

Aktum.

FOR EVERYONE WORKING AT UMEÅ UNIVERSITY • OCTOBER 2017 • NO 3



Meet Cuno Bernhardsson

He is setting up a collective memory

Hi there!

Annakarin Nyberg surprised about the response

Organisation

Time to overview the basics of the organisation

THEME The Arctic

Umeå University conducts broad Arctic research

Outlook

She studies the causes behind terror



UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

Firstly...

The Arctic – far yet near

Even if the previous summer undeniably felt rather Arctic, those who have once moved to Umeå from Kiruna may find it provocative with an Arctic theme at Umeå University. But nowadays, Västerbotten does belong to the Arctic, just like the Swedish mountains all the way down to Dalarna. The City of Birches is actually closer to Stockholm than to Abisko. And how often do you see estate agents advertising ‘arctic’ houses for sale in Teg or Berghem?

The Arctic is more than a geographical location. The Arctic theme at Umeå University permeates all faculties, in events like the large international conference ICASS, in scientific lunches at Kafé Station on everything from infectious diseases in the wake of climate change to representations of Sápmi on French TV.

In our neighbourhood – the Arctic – it’s easy to feel protected from contemporary problems. It usually takes a while for the misery of the world to reach us, and when it does, it’s usually properly diluted. Global warming has thus far mostly been noticed as bad skiing and moose hunting being delayed. The air is still quite clean, we feel safe within the most peaceful borders to our Nordic neighbours, we don’t suffer from overcrowding, and none of Sweden’s roughest areas can be found here.

It’s a question of qualification. Northern ecosystems are more sensitive than in the South, the biological base is more narrow. Climate changes will most likely be particularly dramatic here. Methane is released from thawing permafrost and puts more stress on global warming. In a globalised world full of war, population growth and natural disasters, it’s understandable if people move north where it’s cool and there’s an abundance of space, but already today the sparsely populated Arctic creates vexed conflicts about land and waters, and about who was here first.

Next year’s theme at Umeå University will be democracy, an appropriate topic of discussion during the election year. Luckily, the Arctic and democracy can unquestionably be combined, so we can carry the arctic perspective with us into 2018.

The Arctic is sometimes called the canary of the world – being the indicator of the world’s overall health. So, may this canary keep chirping even after 2017. ●

OLA NILSSON
COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER AT THE
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES



“The sparsely populated Arctic creates vexed conflicts about land and waters, and about who was here first.”

Contents



THEME *The Arctic*

8 Umeå University’s wide-spanning Arctic research impressed researchers when the ICASS conference took place this summer

6 Pit stop for the organisation
An overhaul of the University’s organisational cornerstones

7 5 questions
Lars Lustig about his new role as vice chair of the University Board

14 Profile
Archivist Cuno Bernhardsson builds a collective societal memory bank

21 Signed
Dieter Müller believes it is time to highlight Arctic research

22 Culture
Culture on Campus has an autumn full of music, literature and poetry planned

24 Finally...
Klara Johansson has strategies to respond to fact resistance



Aktum.

Publisher Gunilla Stendahl, Head of the Communications Office.

Address Communications Office, Umeå University, SE-901 87 Umeå. Phone +46 90-786 50 00.

Editor-in-chief Mattias Grundström Mitz, Per Melander **Editorial board** Petra Sandberg, Dan Frost, Fredrik Georgsson, Stefan Gelfgren, Helena Vejbrink, Jeanette Lövkvist, Elin Andersson, Peter Lexelius, Ulrika Andersson, Greg Neely. **Translation** Anna Lawrence, David Meyers.

Cover photo Johan Günséus. **Design and repro** Inhousebyrå, Umeå University.

Printing Taberg Media Group.

What do you want to read? Get in touch with the editorial board: aktum@umu.se

Any questions about distribution? Please contact Sara Mejtoft, +46 70-148 50 50

aktum.umu.se

At Aktum online, you can read Aktum, comment on it and present your own opinions.



www.aurora.umu.se/en

On the intranet Aurora, you will find the latest news for people working at Umeå University.

Hi there!

Annakarin Nyberg, senior lecturer and assistant head of department at the Department of Informatics

Overwhelming response after Radio Sweden summer talk

Courage, master suppression techniques, social media, relationships, entrepreneurship, old men fatigue and cancer. It was a combination of topics that encouraged Radio Sweden to reach out.



PHOTO: EMIL NYSTRÖM/EMILMEDIA

ANNAKARIN NYBERG WAS surprised and elated when she was asked to be one of the hosts of the popular summer programme on P1 (Sommar i P1). And she is now promising to swim doggy paddle style in the campus pond if listeners vote her in as a winter host.

Annakarin Nyberg was totally overwhelmed by all the nice emails, letters, comments and conversations that were sent in by familiar and unfamiliar individuals after she was host for the show in mid-August.

“At the beginning it was hundreds per day. It’s now slowed down, even though I still get contacted on a daily basis. There are so many kind and generous people out there,” says Annakarin Nyberg.

She explains that preparations began the moment after she was asked to participate. Together with a producer and editorial staff,

discussions were held about topics that could be interesting. And how she as a person would be portrayed and to which target audience.

“The summer radio programme attracts a wide audience and it was all about finding a level that would fit as many as possible. For example, I had to rewrite sections on social media in order to simplify it and make it understandable to more people. Then it was about turning everything into a ‘talk radio script’ and practicing to read so slowly that the listeners would create their own pictures while listening.”

ONE THING THAT turned out to be unexpectedly difficult during her preparation, was to write the section about her cancer diagnosis.

“I was forced to open the door slightly and once again release the most difficult emotions and fears. Those that had been hidden-away and perhaps not yet properly well cared for.”

In regards to the attention and response that comes from being a summer host, Annakarin Nyberg says she does not think so much about it. Her everyday life is rolling along as usual.

“But, of course, every time someone stops me on the street to tell me they’ve listened and what they think and feel, yes, I’m obviously reminded – and happy. I also get many exciting requests to participate in panel discussions or to hold lectures on different topics.” ●

PER MELANDER



PHOTO: MATTIAS PETTERSSON



Umeå researchers threatened online

Online antagonism and threat of force does not just affect political activist, but also researchers. In August, a right-wing extremist blog published thousands of names of people, including twenty Umeå researchers. These people were singled out as ‘the people who had ruined Sweden’ and severe punishments were mentioned.

TEXT: Mattias Grundström Mitz **PHOTO:** Mostphotos, Elin Berge, Mattias Pettersson



Lena Berggren sees herself as privileged and with good support.

LENA BERGGREN AT the Department of Historical, Philosophical and Religious Studies specialises in Fascism and other types of ultranationalism, and is one of the researchers who is often subjected to threats – both online, over the phone and also in real life. These threats are directly linked to her research.

“It’s very unpleasant to be exposed to threats, and it’s something you need to learn to handle, both as an individual, but also as an organisation and public authority. The angry and putatively offensive voices are claiming an increasingly larger presence in public debate. It’s something us researchers, just like other people in society, need to stand up against,” says Lena Berggren.

That right-wing blog was only published for a few hours, still it received great attention in social media due to its content. For example, one of the pages of the blog mentioned severe punishments for the listed individuals; such as the death penalty, and labour camps.

THE BLOG PUBLISHED thousands of names of people around the country; researchers, priests, anti-fascists, and journalists, but also Swedish organisations and associations.



Chatarina Larson, senior legal advisor

When staff at Umeå University are subjected to threats, which happens now and again, it becomes a work environment issue. In one of those, the employer can take measures such as changing the individual’s work tasks, introducing security measures, and offering various forms of support, for instance by the occupational health care services,” says Chatarina Larson, senior legal advisor at Umeå University.

A police report can be filed by the individual with support from the University.

IN LENA BERGGREN’S mind, it is important not to give way despite it being tough to be subjected to threats. Instead, let colleagues and the employer support you in finding tools to handle the situation.

“To be exposed to threats is a regular reality to many people. Often it is much worse and more directed than this type of online threats. As researchers, we are privileged, we have a voice and channels to express it in, we have a huge organisation to back us up and we’re able to bring forward arguments to the police and prosecutors if necessary. This is something to make use of, not least to give strength to other weaker groups in society,” says Lena Berggren. ●

Mobile contracts cause problems

WHEN THE UNIVERSITY changed supplier of university mobile telephone services to TDC, which in the process was acquired by Tele2, many users reported that the reception signal got worse. Arne Vedefors, Head of the IT Office, says that all problems and mistakes reported have been forwarded to Tele2. They in turn have promised to look at and fix the issues.

“So far, only about half of our old contracts have been moved from Telia. We’re currently not moving any more contracts

until we can see that Tele2 has solved our issues,” says Arne Vedefors.

He also mentions that in the near future, there will be a few special solutions available when it comes to mobile contracts. One is a contract that is not bound to one individual, and the other is a contract with greater allowance for data traffic.

In about a year, the current contract runs out and a new public procurement will be carried out. ●

PER MELANDER

Figuratively speaking → Erik Domellöf



Eight seasonal banners on the Humanities Building

DURING 2017, EIGHT seasonal banners in Sami, with Sami art and seasonal representations, will decorate the facade of the Humanities Building on Campus Umeå.

The idea behind the art project is, for instance, that Umeå University lies on Sami land, in Sápmi.

The University also has a tradition of research and education on Sami languages, history, culture and communities. The banners have been designed by Vaartoe (the Centre for Sami Research) the Faculty of Arts together with the Sámiid Riikkasearvi (the Swedish Sami Association), and Sáhkie (Umeå Sami Association). The banners will also be shown at Bildmuseet this autumn.



Norrländ under scrutiny in new book

IS NORRLAND, the north of Sweden, foremost used as a larder for Sweden as a whole and otherwise a liability to the Swedish tax-payers? What is the Northerners’ view on themselves and Norrland? In what ways can Norrland be seen as a focal point for further societal questions?

In the book *Brännpunkt Norrland*, with editors Bo Nilsson and Anders Öhman at Umeå University, the question is posed: what is the current image of Norrland?

Various media portray the hinterland as hard struck and exposed. Already at the end of the 19th century, when forests and iron ore were the principal Swedish assets, these issues were discussed. Intellectuals and authors reacted against Norrland not being treated better than a colony.

1,361

works of art are displayed at Umeå University

- 69 photographs
- 652 graphic artworks
- 59 handcrafted artworks
- 374 paintings
- 131 sculptures
- 69 drawings
- 7 textile artworks

Akademiska Hus owns and manages a large proportion of the great works of art tied to buildings and the larger outdoor works of arts. This covers 30 works of art placed at Umeå University. For instance, Lage Lindell's great mural in the Lindell Hall, Ernst Nordin's sculpture *Northern Lights* by the Pond, Albin Karlsson's *Mirror Digital Clock* in the University Library, Mandana Moghaddam's *The wind will carry us* outside the Humanities Building, and Cilla Ramnek's *Pattern no 74* in the Northern Behavioural Sciences Building.

Pit stop for the organisation

An organisation overhaul does not sound that overwhelming. But it may end up causing some excitement, after all. Even small adjustments to policy documents can lead to rather large adjustments when the policy is applied.

TEXT: Jonas Lidström **PHOTO:** Per Melander

THIS AUTUMN, a working team of some impressively experienced people will be making an overhaul of the foundation of Umeå University's organisation. At the beginning of next year, their work will result in a proposal for decision-making.

The bulk of the effort is to define the University's basic structure: departments, centres of expertise and research, units, and schools. What are they for and how do they differ from one another? Based on what criteria should they be established, run and dissolved? And how are they controlled?

"The first meeting we had in the group was one of the most rewarding I've had in a long time. Everyone involved is truly committed when it comes to issues of this kind," says academy clerk Daniel Andersson at the Planning Office, and convener of the group.

"It's also due to the great need for development in order for things to run even more smoothly. Also the small, nerdy details can prove incredibly important for the larger picture," he adds.

As academy clerk, Daniel Andersson has seen hundreds of organisational cases pass his desk for different reasons, he is certainly familiar with the pros and cons of the current organisational setup. The overhaul that has now been initiated is something he has been looking forward to for quite some time.

"All the members have now been given homework. Namely to scrutinise their own faculty's organisation and dive deeper into what challenges and risks it faces in the future."



Anders Steinwall and Daniel Andersson establish that there is a great need for development in order for things to run even more smoothly. Even in the small detail.

THE NEED FOR A MORE uniform legal framework has developed over time. This according to Anders Steinwall, analyst at the Planning Office:

"Most people we have talked to see the need for an overhaul of the current system, but people also show concern that a new solution will hinder rather than help matters."

Together with Daniel Andersson, he has analysed how the current organisational structure works, traced its development, and compared it to how other institutions of higher education are organised, both within and outside of Sweden.

"The University of Gothenburg made a corresponding overhaul as late as in 2014. One of the changes made was to set a time

limit on centres of expertise and research, and they introduced a clear plan for evaluation and potential extension," says Anders Steinwall.

IT CAN TURN OUT that centres of expertise and research as a core unit will get a remarkably altered role at Umeå University if the suggestions being discussed are approved in the final legal framework.

"At present, we have a number of centres that are placed directly under the Vice-Chancellor's supervision. The message we have received from Vice-Chancellor Hans Adolfsson has been to rearrange these into the line of command – under a host department, that is," says Anders Steinwall.



The overhaul aims to define the University's basic structure: departments, centres of expertise and research, units, and schools.

“One important aspect to consider is that centres are relatively temporary in their nature, whilst the more permanent building blocks should be run as departments,” explains Daniel Andersson.

“Have you ever heard of a centre continuing into a more permanent discipline of its own? If so, it should be transformed into a new department,” Anders Steinwalls adds.

Simultaneously, Daniel Andersson points out that the immediate effects of a revision of the legal framework will be noticed more when new units are founded:

“Currently, a fair few cases have had to await an update of the legal framework, for instance applications on establishing or reforming parts of the organisation, and consequently it will be in that end we take off with a new legal framework in place.”

ONE ISSUE THAT has come to light as of late concerns the positioning of research infrastructure in the organisational scheme.

“In the current legal framework, there’s no mention of infrastructure, but there’s strong demand for it from the organisation,” says Daniel Andersson.

So far, sustainable and well thought-out incorporations of research infrastructure have not been regulated. Is a new type of core unit for infrastructure required? Or can it be sorted under the departments?

“The other universities are also working on how to best organise research infrastructure,” says Anders Steinwall.

“It’s a good opportunity to look closer into this as we’re overseeing the entire picture anyway. Otherwise, a separate project to deal with infrastructure might have been needed on the side,” he concludes. ●

5 questions

for **Lars Lustig**, county director at the County Administrative Board in Västerbotten and former University Director of Umeå University, who since June is new vice chairperson of the University Board.



TEXT: Mattias Grundström Mitz **PHOTO:** Mattias Pettersson

1 How do you feel about being back?

“I’m happy and feel stimulated to reconnect with Umeå University again and to contribute to the continued development from a board perspective.”

2 What are your thoughts on working with chairperson Chris Heister, previous county governor in Västerbotten and Stockholm?

“I’m looking forward to working together with all of the competent board members as well as with Chris Heister. She’s a driven person and structured in her way of work. She accomplished some great work over her last term of office as member of the University Board, while I was University Director. With her wide span of knowledge, extensive circle of contacts and personal enthusiasm, she will be a great asset for Umeå University and the Board.”

3 What will you contribute with as vice chairperson?

“One tangible thing is that I’ll be leading the assemblies when the chairperson is otherwise engaged. Also, it involves leading the Budget Committee and being part of the Staff Disciplinary Board. I have roughly twenty years’ experience in the higher education sector – from a public authority and governmental department as well as the individual university perspective – which I’m hoping to make use of. My years as county director have also given me a thorough understanding of the regional challenges in which the University has an important role.”

4 What are the greatest challenges for Umeå University?

“Firstly, to be an attractive institution of higher education for prospective students and members of staff. Secondly, to identify and support young and talented researchers, build strong research environments, be active in the great funding calls and maintain funding for necessary research infrastructure. Thirdly, to have a good employer policy and be at the forefront as far as work environment issues go. Working systematically and intensely with internationalisation in all of its forms must be the fifth and final challenge I’ll mention.”

5 What does Umeå University mean to Umeå and Västerbotten?

“The importance of Umeå University to Umeå and Västerbotten County can simply not be emphasised enough. Umeå University is the driving force behind so much that is circling. That’s why it’s so important that Umeå and the rest of the county continues to support Umeå University in various ways.” ●



Arctic countries need to take responsibility – we are one

Three months and ten days. That is how long it would have taken to listen to the sessions held at the large Arctic conference at Umeå University earlier this summer if held one after the other. “If we’d known what we were getting ourselves into, we’d have probably turned the chairmanship down,” says Arcum director Peter Sköld.

TEXT: Per Melander



PHOTO: MATS LINDBERG

THE STORY BEGAN in Krakow at the start of 2013 when Peter Sköld was literally pressed into a corner by three former IASSA presidents who said:

“We’ve had a chat and it’s soon time to appoint the next president of IASSA and host institution for the next ICASS conference. So, we came to the conclusion that you and Umeå University should run for the posts.” Peter Sköld was elated and flattered to be asked, and was positive, yet he said: “We’ll see about that.”

“Then I realised that Arcum was only a year old and hence it was too soon. It’s a big commitment and there were only three of us. It would be too much. So two weeks prior to deadline for candidacy, I sent an email saying we would turn it down and come again in three years’ time when we had more flesh on the bones,” says Peter Sköld.

The answer to his email came quickly: “That’s a shame! In Poland, we got the impression you would apply. That’s why we’ve told other candidates who’ve contacted us that we already have an excellent candidate and hence there’s no need to even try.”

“After having pondered for days before the deadline, I submitted an application after all. And hence, in a slightly frightened manner, we had to shoulder the burden of running the entire association. In hindsight,

I’m pleased that we had the guts as it turned out so well. And we gained an incredible amount of experience, not just through the conference, but over the three years of effort spent on IASSA.”

IT WAS NOT UNTIL Umeå University started a Sami research centre – currently named Vaartoe – and later when Arcum started, that the University began paying an interest in IASSA and ICASS.

“I had decided that if we were going to go forward with it, we had to fully commit. I became engaged in various international contexts and even wrote an article in the *Arctic Human Development Report*. And I committed to IASC, International Arctic Science Committee, which is another huge organisation.”

He also emphasises that the most important part of the conference is that the participants get the chance to meet over the course of five days and in detail discuss their respective tasks at hand.

“Many seem to have been stimulated, absorbed and inspired, which is what’s most important. Another important aim of a conference is to create awareness, and this can be seen by the impressive media reports.”

“What we primarily wanted to create awareness of is the ongoing research; within humanities and social sciences. Research that has traditionally held a rather unassuming position in arctic research, which other-



PHOTO: MATTIAS PETTERSSON

A relieved Arcum director, Peter Sköld, who after three years as president of the international Arctic association IASSA, has now passed the baton.

wise revolves greatly around the natural sciences and climate research.”

“We wanted to show that there is research that also approaches the Arctic from the point of the people and the societies; research that aims to contribute to a positive and sustainable development. Because we can’t forget that those insights are needed as well, and we’re trying to produce them. I think we’ve come a long and good way.”

PETER SKÖLD DESCRIBES how well received the conference was among research-

THEME *The Arctic*



PHOTO: SIMON ÖHMAN JONSSON



PHOTO: ULRIKA BERGFORS



PHOTO: ULRIKA BERGFORS

The conference ICASS IX gathered a record number of researchers from the entire Arctic in Umeå 8–12 June.

ers throughout the world: 800 researchers in social sciences and humanities gathered in one place over five days. And how it has almost been hard to fathom how many people found Umeå and Sweden fascinating, borderline exotic even.

He still likes to emphasise that the continued challenges that the social sciences and humanities face in Arctic research had still existed even if they had not organised the conference.

“New commitments occupy me at the moment, I have for instance been drawn closer to the EU, where I’m trying to engage in their Arctic research programme. Not least as it will offer some fairly reasonable opportunities for funding, but also as they have now learnt that Arcum in the north of Sweden can also be a part of leading development forward.”

This autumn, Peter Sköld is planning a trip to Spain to take part in drawing up *White Papers* addressed at the EU and Horizon 2020. It is crucial to show commitment and also to follow it up with activities at home, to make research available to a larger audience.

He points out that the research primarily contributes to the development of the entire Arctic region, but that it also has ties to innovation and developmental processes outside of the Arctic. The Arctic is for instance often a given place for indigenous studies, at the same time as indigenous peoples are found all over the world. The same goes for extractive industries, which do not just concern the Arctic either.

“Strategically, it’s a very suitable field to create awareness of, as we’re positioned in the North as a northern university. I see it as a responsibility just as much as an opportunity, to take our responsibility, and Sweden must do so if we want to take part and call this an Arctic country.” ●

At Umeå University, the Arctic has stood at the centre during 2017 with research concerning climate and the environment, but also on what life in the North involves — and what future has in store for us.

Find out more at umu.se/en/arctic

Arcum — the Arctic Research Centre at Umeå University is a faculty independent centre of expertise and research. Since its establishment in December 2012, Arcum has more than 250 affiliated researchers at Umeå University. Arcum offers a research environment where collaborations in project administration, publications, supervision, international networking, seminars and strategic planning is at the forefront.

Read more at arcum.umu.se

IASSA — International Arctic Social Sciences Association. Social science in this context also includes the humanities and a part of health research. IASSA has observer status in the Arctic Council, which is an international forum for collaboration between governments in the eight Arctic states and six organisations representing Arctic indigenous peoples.

Read more at iassa.org

ICASS — International Congress of Arctic Social Sciences. A conference organised by IASSA every three years. 8–12 June 2017, Umeå University hosted the conference with the theme *People and Place*. In three years, the Federal University in Russian Arkhangelsk will be hosting the conference.

Read more at arcum.umu.se/icass-ix

Joint Arctic Agenda — the five Nordic universities in Umeå, Luleå, Uleåborg, Rovaniemi and Tromsø have formed the Joint Arctic Agenda. By setting up a joint plan for the Arctic, the universities are aiming to create synergies and further strengthening their research and education, and more efficiently reach out internationally. In spring 2017, the five universities handed in a large joint funding application to NordForsk.

Scientific lunches served chilled

Vetenskapsluncherna are served every Thursday at 12:15 starting on 5 October until 30 November at Kafé Station in Umeå city centre.

To highlight the Arctic research conducted at Umeå University, the Arctic is the connecting thought binding this semester’s scientific lunches together.

Vetenskapsluncherna have already turned 10 and have become a popular event in Umeå’s generous calendar of knowledge-sharing culture, and they are a joint effort by the four

faculties at Umeå University. Hence, they also offer a good variation in topics of discussion. The lunches are all held in Swedish this time and the headlines are as follows:

- Hus utan värmesystem i kallt klimat — är det realistiskt?
- Nya infektionssjukdomar i klimatförändringarnas spår
- Mitt på ljusa natten — representation av Sápmi i svenska och franska tidningsartiklar om

TV-serien *Midnattssol*

- Hopp, ilska och uppgivenhet — känslor i samhällsomvandlingens Kiruna
- Vem eller vad styr utvecklingen i Arktis?
- Arktis, en skådeplats för rymden
- Kall om händerna — det kan bero på jobbet
- En historia blott? Vattenkraftutbyggnadens konsekvenser i Sápmi



PHOTO: MATTIAS PETTERSSON

Birgitta Evengård is one of the Umeå researchers who is committed in EU networks that create funding opportunities for EU2030, which is the next big EU research investment.

PHOTO: MOSTPHOTOS



Wants Umeå to muscle up

Umeå University is too modest in stressing its leading role in Arctic research in Sweden. This according to Birgitta Evengård, professor in infectious diseases.

BIRGITTA EVENGÅRD IS one of three leaders of a Nordic research collaboration about links between the spread of disease and climate change.

CLINF (Climate-change Effects on the Epidemiology of Infectious Diseases and the Associated Impacts on Northern Societies) is a Nordic Centre of Excellence in the NordForsk programme Responsible Development of the Arctic. CLINF is led jointly by Birgitta Evengård at Umeå University, Ann Albihn at the Swedish National Veterinary Institute, and Tomas Thierfelder at SLU.

“This interdisciplinary research project includes climate researchers, ecologists, veterinaries, medical staff, social scientists, gender researchers and specialists on indigenous peoples,” says Birgitta Evengård.

“The researchers in the project can now be found in the entire region, from Nuuk in Greenland to Jakutsk in eastern Siberia, where they will collaborate with authorities and organisations on all levels.”

The overall objective of the research project is to strengthen preparedness for the threat of more and new infectious diseases that can affect humans and animals. One example is the rapid temperature increase in the North opening up for ticks to carry hazardous infectious agents on their way north.

Global warming can also set free infectious agents that have been encapsulated in permafrost, such as for instance anthrax, when long-since contaminated and buried carcasses thaw and infectious agents are released. This has happened in Siberia, killing thousands of reindeer, and affecting people as well. Many northern societies depend on animal husbandry for their livelihoods. Therefore, the health of the animals plays an important part, and risks threatening the entire social structure if and when the health of the animals is affected.

THE BACKGROUND to Birgitta Evengård’s interest for this research domain in particu-

lar is because she as a professor sees it as her duty to contribute to increased understanding of what the future has to bring, and creating the competence to deal with these changes – all for better public health.

“It was evident to me, as I received my professorship in infectious disease at Umeå University, that the climate was undergoing rapid changes. As ecosystems change and cause new conditions for infectious diseases to spread, it becomes natural for me to contribute with my competence in this field.”

The conditions for the CLINF project to be able to fulfil its objectives are favourable, according to Birgitta Evengård. She also points out how many competent senior researchers they have, so they certainly have the skills needed. Even financially, things are looking good.

“What’s most important at the moment is the leadership that makes creativity bloom and making full use of the knowledge we.” ●

PER MELANDER, DANIEL HARJU



Citizen science in nature – a new trend

Hikers in Abisko are helping CIRC researchers conduct climate research by documenting changes to plant seasonal shifts. The general public's contribution to research has led to a new scientific culture and the coining of the term citizen science.

Text: Ingrid Söderbergh **Photo:** Anna Lawrence

CITIZEN SCIENCE IS in the vogue at present time, but it is not new among for instance bird watchers. Thanks to current technology and online web portals, opportunities for contributions have increased – and so has the need for help.

Citizen science is research conducted using active participants from the public. Besides helping researchers, citizens also gain insights into how research is done. In Sweden, nature observations is a common citizen science activity. One example is the SLU species portal, an open web page to which you can report animals, plants and fungi found in Sweden.

A new climate research project is the Nuolja research trail in Abisko, opened by Umeå University in June this year.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO, botanist Thore C. E. Fries completed a three-year study of snow melt dates and phenology – the seasonal variations in nature, that is. The place of study was a trail along the mountain Nuolja at the start of Kungsleden (the King's Trail) – Sweden's most popular hiking trail. Now, Keith Larson, researcher at the Climate Impacts Research Centre at Umeå Uni-

versity, is repeating Fries' original study. The work is carried out in collaboration with the Abisko Scientific Research Station, the SLU Naturens kalender and Naturum Abisko. The study has also been modernised with climate stations to complement the long-term climate data that has been collected at the research station since 1913.

“It's fantastic to get the chance to repeat a hundred-year-old study in a region where obvious signs of global warming can be seen. Abisko, and the Arctic in general, has experienced an annual average temperature increase of 1.5 °C in the last century, and the largest increase has taken place in the last 30 years. If that wasn't enough, the temperature increase in Abisko has resulted in a considerable thawing of permafrost and the treeline has moved up the mountain by as much as 30–40 metres,” says Keith Larson.

TO HELP COLLECT DATA, Keith Larson is using a citizen science project along the research trail. Tourists in Abisko are collecting data on twenty important plant species and submitting photos to document phenological changes over the growth season – from germination and flowering to withering.

Using the mobile app Fjällkalendern, developed by Kjell Bolmgren at the SLU Naturens kalender, visitors can submit their discoveries of plant development and upload photos.

WHY DO RESEARCHERS need help from the public?

“In our case, predictions on future effects of climate change in arctic and alpine regions in Sweden and abroad requires a comparison between historic and current data. For this to happen, a large amount of observations are necessary in order to generalise our results to a wider region outside of Abisko. By making use of citizens' interest in nature and science, everyday activities such as hiking and plant watching in the mountains can be simultaneously used for citizen science and large scale data collection.”

According to Keith Larson, these additional data can in some cases be used to replicate and validate field results from researchers. Getting the general public involved in research can also improve their knowledge and appreciation for researchers' work at this extremely critical point in climate change. ●

She studies causes and effects of terrorism

London, Paris, Brussels, Nice, Stockholm. When political scientist Veronica Strandh started studying terrorist attacks and the Swedish preparedness seven years ago, many raised an eyebrow. Today though, no one questions the need for her research.

TEXT: Per Melander **PHOTO:** Ulrika Bergfors

VERONICA STRANDH has always been interested in society and particularly subjects relating to security politics and international issues. Crisis management, terrorism and the civil community are all subjects in Veronica Strandh's ongoing research projects. She emphasises that these are subjects that hold current topics that are constantly in debate, but that are also in dire need for further, systematic research.

"Research on crisis management and terrorism are both relatively new in Sweden – and hence it is exciting to be a part of subjects in rapid change," says Veronica Strandh continuing:

"An interesting environment has developed with continuous contact between researchers, crisis management practitioners and various central security-related authorities. To me, research is at its best when it revolves around studies in collaboration with or close to the actors who work actively with the issues in their operations. The gist of it all is that the more I study these issues, the more interesting and urgent it seems."

WHEN SHE INITIATED her research on Swedish preparedness for great terrorist attacks in 2010 and held interviews, many people raised an eyebrow wondering if the questions were at all relevant.



Political scientist Veronica Strandh studies crises, terrorism and violent extremism.

"Many expressed that terrorism took place in countries far away. Today, we know that terrorism is one of the hottest subject of discussion in society and no one questions the need for research any longer."

ACCORDING TO VERONICA Strandh, more systematic work on a local level is required. There is a tendency in both crisis management practitioners and researchers to focus on the national level; central strategies, national players, and national legis-

lation, that is. And we are much worse at studying and understanding the processes on a municipal level. This is important if we want to figure out how to prevent radicalisation in Västerbotten.

RESEARCH ON TERRORISM is action-driven, if you ask Veronica Strandh. If terrorists start using trucks as their mode of operation, it is important for researchers to try to understand why and how to prevent it. On the other hand, it is important that researchers sometimes take a step back and analyse comprehensive patterns over time to try to understand the basic reasons behind terrorism.

"In the rapid flow of information we meet today, many people make fast analyses based on a relatively scarce amount of information, research plays an important role by presenting greater patterns and explaining the context of various attacks.

In Veronica Strand's mind, society's reactions on the attacks over the last years follow the same pattern.

"Many react with dismay and great worry. Soon, determination can be seen. People don't want to be afraid and want to continue living in open societies. After the Barcelona attack this summer, I still observed a change. Many people expressed resignation as in 'you can't protect yourself against terror'," says Veronica Strandh. ●



“Every human being and every turn of the river has its history.”

He has read millions of documents without getting bored. Quite the opposite, actually, it just gets better.

TEXT: Ola Nilsson PHOTO: Johan Gunséus

WITH ONE YEAR to go until retirement, archivist Cuno Bernhardsson has no plans of phasing out. Where others see dusty shelves, Cuno sees life destinies and stories.

“I’m happy to have had the privilege of having an exciting job that offers me new perspectives and new insights every day. Through these archives, I can get to know the person behind the facade, and follow societal change,” says Cuno Bernhardsson, chief archivist at the Research Archives.

Most people at the University seem to have heard about Cuno. He has become an establishment figure himself. As if he has always been here. But he has only worked at Umeå University since 2004. The move was short, though – only from Gammlia where Cuno worked

for 26 years with the Popular Movement Archives. The starting point was the village Edsele in northeastern Ångermanland where Cuno was brought up. Already early on, he showed a talent for cataloguing events.

“I remember sitting along the village road noting down information from registration plates of cars passing by. Most cars were marked ‘Y’ as in Västerbotten, but sometimes cars came by marked ‘A’ – for Stockholm – and that was something special.”

UNIVERSITY LIFE BECAME a shock. His father was a water power plant mechanic, which meant the family had to move to Sikfors along the Pite River. Cuno was first in the family to complete more than seven years of school. His upper-secondary school in Piteå was one of liberal arts. In 1973, he moved on to the education metropolis Umeå for university studies in history. The debut on campus and the first encounter with academia

was a slight shock to the mechanic's son from the countryside, but he soon picked it up. Cuno got a thirst for knowledge, and after three semesters in Umeå, he found himself curious about ethnology – a subject he had only vaguely heard of, and could not be found closer than in Uppsala.

“As a grownup in a smallholding society in the Northern country, I carried ethnology in my blood. In the village, folklore beliefs in Vittror nature spirits and Bjära troll cats, persisted well into the 1970s.”

Besides ethnology studies, he also took courses in museum technology and archiving in Uppsala. Thanks to those, he landed a job at the Dialectology and Folklore Archives in 1977, where he among other things transcribed recordings of dialects. In spring 1978, he moved back north for a job as an archivist at the Popular Movement Archive in Västerbotten. And a quarter century later, he made that final stones-throw-move from Gammlia to campus.

The Research Archives with its ten employees falls under the University Library spanning across roughly 800 running metres of archives of 206 individuals. The Research Archives focuses on people's lives, whereas the University's national duty to archive only applies to public records and falls on the university administration and departments.

CURRENTLY, CUNO IS in the middle of sorting Professor Gunnar Kulldorff's archive. He was one of the driving forces behind the University formation in the 1960s, and an individual who documented his entire life. This alone has resulted in 103 running metres donated from the mathematics and statistics department.

“So far, I have worked through 85 of those metres and I'm beginning to see a structure. In this material, it's possible to follow the birth of the University and Gunnar Kulldorff's great commitment. Once I get the material into archiving boxes, have labelled and registered everything, the feeling is hard to describe when someone comes to use the material.”

The office on top of the University Library already has a whole wall full of documents, but only the items that Cuno quickly needs access to if someone phones qualifies for this shelf. The rest goes in the archive. Even his spare time is spent collecting documents. In his apartment in Fridhem, a whole room is devoted to documents. Some of them will shortly move to the childhood cottage in Edsele, which Cuno inherited from his grandparents, and in which he is planning on building a library. Minimalism, Scandinavian white interior design, nor living in the moment is Cuno's thing. ▶



Cuno Bernhardsson

Title: Chief archivist at the Research Archives, the University Library.

Hobbies: Gardening, fishing, various building work. Apart from history and documentation, of course.

Watches: Documentaries about people. Otherwise, news, culture and nature shows.

Favourite dishes: Freshly caught and grilled grayling, and partner Maud's pork chops.

Latest book-read: One with Winston Churchill quotes.

Dreams of: When most dreams have been accomplished at my age, the main focus is for those who are close to me to get a good and prosperous life.

“I live in the moment as well, with gardening and my grandchildren. But I also keep in mind how boring life would be if all we could live off was what we had created ourselves during our short stop on Earth. We must have something to go back to in order to learn. Don’t forget. History is also what happened an hour ago.”

“EVERY HUMAN BEING and every turn of the river has its history. Every part of a village or suburb has its history. And I’m just getting more and more fascinated by this profession the older I get. It’s about the collective memory in society,” says Cuno.

History – not least academic history – revolves around a fair few men, hence several running metres in the archive are taken up by men and their life stories. You can follow Gustav Rosén’s entry into the Västerbotten newspaper market when he took over the local paper Västerbottens-Kuriren, or when Gösta Skoglund came to Umeå in the 1920s from a fishing family in Hälsingland. Gösta Skoglund became editor-in-chief of a fishing magazine, led a choir and then climbed all the way up to the Government, where he became Minister

of Communications and one of those who made sure the fifth Swedish university was placed in Umeå. Cuno also got in touch with the Luleå-borne poet Folke Isaksson before he passed, and hence his entire archive was donated to Umeå, including his 180 editions of Gulliver’s Travels.

Quite a number of interesting female life stories can also be found. Known – such as the Swedish author Sara Lidman who donated her entire archive – as well as lesser known women. One of them

is a midwife in Jämtland, Julia Wiklund, whose husband Thunström was a school teacher who was discharged from the Ragunda School and was sent packing. Eventually they found themselves in Missenträsk where he became teacher to Sara Lidman’s grandmother and an inspiration to her authorship. But destiny had other plans for the midwife. She divorced teacher Thunström who was heavy on the drink. And she had fallen pregnant with the Ragunda postmaster. Later on, Julia Wiklund followed her son, who now carried the grand name Garibaldi, when he moved to Stockholm in the 1880s.

ANOTHER LITERARY CHARACTER with a completely different life story was Siv Cedering who immigrated from Överkalix to the US with her dad. Siv Cedering was long the Swedish literary voice in the US and the archive accommodates a fascinating correspondence with American underground poets. Transporting an archive of 70 running metres across the Atlantic is tricky, but the most important perspective is the contact with the person in question and their next of kin.

Cuno also got in unexpected touch with the US through another archival life story. An Olof Petter, who

after a violent dispute on a dark night had to spend three-and-a-half years in prison and then immigrated to North America. Later on, the fighter ends up in the archives as deputy sheriff. Olof Petter’s grandson now lives in Salt Lake City and found out about Cuno’s investigations of the grandfather and invited him to the States, where Cuno has spent nearly a year combined since 2005. Apart from an acquired archive, Cuno has also visited the University of California in Berkeley, the National Archives and the Library of Congress in Washington. It has also given him a chance to practise his English.

A chef wants people to eat his dishes, a musician wants people to listen to his songs. And an archivist wants other people to acquaint themselves with all exciting information that is hidden in the carefully arranged shelves. And certainly, people do. Lately, even other people than the usual visitors, the researchers that is, have shown an increased interest in the collections. Among these you find authors, directors and artists diving into the archives.

“That gives you increased energy in a way. Artists can spend much more time than researchers, sometimes years on end, diving into individual people’s destinies. In return, they instead become less bound to the material and it’s very exciting to see the results.”

DESPITE INTENSE DIVING into archive details, you sometimes never find what you are looking for. It might simply not exist. One of those things is the mysterious contract that said maids and farmhands should be spared from being served salmon every day. Neither Cuno nor any other archivist has found evidence of such a contract. It seems like a tall story. Another uncertain anecdote is how the Västerbotten cheese derived by accident as a consequence of an Ulrika Eleonora Lindström’s love affair in Burträsk. The archives show that the cheese first turned up at an 1872 agricultural meeting in Åsele, without links to Burträsk nor Ulrika Eleonora.

“On the other hand. Why ruin a good story? I don’t begrudge Burträsk to be home to the cheese,” he says.

And then the inevitable question about the name. No, Cuno is not short for Carl-Uno. His name really is Cuno and has been so from day one. It is an unusual name not shared with many, 260 Swedes to be precise. And only 27 of them spell it this way. Those who do a Google search for Kuno together with Umeå University will end up at the Umeå Academy of Fine Arts at which Kuno is the name for a Nordic network of art programmes. His parents wanted to call him Karl after his grandfather on his mother’s side, or Olov after his father, but then the grandmother stepped in – yet another strong woman – and decided that the boy was going to be called Cuno after a certain somebody in a popular song. And that was that.

Next summer, Cuno turns 67, and what happens after that is still uncertain. Maybe he will get more time for holding lectures on all the interesting people, places and events he has learnt about. Maybe there will be more time for gardening, fishing and spending time with grandchildren and others in his vicinity. Maybe some discussions. And of course more time to build the library in the cottage in Edsele. ●

“We must have something to go back to in order to learn. Don’t forget. History is also what happened an hour ago.”



A day at CIRC in Abisko

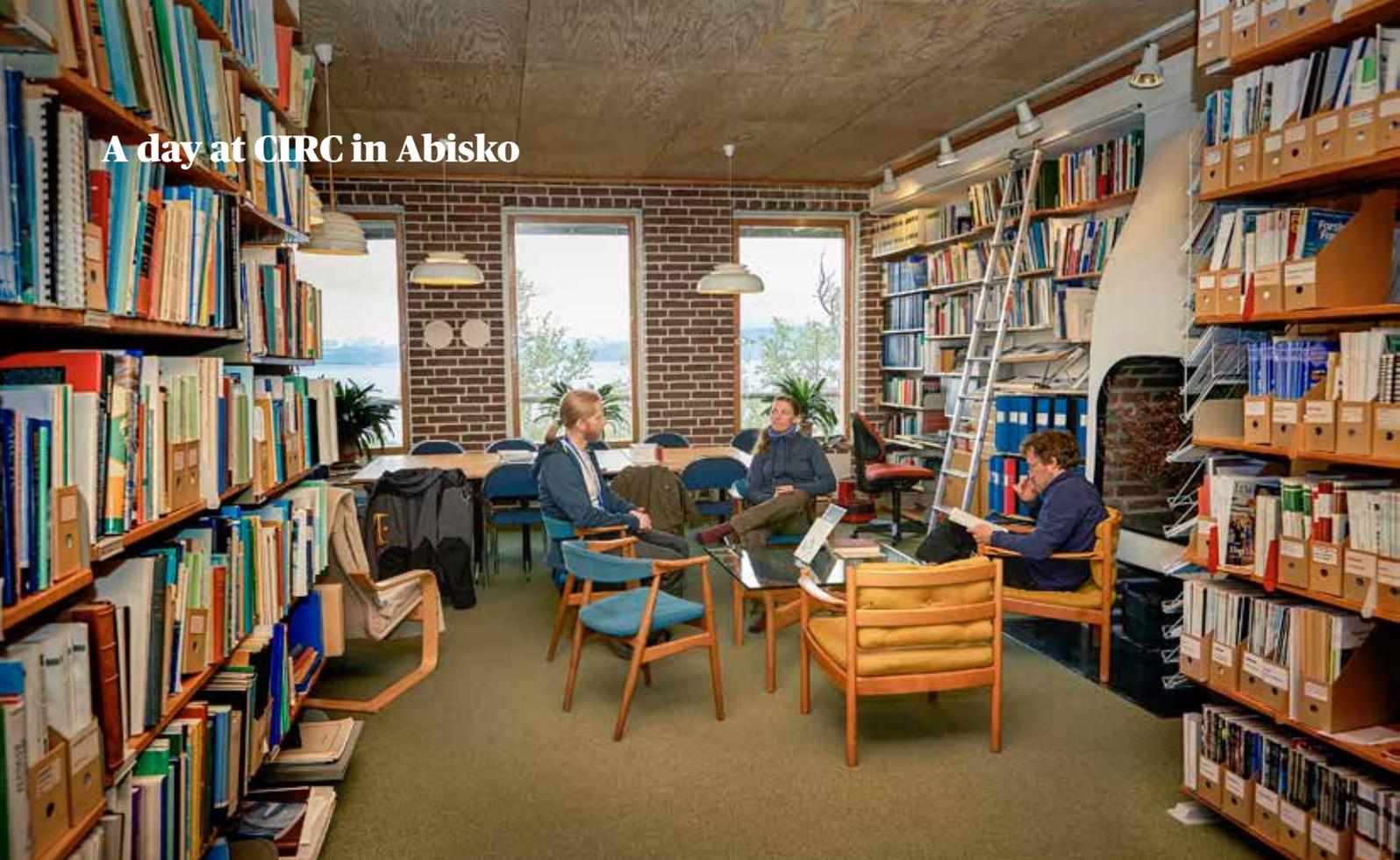
Doctoral student Sylvain Monteux is measuring the depth of the active layer, that is the ground above the permafrost to study for instance how expanding plant root systems affect microorganisms and the decomposition of carbon.

Mountain-crossing climate research

In the sensitive mountain region, climate change can be seen with your bare eyes. The research station in Abisko hence has visiting researchers from all over the world. One of the operations carrying out climate studies in the Swedish mountains is the Climate Impacts Research Centre (CIRC) at Umeå University.

TEXT: Anna Lawrence **PHOTO:** Tomas Utsi, Anna Lawrence, Ingrid Söderbergh, David Seekell

A day at CIRC in Abisko



The library at ANS is looking out on the quiet Lake Torne tråsk. Here, one can peacefully work among titles such as *A Changing Arctic Climate; Geomorphology, Environment and Man; and The Permafrost Environment*.

A **BISKO** Scientific Research Station (ANS) is located 690 kilometres northwest of Umeå. About 40 kilometres east of the Norwegian border. And a ten-hour train journey from Umeå.

“People sometimes ask if it isn’t lonely in Abisko. But Abisko and its surroundings is very popular among tourists and researchers, particularly in summer during which it really flourishes,” says Jan Karlsson, director of the Climate Impacts Research Centre (CIRC).

And he has had plenty of time to experience Abisko as he has made his entire career here. From 1998 as a doctoral student and later as professor and director of CIRC. Nowadays, he spends a few days per month here, and the rest in Umeå.

THE PERSON HOLDING the fort in Abisko is instead project coordinator Keith Larson from the US. Since September 2013, Keith Larson and his family have lived all-year round at ANS.

And according to Keith Larson, Abisko has a lot to offer also to researchers outside of CIRC.

“We have great labs and equipment. You can come here to carry out research, but also to work on your grant proposal or your paper. All the while, you get a change of scenery and can enjoy skiing or spotting the Northern Lights. And there’s no queue to the labs. Just get in touch!” says Keith Larson in a welcoming tone from his office at ANS.

ANS IS RUN BY the Swedish Polar Research Secretariat and CIRC is the only tenant with researchers here all year round. Groups from other institutions come and go. The station has been extended on a number of occasions and the decorations remind you of the yellow and brown Swedish 1960s. The corridors are narrow and take you like a labyrinth in various directions.

At the visit, the building seems to lie dormant and the summer rush has still not quite kicked off. Many of the researchers are also doing fieldwork.

One of them is ecologist Judith Sarneel with her project Teatime 4 Science. She came to Sweden from the Netherlands four years ago to conduct research. This autumn, she is even teaching the new course Arctic Ecosystems in Abisko.

“An advantage with Abisko is that everything is so well-organised. Equipment, car and lab can be rented from the station and nature is right on your doorstep. The landscape around Abisko gives lots of opportunities to study climatic variation, you only have to go to the next valley to find another precipitation zone,” says Judith Sarneel.

WE ARE ON OUR way out to the Storflaket mire. It is a rather chilly day with heavy grey clouds. The purpose of the excursion is to bury tea bags that Judith Sarneel three months later will dig up to measure the degree of decomposition.

The same mire is also regularly used by other researchers, particularly for permafrost studies. To the detriment of berry pickers perhaps. Because the field is full

Keith Larson’s task as project coordinator is to run the day to day business at CIRC and help researchers who come to Abisko. But he also has a few research projects on the go, one being the Nuolja research trail.





“The Abisko Scientific Research Station has no equivalent anywhere else and attracts researchers from all over the world thanks to its geographic location and its good infrastructure,” says Jan Karlsson.

Ecologist Judith Sarneel buries some tea-bags to study the degree of decomposition.



Student Moa Petterson has captured a *Bombus polaris* bumblebee on the way up to Kärkevagge and shows it to Stig-Olof Holm and Hassan Ridha.

FACTS

Annually, 80 projects are run at ANS leading to 6,000 overnight stays across 500–600 researchers and students. CIRC with its 40 researchers belongs to the Department of Ecology and Environmental Science.

Students in the summer course *Alpine Ecology* are intensely trying to capture a bumblebee. When captured, the species is determined and the insect is released.



A day at CIRC in Abisko



Hannah Rosenzweig and Lara Schmitt come from Germany and are doing their internship in Keith Larson's phenology project. They have, together with Hassan Ridha, been very helpful in measuring the snow coverage, analysing soil moisture and registering plant development on the Nuolja research trail.



"When mountain temperatures increase, plants and animals adapted to cold climates have a hard time surviving. Hence, species are dying," explains Jan Karlsson during his popular science lecture during Arctic Days in Abisko.

of cloud berry plants in full bloom that will later turn into the golden cloudberry – at least the female flowers, we find out.

This late in June, the mosquitoes have just arrived, but not in full attack mode yet. Spring had been cold and insects few, leading to delayed pollination of plants. The remaining patches of snow on the mountain are hence unusually thick causing trouble for some researchers with field sites on high altitudes. One of them is Maja Sundqvist who has had to spend many extra hours just reaching her field site resulting in not being able to meet up with us at all.

Sylvain Monteux, doctoral student in ecology, on the other hand is not affected by the weather right now. He has lived in Abisko for three years and has already spent hours measuring the depth of the active layer between the permafrost and the ground surface in the field. Now, his research is in a stage of data analysis at the station before he takes off on holiday back home to France.

"I really like Abisko. Seasons shift a lot, which provides good opportunities to vary how we conduct our studies. And we have a really good time outside of working hours," he says when he takes a break in the sun together with research colleagues from other research institutes outside the station.

Keith, Sylvain and Judith are not the only ones who have travelled far to come to Abisko for their research. The fact is, a majority of visitors at ANS come from abroad. This is

not least noticeable from all the signs in English posted all over the station. And in the break rooms we bump into researchers from Canada, the UK, Denmark and Germany.

This particular week, CIRC with the help of researchers are arranging a seminar series under the name Arctic Days in Abisko. But popular science lectures to the public is no one-off affair. CIRC researchers regularly spread climate research to an interested general public in Abisko as well as in Umeå.

ALTHOUGH, NOT ONLY research takes place in Abisko – but education too. Aktum followed Stig-Olof Holm, associate professor in ecology, with the help of nature guide Hassan Ridha, on an excursion to Kärkevåg valley west of Abisko. Together with 22 students from the Umeå University summer course Alpine Ecology.

"The course is based on two sessions of field studies in Abisko focusing on birds and alpine plants. Today, the students will be learning more about alpine bumblebees and the effects of grazing on flora and fauna," says Stig-Olof Holm whilst walking along footbridges across wetland up the flowering valley.

At the start of the two-day stay Čuonjávággi (Tjuonavagge) – the Lapponian Gate – was hard to spot behind thick clouds, but ready for our departure, the well-known gate showed its splendour together with the midnight sun. ●

Arctic issues awaiting answers

PHOTO: MATTIAS PETERSSON



“It’s time to promote Umeå University’s strong research in, about and for the Arctic.”

ABISKO IS PROBABLY the northernmost location where Umeå University has research and teaching staff. Climate Impacts Research Centre (CIRC) is the second largest tenant at Abisko Scientific Research Station with roots in the early 20th century. At present, the station is included in a network of research stations around the Arctic, but its age and many of the over 100 year-long series of ecological and climatological data make the station superior – and popular.

Shortly after Midsummer, I had the pleasure of driving up to Abisko for the event Arctic Days. This time, CIRC had organised a gathering with popular science lectures and a field walk. Keith Larson, researcher at CIRC, presented his *citizen science* project in which tourists are invited to collect data that is then used in research evaluations.

THE TRIP ALSO GAVE me the chance to talk to university researchers on site and I was impressed with how many cool projects that take place here, and even more so, what exciting ideas they have in store for the future. The challenge for this operation is a lack of people rather than ideas. And it isn’t just natural scientists, but also representatives from the arts and humanities, and the social sciences. This also became clear in all the presentations I listened to. History of science issues and conflicts over land use are just two such themes that came to my mind. Undeniably, there are many exciting issues in Arctic research that are yet unanswered.

When writing this text in August, a news item that I believe will favour Arctic research at Umeå University is released: The Swedish Polar Research Secretariat will be moved from Djurgården in Stockholm to

Luleå. The authority that also runs the research station in Abisko, is responsible for coordinating Swedish polar research with a minimal number of employees. Still, the move has symbolic value. It means that you accept and manifest Sweden’s role as a country with Arctic territory. Relocating the headquarters closer to Umeå University and Abisko Scientific Research Station may mean that land-based research will be granted greater attention within the Swedish Polar Research Secretariat, whose attention has largely been aimed at the icebreaker Oden.

Umeå University has over the last few years worked together with the Secretariat to widen the polar research perspective to also include land-based operations in northern Sweden, and research in the arts, social sciences and medicine. And in June, we signed an agreement for further collaborations with the Swedish Polar Research Secretariat.

Naturally, immediate criticism was delivered from Stockholm-based pundits who regularly express unease about competence management in northern peripheries. In these circumstances, it’s high time to further promote the university’s strong research in, about and for the Arctic and help make the Secretariat’s relocation into something positive for Swedish polar research. The University has the competence to do so. ●

DIETER MÜLLER
DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR

“People are social creatures and we learn by testing our ideas against one another’s, create new connections and change our perspectives. We gain new insights by meeting and interacting — with each other, with text books, with research findings, and with the surrounding world. For me and many other teachers, our aim is to never leave a lecture without having learnt something for ourselves.”

Heidi Hansson, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, writes about knowledge being something created together with others.
blogg.umu.se/ledningsbloggen (In Swedish)



PHOTO: MATTIAS PETERSSON

“It’s in those messy situations that it’s comforting to know that this institution of higher education can signify something stable and durable ...”

Hans Adolfsson, Vice-Chancellor, summarizes a summer with discussions about the Swedish Transport Agency and Trump.
blogg.umu.se/ledningsbloggen (In Swedish)

Prime art rounds up the autumn

Faust selling his soul to the Devil, female Nobel laureates are getting even with prejudice, and Finland celebrates 100. Culture on Campus is going broad this cultural autumn.

“BREADTH AND QUALITY are the catchwords for our bookings,” says Jonas Ericson, project coordinator for Culture on Campus. “Each individual booking much reach a high quality, but seen over time, there must also be a good span of events. Not too much of the same thing.”

This autumn has started broadly and at quite a pace with hiphop, jazz, literature and poetry. Cleo was first out at the Welcome Fair, followed by world-famous jazz by Svante Henrysson, the author Mats Jonsson about his novel about the Nya Norrland. In the traditional collaboration with the SEE Sustainability Week in September, the poet and entertainer Bob Hansson paid a visit.

“When talking about sustainability, people often think about the environment, but there’s also a social sustainability to safeguard. Love, friendship and work relations. And at the same time us people must stick together. That aspect is important, not least at a university, so we gave Bob Hansson a mission to give his impression of that,” says Jonas Ericson

At the time of this magazine going to press, the other half of the autumn was still not official. The best way of staying updated is to follow Culture on Campus on Facebook or sign up for our newsletter. ●

PER MELANDER

www.facebook.com/kulturpacampus

CULTURE ON CAMPUS is a unique investment in culture in a scientific surrounding. Cultural events nearly every week, always at lunchtime, and free for students and staff. It’s all from music, literature and dance to theatre, circus and much more.



Faust

NorrlandsOperan
Thursday 28 September
At 12:10–12:30
Ljuskården Atrium, the
Teacher Education Building
On stage: conductor and
solo singer. In Swedish.

The opera tells a story about Faust, who is tired and disappointed with life and sells his soul to the Devil. In exchange for eternal youth and love, he swears to serve Mefistofele — the Devil — in the life after death. He makes a poor woman pregnant, deserts her and kills her brother. The woman who is driven mad, kills their joint child. Finally, he gets an epiphany and visits her on death row awaiting her sentence. For the greatest of crimes: Infanticide.



Growing up in one week (Viikossa aikuiseksi)

Finnish comedy, 92 min
In Finnish with Swedish text.
Thursday 5 October
At 12:00–13:30
Lecture theatre F,
the Humanities Building

We are celebrating Finland’s 100th anniversary with a film. Welcome to a sex and drug free adulthood camp for adults. Your new life starts here! A group of strangers gather in the Åbo archipelago to celebrate an unusual holiday at something that has been marketed as a camp for adults who want to grow up. The camp may not fulfil the promise of being the best week in life, but one thing is for sure: no one returns to everyday life unchanged.



Scandal!

“An explosive song and dance drama about the female Nobel laureates in Physics, Chemistry and Medicine.”

Thursday 12 October
At 12:10–13:00
Ljuskården Atrium, the
Teacher Education Building

Besatta Teatern is doing a play on the reality of women researchers over the years: obstacles resistance, exclusion and even humiliation. Naturally, they do it in their own way with lots of humour, musicality and interactivity. In Scandal, we meet six historical women researchers who have won the Nobel Prize — and a few who were left without. They pose questions about structures, habitual patterns, prejudice, unfair treatment and sing about scandals — all mixed with facts and statistics.



Lucia

with the Umeå Student Choir
Wednesday 13 December
At 12:10–12:40
Aula Nordica

One of Sweden’s nicest traditions, Lucia with Umeå Student Choir. You don’t want to miss this! Christmas spirit is guaranteed.

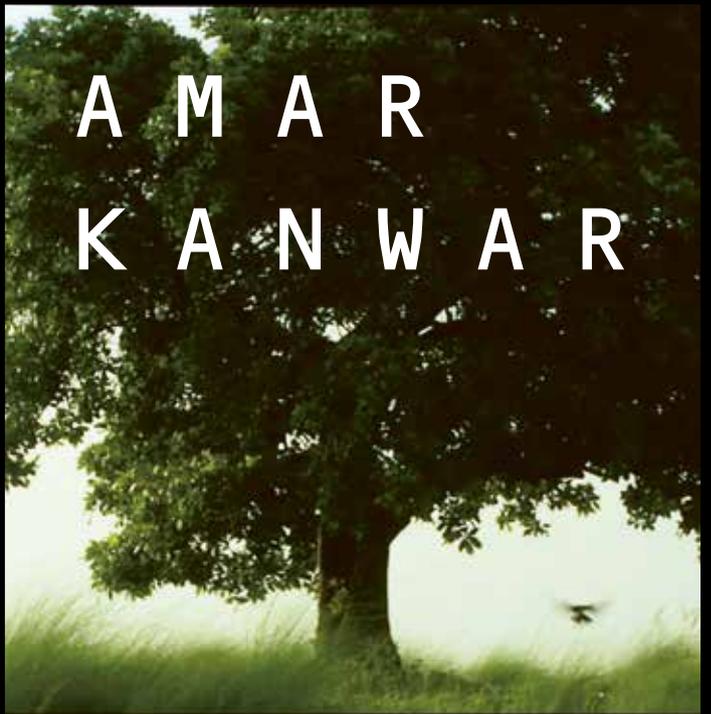
PLEASE NOTE! A tickets is required. You can pick up your free ticket a couple of days in advance from Infocenter and the University Library.

BILDMUSEET UNTIL 22 OCT 2017
FRI 11-21, SAT-SUN + TUE-THU 11-18
WWW.BILDMUSEET.UMU.SE



A N A
M E N D I -
E T A

A M A R
K A N W A R



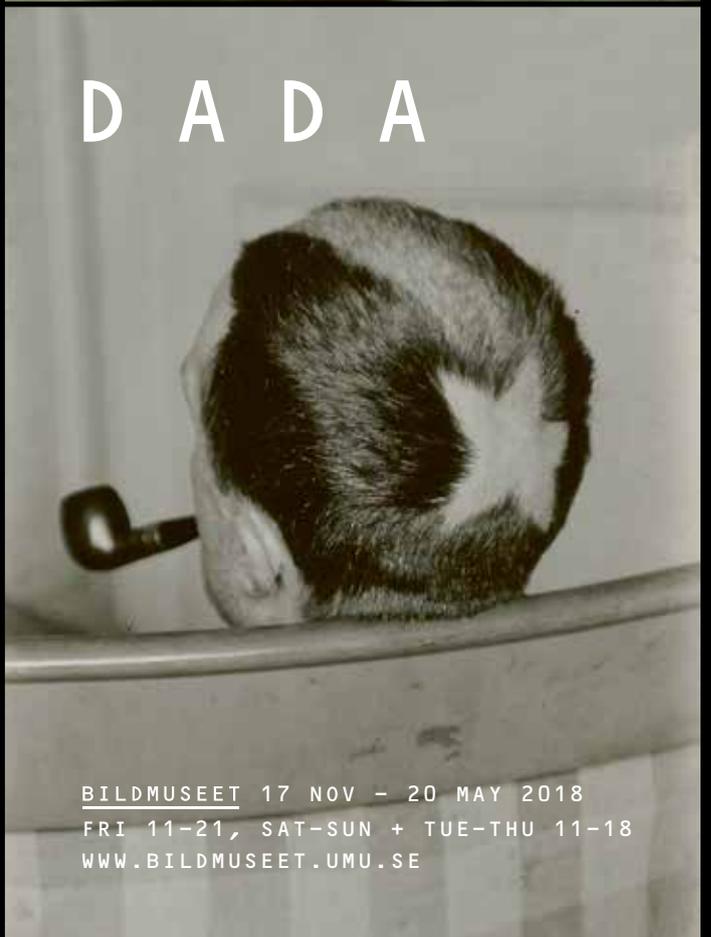
BILDMUSEET 20 OCT - 11 MAR 2018
FRI 11-21, SAT-SUN + TUE-THU 11-18
WWW.BILDMUSEET.UMU.SE

D O H O
S U H /
P A S -
S A G E S



BILDMUSEET 17 NOV - 15 APR 2018
FRI 11-21, SAT-SUN + TUE-THU 11-18
WWW.BILDMUSEET.UMU.SE

D A D A



BILDMUSEET 17 NOV - 20 MAY 2018
FRI 11-21, SAT-SUN + TUE-THU 11-18
WWW.BILDMUSEET.UMU.SE

Finally... **Klara Johansson**

PHOTO: TEDx UMEÅ



Klara Johansson is a researcher in epidemiology and public health, and studies the importance of socioeconomic factors to young people's mental health.

Would you like to write an Aktum column?

Get in touch with the editorial board!
aktum@umu.se

Strategies against fact resistance

FACT RESISTANCE is on everyone's lips today, and how much it has increased. But I'm not sure we know if it actually has increased. One thing is for sure though – it's rather loud and confident these days. And it leads to some rather tangible and serious issues. For instance, measles is now on the rise in countries where it was nearly extinct due to some parents' distrust for vaccines.

One problem is that humans always tend to be sponges to information we like, simultaneously rejecting information that is contrary to our beliefs. Unfortunately, this also goes for well-educated people, researchers alike.

IS IT EVEN WORTH engaging in an argument with someone whose strong conviction is contrary to all established research? If your objective is to turn that particular individual – your efforts will probably be in vain. In a heated discussion where arguments are fired crossways, the risk is for the opponent to just dig a deeper hole into its own trenches. Not leaving a wrongful claim unanswered can however be valuable, not least as there may be others who need to hear the counterarguments.

In such a debate, it's important for us to maintain scientific nuances and proceed with some care, even when the counterpart has a dogmatic and aggressive style of debate. Unfortunately, it's difficult to be quick-witted, worth reading, brief and at the same time nuanced ... But if we blurt out a dogmatic statement for which it turns out we have no evidence, we've lost credibility as scientists.

IF YOUR AIM INSTEAD is to reach that particular person with the wrongful, yet strong conviction, it may be better to ask open and neutral questions. When subjects in a study were asked to describe the health insurance system, their previously strong views on it became more careful. They simply realised that they knew too little about how it worked.

Also, curiosity seems to function as a type of vaccine against misinterpreting information. A study showed that people 'curious of science' were better than others to absorb information that disputed their political views. On the other hand, 'scientific competence' was no protection whatsoever for preferential interpretation of information.

DO THE UNIVERSITIES HAVE any responsibility in promoting curiosity and counteract fact resistance? Can our students complete their studies with just as much curiosity as they had when they started? Can we encourage scientific curiosity and source criticism in society?

The first step may be to strengthen our own curiosity, and to be open for our own hypotheses and results potentially being wrong. I may even be wrong about absolutely everything in this column. At least, I'm very curious about how the fact resistance phenomenon works and how it can be counteracted. ●

KLARA JOHANSSON