
Len in Sweden, 2004



This is an account of the trip taken by Len Nasman in July of 2004 to attend the sixth Andersson Family Reunion. Len was accompanied by his daughter, Wendy Pickering, and (for the first week) by his wife Diana.

Introduction

The sixth meeting of the Andersson Family Reunion was held in Falkenberg, Sweden in July, 2004. It is the third time I have attended. The first was in 1998, also in Sweden, and the second was in 2001 in the Washington, DC area.

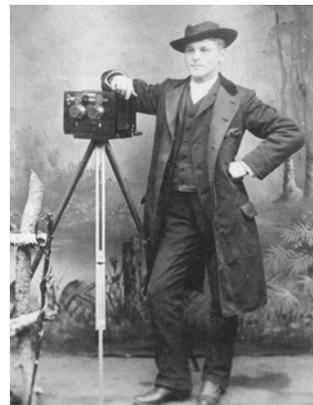
The Andersson Family Reunions were indirectly the result of some research by Claes Håkan Jacobson (shown here with a photograph by John Anderson). Although not related to the group, he was responsible for starting the Andersson family reunions. In 1984 he engaged in a research project to study the work of the Swedish-American photographer John Anderson. Anderson had a trading post near the Rosebud Sioux reservation in the 1800's. He became very friendly with the indians, and received many gifts from them. He also traded for things. His collection finally became large enough to open a museum. The museum contents were eventually bought by the Government and are available for viewing today in South Dakota. Anderson also produced one of the most important collections of indian photographs in the country.



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Claes has published a book (now available in English) that contains a large collection of photographs along with the history of the life of John Anderson. While doing his research, Claes discovered that there were living descendents of John Anderson, in particular Arthur and Elisabeth Culver in the USA and Anders Andersson in Sweden. He contacted them, provided information about their interesting ancestor, and encouraged them to get together for a reunion.

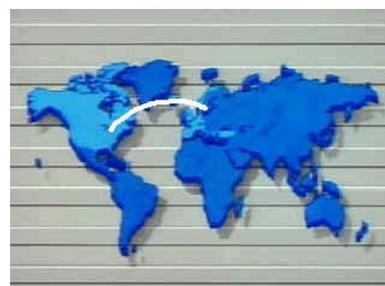


When I was on my first trip to Sweden in 1997, I knew nothing about my mother's relatives or the connection to John Andersson. I knew only that my mother's parents were from Tvååker. Some internet research had led me to visit Inge Svensson, a retired Tvååker resident. One evening Inge invited Anders Andersson over for coffee. Anders brought out a genealogy chart that had columns listing various members of the Andersson family. One individual was shown with the notation 'left for America' and the rest of the column was blank. This was my mother's father. The connection was made and I returned to Sweden in 1998 to attend a reunion.

Now, in the summer of 2004 I was headed back to meet again with some of my Swedish släkt (relatives).

The Adventure Begins

My travel plan was to fly from Columbus, OH to Newark, NJ, meet my daughter Wendy who was to travel there from the Washington DC area where she lives, and then fly together to Oslo, Norway. My travel agent had scheduled me for a 55 minute time between flights in Newark. The problem was that my flight from Columbus was one hour late leaving due to 'VIP movement' which I guess meant that the President was flying somewhere in the area. Also, there was only one flight per day from Newark to Oslo.



After getting under way, I asked the flight attendant if she had any suggestions for me. She promised that an electric cart would be at the gate to whisk me off to the Oslo flight. The Oslo flight was scheduled to leave at 8 AM. I arrived at 7:55, jumped on the cart, beeped through the terminal to find Wendy waiting for me and we rushed on to the plane. A while later, there was an announcement that because 50 passengers connecting from a California flight were delayed, we would have to wait a half an hour before leaving. So, I had wasted a couple of hours of worrying and gnashing teeth. Eventually we were flying toward Oslo.

Oslo is only about 150 miles from Göteborg, Sweden, where we were scheduled to meet with our first Swedish connection. Wendy and I made our way by train from the airport to downtown Oslo, found the Swebus terminal, got a bit of Norwegian money from an ATM, and bought our bus tickets. We then grabbed lunch and wandered around Oslo until it was time to board the bus. You no longer have to worry much about purchasing travelers checks or exchanging currency in advance, at least in the Scandinavian countries. There are ATM machines nearly everywhere, bank cards work the same there as they do in the USA. The only difference is an initial display that asks you to select a language.





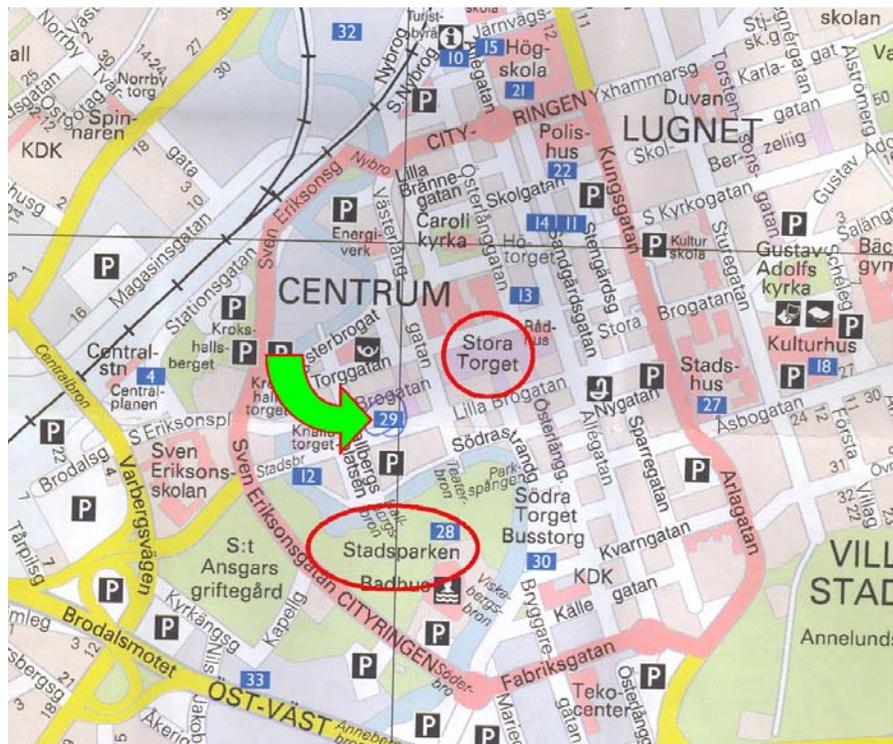
The Swebus was an express bus with no stops between Oslo and Göteborg. The ride is a little less than four hours and provided us with a good feel for the landscape. Lots of nice looking farms and wooded hills. Just north of the Swedish border there was a long traffic jam. The only cause seemed to be a couple of small village traffic lights. Based on the construction visible where a big new bridge is being built and the highway is being expanded to four lanes, I suspect that these traffic jams will soon disappear in this area.

Passing through customs at the Norway/Sweden border was about the same as passing from Dublin to Hilliard, Ohio. The bus driver didn't even slow down or wave at any customs officials as we rode on by the border crossing. If you want to get a Swedish stamp on your passport, you won't get it on the Oslo-Göteborg bus.

Borås

At the bus station in Göteborg we were met by Benny Lindahl. Benny's mother was a sister to Nils Palmquist and Nils was married to one of my father's sisters. This makes Benny and I what the Swedes call släkt til släkt, a relative of a relative. Although until this moment Benny and I had only met by E-mail and phone, Benny treated me as if I were a long lost brother and proceeded to serve as our chauffeur during this part of our adventure. Benny is a taxi driver and has all of the information and contacts that an American tourist could possibly wish for.

Benny had arranged for us to stay at a hostel in Borås, his home town. Borås is about 80 kilometers (50 miles) east of Göteborg. Our hostel room was in a renovated 1800 vintage building right in the middle of town. It had two bunk beds and nearby bathrooms, showers, a kitchen, and lounge. The price for three nights there was less than the cost for one night at the Grand Hotel just down the street. After Wendy and I had a chance to unload our luggage, Benny picked us up and brought us to his house to meet his wife Lena and to taste some good smörgås (open sandwiches) and beer. After a pleasant evening, we went back to our room for a little rest. Since I can never



seem to sleep in a moving vehicle I had been awake for around 30 hours or so at this point. We went to bed around midnight local time and I awoke about 6 AM the next morning ready to go. Lucky for me any sign of jet lag was not visible.

Our location in Borås was ideal. We were a block away from the Stora Torget (big market square) and a block in another direction from the Stadsparken (city park). It was Sunday morning, however, and not much was open yet. After locating an ATM and grabbing some Swedish kroner to get us by, we looked for a place to get breakfast. Good grief! The only place open was a McDonalds. There, I got pannkaka med jordgubbe mos och lättmjölk (crepes with strawberry sauce and low fat milk).



We were then off to explore the city park. We were a few weeks late to see the rhododendron blossoms. Too bad, because they really seem to like this climate, and the hill behind this fountain was full of them. There were plenty of other bloomer to look at. There is a small river that winds through downtown Borås that provides a border for the park. The park features a variety of sculptures to add additional visual interest



When we got back to our lodging we were met by Benny. He suggested a trip to a nearby shopping area. Borås has a long history of being a center of textile manufacturing, and there are some good concentrations of shops in the area.



While Wendy and Lena headed for the fabric shops, Benny and I went instead to the Clas Ohlson store and compared notes about the differences and similarities of plumbing, and hardware supplies between the USA and Sweden. Guy stuff.

After a bit of shopping we relaxed in our room for a while. Benny and Lena picked us up and we went out for dinner. Then it was time to head for the airport to pick up Diana. Because Diana was headed to Romania with her Bridges for Education group after a week in Sweden, she had to make her travel arrangements through Bridges. Her itinerary took her through Vienna. We had to meet her at Landvetter airport which is halfway between Borås and Göteborg.



After what seemed like a long wait for Diana to get her luggage and pass through customs, she finally appeared. It turns out that only one of her two big suitcases, packed with heavy supplies for the language camp in Romania, had followed her to Sweden. Also, there is only one flight between Vienna and Göteborg each day. Benny to the rescue. He arranged for her missing bag to be transported to his house when it finally arrived. We would retrieve it from there when we left Borås for Falkenberg.





Early the next morning Benny picked us up and we were off to visit Torpa Stenhus.

The history of this castle goes back to the middle ages when the original stone house was built. This place was very important in the earliest days of the country that became the Sweden we know today.

When Gust Ericksson drove the Danes out and became King Gustaf Vasa in the 1500's he created a country that continues as modern Sweden. Having lost two wives by the time he was 56 years old, Gustaf Vasa came to this place and announced his engagement to 17 year old Katarina Stenbock. She, who had a local boyfriend, was less than happy with the arrangement. But Gustaf was the king. The boyfriend had to settle with marrying her sister.

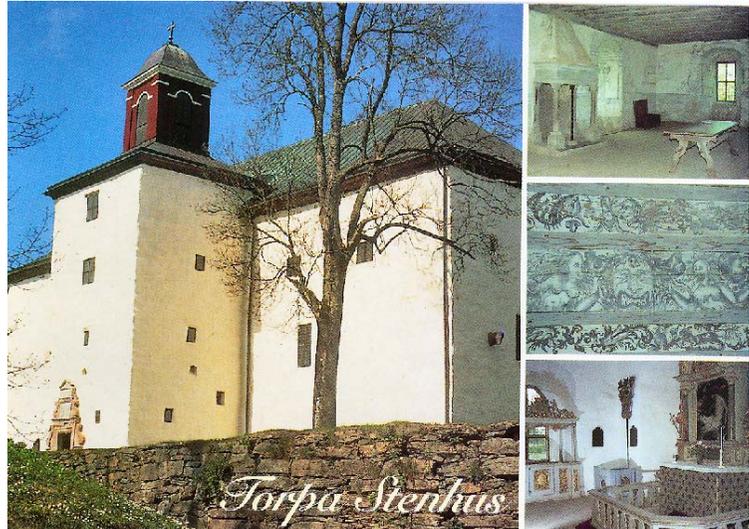
I had studied the history of Sweden when I became interested in my Swedish roots a number of years ago. Now I actually could run my fingers over the surface of the same table where it is said that Gustaf Vasa once ate, and walk the same floors that were once trod by those people in the history books. Many notable Swedish figures visited this building during its long history.

After our tour, we had a nice lunch at a cafe on the grounds. There I learned that paj (pronounced pi) does not come in apple or cherry. It is more like a quiche, and Diana and I shared a nice Lax (salmon) Paj.

After lunch we went back to Borås and gave Diana a chance to explore some of the textile shops, and later Diana and I took a stroll through the city park.

Falkenberg

The next morning we were to start our stay with our host family for the reunion, Ingvar and Gunilla Kärrdahl, in the village of Bor. The problem was that this was the coolest and rainiest summer in Sweden since 1928. The rain was especially bad in Småland, the province where Bor is located. Ingvar and Gunilla had just returned from a visit to the USA to find the water nearly at their doorstep, and still rising. This made it difficult to welcome American cousins as originally planned.



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The alternative was for us to stay at a summer cottage of another cousin near Falkenberg. Gunilla picked us up at the hostel in Borås, picked up Diana's wayward suitcase at Benny's, and then made the 80 kilometer drive to Falkenberg.



There we met Linnea and Gert-Erik Bengtsson. Linnea and I are actually fourth cousins (which means that we share the same great-great-great grandparents).



They live in Falkenberg and maintain a summer cottage just a few miles south of town, right on the coast. The view from the house is wonderful.



There we were treated to a fantastic lunch featuring marinated and smoked lax (salmon), a specialty of a local Falkenberg shop.

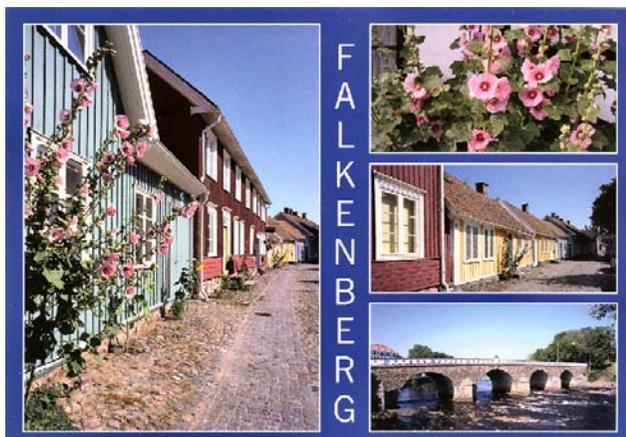




From the summer stuga, it was a pleasant after lunch walk to the Ringsagården Konst och Cafe. Ringsagården is the name of the place, and Konst is art (or in this case an art gallery). A popular painter of birds and nature scenes had recently died, and his work was featured in the gallery.

During our walk we stopped frequently to examine the wildflowers. Some were familiar, and others, like these, were unlike anything I had seen before.

The next day we drove into Falkenberg where Gert-Erik provided us with a walking tour of the town.



One of our stops was a visit to a small pottery factory where local artists have been creating their own unique patterns since 1783. The patterns are not simply painted on the bowls and plates, but first the outlines are carefully and precisely cut into the surface of the clay. This shop also produces an unusual shaped musical instrument and a strange drinking mug that has a series of holes around the rim and a hollow handle. The trick is to figure out which hole to drink from and which holes to cover with your fingers.

After our walk we ended up at Linnea and Gert-Erik's Falkenberg house where we were treated to a lunch featuring some of the best home cooking I have had in years.



The Andersson Family Picnic

In the evening we went to a farm in the Falkenberg area where the entire Andersson clan was gathered for our initial get together picnic.



I must remind you that the people at this reunion are related to me on my mother's side of the family. You can understand my confusion when one man came up to me and asked if I knew who he was. I struggled with a quick search of my mental data bank, but could not make an identification. He then confessed that he was Bengt Näsman from Sundsvall. I have corresponded with Bengt by E-mail, but this is the first time I had ever met him. His grandfather and my grandfather (that is my father's father) were first cousins.



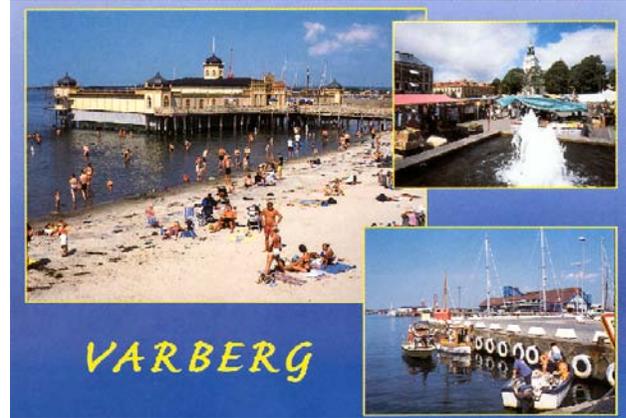
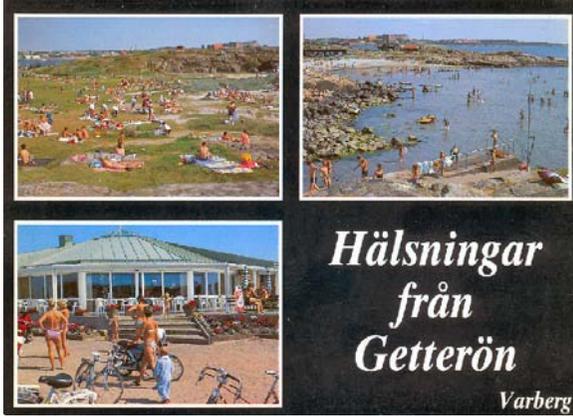
Bengt had made a trip across Sweden just to meet me. A most pleasant surprise.

In this picture you see (from left to right) Wendy, Diana, Bengt Näsman, me, Gunilla, and Ingvar Kärrdahl.



Varberg

The next day had been scheduled to be spent with our host family. Ingvar and Gunilla took us to explore the Varberg area. The coast here is sometimes called the Riviera of Sweden. We did have a little sun that day, but it was not warm enough to remind one of the Mediterranean coast.



Our first stop was a visit to a nature center. This place is very popular with bird watchers from all over. There are exhibits inside the building and a number of 32 x spotting scopes available for watching the local scene. Walking paths provide access to the marsh area for closer viewing, and blinds and viewing towers provide additional opportunities for viewing nature.



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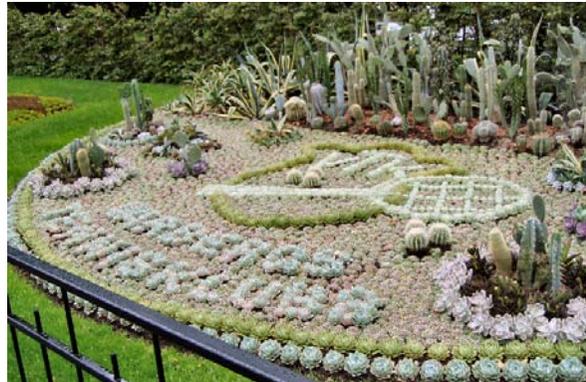
After spending some time at the nature center we drove to a nearby boat harbor and had lunch.

This place was just north of Varberg and the big Varberg Fastning (fort/castle) was visible in the distance.

Next, we went into Varberg. Diana and I had visited the fort on earlier trip, so we left Gunilla and Wendy there and Ingvar, Diana and I explored Varberg. There were two unexpected things to see there. One was that we started noticing a large number of older American cars (1968 Oldsmobile, 57 Chevy, etc.). We finally discovered that there were around 4,000 vintage cars gathered for a Wings and Wheels festival.



We were also surprised to discover this group performing in the town square, and a desert garden patch sponsored by a local tennis club.



From Varberg we drove to a small fishing harbor to view a collection of modern fishing boats. One interesting thing here was the large number of jelly dish drifting around the boats.





Halland

The next day was reserved for a bus tour of Halland. The province of Halland lies on the southwest coast of Sweden and is the home to many of my släkt on my mother's side of the family. My mother's parents came from Tvååker, a small village in the heart of the Halland farmland just a few miles from the coast.



The landscape of Halland presents a large variety of different types of terrain. Rocky windy coastline dotted with modern windmill farms; rolling fields full of oats, wheat, barley, sugar beets, potatoes, beans, and the golden rape seed plants; forested hills; and a steep mountain ridge cutting across the southern border of the province. All of these were part of the view we enjoyed with our cousins as we traveled south in a 40 passenger bus.



We left the main E 6 highway, and the bus driver negotiated a narrow winding road up and over the Hallandsåsen, the long mountain ridge which defines the border between Halland and Skåne. Back down the mountain to the sea brought us to the town of Båstad. There we enjoyed a special guided tour of the weaving workshop of Märta Fjetersjön.

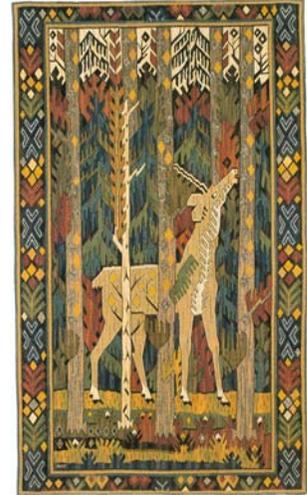


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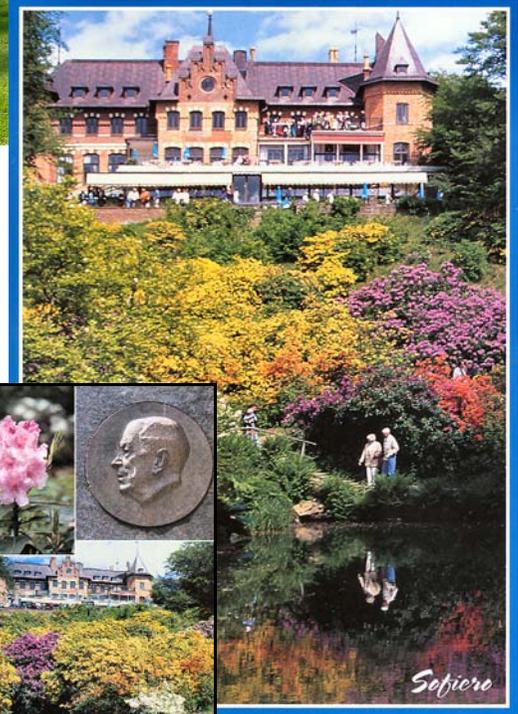
Some of the classic patterns are still being produced, however, custom designs are also created for special occasions and customers. Some of the rugs that are hand-woven here take over a year to complete.

From Båstad we headed south along the coast to Helsingborg. Here the Kattegatt shrinks to a narrow channel between Sweden and Denmark. And here we visited Sofiero, the place that for many years was the summer home of the King.



The grounds and gardens here were the special work of Queen Marguerite whose love of flowers resulted in a spectacular collection of plants.

Once again we very sorry that we were a little late for the rhododendron blossoms. The grounds has a collection of around 10,000 of these plants. We headed across the broad expanse of lawn to lunch in the palace.





The first floor has been turned into a fine restaurant, and our group pretty much took over the place and dined on a fine meal of baked lax.



An English speaking guide had been arranged for, so the group followed her for a tour of the gardens.

We heard about the Queen's interest in flowers and plant breeding. You may be familiar with the flower marguerite, a small daisy variety, that was named after her.



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From the grounds you can see across the water to Denmark. You can even see the famous Helsingor castle (supposedly the site for Shakespeare's Hamlet).

On this day, there was an exhibit of glass by a local artist on display in one of the glass houses.





And along the way we spotted this sculpture carved from an old tree stump.



Back on the bus we headed north and stopped for a visit to a pottery factory, and then stopped at Flickorna Lundgren, a popular cafe, for coffee and cake.

As soon as the bus returned to the meeting place (an area garden center parking lot) We hustled Diana off the bus and into the waiting car of Linnea and Gert-Erik for a quick trip to the Falkenberg train station. She managed to buy her ticket to Göteborg with about ten minutes to spare, and was off to Vienna to join her Bridges for Education group and travel to Romania for a four week stay.



Farm Tour

The next evening was scheduled for the big family fest. Ingvar and Gunilla headed to Bor to check up on their flood-endangered house, and Wendy and I had extra time to spend before the gathering of the clan. One of the cousins, Lars Torstensson, had arranged to pick us up from the summer stuga in the morning and take us on a tour of his farm.

Lars has over a thousand acres in the middle of prime Halland farmland. In the past he has raised pigs in a very modern ‘piggery’ but currently leases that operation out. It is quite a sophisticated operation. Nearly 1,000 pigs are kept in groups of 10 in a large building. Pipes carry feed from a computer controlled mixing and distribution system. The computer is programmed to supply a volume of feed determined by the age of the pigs. After 3 or 4 months, the pigs are off to the bacon factory.



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While cousin Candy Crites took Wendy to shop for some locally made shoes that Wendy had her heart set on since we arrived, Lars showed me around the area.

Some of his fields are planted with the rape seed plant (a relative of mustard), the seeds of which are used to produce oil for cooking and other purposes. There is also some land dedicated to forest.



We also visited another large farm that had formerly been leased by Lars and his brother, but is now leased by Lars' nephew. The old man who owns the land still lives (alone) in this big house that dates back to the 1600's. It takes a lot of expensive equipment to run these big farms, but the equipment makes it possible for a few men to work an area that required a small village of workers in the old days.





Before we completed the tour, Lars showed me a granite quarry where they produce a unique color of this stone. It is said that an expert can tell the exact source of granite by studying its color. A little water splashed on the rock reveals the color of the stone.



Now it was time to get back to the summer stuga and get ready for the big party.



Family Fest

One of the relatives has a large farm near Falkenberg, part of which had been developed into an 18 hole golf club. The newly built club house was the location for the traditional family reunion banquet. A local musical group from Tvååker was engaged to provide some of the entertainment for the evening.



The Andersson family fiddlers were also called on to play some traditional Swedish music.



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We feasted on a variety of good food, took part in a sing-a-long (in both Swedish and English), heard a little about the background of the reunion, saw pictures of some of the absent släkt, and had the opportunity to look at the family tree (which had been printed out, taped together, and was stretched out for a few meters on the wall).



In a family this big, it seems that many occupations are represented. One of the cousins (Per Pederson) is an award winning pastry chef, and he had prepared enough special decorated cakes for all. We also had to indulge in the ever present summer treat of jordgubbe.

A good time was had by all as we renewed old acquaintances and made new friends of our Swedish and American cousins and their families.





The Bus Trip South

The family fest lasted nearly till dawn (which comes around 3 AM this far north this time of year). So, the next morning we slept late. Then we went to the Bengtsson's house in Falkenberg for an excellent meal and relaxing afternoon.

The Bus Trip South

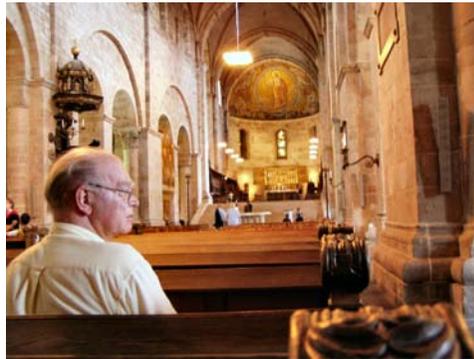
The Americans were given the option to extend their stay in Sweden by taking an organized bus trip through the southern part of the country. Ten Americans and six Swedes piled into a Dagsås Buss and headed out. The early part of the trip repeated our views of the farms and hills of Halland and then we entered the province of Skåne.



Lund

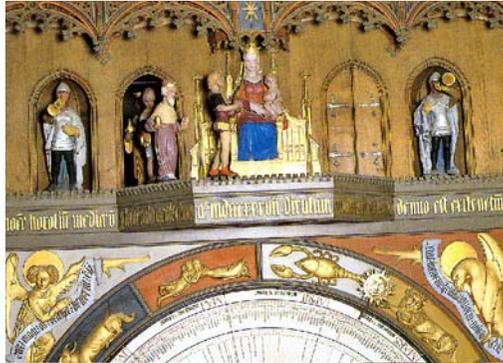
Our first destination was the old city of Lund. There we stopped to view the Domkyrka.

Both the exterior and interior of this very old cathedral provide much to see.





Inside is found all of the decorations one expects to see in a European church of this type. However, this place has a few unique details including this amazing clock.

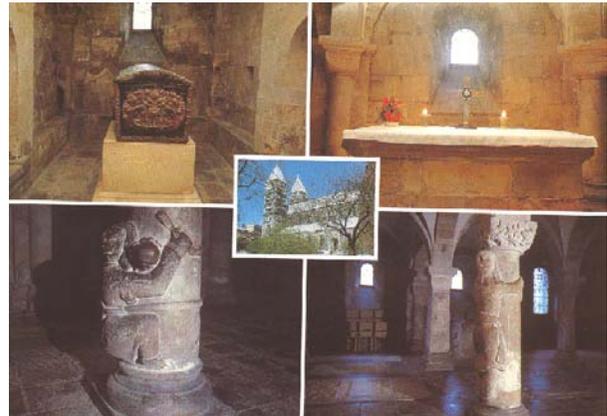


Our guide pointed out that this clock not only shows minutes, hours, and an animated display at 12, it also shows month, year, phases of the moon, and astrological signs.



The big circle at the bottom of the clock is a calculator. If you properly select the year, month, and day of your birth, this calculator can tell what day of the week that was.

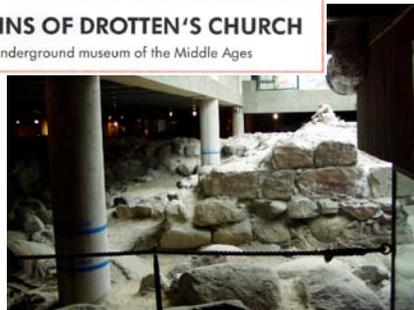
Down in the bowels of the Domkyrka you can see some of the pillars that hold the church up. There is a legend about how these creatures were turned to stone.



Not far from the Domkyrka, in downtown Lund, excavations have uncovered the foundations of several churches from different eras dating back nearly a thousand years. A museum has been built over the excavation site. Here we saw models of the different ancient churches, and information about the people who lived in those times.



THE RUINS OF DROTEN'S CHURCH
An underground museum of the Middle Ages





Lunch was enjoyed at Gästgifvaregård, a very nice restaurant in Sjöbo. Some of the tourists were saying ‘what! lax again?’ but most of us enjoyed this excellent fresh fish



Although we didn’t have time to stop in Ystad, a port city on the southern coast, our bus driver did squeeze the bus through narrow streets to give us a glimpse of that interesting place. This town was very busy with tourists. From here it is possible to take a ferry to Germany or Poland. The edge of the city was populated with large camp grounds crowded with tourists.



This is the kind of place you have to mark “sorry, not enough time now, but we’ll have to get back here some day.”



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The next place on our agenda was the Ales stener. This is a collection of large stones located on a high bluff overlooking the sea. The stones are arranged in the form of a viking ship, and it is claimed that they mark the positions of the summer solstice and other astronomical events.

Because the cliff here produces a steady stream of wind blowing up from the sea, the location is very popular with hang-kiters. These people sit in a harness attached to a large kite that is controlled by ropes attached to handles, and they soar back and forth over the edge of the cliff.



Glimmingehus

After driving through the rolling farmland of Skåne, we saw in the distance a tall stone building. This was Glimmingehus, an ancient fortified castle. We were greeted by an English speaking local guide (arranged for by Christer Andersson, our primary trip planner and on-bus narrator).

The guide showed us the many traps that were built into the castle to foil any attempts at invasion.





She told us stories of the people who once inhabited these thick stone walls that were decorated with ancient tapestries.

Next, we went on to Åhus where we stayed for the night at a high quality hotel located a block from the Absolute Vodka factory. Sorry, no free samples there. The place was closed for the night.



We did have a first class dinner at the hotel restaurant. We sampled several kinds of herring, lax, and eel, and dined on pheasant.

Some of went for an after dinner walk guided by Ingvar, who once lived in Åhus.

That's me in front of the Gästis where we stayed, and the vodka factory is behind the big truck.



Karlshamn

A quick stop was made at Karlshamn to view the monument to Karl-Osker and Kristina, the main characters in the series of Vilhelm Moberg books about the Swedes who emigrated to America. Many of these Swedes left from this very port.



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My attention at this stop was not toward the monument, but toward meeting another cousin from my father's side of the family. When I was doing my genealogy research, I placed a note on a Swedish genealogy web site mentioning that I was researching relatives of Peter Nasman. I received a note from a young lady (Linda Salomonsson) from Olofstrom (about 20 kilometers from Karlshamn) who mentioned that her great-great grandmother was named Sara Oliva Näsman. That lady was a first cousin of my grandfather.

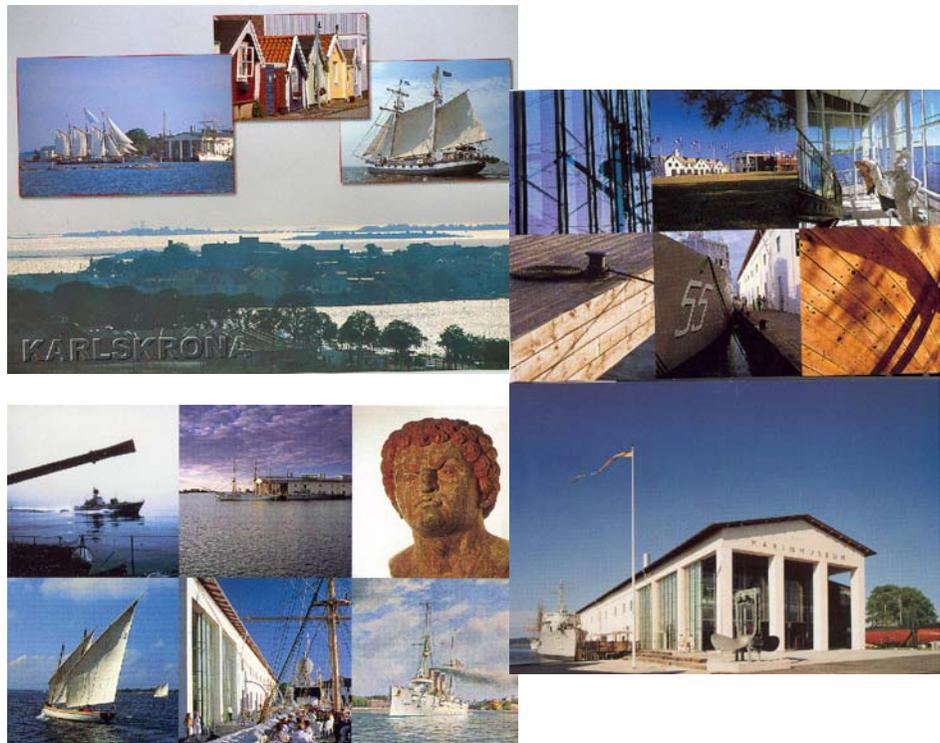
Linda and her family met our bus at Karlshamn and we spent a few minutes putting faces and voices to the source of our E-mail conversations. We of course made promises to keep in touch and to try and have a longer meeting on the next trip.



Karlskrona

The next stop was at Karlskrona, a harbor town situated among a large group of islands on the Baltic coast. Karlskrona has been the home to an important Navel base for hundreds of years, and it has a very interesting maritime museum

We had a nice lunch at the maritime museum and were also treated to a very interesting guided tour of both the museum and the nearby navel base.





The museum contains an extensive collection of ship models.

Some of these models are hundreds of years old, and were actually used to aid in the construction of the ships.

There are dioramas depicting some of the great navel battles of Swedish history, and our guide spent some time telling us tales of these historical events.



The museum also contains the largest collection of large ship figure-heads to be found.

While visiting Karlskrona we also visited the navel base where we saw one of the oldest and (in its day) the largest dry dock in Europe. It had been carved out of solid granite before the time when dynamite or blasting powder was available. The technique was to heat the rock and then pour cold water on it to fracture it into small pieces. We also saw a 300 meter long building where ropes were made.



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We took a ferry tour on this boat around the harbor, to several islands, and back again.

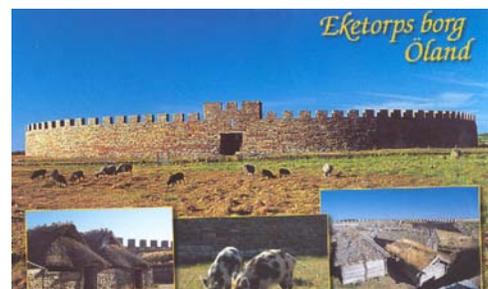


Then we had our evening meal on a floating restaurant, and stayed overnight in a nearby hotel. There is a lot to see and do in Karlskrona.

The next morning brought the worst rain we had seen so far. Our bus ride through the misty landscape took us past the city of Kalmar and across a 6 kilometer long bridge to the island of Öland.



The island of Öland is long and narrow and parallels the south east coast of Sweden. It has a long history and because of its strategic position has been the home to many ancient forts. We visited a restored fort and museum at Eketorpsborg.





We again were greeted by an English speaking guide who provided us with a history of the fort and the associated cottages.



Inside some of the cottages in the fort you can find people who play the role of the medieval inhabitants, and who are happy to explain the life and times of the people who once lived here.

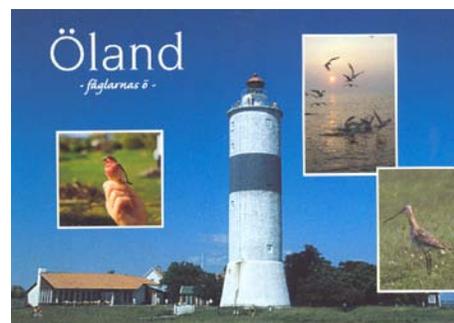
The chilly rain put a damper on our visit to the fort, but the exhibits were well worth seeing.



From here we went on to the southern tip of the island and had lunch near the Långe Jan light house. This is also a big nature reserve that is very popular with bird watchers since it is on the migration path of many species of feathered friends.



In the path between the light house and restaurant, I found this bronze sculpture of Åke the goose featured in Selma Lagerlof's book "The Wonderful Adventures of Nils Holgersson." (Do you see Nil's shoes?)



Len in Sweden, 2004



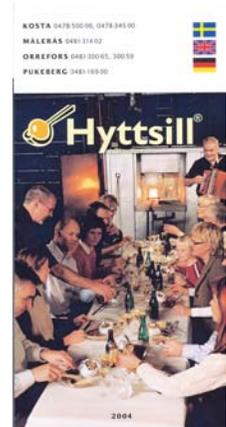
We then retraced our path back over the long bridge to the mainland and headed to Småland and the kingdom of crystal. We left the main road and traveled on narrow dirt roads through the Småland skog (forest). There, in a small clearing, is found a monument to Vilhelm Moberg, the author of the series of books that traces the lives of Swedish emigrants as they made their way from Småland to America. (The Moberg books are *must* reading for anyone who is interested in Swedish American life.)



Småland is known as the kingdom of crystal because it is home to 15 different glass factories. Each of these factories employs artists who design unique glassware patterns. We registered at a motel near the Kosta Boda glass factory.

It is said that in the old days the glass factory workers would cook their meals in the glass cooling ovens. This tradition is maintained for the tourists by offering something called Hyttsill (perhaps it can be translated as hot fish).

In the evening we gathered together with other groups for dinner, entertainment, and a glass blowing demonstration. In addition to hearing traditional Swedish music played on accordion and guitar, this strange instrument was also used. It seems to be some kind of an electric keyboard violin.





After some food and music, we headed across the factory for a glass blowing exhibition. The artists do quite amazing things with molten blobs of glass.

The next morning we returned to the Kosta Boda glass factory shops where the work of the artists is available to purchase. They offer to ship directly to your home, which was just the thing for Wendy, who added to her collection of Swedish souvenirs.



Växjö

It is not far from the Kosta Boda factory to the city of Växjö. Here we visited the local Domkyrka and we were fortunate that someone was practicing on the wonderful organ that is found there.



Wahlberg / Schwanorgel
i Växjö domkyrka

Len in Sweden, 2004

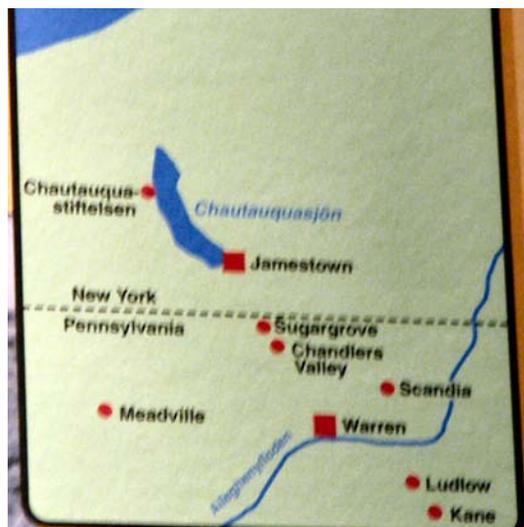
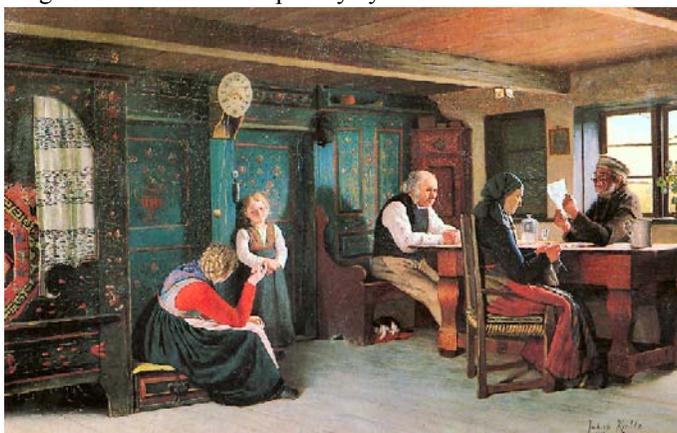


From the Våxjö Domkyrka it is a short distance to the House of Emigrants. Here we were greeted by the Director of the museum and were reminded of the fact that between 1850 and 1910, about 25% of the population of Sweden emigrated to America. Information about these emigrants has been collected here, and an exhibit tells the story of what life was like for these people.



Part of the exhibit was of particular interest to me because it not only showed a map of the area of Jamestown, NY that was the destination of many Swedish emigrants, but the map also included both my home town of Kane, Pa and even little Scandia, PA where my grandfather had his farm.

A painting on display depicts a scene in a Swedish home where the family is gathered to read a letter from America. By the way, the last book in the Moberg series is titled “The Last Letter Home” and I perhaps should warn you that it is hard to read the ending of that book and keep a dry eye.





Husby bruk

We next traveled through Småland to the historic village of Husby bruk.

This has been an important iron works for about a thousand years. During the 30 years war in the 1600's, it became very important in supplying cannons and guns for the Swedish army. Later they manufactured ornate cast iron stoves and other products.

One of the reasons this site became important was the availability of water power. On this day, the results of the Småland flooding were in evidence. The river here was lapping its banks, and even washing over some of the bridges.



Once again an English speaking guide was waiting to give us the history of the place, including the big mansion that had been occupied by one of the last daughters of family that operated the factory into the 20th century.

Len in Sweden, 2004



At a restaurant that had been created by remodeling a fancy horse barn, our group of 6 Swedes and 10 Americans had our last meal together. It had been a great tour thanks to the extensive planning done by Christer Andersson and our skillful and knowledgeable driver Bernth Johansson.



We presented them with a small token of our appreciation, and then gathered for the traditional group photo before returning to our pick up points in Halland.





Another trip to Sweden had come to an end. Wendy and I stayed overnight with Ingvar and Gunilla in Bor. They then took us to Göteborg where we boarded the bus for Oslo. The trip from Oslo to Newark was crowded, and getting through the disorganized mess of customs and luggage pick-up in Newark was a real bother. Wendy missed her connecting flight to Washington, DC, but I had plenty of time between flights and made it back to Columbus, OH in pretty good shape.

Whoever said that getting there is half the fun must not have had any recent airplane travel experience. However, being in Sweden with good friends and relatives, and seeing the beautiful landscape and learning the history of the country makes the pain of getting there and back well worth while.

Len Nasman

August, 2004

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Technical Stuff

This is only for people who are interested in details about how I put this report together. For most folks, this is more than you probably want to know about this stuff.

• Pictures

Most of the pictures in the report were taken with an *Olympus C-720* digital camera. This camera features an 8x optical zoom lens and 3.0 mega pixel resolution. I used the 1984 by 1488 pixel resolution mode. This allows for 173 pictures on a 128 MB memory card. I used two cards and took a little over 300 pictures.



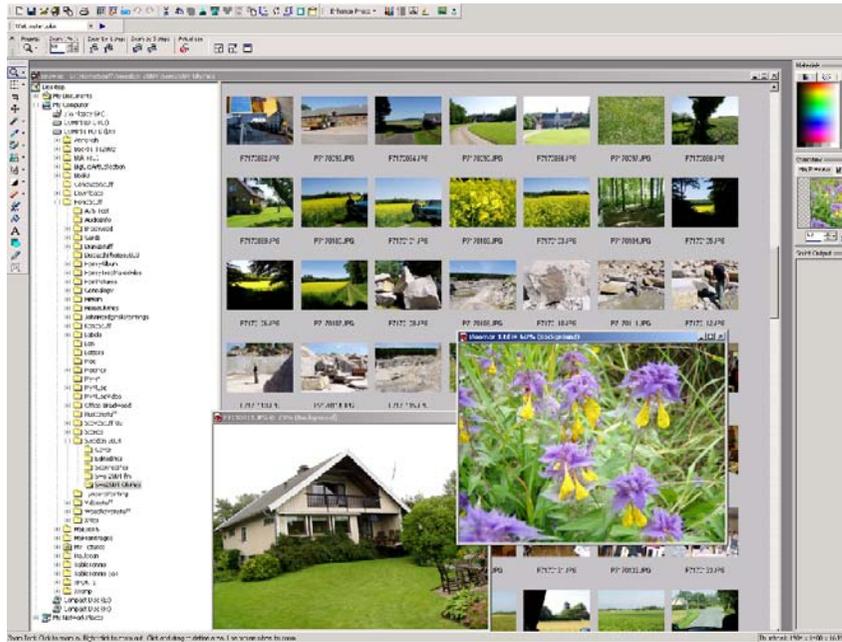
I find the C-720 easy to use for most things, but the menu system is cumbersome for getting into the special settings. My biggest complaint about this camera is that the automatic focus system is a little slow and not so good in low light situations. On the other hand, the optics are quite good and I have enlarged images up to 16 by 20 inches with good results.

Some of the pictures in the report were scanned from post cards and brochures. I have developed a habit of collecting post cards while traveling. Many times the post cards have better pictures than I can take (for example interiors of buildings or ariel photos). Also, post cards help me remember the names of places I have visited and



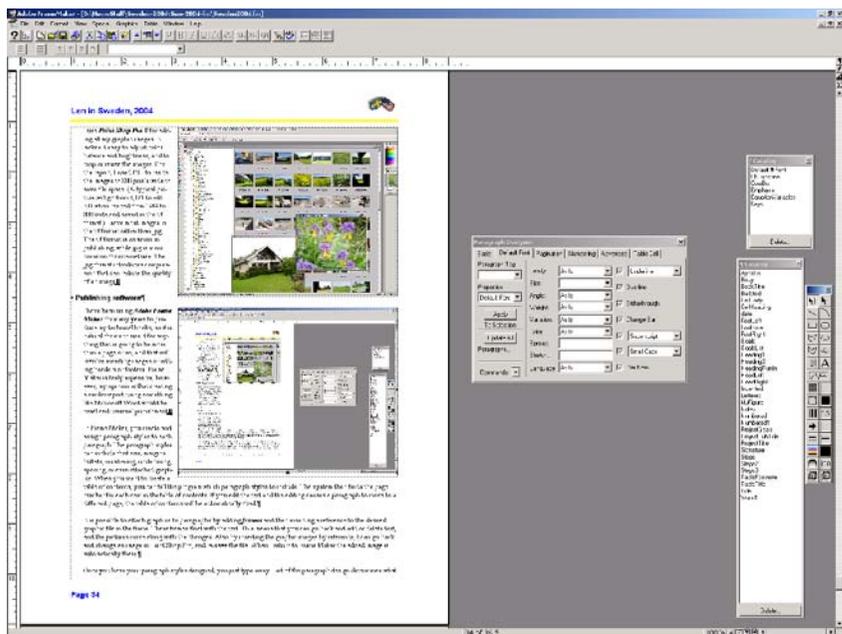
assist in spelling foreign names.

I use *Paint Shop Pro 8* for editing all my graphic images. It makes it easy to adjust color balance and brightness, and to crop or resize the images. For the report, I used PSP to resize the images to 800 pixels wide to save file space. (A typical picture will go from 4,171 to 944 KB when resized from 1984 to 800 wide and saved in the tif format.) I save most images in the tif format rather than jpg. The tif format is common in publishing, while jpg is more common for internet use. The jpg format introduces compression that can reduce the quality of an image.



• Publishing software

I have been using *Adobe Frame Maker* for many years to produce my technical books, so it is natural for me to use it for anything that is going to be more than a page or so, and that will involve inserting images or adding headers or footers. Frame Maker is fairly expensive, however, my opinion is that creating a similar report using something like Microsoft Word would be cruel and unusual punishment.



In Frame Maker, you create and assign paragraph styles to each paragraph. The paragraph styles can include font size, margins bullets, numbering, underlining, spacing, or even attached graphics. When you want to create a table of contents, you can tell the program which paragraph styles to include. The system then finds the page number for each item in the table of contents. If you edit the text and the editing causes a paragraph to move to a different page, the table of contents will be automatically fixed.

It is possible to attach graphics to paragraphs by adding *frames* and then inserting a reference to the desired graphic file (or files) in the frame. These frames can be anchored to the text. This means that you can go back and add or delete text, and the pictures move along with the changes. Also, by inserting the graphic images by reference, rather than including them in the report file, I can go back and change an image in Paint Shop Pro, and save the file. When I return to Frame Maker the edited image is automatically there.



Once you have your paragraph styles designed, you just type away. Part of the paragraph design determines what happens when you hit the enter key to start a new paragraph. In my case, I have the system automatically switch from **Heading 1** to **body** when the enter key is pressed. No more hitting the enter key more than once to add extra space between paragraphs. The paragraph design takes care of this automatically. If you want to change the style of a paragraph, you simply place the cursor in a paragraph and select the desired style from a list.

Each Frame Maker page is based on a **Master Page** that you define. The master pages include the lines and little flags found at the top of each page. In my case, I have different master pages for odd and even pages. Since I designed this report for two sided printing, I made the page numbers on my master pages always appear at the outside lower corner of the page. I designed the even page **header** to carry the report title, and I designed the odd page header to use something called a **running header**. In my case, the system uses the most recent paragraph that I set as **Heading 1** as the header for odd pages. (Heading 1 is also the paragraph used for the Table of Contents.)

• Printing

Color copies of the report were printed on an **Oki 5150** color laser printer. Color laser printers have come down in price quite a bit lately and I got the Oki for \$600. It is much faster than my old HP ink jet, and does not choke like the ink jet on double sided copies.

Since double sided document always end on a even page, I hate to leave it blank. In this document, I simply added a couple of nice pictures to fill out the report.

Well, I warned you that this would be more than you wanted to know. But, I hope some of you might find this interesting.

