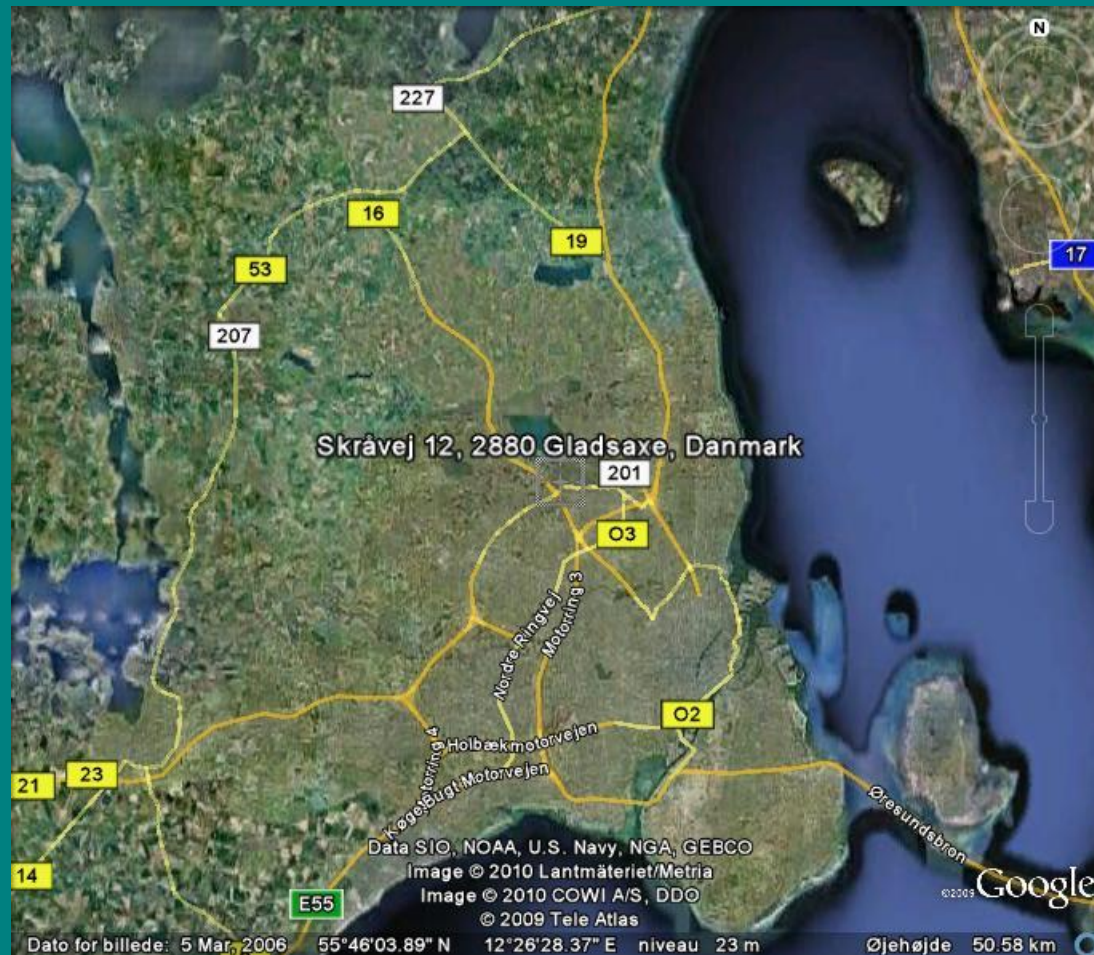


# **A Round trip in Suburbia**

With Erik Somer in Bagsvaerd,  
Denmark on a winter day.

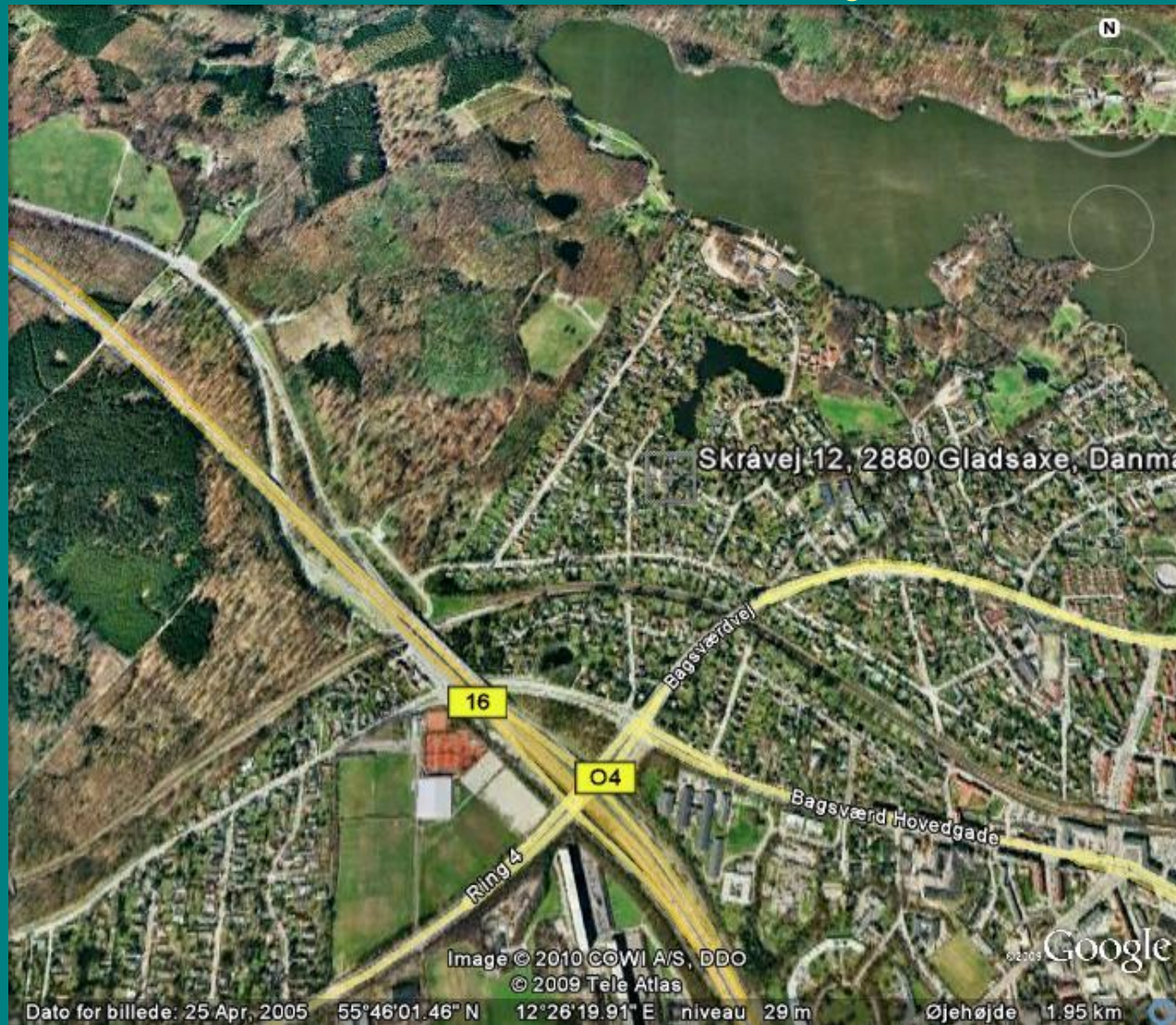
14 January 2010

Together with my dear wife Inga I am living in Bagsvaerd, a village in the municipality of Gladsaxe, north of Copenhagen (at the "G" in Gladsaxe). Copenhagen town is in the lower part of the picture. We are on the island of Sealand separated from Sweden (upper right) by the Sound. At the lower right is the 19 km combined tunnel and bridge to Sweden.





We are closing in on Bagsvaerd. Our house is situated close to the S in Skråvej. Our house is bordering to the small lake Nydam and further north you see the larger lake Bagsvaerd. Bagsvaerd is a very old village. It is mentioned for the first time in a papal bull in 1089. Soldiers of the Danish king killed some men in a Danish cathedral. As penance the king had to give a county to the church. In the letter by the Pope describing this area Bagsvaerd is mentioned. The name is of old Nordic origin. It means "firs on a slope"





Our house is in the center of this Google Earth picture. The black shadows in the lower left of the picture are shadows of the firs on the slope of the hill southwest of our land. Our lake –Lake Nydam - is the black area at the top. The light brown rectangle northeast of our house is our vegetable garden.



View from our house towards the lake





My book is being printed now. For the first time in nearly a year I have time to stroll around and to take pictures from our neighbourhood. Here we are at Lake Bagsvaerd a few minutes walk from where we live. In the summer it is used for rowing regattas. In the foreground the pier of the boat club. Two skiers are on the lake.





It is 3 o'clock in the afternoon. It is nearly sunset time.



There is a nice gourmet restaurant close to Lake Bagsvaerd





The boat house of the rowing club. Some years ago the world championship in rowing took place on lake Bagsvaerd.



The dormitory of our local high school. It is mainly for use by students whose parents live abroad.





Old peoples flats partly owned by our municipality. There is a very nice restaurant only for senior people of our community. It is cheap, serves gourmet food. We go there sometimes for lunch. Until World War II there was a spa and sanitarium here. The Germans blew it up as counter-terror after sabotage of German installations by the Danish underground movement.





This is probably the oldest house in our close neighbourhood. It belonged to the director of the sanitarium. It was built in the 1880's. There is fashion in one-family houses. When looking at it, you can easily see when it was constructed.





This lovely house is from 1912.. The owner of the house also owned lake Nydam. Later on all the families living around the lake established a lake owner society, which bought the lake and takes care of the maintenance of it.





Before the addition to the left was added this house looked as inspired by the Italian or Tuscan style with a rather flat roof. New owners have made the addition, changed the colour and felled the trees which added to the style. The house was built around 1920 and was also owned by staff of the sanitarium.





The house on top of the hill is from about 1920, while the lower one is typically from around 1980. Our neighbourhood is rather hilly, shaped by glaciers during the latest ice age around 40.000 years ago.



This is a functionalistic villa from about 1930, inspired by the German Bauhaus style.





This split level house is from around 1960.



This new wing of the old people flats was built last year.





We are now returning to our house from our round trip. The garage to the left with my favorite blue colour gate belongs to us. Our neighbours house is from 1960.



Our house was designed by me and built in 1953 with later enlargements and additions. The front is a half-timbered construction. At that time shortly after the war there was a severe shortage of housing. The government gave loans covering 95% of the cost of the house at a very low interest. I was a young engineer then and had almost no money myself. The last 5% I had to pay were covered by my own construction activities.





Our house is situated in a nature protection area. Before construction could start the drawings had to be approved by the nature protection authorities. For this reason, I let the house follow the slope of the land and kept it very low. The floor of the rear part of the house is actually lower than the surrounding surface. Here we have our heater and storage rooms. As water is scarce, we collect rain water from the roof in the two vessels to the right for use in the garden. The border of the nature protected area is at the fence to the left of the picture. Thus, there were no restrictions when the neighbours house was built. They raised the level of the ground and built a high rise house. We did not like it, but we are good friends with our neighbours, so we don't think about it anymore.



Here you may notice how the side wall of the house follows the slope of the ground.





Along the side wall of the house we have a bed of our earliest and latest plants. They are autumn crocus (*colchicum autumnale*). The sprouts are growing up through the snow. In spring there are only green parts. They wilt in August and nothing can be seen of the plants. But in October lilac crocus like flowers without green leaves are coming up. They remain nearly to the end of the year.



We are now at the front door of our house. Theft and robbery has become more common now than in our early years here, when we did not have to lock the front door when we left the house. In order to protect the house against unwanted visitors I have a Thai shadow doll demon on the inside of the glass pane as well as a sign saying that the house is protected by TV surveillance and alarm . (Actually, we have only the sign and no TV and alarm). I don't know if it is the demon or the sign which has kept thieves away so far.

