

THE FIVE Scandinavian countries — Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Iceland — are large in land area but small in population. About 22½ million people are scattered over half a million square miles of territory.

With no radio outlets in the region carrying *The World Tomorrow*, the main means of disseminating God's message has been through the *Plain Truth*. The subscription list stands at over 18,000 now. And another 9,000 *Plain Truths* are placed on selected newsstands (and in department stores and bookstores). The Scandinavian edition is printed in English as it is the second language in the region, with just over 50 percent of the population able to speak it fairly fluently.

Until quite recently, a visit from one of God's ministers was a very rare occurrence in Scandinavia. Previously the area came under the German office, but the vast area and the demands on the small staff in Germany meant that regular visiting was impossible. A few members living in Denmark were occasionally able to attend monthly services held in Hamburg, Germany.

In 1973 Bricket Wood was given the responsibility of the Scandinavian region. A Scandinavian department was established, headed by Stuart Powell. In May of that year, Mr. Powell visited and baptized in the region. He also surveyed the possibilities of holding a spring festival there. The very first Sabbath service was held in Oslo, Norway, in August 1973.

Since then, Mr. Powell has made monthly blitzes through three countries. There is a Friday Bible study in Stockholm for about a dozen people, followed by a

Sabbath service in Oslo and another Bible study on Sunday near Aarhus in Denmark. In Oslo and Aarhus the attendance varies between twenty and thirty members.

Mr. Powell is no stranger to international travel. While in the Royal Air Force Transport Command, he served in the Middle East, the Suez Canal Zone, Aden, and was in Kenya during the Mau Mau disturbances. After completing his period of national service, he started his own business involving the wholesale distribution of fish. Later he found out about the Worldwide Church of God and eventually attended Ambassador College in Bricket Wood, from which he graduated in 1968. In addition to his Scandinavian responsibilities, Mr. Powell visits in the East Anglican area in England and pastors the churches of Chelmsford and Norwich.

A year and a half ago, Danish-born Richard Sprotte was transferred from Pasadena to help Mr. Powell as office manager and ministerial assistant. Mr. Sprotte grew up in Denmark and studied structural engineering at the Copenhagen Technical College. At the age of 30 he emigrated to the United States and settled in California where, in 1968, he began translating for the Worldwide Church of God.

Another construction engineer called to help build God's Church is Norwegian deacon Diedrik Zernichow. He helps part time by handling personal correspondence in the Norwegian and Swedish languages. He also assists Mr. Sprotte with translating and has the responsibility of making all the arrangements in connection with the festivals.

by Peter Shenton

Photos by Ron Beidock — GN

THE CHURCH IN Scandinavia



inavia

Mr. Zernichow was formerly managing director of one of the larger construction firms in Norway. In 1961 he was appointed to the Royal Norwegian Council for Scientific and Industrial Research and was head of the building materials division until leaving Norway in 1970 to come to Bricket Wood.

Thanks to the efforts of Mr. Sprotte and Mr. Zernichow, all twelve lessons of the Correspondence Course have been translated into Danish and currently there are more than 1700 people studying it. However, as the second language in all these countries is English, there are a further 1000 students taking the course in English.

In October 1974, the first Feast of Tabernacles was held in Scandinavia — a major milestone. The beautiful setting was the Norwegian fell country at Sanderstølen.

Some 140 people, including children and visitors from Britain and North America, attended. The warmth and friendliness in this small group of people created a family atmosphere that was a real foretaste of what all people, everywhere, will eventually enjoy.

The Hotel Sanderstølen provided all that one could wish. Indoor swimming pool, saunas, game rooms and a “trim room” — or gymnasium — that was very much needed after partaking of the traditional breakfast and lunch smørgaasbord! At night a superb candlelit dinner was served with such entrees as smoked salmon and reindeer meat.

The Holy Days offer the only opportunity for all the brethren in Scandinavia to meet together. This spring, during the Passover season, we are arranging for them to get together again. Future plans are also being made for evangelistic campaigns.

Like the proverbial mustard seed, the Scandinavian work is small but has great potential for growth. The harvest will be great — it's only a matter of providing the funds and manpower to do the job. □



The site of the first Feast of Tabernacles to be held in Scandinavia was the beautiful fell country at Sanderstølen, Norway. Eleven countries were represented among the one-hundred forty brethren who attended. In the group photograph above, Stuart Powell, director of the Scandinavian work and pastor of the churches at Chelmsford and Norwich, England, is shown at extreme left. Second from right on front row is Sidney Hegvold, minister of the church in Dublin, Ireland. To the immediate left (second row) of Mr. Hegvold is Richard Sprotte, Danish translator, mentioned in the article. Right: Mr. and Mrs. Stuart Powell. Below: Room used for services at the Hotel Sanderstølen.

