city life
- The relationship between the city and the growing surrounding areas
- How do gender, class and race record in environmental issues

Based on an assessment of what will be relevant to the development of the old town (with the physical constraints and with the learning goal in mind) we consider the term 'city's metabolism' as very applicable term - a term derived from human but that has some visual explanatory power also of a town.

This "city's metabolism" can be illustrated as follows:



Based on Dieter Scott's illustration¹⁸

Such a perspective will not primarily be a story about the development of sewerage systems and networks, (the more it will be there too) but if the consequences were for man's actions and attitudes, and for nature. Old Town on Sverresborg may be used at many levels in an environment in historical perspective as it very broadly outlined above. For example, water: On the obvious side, we have the development of water pipes in the city – that is the technological story. But then follows the impact of human attitudes and behavior:

- Changes in the way houses are built on
- Change in attitude to water sources and water consumption
- Changes in the economic system through the pricing of water at different times
- Change in attitude to hygiene and subsequent health changes

Presenting abstract research in a museum is demanding a fine balance, and with many considerations to the visitors (as mentioned earlier). A open air-museum has to consider all kind of people with all kinds of motivation for visiting us. We should be able to serve both the family outing and the more demanding visitor – at the same time! Tall orders. But as a OAM we have the opportunity to take advantage of our collections and buildings to visualize in different ways, the material effect of environmental history and connecting the past with the present.

Before the introduction of water pipes, the average consumption in European cities from 10 to 20 litres of water per day per person. As late as the 1950s, were Finnish women with a distance equivalent to the moon and back to fetch water per day - no wonder they were saving on the water. In the 20th century domestic water consumption rose to 150-200 l per head per day, in US 300 litres.

¹⁸ Dieter Schott, "Urban environmental history: what lessons are there to be learnt?" *Boreal Environment Research* 9 (2004): 519-528.

Initially, consumption of water were encouraged - paid less the more water used the new water mains, the thought of what happened to the natural environment through the exploitation of water resources, construction of dams and networks, was completely absent. As we know, this has changed - we have been forced to think about, add to our habits, our actions are influenced and our way of thinking around the natural resources changed.

Similar development and reflections can be connected to sewage systems, transport system etc. These are just examples of *facts* that can be visually presented indoors and outdoors and by using the existing buildings in the old city Sverresborg. Through such an approach, we will be able to use local history of the city and a general history that may be relevant to any city anywhere to engage contemporary people in dialogue, encourage reflections and hopefully change *some* attitudes and actions. (And we don't have to mess with the *authenticity* - keep the curator happy).

Visualizing environmental history by using 'Ecological footprint'

“Ecological Footprints is a measure of human demand on the Earth's ecosystems. It compares human demand with planet Earth's ecological capacity to regenerate. It represents the amount of biologically productive land and sea area needed to regenerate the resources a human population consumes and to absorb and render harmless the corresponding waste.” Man's global ecological footprint has more than doubled since the early 1960's, when we spent half the planet's renewable resources. For 2006, humanity's total ecological footprint was estimated at 1.4 planet Earths - in other words, humanity uses ecological services 1.4 times as fast as Earth can renew. We are spending our capital – not only the interests.
SHOW

(Waterfootprint) <http://www.waterfootprint.org/?page=files/YourWaterFootprint>

A citizen of USA has an EF of 12,3 hectar, a Norwegian 6,14 – and a citizen of Ghana only 1,1 ha.

Ecological footprints can be a way to show how the local is part of the global: the cliché: 'think globally act locally' put into perspective and gives meaning through such a visualization.

From theory to reality!

In our Old Town we have a wide range of buildings, homes and small industry, different classes and spanning in time from 18th c till present:

- Small family homes with 15 residents, working class, ca 1920
- Merchant home with only grownup residents, upper middle class, ca 1890
- Combined housing/production, spinsters, small scale production of jam, 1930s'
- Small scale textile production, women 1950s
- Pharmacy
- Workshop 1950

- 1970 student's bedsit

These houses are organized around a Town Square. Each house will be equipped with a Signpost in the form of a footprint - in a size that indicates the EF of the residents/production in this house. Signposts will have a colour-scheme that indicates which 'main story' it is a part of: i.e. the story of water supply, health, waste management, small local industry, communication. The same house and the same interior can be part of multiple stories.

Inside the houses there will be a 'technical room' with information about each of the stories included in the house. The room can be a physical room, it may be a drawer or cabinet, it may be digital story or a poster. The important thing is that it is accessible to a visitor who comes without a guide as well as for guided tours. The buildings also have an environmental history to tell in itself, the history of drafty house that requires a lot of fuel, about recirculation of building material and architectural elements about changes brought about by wastepipes, water closets, renovation and electricity. The museum's ecological footprint will be calculated and presented clearly visible in the entrance hall, as a link to the environmental history of the old town.

The dialogue:

Learning by doing – from text to praxis: We invite people to touch, make, feel and talk about what is going on.

Children are extremely environmentally conscious; this interest can be developed through "learning by doing" elements: Recycling, waste sorting, play, and creative tasks in relation to re-use. By seeing and trying they might find that old technologies and knowledge may be just as good as new technology when it comes to protecting the environment. But also we become aware that the "good old days" were not as rosy and harmonious and 'friendly towards nature' as one has been led to believe: New technology have help to reduce waste and pollution and made life better for people.

We want to establish workshops and small scale production units that actually work:

- Bicycle repair shop
- Small scale bakery
- Carpenter shop
- Printing press
- Herb garden by the pharmacy

Such places are incredibly boring to watch if nothing is going on there, and not very informative for most people. These places can be made active by inviting people to try out the production; we invite local people with professional knowledge (which are 'dead' – no longer useful knowledge) in the planning process. Others will be invited to set up a functional workshop (ie bicycle repair, bakery), or it could be a person/organization that produces stuff for sale in the museum shop. As a relatively small museum we depend on community groups to take part in the maintaining of the

activities. It is not the museum curator that possesses the knowledge needed, and we do not have enough staff to set up production of any kind. We have already several groups of volunteers that work for the museum, with activities such as clearing forest, maintaining gardens etc. Different professionals (retired) contribute on a regular basis with the documentation of collections connected to their profession. (Doctors, pharmacists, dentist etc...) The new plans will strengthen the ties between the museum and the community and at the same time hopefully raise awareness about environmental issues