

To all our cats who gave and still give us their unquestioning affection.
And to Myrtle, Michael and Eric without whom there would have been no human or cat family to write about!

THE NAMING OF CATS - BOOK 2

CHAPTER 1

In Book 1, Chapter 14, I wrote that "Gerd is nagging me to write more about our life in Denmark." Just to get things clear from the start, Gerd is our very good friend, and it is Myrtle and my Golden Wedding Anniversary that we have just celebrated in 2003!

So, where to start for new (and old) readers? 1970, 1982 and 1996 have all been mentioned in my ramblings through the Book 1 years, so perhaps I had better get some chronological order into things right away!

We married in 1953, built our bungalow in Finchley (that is in the north of London) in 1958. I left the company I worked for for 22 years, in 1972 when I went full-time into working for myself. In 1977 we met a Danish technician, and from that chance meeting we started doing business in Denmark; made new friends there, and started to regularly travel there for business and pleasure. Eventually, in 1993, we definitely decided that we would like to move from London before retirement, and by then, Denmark was our natural choice. In 1994 we moved our home, our business, and, most importantly, all our cats to Svenstrupvænget 3, 5260 Odense S, to a little village just south of the Odense motorway, called Skt Klemens. Interesting, that a part of London where we were frequently involved, is named after St Clement Danes, and centres on the church of that name - the same Skt Klemen.

The move was accomplished after a lot of legal hassle (more about that in Book 1 later) in March 1994, so I will start this new story just a few months earlier, in the summer of 1993. We came back from our caravan holiday in Denmark in a state of great excitement! During the time on our favourite campsite of Bøsøre on Fyn, we were talking to the young couple who owned the site about our vague thoughts of moving to Denmark one day, and asked them if they knew what sort of houses were available, and at what price. It so happened that Helle's parents had just put their house on the market, as they wanted something smaller for *their* retirement, so they invited us to go and have a look. It turned out to be an old farm type house from 1880, fully modernised, about the same size land as in Finchley, and with a swimming pool! We fell in love with it and after a few days excited discussion, said that we would like to buy it.

However, that was not to be, as it turned out that the estate agent had already accepted a deposit. (In Denmark, unlike England, an actual deposit effectively seals the deal.) In hindsight, although we loved the house, it was a two storey house, so probably not such a good idea for us, and anyway, we ended up with a house that really does suit us perfectly, with good friends nearby. We left Denmark at the end of the holiday with the possibility that the deposit might be withdrawn, but after only a few days

back home, we got a message that we were out of luck. Of course, having at last made up our mind that we really were going to move, our own characters brooked no further delay, and so we set about finding somewhere else as soon as possible.

The first step was to make a list of questions to be answered - it went something like this:-

1. How to sell our bungalow, and what realistically could we expect to get for it?
2. Who can we contact to get more information about moving to Denmark? We had to keep working, so we needed to move home, cats and business.
3. Where can we get information on houses for sale that would suit us?

And these were the answers:-

1. We had recently had a flyer from an estate agent which looked quite promising, so went to see them. The owner, Jeremy, was quite helpful and appreciated the problem of selling not just a house, but a piece of potential building land with several other buildings on it. He made some enquiries, and estimated that he could get three potential buyers, with a possibility of selling for around £ 250,000.

2. We tried the Danish Embassy in London and had a rapid response from the commercial department. Two helpful ladies came to see us, and left a lot of information with us. As we had already decided to move to Fyn, they also gave us a contact in the business section at Odense Town Hall.

3. We wrote to the Town Hall, and got another quick response with copies of ads. clipped from local papers of estate agents listings. We were also invited to meet the sender when next we visited.

By the way, at that time, 1993, telephone and fax was the order of the day, so somewhat slower than the Internet/Emailing norm of recent years! In the meantime, we had our Ruby Wedding Anniversary, as usual in the swimming pool and the marquee, with many friends, neighbours and business people. There we announced generally that this would probably be the last one, as our unrealised idea of moving to Denmark was about to become a reality!

From the estate agents ads., we found two possibles, so wrote to the two agents for more information. Susse Ehrhorn faxed straight back with the details and when we asked if she could send us more pictures, they came back in a few minutes. They were obviously freshly taken, as they showed the weather and plant conditions for the time of year! (That puzzled us a bit at the time.) Between us we fixed a possible date to inspect the house in a few weeks towards the end of November, and we also contacted the Town Hall to arrange an appointment to discuss the business possibilities and any help that they could give us.

The final thing to do before actually finalising all the arrangements was to check in the DFDS brochure for the best travel deal, and then ask Susse if there was a small hotel nearby where we could stay for a few days.

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