

# The sixty years crisis

## A short history of a huge problem



Part 11 My own journey – Part A  
Compiled by Carl Ohlen

When you have gone through this history  
please send your feedback to:

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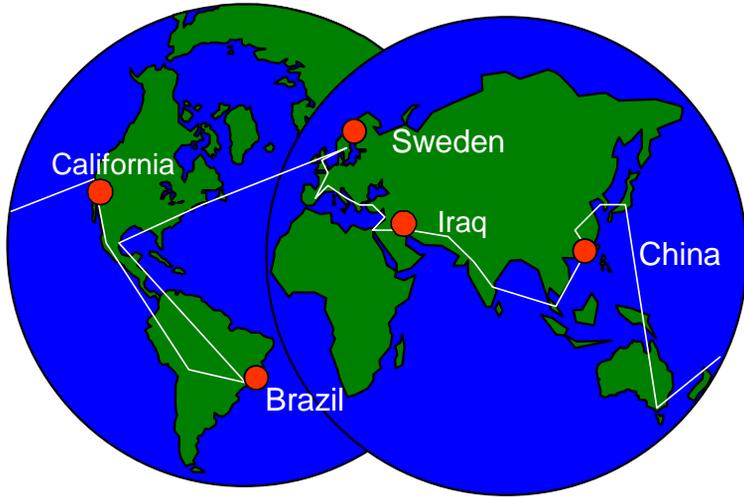
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# My own journey



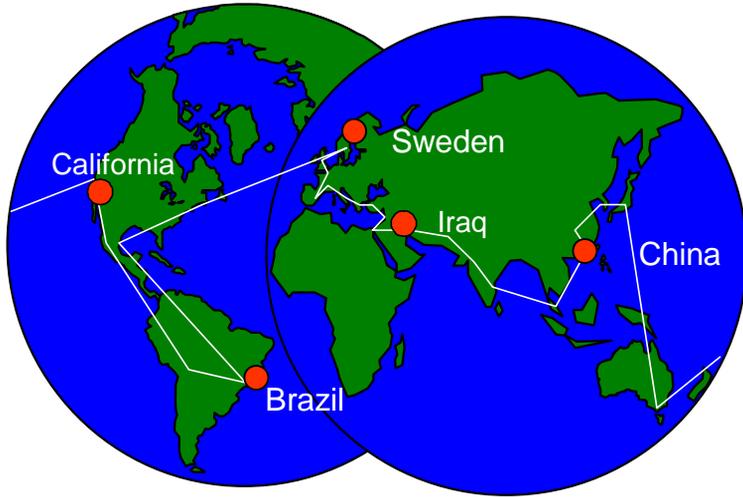
What we call civilization was born 5000 years ago in Mesopotamia, today's Iraq. This started a "westbound journey" through what we today call Middle East carrying the basic template and raw model for the way we live, including our religion. It evolved through the Greece and Roman Empires and was reborn as the Spanish & British Empires when it conquered a New World in America. The Anglo – American empire was born and man had reached what the natives of California called the brink of the world.

I was born in Sweden 1949. My ancestors had for all known generations lived in the same village. I belonged to the first generation that had more than 6 years of school, went to high school & university and traveled the world.

I visited America for the first time 1969 – the Woodstock summer. My first foreign job assignment was in Iraq 1979. Ten years later I lived and worked in California and another ten years later in Brazil.

Ever since I worked in Iraq I have been fascinated by history. In my work I have been privileged to follow in the foot step of our civilization from Mesopotamia to California – today's centre of civilization. When I lived there I also took another step – to China, closing the circle and experienced maybe tomorrows centre of civilization. When east meets west as Jack Kerouac said.

# Communication



This development also followed the same route from the clay tablets and vases out of Mesopotamia to the chips and computers out of California. All made of silicon.

Man can not survive by himself. Communication brings us together. And communication has two different meanings. Our spoken language differentiated us from other animals. We could share our ideas and our experience. We could even as story-tellers pass it on to our children.

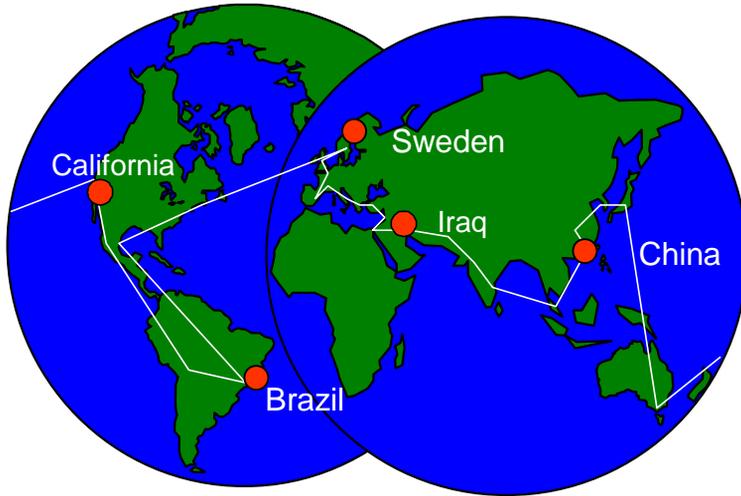
The invention of the written language that we believe originated as the Cuneiform script in Mesopotamia made it possible for us to write down our knowledge and experience for many generations to share.

It also made it possible to organize all our activities. Keep records of trade and taxes. write stories and pictures to show our ideas and dreams.

This did not only happen In Mesopotamia but transcended into other civilizations. This evolution went on with other technologies. The printing of paper. Photos and film. TV, computers and Internet.

We have today 99.9 % of all information ever recorded in history available. We can communicate directly with almost everyone on earth. Fantastic, but we have lost the most important - our ability to communicate with and to understand Nature & Gaia.

# Through the lands, oceans and heavens



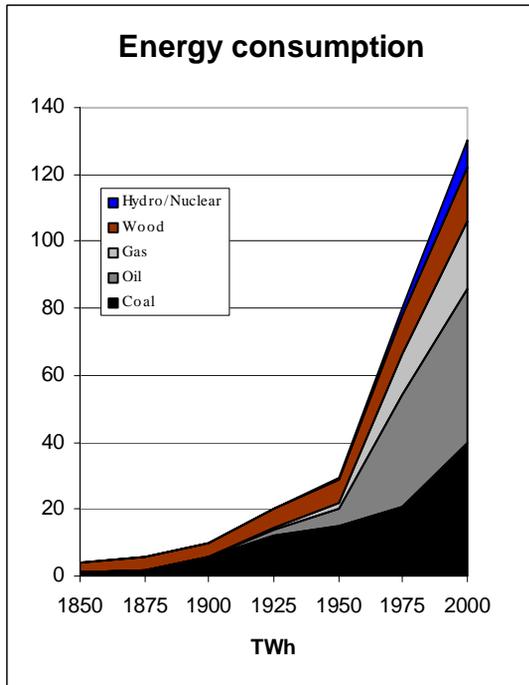
But communication is not only language. It is also the way we physically move and meet.

Also here Mesopotamia became a “revolution”.

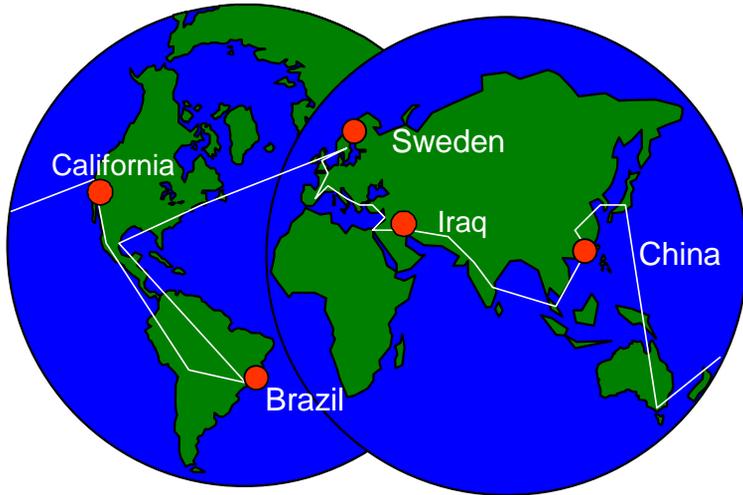
It was here the wheel was invented. Oxen and horses were put in front of wagons. This was used for transportation of people and goods but also to go to war with. Horses became the fast way to move either by riding or with a wagon behind. This was still the case in 19th century Europe and America. Wells Fargo and the Pony Express reached all the way out to California.

Man has been using boats carved out of timber for thousands of years. But it was once again in Mesopotamia that shipbuilding became a trade and sails were being used throughout the Civilizations continuing westbound journey to discover America and reach China. Until the “black revolution.”

The discovery and use of fossil fuel transformed our world. The steam engine fueled by coal industrialized the world, powered our railroads and ships. This built the British Empire. And when oil was discovered in America the journey continued even faster by car and with airplane to build yet a new empire.



# From Mesopotamia to California

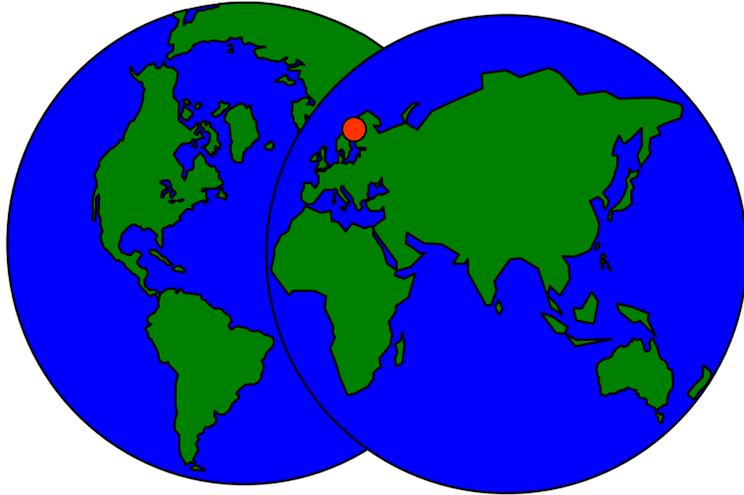


This fascinating journey through 5000 years makes you think. Both about the horrors of our civilizations and the achievements. The wars escalating to kill more and more innocent people and culminating in our time. Our three western religions and their off springs begun here. But also the outstanding scientific and technical development. And now the result. The destruction of our environment. Maybe it is so that the success of our intelligence has not been balanced by the same success in our spiritual development.

Before the white man arrived to California its was a virtual paradise. A unique nature with the oldest, largest and tallest trees in the world. Rivers and snow covered mountains. The lush Central Valley. The warm and dry south. The Pacific coast. Native tribes adopting to Nature in different ways. When I lived in California 1986 – 89 I was privileged to live the best material life ever. This was the center of our civilization. Everything happened first in California. Also the devastation of nature and the genocide of the indigenous people.

So it was also here at the brink of the world that the questioning of our civilization began. The beatnik movement of the fifties, the student movement of the sixties, the back to nature movement of the seventies and the new age movement of the eighties from Shamanism and Taoism to all sorts of new teachings. People were searching for their roots. The meaning of life. So did I.

# After the ice age



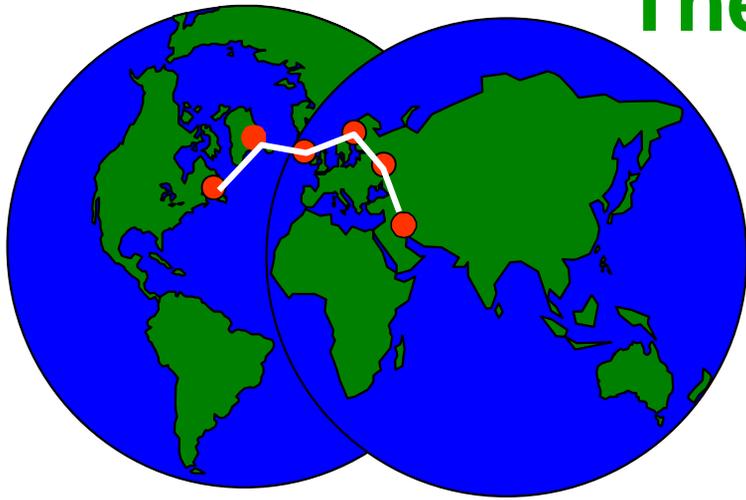
Northern Europe was populated with different tribes from the east. The Celts, the Gaul and the Germanic tribes are normally described but most probably there were many others. The Scythians arrived from the east on horse and in trousers. And around the Mediterranean the Greece-Roman empires were built reaching all the way up to Britain.

The Romans were fighting a constant war with the Nordic barbarians and invading Asian huns. Goths, Vandals, Alans, Sueves, Visigoths, Ostrogoths, Scots, Britons etc. were searching for land. Despite an army of one million men the Roman empire collapsed. The period around 400 – 550 B.C. was a Europe in turmoil with different tribes invading new homelands. The Angles, Saxons and Jutes invaded Britain and competed with the existing Celts, Scots and and Irish population over the islands. The new Europe was forming.

10 000 years ago the total human population on earth is estimated to 5 million people with the majority living on gathering, hunting and fishing. At that time Scandinavia was still covered with ice but “global warming” slowly started to uncover the land. Vegetation, animals and soon humans entered into Northern Europe.

There are remains in Sweden going thousands of years back. Both where I was born and where I live now there are stone mounds and rock carvings from the early bronze age when people also started with farming and cattle.

# The viking age



Sweden was first populated along the coasts and the rivers as the ice was melting. There are remains as long as 9000 years ago from Northern Sweden from ancestors to today's Laplanders. The Germanic tribes came from the south and the two groups lived for thousands of years side by side. After the great European turmoil around 400 – 550 AD the center of Sweden developed around lake Mälaren and the Northern part around Medelpad with its connections through the river valleys over to Norway. In both location you will find the stone graves, great king moulds and rune stones.

Scandinavia with Denmark, Norway and Sweden was at that time not separate states but a number of populated areas with a common language and a common culture. What later has been described as “Normans” or “Vikings” were often experienced seafarers using the long boat. From 780 AD the Norwegian Vikings begun raiding the British Isles and the Danes today's France. The Swedish Vikings went towards the east through Russia, Constantinople and all the way to Baghdad. Birka in Lake Mälaren became a center for the trade with the Muslim world. The Norwegian Vikings colonized Iceland, Greenland and year 1000 AD established the first European settlement in America. The Vikings also settled down on the North Atlantic islands, parts of Britain and on Ireland where they founded Dublin. The French king employed Vikings in Normandy to defend France against other Vikings and from there they went to Italy.

# I am a viking

The short history of Northern Europe demonstrates how related we are. English, German, Dutch, Scandinavian culture are all part of this violent and restless history of tribal movements. The Angles, Saxons and Jutes from Denmark with vicinity who replaced the Romans where later mixed with invading Vikings from Scandinavia. Norwegian and Icelandic Vikings stole their wives from the Celts of Ireland and Scotland .

The Vikings that inhabited Normandy was called Normans. The Norman conquest of England began in 1066 AD with the invasion of the Kingdom of England by William the Conqueror (Duke of Normandy), and his success of the battle of Hastings resulted in the Norman control of England.

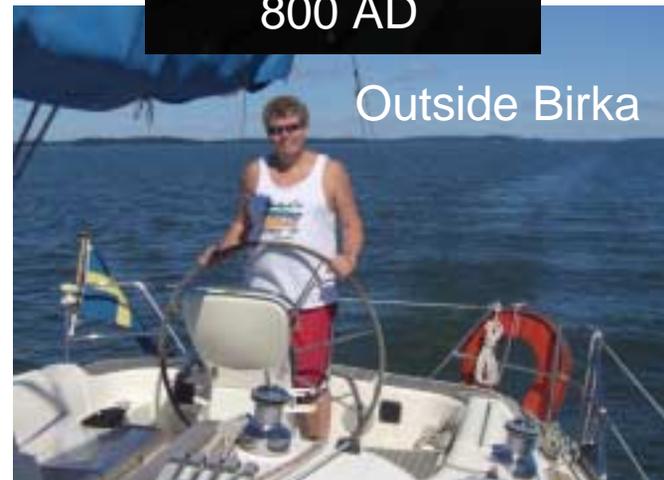
One history book describes the Vikings as “enjoyment of fighting, freedom loving, a lust for glory and adventure”.

So maybe this is me. I was born near “Högom” in Medelpad and I now live at Mälaren near “Birka” where by Viking ancestors lived 1000 years ago. And like them I went to explore the world from Mesopotamia in the east to America in the west.

And maybe we are all “Vandals”, “Vikings” and other “Barbarians” still trying to find our home.



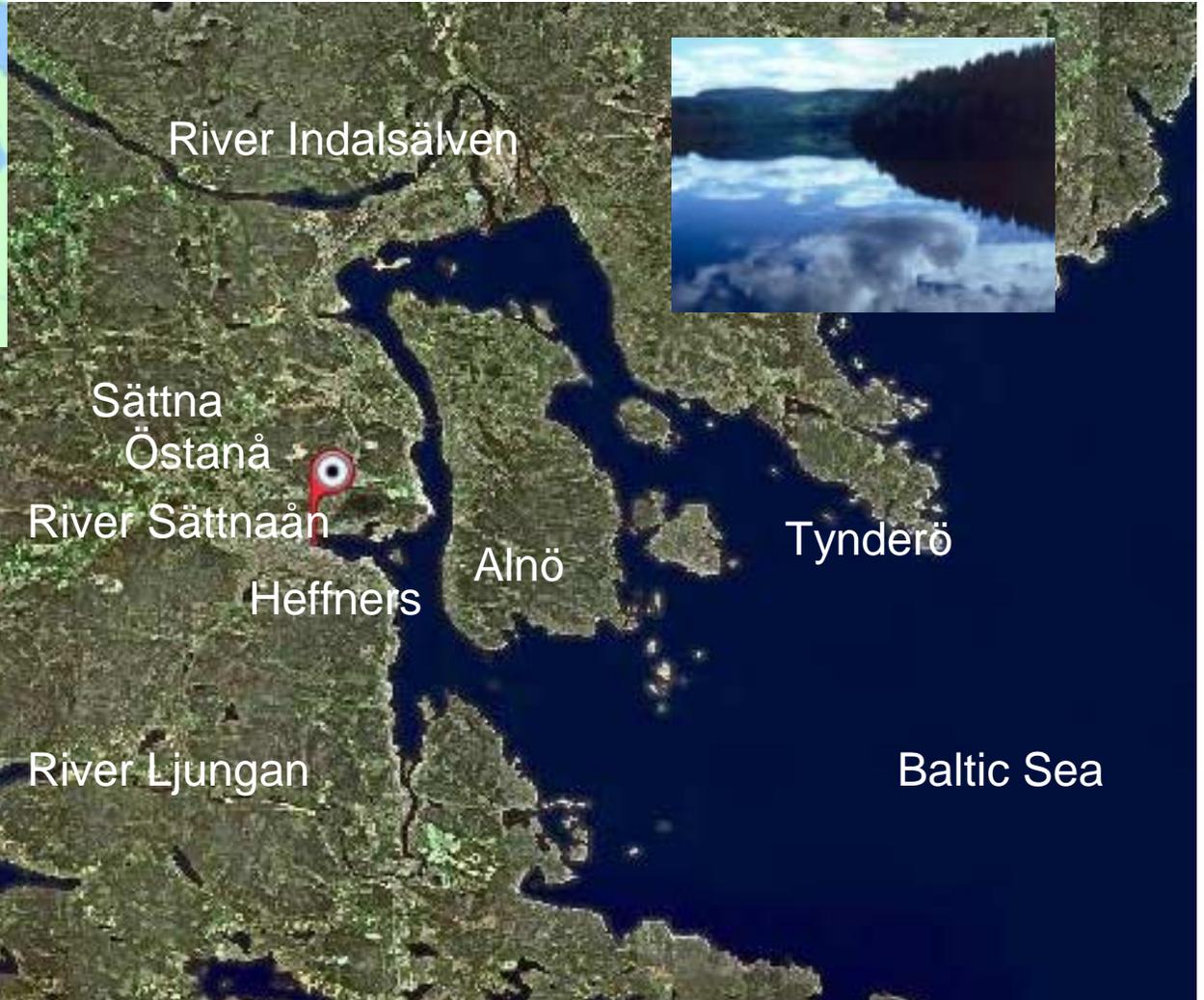
The Oseberg  
viking ship  
800 AD



Outside Birka

# Medelpad in the middle of Sweden

This is my first home and origin. I was born and raised here from 1949 to 1968 when I was enlisted in the Swedish army and was sent to the Finish boarder to wait for the Russians to invade. Later this revolutionary year I moved to the BIG city of Stockholm to learn about life.



# The history of Medelpad

Medelpad belongs to "Västernorrland" = the north western region of Sweden which corresponds to the same latitude (63°) as Yellowknife in Canada. Still Medelpad is located in the geographical center of Sweden. Medelpad means "Middle Country" also because it is located between two large rivers, Indalsälven and Ljungan. It was populated after the last ice age, 10 000 years ago. Many rock carvings show a hunting culture. The fishing was concentrated to the two large rivers and the islands around Alnön & Tynderö. The river valleys and the island also became the first farmland.

During the Viking age Medelpad and Högom was an important trade centre linking Finland, Sweden and Norway. The smaller Sättna river in between the larger rivers became the port and also a suitable area for new farmland. Alnön is the largest island with Spikarna fishing village. The main city Sundsvall was founded here 1621 by the Swedish king Gustaf II Adolf. During the following year Sweden fought in the thirty year war in Europe and expanded its land from Sweden and Finland to cover the Baltic States, part of present Russia around S:t Petersburg and Northern Germany. Sweden also founded the colony New Sweden in present Delaware. Sweden was later in several wars with Russia when Sundsvall also was ransacked. Sweden lost 1721 the Baltic States and 1809 Finland to Russia. After this Sweden has not been in any war and the union with Norway was peacefully dissolved 1905.

Swedish is a Germanic language and the Swedish population originates mainly from the same German tribes who came to the rest of Europe. In addition Sweden has always like the other Northern countries had Laplanders living on reindeer breeding.

# Medelpad in Sweden

Medelpad is the part of Sweden that has the highest percentage forest, mainly spruce and pine. Sundsvall was therefore one of the first industrialized regions in Sweden at the end of the 19th century due to timber and rivers. The rivers were used both to provide power for the sawmills and to be used for transportation of the timber. In 1870 the wood production represented half of Sweden's export and the Sundsvall bay area was filled with saw mills – now also using a new invention the steam engine. This region also saw the first negative consequences of fast expanding industrialization. Guest workers from other regions and even countries came but soon depression resulted in heavy unemployment. Many emigrated to America and even Brazil. Sweden had its first big strike in 1879. After a long struggle between workers and owners, left and right Sweden established a full parliamentary democracy in 1921 for both men and women.

Sundsvall is still the main forestry, pulp & paper centre in Sweden and has also a large aluminum plant. For many years Sundsvall was considered as the most polluted city in Sweden. Today this is reversed and Sundsvall is a relatively ecological sound environment with population around 100 000 –but still with some industrial pollution.

Both the Öhlens family and Högstedt family originates from Medelpad.

The Öhlens family were farmers in the small village of Östanå (East of the river) in Sättna, west of Sundsvall going back to 1652. Högstedt family came from Tynderö and Alnön as farmers and fishermen families before settling in Heffners as factory workers in the saw mills. So what also connected the two families was the forest. Öhlen like any other farmers used timber both to burn, to build and sell to the saw mills.

# Facts about my heritage

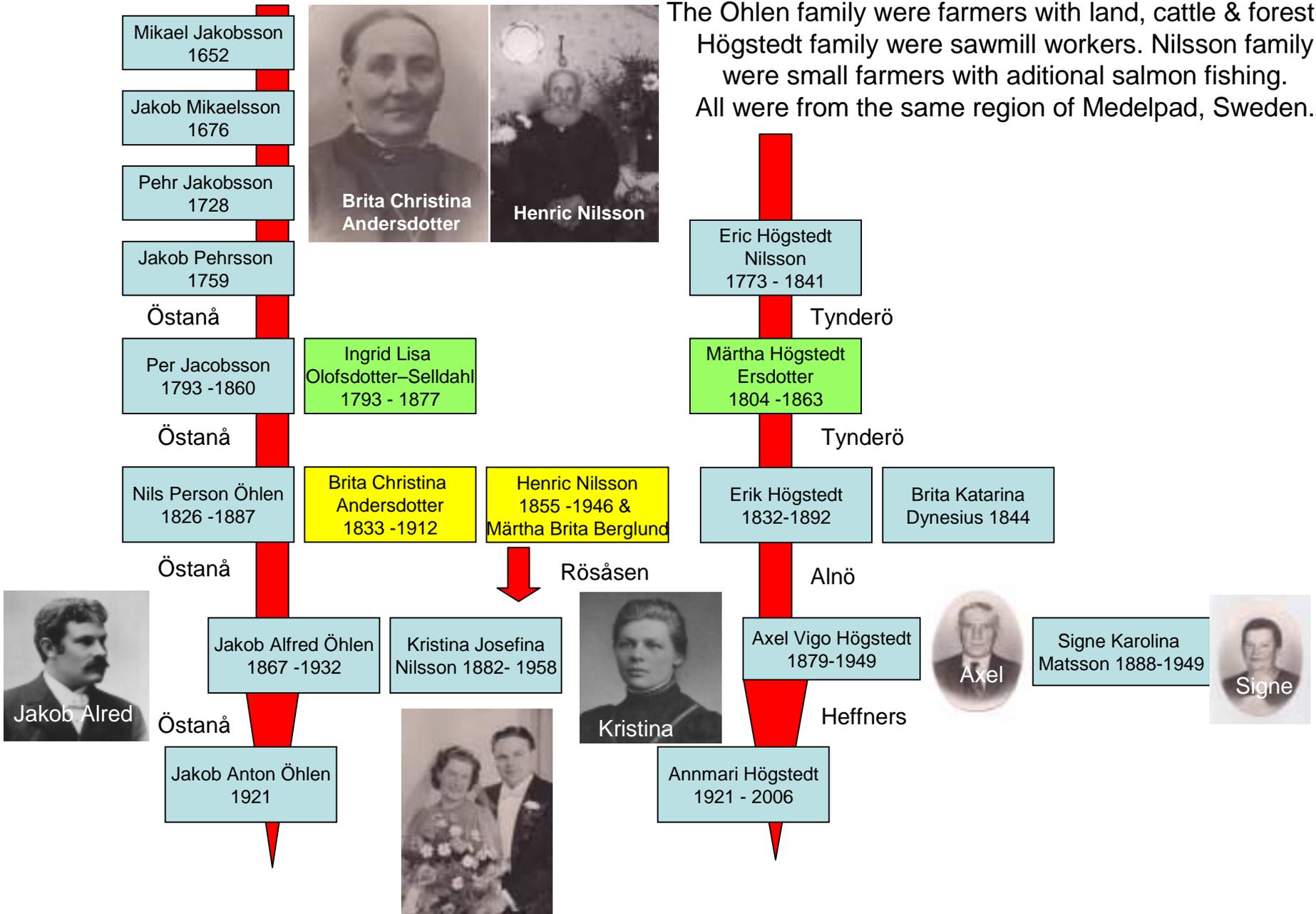
My father Anton Öhlen and My mother Annmari Högstedt represents very much the life in Medelpad. Both the Högstedt and the Öhlen ancestors were farmers and/or fishing families. They were born, baptized, married, had children and died within a small area. People did not travel or move unless they had to. The Öhlen family can be traced back to 1652. But it was not until the children of Ingrid Lisa Olofsdotter–Selldahl took the family name was “Öhlen”. Ingrid Lisa’s first husband died and she re-married with Per Jacobsson 1818 in Östanå. The three sons from her both marriages took the name Öhlen. The Högstedt family originates from Eric Högstedt on Tynderö. But it was Märtha Högstedt who carried the name of my ancestors since she was a single mother – in the early eighteen hundreds. Although also the farming community was ruled my men it was kept together and living by women.

Everybody was living on the land and with the nature. Barley and Oat was the basic food together with milk, butter, cheese and eggs. When the potatoes were introduced during the 18th century in addition to Swedish turnip and cabbage, this became equally important. The cows and horses were naturally not eaten. Some old age cows was sent to be slaughtered for sausage when they did not produce milk anymore. Any food not consumed by man was given to the pig that was saved for Christmas. Fish provided the other main supply. Herring from the sea, pike from the lakes and salmon from the rivers.

With the industrialization of Sundsvall by mid 19th century more people was drawn to the city and Alnö that became the centre of the sawmills. My great grand father Erik Högstedt moved to Alnö and his son started working in the sawmills.

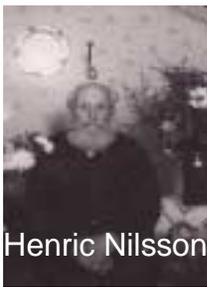
# My Origen

The Öhlen family were farmers with land, cattle & forestry. Högstedt family were sawmill workers. Nilsson family were small farmers with additional salmon fishing. All were from the same region of Medelpad, Sweden.



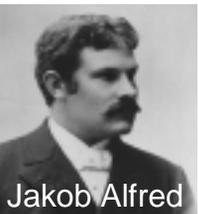
# A comparison Sättna - California

When my great grand mother Brita Christina was born 1833 the major part of North America was still Indian territory. Chicago was a small frontier village with a population of 550 persons mainly men. Los Angeles was a small town belonging to Mexico with around 650 persons (Less than Sättna) and San Francisco did not yet exist but the closest town Yerba Buena had just a few inhabitants.



(1833 -1912) (1855 -1946)

1848 when my great grandmother was 15 California was conquered by United States from Mexico and the gold rush began. One hundred thousand “fortyniners” invaded California looking for gold which was about the same number as the native Indians living there. Between 1850 and 1870 about 70% of the Indians were killed. 1873 when my grandfather was six years old the last tribe in California, the Modocs were defeated and their leader hanged.



(1867 -1932) (1882- 1958)

The remaining Indians were forced to work in public projects for no payment and had no rights (That they actually had during the Mexican rule). An Indian could not vote, own property or testify against a white man in court. By 1900 there were only 16 000 Indians left in California. 1833 when my great grand mother was born the US population passed 10 millions. 1921 when my parents were born USA had almost 10 million cars. This is more than the total Swedish population – today.



(1921 -2006) (1921- )

# A new world

The first saw mill in Medelpad was built 1662 in the Indalsälven river. 1672 the first ironmill was built in Galtström. 1669 the first shipyard was producing it's first ship made out of wood and iron from Medelpad. 1849 the first steam engine powered saw mill was built in Tudadal. This started a revolutionary change.

But the industrialization of Sundsvall did not affect very much the life in Sättna. The families lived on their farms as generations before. The main change was the increased demand for timber. The Sättna river was adopted for transportation of timber. The farmer could work during the winters and make money. Many was also fooled by the buyers from the growing big business in Sundsvall to sell their forests for almost nothing. But in Sundsvall just 12 kilometers away a new world was growing. After a devastating fire 1888 a new continental style city with avenues was built by stone. A new rich class of business men earning money on export from more than 60 sawmills invested in a new high school, city hall, hotel and their own buildings.

Besides the wood Sweden was a mining country since several centuries. But Sweden was a large and long country in the north of Europe. Far away from "the market". Medelpad had some iron ore and also iron mills. But most of the mines were in the north and in the west. Wood was also used to produce coal for the iron manufacturing. With the invention of the steam engine and later electricity a new infrastructure for was built. The Göta canal through Sweden was ready 1832. The first steam powered railroad begun in south of Sweden 1856 and all of Sweden up to the mines above the arctic circle was connected with Medelpad 1877. Now you could go by boat or train to anywhere. Medelpad had become part of a new world!

# The industrialization

From 1850 to 1900 the Sundsvall region increased from 6 000 to 32 000 inhabitants.

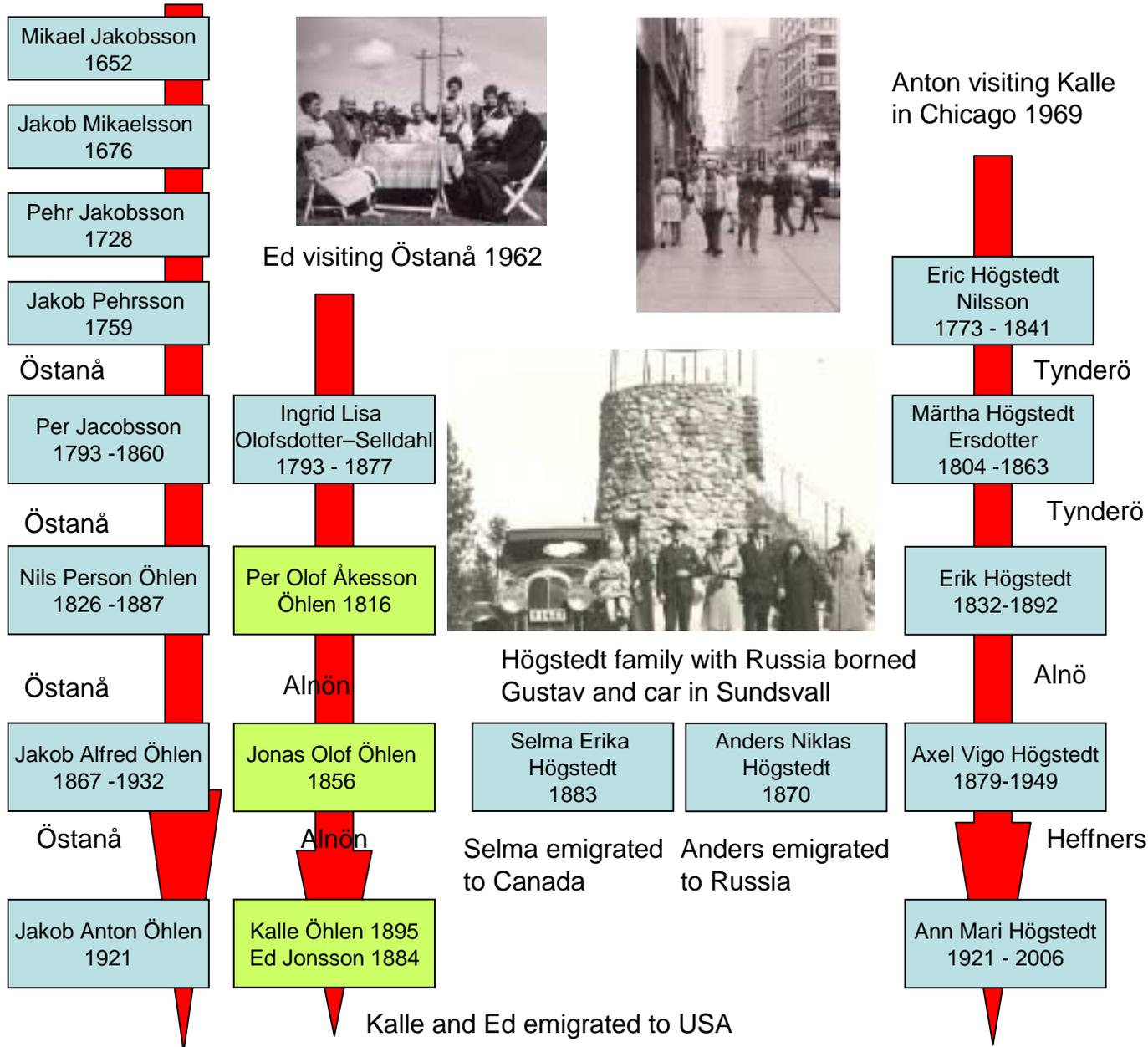
Many working on the sawmills. Only Alnö had 18 sawmills (My grandfather started working on one of them) . The population of the island of Alnö increased from 950 to 6841 during the same period. Only in the city itself the population grew from 2 800 to 14 800. Skön where my mother (and I officially) were born increased from 1100 to 11 753. There my grandfather and my uncles worked on the Heffners sawmill.

Sweden's first large strike started here 1879 and spread to almost all other mills.

The strike and demonstrations were crushed with the help of the army but this started the workers (labour) movement for equality, solidarity and freedom fueled by the new Marxist thoughts. My grandfather joined at the end of the 19th century the new labour movement and trade union. On Alnö they built one of the first "Folkets hus" (People's house), a gathering place for discussions, lectures and a new invention – the movie.

This region was called "The New America" and Sundsvall "Little Chicago". The reason was obvious. A very rapid increase of the population and immigration from other regions created social problems and lack of good housing for the new working class including unemployment and blacklisting of trade union members. Many emigrated. One branch of the Öhlen's family from Alnön emigrated to America. First the oldest brother to Chicago and then to upper Michigan to start working – on a saw mill. Then the other brothers followed one by one. It took about 50 years before they returned to visit and tell us about the fantastic America where everything is bigger and better. My mother's uncle moved to Kovda outside Murmansk in Russia to start – a sawmill. After the revolution he and his family fled back over the tundra to Finland. My mother's aunt emigrated to Canada.

# The Emigration



Edward (Ed) and Carl (Kalle) emigrated with 3 brothers to USA in the beginning of the 20th century. After 50 years they visited their home country for the first time.

Selma emigrated to Canada and had five sons married as Cutler

Anders emigrated to Russia around 1900 to open a saw mill. Returned after the revolution.

Kalle and Ed emigrated to USA

# The industrialization continues

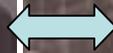
Not only wood was needed by the market. Also paper became a necessity. The first paper mill was opened 1870 along the Ljungan river. But it was not until a new invention, electricity that this really took off. Wiforsen hydro power plant in Ljungan river became the first large scale hydro power plant 1900. It was still operating with the same equipment when I worked there the summer of 1971 standing in the middle of the stream regulating the water with wooden planks. The same year (1900) the first sulphite pulp mill was opened in Essvik at the mouth of the Ljungan river. Between 1900 and 1931 six sulfite and two sulfate pulp factories were built around Sundsvall.

My mother was born 1921 in a multi family house complex built and owned by the factory and with a wonderful view over Sundsvall but without basically anything. A common outhouse and even the grocery store owned by the company. The difference between the poor workers and the very rich upper class in Sundsvall was enormous. The same year 1921 Swedish women were allowed to vote. The workers movement grew in strength and soon the Social Democratic party replaced the right wing government. Sweden started building what was called "Folkhemmet" – The home for all people. My uncles started working in the sawmills as young teenagers. My mother and her sister who were younger were allowed to study. After primary six years in school my mother worked as an aid to a dentist. She then got the possibility to study in a "Folkhögsskola", a way to get continuing education as an adult and often run by an organization. She finally became a licensed nurse and her sister a teacher. Sweden started changing from a farming and industrial society to a service society and women were allowed to participate (sometimes)



The Högstedt family with my grandparents

My mother in school and as a nurse



# Facts about Sättna (1949)



- Sättna was populated along the Sättna river from 500 A.C.
- Solum (1543) & Tösta (1547) are the oldest villages
- The Laplanders brought their reindeers here until 1920
- The population stabilized around 2000 with 1811 (1949)
- ~100 persons emigrated to America & Brazil 1860 – 1910
- 340 farms of which 197 were small (0-5 ha)
- Out of the total land 72% was forest, 9% was arable land 3% for grazing and the rest wetland.
- Out of the forest 55% was owned by big corporations
- 261 Milk farms with cows delivering 1 800 000 kilo per year
- 1626 cows, 378 calves, 17 bulls and 343 hoeses
- Alternate cultivation (3-4 years) with grain, potatoes, grass
- The forest was cultivated with selected harvesting & planting
- About 200 men and 75 horses worked in the forest in winter
- Several mills were built in Sättna river during 18th century
- 1912 an electrical generator was installed in the Flata dam
- The Sättna river was also used to transport timber
- The first church was built 1651 and the Baptist chapel 1889
- The first chapter of IOGT temperance movement started 1906
- Sättna had three schools and four general stores
- The sports arena and “folk park” was inaugurated 1936
- The neighboring sport teams, a few artists & the gypsies were the only signs of a world outside Sättna until....

The milk waiting to be fetched in Solum



10 000 m<sup>2</sup> = 1ha

# Facts about Sättna way of living (1949)

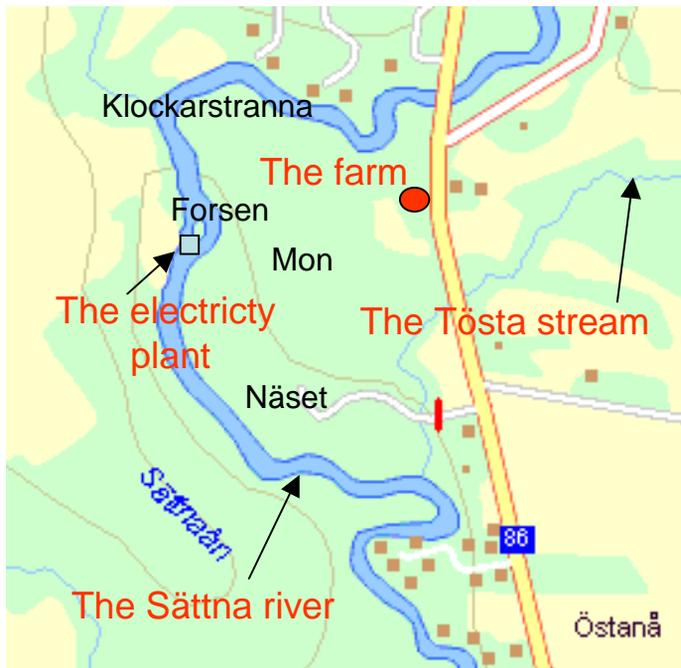


The year I was born 1949 Sättna was a self sufficient and democratic society. It was a decentralized community with it's own elected "parliament", own post office with bank, own telephone switching station, own police, nurse and fire brigade, own public transportation and taxi, own church and chapel and an own community park & house for dances and movies. Sättna had very active population within different organizations for religion, sports, temperance, women, workers, farmers. Small business were everywhere; The General Store, the bakery, the carpenter, the painter, the electrician , the cafeteria, the bicycle repair shop, the tailor. And almost every family had a cow and a small land to grow vegetables except for in the Centre of Kovland. Sättna had sustainable living with re-cycling before these words were invented.

# The Öhlen's family farm



The farm has probably been in use since the end of the 17th century. Per Jacobsson and his wife Ingrid Lisa (Both born 1793) lived there. Nils Pehrsson Öhlen (My great grand father) became the first with the family name when he took over the farm from his father. My grandfather was born here 1867 and opened his first general store in one room of the main building 1899. The farm was it's own biosphere that had everything. Located on the east of the river on a boulder ridge the land became like an own island with the road and the Tösta stream as the other borderline.



The cows were let free on the forest during the summer and they cultivated the grass like a park. Blueberries, raspberries, lingonberries, wild straw berries and the most delicious "Åkerbär" (Now very rare) grew here as well as mushrooms. The river was used for fishing, swimming, washing and later transporting timber. At the beginning of the 20th century the farmers on both side o the river built a dam for the first electrical generator in Sättna. 60 years later the gravel from the ridge was exploited to feed the growing city.

A big scare had replaced my paradise.

The new time had arrived!

Pehr Jacobsson 1793

+

Ingrid Lisa Olofdotter Selldahl 1793

+

Åke Bengtsson Bylund



Nils Pehrson Öhlen\*\*\* 1826

Brita Christina Andersdotter Ljöblad\*\*\* 1833

Jakob Pehrsson Öhlen 1822



Per-Olof Åkesson Öhlen 1816

Johanna Petronella Sjödah

Family tree not shown here

- Nils Petter Öhlen 1860 + Josefina Katharina
- Anders Olof Öhlen 1862 + Maria
- Margareta Amalia "Malla" 1870 + Lars Gustav Eriksson
- Jakob Alfred Öhlen\*\* 1867 + Kristina Josefina Nilsson\*\*

- Elisabeth Olivia Öhlen 1844
- Nils Petter Öhlen 1850
- Märta Margareta Öhlen 1858
- Jonas "Jonte" Olof Öhlen 1856 + Sofia Kristina Åslund 1857

- Gustav 1888
- Anders 1896
- Ernst 1890
- Kalle 1891
- Nils 1892
- Johan 1894
- Oskar 1899
- Anna 1901
- Brita 1918
- Anton\* 1921
- Josef 1927
- Erik Algot
- Olivia Amalia
- Nils Gunnar
- Johan Valfrid
- Lars Axell
- Tyra Brita
- Axel
- Edla
- Hulda
- Adolf
- Johan

- Jonas Edward Johnson 1885 + Frances (Walter + Helen = Linda)
- Olof August 1886 (+)
- Knut Napoleon Johnson 1890 + Elfie (Virginia Burnes Edward + Shirley Robert)
- John Ohlen 1891 + Anna (Austin Oliver + Irene)
- Theodor Ohlen 189x + Selma (Emigrated to USA)
- Karl Verner Ohlen 1894 + Kate Butenhof (Emigrated to USA)
- Anna + Verner Svensson (Marianne)

\* My father  
 \*\* My grandparents  
 \*\*\* My Great Grandparents

# Brita Christina's three sons

Mikael Jakobsson  
1676

Jakob Mikaelsson  
1676

Pehr Jakobsson  
1728

Jakob Pehrsson  
1759

Östanå

Per Jacobsson  
1793 -1860

Östanå

Nils Person Öhlen  
1826 -1887

Östanå

Nils Petter Öhlen  
1860

Östanå



Brita Christina  
Andersdotter

Nils Petter & Josefina Öhlen  
with children 1900:

Axel  
Edla  
Hulda  
Adolf  
Johan



Ater the death of Nils Perhson Öhlen one of his sons, Anders Olof bought the farm from his siblings. In the will Nils had provided for his wife Brita Christina to have one room and one cow together with specified food supplies as long as she lived. My grandfather Jakob Alfred had an agreement when he sold his part o the farm that he also could stay in one room as long as their mother Brita Christina lived. And this was until 1912.

Ingrid Lisa  
Olofsdotter-Selldahl  
1793 - 1877

Jakob Alfred & Kristina Öhlen  
With children 1924:

Brita Maria  
Jakob Anton  
David (Died with one year)  
Josef Alfred (Was born 1927)



Brita Christina  
Andersdotter  
1833 -1912

Anders Olof Öhlen  
1862

Jakob Alfred Öhlen  
1867

Margareta Amalia  
1870

Anders Olof & Maria Öhlen

With children 1904:

Gustav  
Ernst  
Kalle  
Nils  
Johan  
Anders  
Severin  
Oskar  
Anna



Jakob Alfred & Kristina

Brita  
Anton  
David



Thore

Olle

Arne

Ingrid

Gunnel

Märta

Ingegerd

Axel

Edla

Hulda

Adolf

Johan

Karl Gustav

Sven Erik

Göran

Nils

Sture

Jenny

Håkan

Gustav

Per

Sigrid

Olle

Harry

Nils Gustav

Anna Britta

Ture

Anders

Frans

Ivan

Helge

Maja

Anders

Ernst

Karin

Hans

Karl Johan

Karl Gustav

Ingrid

Anna Lisa

Maria

Gulli

Lennart

Bertil

Oskar

Anna

Karin

Samuel

Kurt

Ivar\*

Carina

Thomas

Brita

Gunilla

Valter  
Alice

James

Kristina

Anna Karin

Kalle

Anton

David\*\*

Karin

Urban

Josef

Anna

Jakob



Alice 2007-08-02

Alfred

Ingrid

Viktor

Olvia

Susanne

Agnes



Brita Christina  
1833

Algot

Olivia

Gunnar

Johan

Axel

Brita

Kesrtin

Ulla

Birger

Elsie

Britt Mari

Jan Erik

Lilian

Gudrun

Margareta

Erik

Lars

Eva Lena

Yngve

Lars Gustav

Paul

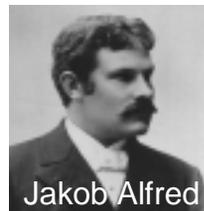
\*Foster child  
\*\* Died before 1 year

# The Öhlen's general store

Jakob Alfred Öhlen (My grandfather) opened the first general store 1899 in the farm house. The same year he became active in the Baptist church. He was originally a painter & a carpenter but was always good at “female” occupations like sewing, baking, cooking and even as “medicine man” and helping cows to give birth.

When his mother died he bought some land just across the street from the farm and built a new bakery and general store that was opened 1912. This soon became the center for the small village. He met his wife Kristina through the Baptist church and they married on his fifties birthday 1917. They took Ivar as foster child since his parents died in TBC. They had three children who survived the first year Brita (1918), Anton (1921), Josef (1927)

My grandparents



Jakob Alfred

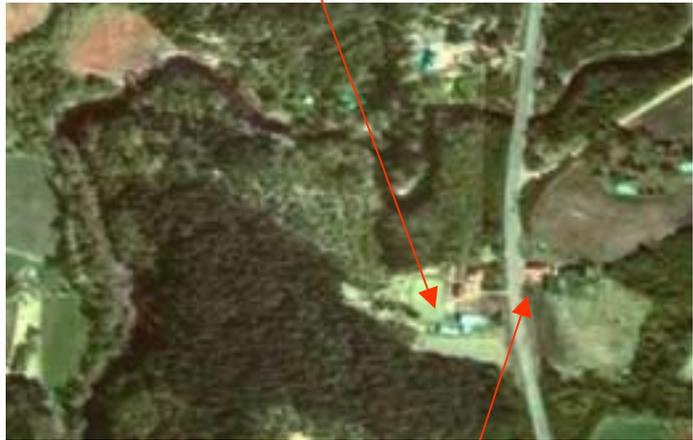
(1867 -1932)



Kristina

(1882- 1958)

My father



# Some difficult years

1914 the general store got electricity from the river and J.A. Öhlen signed a contract for 10 energy saving lamps but with the condition that electricity was switched of when it was light outside and between 11 pm and 5 am.

Sweden did not participate in the first world war and it did not directly affect the life in Östanå. But Sundsvall was depending on export and starving people from the city walked out to Östanå to beg for food. During the cold winters the family slept in the bakery. During the depression of the early 1930s things got worse. The store was like a credit bank. Everybody in the village had a credit book (Similar to the credit card) and they paid only when they had money. My grand parents were both deeply religious, no liqueur, no magazines, no pleasures. But if people did not have money they still got food. 1931 Jakob Alfred had a stroke and my grandmother had to nurse him in bed for one year, take care of the children, the store, the home and the bakery. In addition she had to work at the farm to get milk, grain and potatoes. 1932 J.A. died.



# Some more difficult years

Ivar and Anton started working as young teenagers to make money for the family. As many others cutting timber in the forest at winter and working at farms during summer. Ivar wanted to join the Swedish airforce but he lost part of his hearing one winter living in the forest. But he became and airplane mechanics and continued studying to became headmaster for vocational schools. Sweden did not participate in the second world war but was now more affected due to the blockade and the German occupation of all surrounding countries. There was a lack of almost everything and the Swedish industry was used for weapons. My grandmother Kristina continued with the bakery and shop and also supported Baptist preachers staying at the store. My father Anton got enlisted during the second world war so did my mother as a nurse. They did meet through Brita, Anton's sister who like my mother had studied to become a nurse. 1949 Anton and Annmari were married and later the same year I was born. Anton took over the store from my Grandmother who at the age of 67 was entitled to retire. She had been a very strong women but after all work now with her hips worn down unable to walk and was loosing her sight. I remember her listening to the sermon on radio or knitting. Always happy, kind, loving and at peace.



# Growing up

My father and I went to the same school. We even had the same teacher. The difference was that he went six years, three days a week. I went sixteen years. The Swedish school system changed for my generation. Instead of six years we got additional six years and graduated out of High School 1968. And then four years university. We were a new generation of educated young men and women ready to fly. “We want the world and we want it now” as Jim Morrison said. This was “a small step for me but a giant step for mankind” since it created a completely new civilization – at least in the rich countries. My generation moved from farms and working class environment to the city to become the new middle and upper class to rule the world. We learned to speak English, French, German, Spanish beside our native Swedish prepared for our flight. And we wanted more....



# A selfsustainable life

The Öhlen's farm was it's own universe. It had almost everything that was needed except salt and sugar. Cows, pig, hen, potatoes, cabbage, carrots, oat and barley, black currant. Wild berries for jam & juice from the forest. Sometimes moose. Herring from Alnö and salmon from the rivers. Salt, sweat, pickled, smoked, dried, fried, fermented herring or salmon.

Flour was made from grain in the Solum mill every fall and every spring with lot of water since this could not be done during winter ice. So for two days every fall and spring the women baked hard bread to store for the winter or use during summer. And home made salt butter to go with it.

The farm had a separate house for everything. A bakery, a slaughter house for the pigs, cellars, a cooking house for hot water, a stable for the two horses and in the other end room for the ten cows, the calf, the pig and the hen. Separate buildings for the storage of grain, another for wood, a third for hay and a fourth for the wagons together with the tools and work benches. An outhouse with ten holes on the second floor above the dung from the animals. Nothing was wasted and everything was re-cycled.



# Life on the local farm

Anders Olof & Maria Öhlen had eight sons and one daughter. Three of them Johan, Nils and Anna stayed on the farm. Johan married Märta and they had two daughters; Maria and Gulli. When I grew up I spent most of my free time there. I lived with their for seasons like generations before me. The wonderful summers and harvest season.

We brought in the hay and picked the berries. Fishing trout and salmon in the river. In the fall we brought the grain by horse to the Solum mill in the same river. In the winter I went with them to cut timber. We all spent the Christmas on the farm with different relatives. In the spring we spread the dung on the fields and planted the seeds and potatoes for a new season. This was 50 years ago!

Wood was used for everything. Originally to build the houses. As fire wood in the winter. But also for the roof. The wood was cut to thin plates to cover the roof and replaced after some years. The farm had no tractor. Everything was done by horses. All income was from milk. Everything until April 66th 1966 when the last cow was sent away.

This was not only the end of the sustainable Öhlen's farm it was the end of an era. Today only one farm is left out of the 261 farms that existed 1949. Sättna was incorporated in a larger community, that was soon incorporated in an extended Sundsvall in a new Sweden that later was incorporated in the European Union and Globalization.



# The center of the village

The general store was the center of the village. It provided everything the farm did not have. Salt and sugar naturally. Bread from the bakery.

Tools, nails, horse shoes, stockings and shirts, fishing equipment, cement. Coffee, tea, chocolate and tobacco. Bicycles, clocks, porcelain and even radios. My father sold glass windows and I helped him in the evenings to cut glass and mount them into the frames. He was also a butcher and helped the farmers after the moose hunt in the fall. The store was the bank and the post office. The center for all the gossip. My father also handled the official betting and lottery. And he was taking care of the economy of the local church including the donations for each funeral. But then something started to change.

The people from the city, Sundsvall built summer houses along the river. They represented a different breed with different habits and even language from this different world 12 kilometers from us. They wanted more sophisticated and prepared food and they wanted it delivered that I first did on bicycle or my dad on motorcycle. We even sold ice cream. And in a small cooler we had the standard sausage and the blood pudding. During the winters we started to get exotic fruits. Oranges and bananas. But nothing was wasted. If there was any pork or bones left on Saturday my parents had a secret recipe for "pölsa" with this mixed with barley. And all boxes made of paper or wood became fuel for our hot water stove in the basement.

I know since I was sitting there tearing them up.



# When the world arrived



For me the general store was one universe and the farm another. And I could freely jump between the two to experience the world – totally alone and yet not. I explored the forest with its trails and meadows. Played I was an Indian. Went on my raft or with my fishing pole along the river in the summer. Went skiing and built snow fortresses in the winter. I followed the two brothers on their work whatever they did. Played with the cats.

The store was a much smaller world but yet bigger. It had everything. Things from other countries. And like the farm it also followed the season. For both the spring was a re-birth. After midsummer we got fresh strawberries from a lady nearby. I picked wild strawberries at the farm and was looking for trout in the river. The farmers needed new supplies. And then the summer guests arrived with their demand. Autumn was harvest also for the store getting potatoes and carrots in the basement.

I packed flour and sugar in paper bags, grained fresh coffee. In the late fall my father started to prepare the dried cod and the salted herring for Christmas. He was also baking but now in our kitchen. The bakery had been converted to present shop.

The presents arrived five weeks before Christmas in four big boxes. And it was my job to unpack them. Porcelain, ornaments and toys made in Germany and Japan now being rebuilt after the war – to a new world!

# So what did we eat?

We all need food to survive. But food is also a pleasure. What do we do when we want to impress somebody or “make friend”? We invite the home or to a restaurant for dinner.

When I grew up there were no pizza, no hamburgers, no spaghetti and no steaks. There were no frozen food, we had only two types of milk and two types of toothpaste. For generations the local community had adopted to what was available during different seasons. Salt, sugar, drying and smoking was the basic way to conserve food, sometimes canned like the berries. The cellar was cold enough to keep most food fresh.

Today we eat a lot of different food that we import from all over the world. If you visit a supermarket anywhere in the world you will find almost the same thing carefully packed in plastic, chilled or frozen. You can have Maine lobster in Riyadh and Alberta prime rib in Shanghai. You can drink beer or bottled water that has been shipped around the world.

You can find hundreds of different brands and models of the same thing. We only had one or two. So it must be hard to even imagine the life in the 50s and even 60s. But we had everything we needed! And the food was great and it still is. Now we call this delicatessen. The pickled herring, gravad lax, cheese, smoked ham, hard cracker bread, Jansson’s frestelse, the cabbage rolls with lingonberry jam, cloudberries, pea soap, smoked fish and dried sausage. We ate salted pork but no red meat. Only some calf or moose for special occasions. When I grew up we had one local dairy, two local breweries, three butchers making sausage, numerous bakeries just a few kilometers away. The fish was sold fresh in the summer and salted, smoked or canned by the local fisheries. Basically everything was local and nothing was wasted. So everybody could work, shop and live in a local and sustainable community. Today we are not!

# The river runs through it

Östana means “east of the river” and Kovland means “The bend of the river”. The river had always been what has given life to the village. And it was a play ground for us children. Fishing and looking for mussels or crayfish. My father built me a raft I was exploring it with. It was like a paradise. Our school did not have shower. Most houses did not. The school sent us twice a year to the city to get a shower. But during the summer we went to the river to wash ourselves. For ages women went here do to do laundry and the animals to drink.

When I was eight years I went to swimming school in the dam by the mill. There they also had built a stairway for the salmon to jump. A clean environment. But then something happened. In Kovland some people started to install bathrooms instead of outhouses. In a few years the river was contaminated and we were no longer allowed to swim there.

The civilization had arrived to the village.

To be honest it improved later. A community water and sewage system helped. But the increased use of fertilizers and the acid rain destroyed. Then came Chernobyl nuclear accident and this region was hit the worst by the radioactive rain. And the mill was destroyed by flooding.

The river still runs through it but not like before.



# The revolution 1959

The revolution came 1959. For the first time we went on something called vacation. It was my parents and I, my uncle and aunt with their two children. Skies, food, cloths and sleeping bags for all. In my uncle Josef's Volvo 444, such a tiny car that today hardly exist. We were going one week to the Swedish mountains to ski. We stayed with a family in their farm. Cooking on a wood fired stove and freezing going to the out house. But what an experience.

Mid 1959 we got Television and my father bought a car, Ford Taunus so we could deliver and also sell and install the television sets to the village. And we did. My father climbed on the roof tops to install the a antennas and I was watching the television screen until "something" was seen. This revolutionary year of 1959 Elvis and Tommy Steel were competing in Rock & Roll, Ingmar Johansson became the first and only Swede to win the heavy weight championship in boxing and Louis Armstrong had 3600 people listening to his two shows in Sundsvall. The Russians was first with a satellite (sputnik) to the moon. But I did not care. I was watching Cartwright on Bonanza, Perry Mason, Lucy Show, Flintstones & Disneyland on TV. The new world had arrived to the village.



# The Öhlens family

Ivar, Brita, Anton and Josef got married and had children. Like earlier generations. And I got cousins. I spent summer holidays working in the store or visiting my cousins. And my cousins was visiting me and working in the store. When my dad decided to build his supermarket they all came to help. The youngest brother Josef was our handy man. He was a fireman but could do anything. And he did for all of us. It was with Josef & Sigrid and their family I grew up.



# Back to Alnön

My mother's father was born on Alnön and started working in one of the sawmills there. This place was since long gone but my mother and my uncle Josef bought a small cottage where a typical workers family had lived at the turn of the 20th century. A small farmhouse for one horse and one cow. One small land for the potatoes and the other as grass for the animals. A trail down to the sea an the boat to fish herrings. This is how my grandfather grew up and where me and my cousins spent many summers, including at the fishing village of Spikarna looking for diamonds since Alnön is a volcanic Island with many rare rocks. We grew potatoes and smoked herring there until 1980. We still own it together and celebrate Midsummer here. We had a visitor last year that told us it could soon be a Museum over a past age.





1930



1958



2007

# Times they are changing

Looking back on the time when I grew up and comparing this with today it seems unbelievable.

The first ten years of my life I was truly living in a paradise, protected from civilization. My two worlds, the farm with it's animals and the river with it's beauty as well as the store with all it's things, smells and people is for ever engraved in my memory. And it was never a dull moment. In the winter we went skiing or if you were a boy wrestling. In the summer we played football or run "orienteering", the Swedish sport when you try to find your way through Nature with a map and compass. The sports club was run by everyone for everyone. Even the entertainment park, "Folkets Park" with dancing and occasional American artists was run on voluntary basis by the sports club.

Sättna, Kovland and Östanå still exist. Even the supermarket that my father built instead of the general store is working. We keep the old store as a meeting point and exhibition hall to among other things inform about global warming. And Kovland has an indoor ice hockey arena. A healthy community, but a lot has changed. It is no longer a decentralized, self governed and sustainable society. 15 minutes away by car the largest shopping center in Northern Scandinavia has been built.

# The revolution 1968- 69

I graduated 1968 in the spring. Ten of us just graduated boys went on our first charter trip ever to Rimini in Italy. The generation of 1968. To see the world, to party and get lucky. When I got back I took a 20 hour train ride to the Swedish army garrison around the Arctic Circle.

1968 USA was terror bombing all of Indo china. Napalm, cluster bombs, chemical weapons you name it. Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy was shoot, Black Panthers demonstrated at the Olympic Games in Mexico, Apollo 8 took man around the moon for the first time, Riots on the streets of Paris, Nixon got elected and Soviet Union occupied Czechoslovakia. This meant the Swedish army was on alert and I was sent to the Finnish boarder with a thirty year old machinegun to wait for the Russians. There I met my wife to be from Canada. Life is surprising. 1968 I moved to Stockholm and the big city to study.

1969 when USA put the first man on the moon the Massacre in Song My was discovered. Sweden banned DDT as the first country in the world. The Boeing 747 and the Concorde flew for the first time and the first microcomputer was on. My father and I follow in the trace of the Vikings when we flew with a propeller airplane via Oslo and Reykjavik to New York. We continue to Chicago to see our relatives and then we drive to Canada to meet the family of my first wife to be. This is 1969 and the summer of Woodstock. My wife to be and me did go to another open air rock concert – 6 hours with Frank Zappa. In the new world!





# The new revolutionary generation 1972 - 74

In Stockholm a group of the 1968 generation from Sundsvall got together and decided to live in one large family. This included me and my new Canadian wife. It was an old and large three story building in the best area of Stockholm, Djursholm. All couples and singles had their own rooms but we shared the rest including common meals in the kitchen. This was sustainable living with minimum resources. We even produced our own wine from the large garden with apple trees which then was stored in the wine cellar. We had an old boat from 1928 to travel to Stockholm or out in the archipelago.

1972 the first international UN conference on the environment was arranged in Stockholm on initiative from Sweden. I was studying both engineering and environment so I became active in the alternative conference about the environment where we were focusing on energy crisis, dependency on oil, the risk of nuclear power and the global warming from a young and political left view point. We painted posters, printed flyers, held seminars, published magazines and books about a better world.

Nixon was re-elected as president and during Christmas 1972 he tried to bomb North Vietnam back to the stone age. The year after, on September 11, a US initiated military coup ended the democratic Allende government in Chile followed with terror and murder against all opposition. Our extended family received refugees from Chile and American deserters from the Vietnam war besides many others. We lived in a large community of young women and men with dreams about a better future. And we had fun.

Here several of our children were born including my son James 1974.



# A new Community

My Canadian wife and I got divorced and she and our son moved to Canada. 1979 six young women and men – now with good and steady jobs bought a new place near the lake Mälaren. I was one of them together with my new Swedish wife. This became a new meeting point for the generation of 1968. We went windsurfing, canoeing, fishing, bicycling. We worked together, grew vegetables together, partied together. The extended family became even bigger and the parties were wild. So here more of our children spent their summers including my two daughters Kristina and Anna Karin and some times my son James, visiting from Canada. So what happened. We grew older. We became attached to our jobs and careers. And we got divorced. So from being six owners sharing this paradise by the lake I was finally left alone. But this is the next part of the story.



# California dreaming

When I was a small boy I was listening to the stories of the Ohlen's brothers who emigrated to America. I was reading about Buffalo Bill and I was watching Disneyland on TV. One of the brothers promised me that if I ever got to America he would show me Disneyland. 1986 I moved here, not because of him but a completely different reasons. It was such an unbelievable happening and it went so fast. It has taken me a very long time to understood why. I still haven't.

Imagine this life. Living in three story house near the golf course. One hour to the mountains and skiing. One hour to in another direction and surfing. Party in New Port Beach, rock concert at Universal Studios and Sunday brunch in Hollywood. Working in Las Vegas, Reno, San Diego or San Francisco.

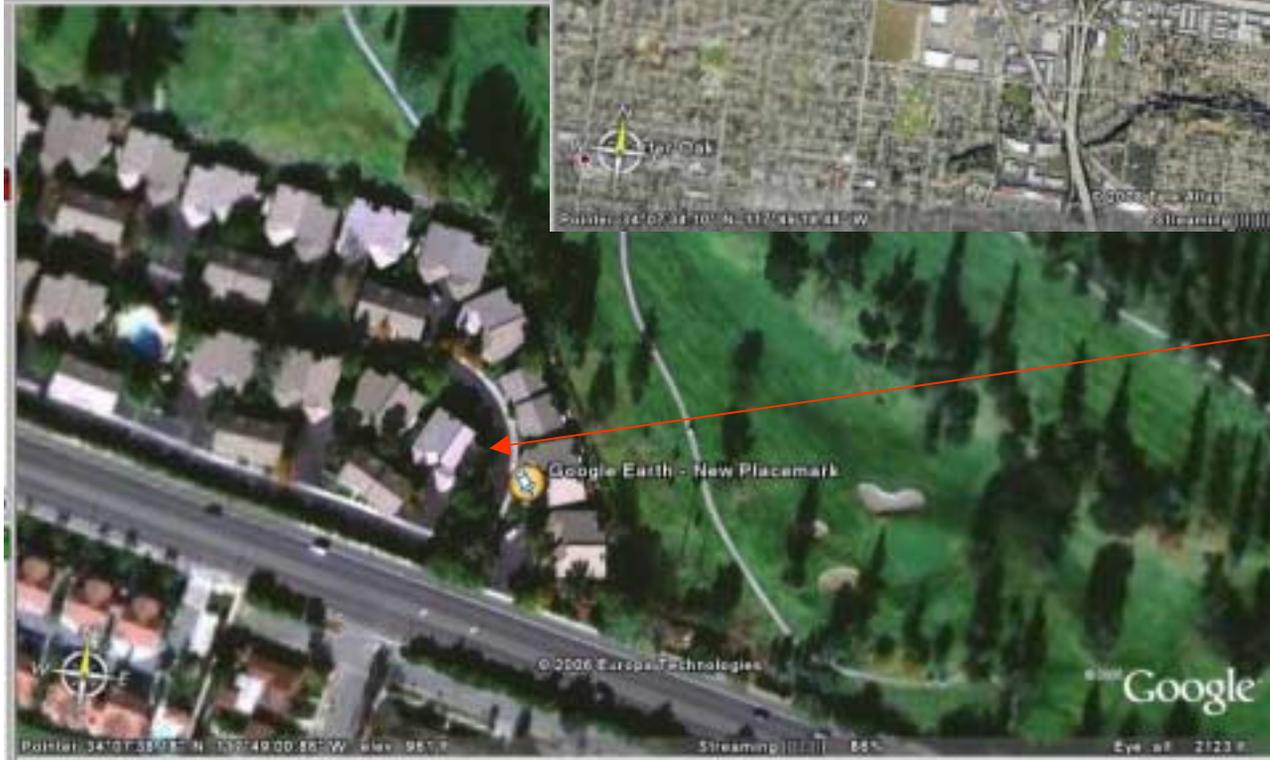
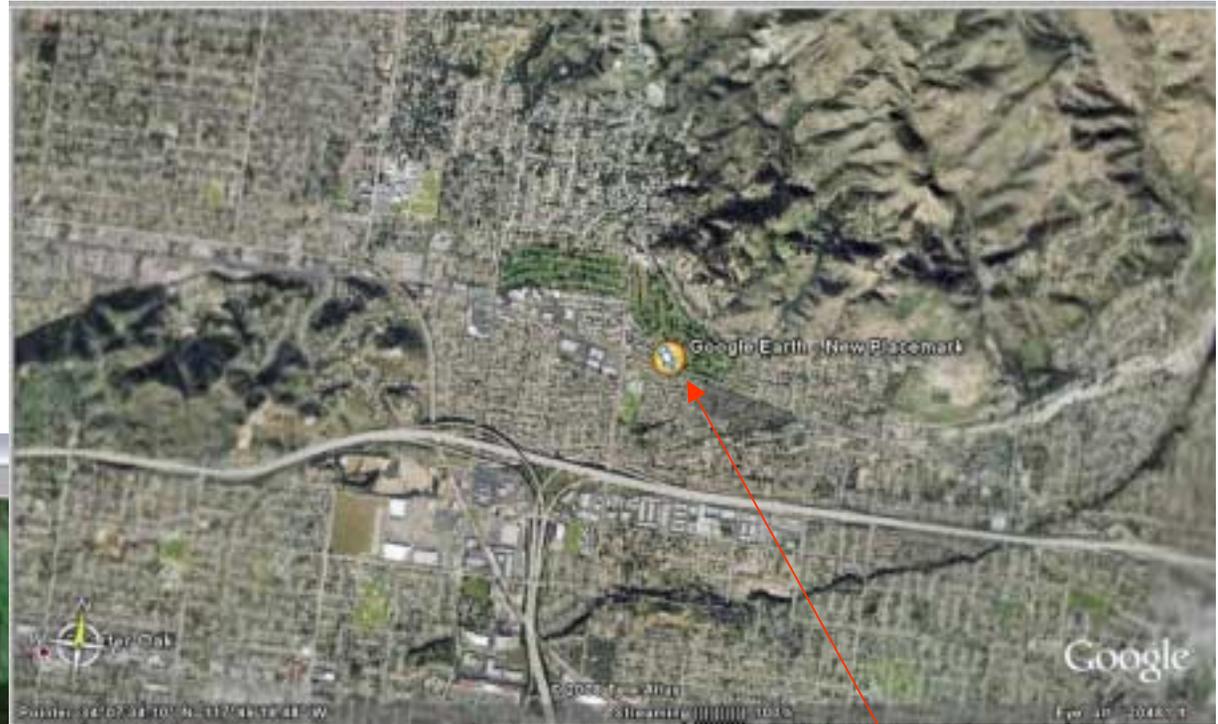
Maybe it was the Universe that sent me to California to punish me because something I had done wrong. And I had. Like so many before me and after me I managed to destroy relations with the other sex. And I had many. Too many. At the same time. This was a way for me not to be attached. To be able to escape. But all of a sudden I had been attached. Someone had managed to open me and reached my soul.

And as a strange coincidence I was moved to California

-To learn that I had it all and still nothing?



# My new home at the brink of the world



My home in California for three years

# California recapture & science fiction

My three years in California became like a review of all my past life (lives) and a journey into the future. I arrived as a guilty soul not knowing why I was accidentally here in Los Angeles and what my mission was. I moved in alone in this large air conditioned house between the Foot Hills and the end of the famous route 66. I could hear the rhythmic sound from the cars passing over the cement plates of the freeways and the constant “moving stars” at night from all the airplanes with occasional police helicopters with searchlight. I spend many hours on these freeways and on airplanes. But I also spent as much time I could in the Nature. Walking or jogging from my house up to the San Bernardino mountains to escape the smog. If it was one of these few clear days after a Santa Ana storm I could see all the way down to the Pacific coast. But often I saw this cap of smog covering the network of freeways with just some of the tall buildings in the centre of Los Angeles sticking up. But driving up to Big Bear mountains or into the desert I could escape the smog and listen to the silence.

Professionally I experienced everything. I worked with all the utilities, research laboratories, consulting companies, US navy, the air force, irrigation authorities, municipalities, the oil companies. I received an honorable position within the Pacific Coast Electrical Association to work with all major western utilities to define the future development. I got the chance to work with wind farms, geo-thermal and solar energy, co-generation and even retrofitting the Hoover dam hydro power plant outside Las Vegas. I had my office in my house. A virtual office with a fax machine, a computer terminal with modem to the main frame of my company main office in Wisconsin with my calendar, my data base, my mail. An answering service to take my calls.

This was the future world of 1986 and I bought my first Apple Personal Computer.

# California rebirth

In my work I really had it all. If I ever would have described my perfect job. This was it. And not only because of the salary, the company car, the house, the flexible working hours and no boss around. From a scientific and technological view this was on the fore front in every aspect. And not just because of my virtual and IT based home office and working with sustainable energy. I even got to work with a project on Lawrence Livermore Laboratory on a laser gun for “Star wars”. I worked sometimes in Silicon Valley. One of my neighbors worked at JPL in Pasadena and showed me the preparation for the next deep space exploration and the control room where the scientists were following the different missions through our solar system.

So what do you do when you have everything but still are alone. My second family from Sweden came over to stay with me and went back after one year. My first family from Canada came down and went back. I had relatives and friends visiting. I even managed to gather my father and my three children from Sweden and Canada at the same time. And I created a new network of women. Because I could not stand being alone.

I was a swinging single in California. What a great life. Totally free to do whatever I wanted. No commitment but many relations. But it was not so great. I was missing something essential. Somebody to love. So like many others I believed that if I just found my other half – my soul mate everything would be fine. It wasn't until much later I slowly discovered that you never can become whole by “stealing” another persons soul. You have to be whole in order to love and be loved. And in order to discover this I had to be broken down, shaken up and be humbled – or die.

# Searching for truth?

I was introduced to New Age by one of my new girlfriends. She showed me the Bodhi Tree bookshop in Hollywood (Made famous by Shirley MacLaine). I signed up for two retreats for the next two weekends. One in Sedona and one in the mountains behind Pasadena. That started my soul searching for about two years when I tried everything. Including finding a new “soul mate”. Because with very few exceptions the participants on these workshops and retreats were single women or gay. Sometimes both.

But instead of becoming the stud and alpha male in my harem I became the symbol of male oppression. Most of the women were there to heal from painful relations with men. I tried crystals, acupuncture, meditation, yoga, Reiki, past life regression, re-birthing,... to heal. But the most I experienced one common thing. Our longing for love and togetherness. As with everything else you can find every religion and every New Age concept in California. Also New Age became a business with the yearly New Age exhibition growing steadily. There is wisdom and there is rubbish. You have to find out for your self. I found U.S. Anderson, Ken Keyes – Handbook to Higher Consciousness and Willis Harman Global Mind Change as well as Science of Mind and A Course in Miracles useful.



LA Mountains



Mendocino



Hawaii



Orr Hot Spring

# The Big Bang

I am a white male and an engineer who always have believed the world to be explained by formulas. Now I was also introduced to the new physics with the new truth that you as an observer are actually influencing what you experience. You are responsible for your own reality. But it is uncertain! I was also told about the connection between your mind and your body. That you by affirmation and meditation can reach another reality.

And I learned how a common thought by many in fact can change the world.

And all of a sudden some “strange” events started to happen in my life or I started to notice them. The first was naturally the sudden way I ended up in California. But an increasing number of confronting events occurred as if someone was trying to tell me something. And it was always happening in my relations with women. The problem for me was how to interpret these events. How to interpret women. To understand men is so easy. We are totally predictable and rational. We can only do one thing at the time and we are so easily controlled by sex, money & violence. Women are another world.

I tried many times to re-connect with my original reason ( I thought) for being in California but it always went wrong in some way. And when I tried to erase this out of my mind something appeared to put her back there again. It was like somebody was playing games with me until I would understand. We had decided to meet again to drive up to Mount Wilson where Edwin Powell 1929 discovered expanded Universe and the basis for the Big Bang theory. On the way back on this “Hollywood movie road” with the deep ravine beneath we had a “Big Bang” that could have killed us. A truck with four young kids passed another car and smashed right into our car. A near death experience.

# On top of the volcano

It was 1989, I was 39 years old and my life was accelerating out of control. I had collected so many miles on my flying that I could go many times around the world. I made a last try to re-connect with my old relation and asked her go to China with me.

She turned down my offer. The New Age group I had been involved in had an Easter retreat on the big Island of Hawaii. So the day after I bought a ticket to Honolulu. Slept on a bench on the airport after arriving and took a morning flight to Hilo on the big Island.

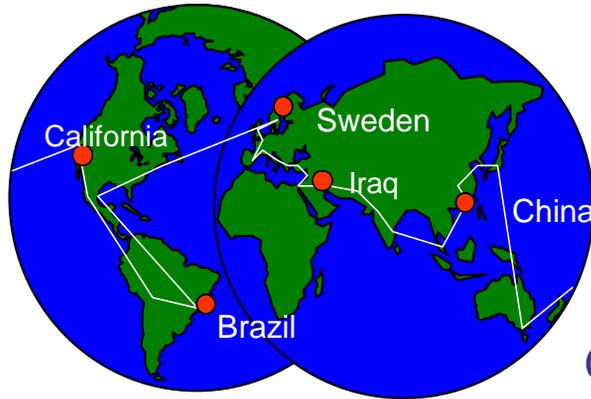
We stayed near the lava field where the fresh lava fire was flowing into the ocean. After all sorts of New age activities including swimming with the dolphins the workshop was over but I did now want to leave since I did not know where to go. Two of the participants lived on the island, both nurses. One gay male nurse dying with AIDS and his female friend who was taking care of him. So I moved in with them for Easter. On God Friday evening she and I walked out on the thin lava surface of the active volcano. It started to rain and we could not see anything in the dark – except the glowing lava beneath. We then prayed together. I really don't know how we came back in the dark.



Easter on the volcano



# Come full circle



My first New Age retreat was real. I was going away on my birthday to look for something I did not know what it was.

But to be honest when I discovered all these lonely young women I got interested for another reason as well.

And it was not only sex. My company had merged three times and every time I had to make a new application for a Green Card. And now I was running out of time. So I thought that if I could solve all problems, Love, sex and a green card by getting married to an American I had it all. But the

Universe had planned something else. These retreats became an opening of my soul. I grew up in a land of forests.

We cut timber and wood. We had a retreat in the Redwood area of Mendocino and we were practicing to hug a tree. So a young woman and I did and we both had this electrifying experience of bliss that no one of us ever felt before.

I had another similar experience with another young woman but only by sitting in a distance looking at each other.

She later told what it was – The feeling of pure love! Everything that happened in my life by coincidence, moving to California, entering the New Age ,traveling to Hawaii brought me closer to my desire – to go to China and by this complete my westbound journey around the globe –

Closing a full circle.



# Life in the fast lane



When I was back from Hawaii I was invited by another girl friend for a party in Long Beach. I drove down and “enjoyed the party.” Driving back on the freeways early in the morning after I was so tired that I pulled over and parked outside a gas station to sleep. I woke up by a noise and had a search light in my face. When I finally could see there was three police cars around me with policemen all pointing their guns at me. If I had made a move they would have shoot me dead.



I had met another ICU nurse on our Hawaii retreat. We actually went scuba diving in Hawaii together. The first thing I did was to cut my foot that did not stop bleeding in the water so I had to get up not to be attacked by the sharks. But we had fun together and when I went on a business trip to San Francisco we again. She decided to go with me to LA and we had a rather exciting drive through the Central Valley.



Back at my place we found out that we both loved Frank Zappa and photography. Not just photography but making colour prints from Cibachrome. So what is the chance that you meet a beautiful young nurse in Hawaii who love Zappa and Cibachrome and want to explore the world?

So I asked her to go with me to China. And she said yes!

# Hey I am dead!

So much was happening in my life during these few weeks. I was working on my video and needed more photos. A Hollywood friend helped me with singing and an Indian woman with drums for the sound track. With my new girl friend anything could happen and it did. We created a fantasy world about our trip to China. Imagined we were going on an adventure to find the magic stone. I had my Indiana Jones hat on and my camera. We stayed at the Marco Polo Hotel in Hong Kong, took a boat to mainland China to see a Panda. We went absolutely wild and chocked the Chinese. We took the train back to Hong Kong and the next day we took the Star ferry to the Hong Kong Island and found a place to make Cibachrome prints out of the many slides we had taken. Then we continued out to a small market and there an Indian fortune teller approached me while my girlfriend tried furiously to convince me not to talk to him. But I did and besides telling me the age of my children he told me I was going to die in a car crash. Then he pulled out a magic stone and said if I bought this it could save me. The night before leaving Hong Kong I got a head ache. The Hotel TV was showing the last Indiana Jones movie, by coincidence about the secret stone but I was too tired to watch. When we left Hong Kong the day after the Monsoon rain had flooded the city and the airplane could hardly take off. But it did and when we landed in Seattle I died.

