

Experienced, recollected, and reconstructed

The establishment of Nordic forest museums in the 1940s–60s

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Abstract: *The article focuses on the Nordic forest museums established in the 1940s–60s, during the period when Finland, Sweden, Norway, and even Denmark experienced rapidly changing forestry. These museums shared their timing and their theme, but did they also share the ultimate ideas, motives and visions? The article discusses the actors who took the initiative in establishing museums, as well as their backgrounds and reasons for collecting, documenting, and exhibiting forest history. It concentrates in particular on two Finnish cases which are seen in a wider Nordic context to find out whether there were common Nordic visions of forest museums – as there was a lot of shared forest history. The article was written as part of a project called Happy Days? The Everyday Life and Nostalgia of the Extended 1950s, led by Professor Hanna Snellman of Jyväskylä and Helsinki Universities and financed by the Academy of Finland.*

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It seems to be the last chance to establish a forest museum. From now on and more quickly than ever, old and valuable material, connected to forests, will vanish. So too will the oldest individuals with indispensable knowledge soon be gone. It is a question of documenting and rescuing the knowledge, practices, and working methods of one of the main sources of livelihood in this province for future generations (*Savotta* 17–18/1962).

This is how a forest museum project, started

in Finnish Lapland in 1962, was introduced in a newspaper. Lapland's forest museum became one of hundreds of forest museums around the world (*Forest History Museums of the World* 1983, Kaldal 2005). These special museums focus on one particular theme, a forest, but they are still not easy to define as a homogenous museum group, as a forest can be understood in different ways. In the Nordic context a forest museum most often refers to forestry, especially forest work and

22 transportation, but is sometimes complemented with other ways of using forests, especially by such themes as fishing and hunting. As the concepts of *culture*, *history* and *heritage* are usually connected with the concept of a museum, forest museums often seem to focus on *forest history*, or the past and the present *forest culture*. Usually forest museums seem to share a cultural interpretation of forest history, complete with natural history and ecological viewpoints. According to Bo Fritzboøger, “in forest history natural history and cultural history meet each other” (2001:13). Forest culture is most often understood as a shared history of man and forest, that is activities, practices, viewpoints, meanings, and values related to forests and shared by individuals and communities in a social context. Forest culture means the interaction between man and forest, human beings’ various relations to forests, and the presuppositions created for human beings by forests.

In this article, I focus on the Nordic forest museums established in the 1940s–60s. There are several reasons which make both this theme and period worth studying. Finland, Sweden, Norway, and even Denmark, share this history of rapidly changing forestry after WWII. In these countries the first serious forest museum projects were introduced in the 1940s–60s, to be supplemented later, at the end of the 20th century, by some new larger museums and plenty of small ones. As museum projects, they were not rare: About 95 % of all the museums of the world were established after WWII. For example, in post-war Finland, establishing small local museums was very popular (Lowenthal 2004:3, Vilkuna 2010:33–34).

What were the aims of these first forest museums? They shared their timing and their

theme, but did they also share the ultimate ideas, motives and visions? I am interested in the actors who took the initiative in establishing museums, as well as their backgrounds and reasons for collecting, documenting, and exhibiting forest history. I will focus in particular on two Finnish cases. They are seen, however, in a wider Nordic context to show a variety of Nordic forest museum concepts and to find out whether there were some common Nordic visions of forest museums – as there was a lot of shared forest history.

My research is mainly based on museum histories and Finnish newspaper articles. There are several museum histories available concerning Denmark’s, Norway’s, Sweden’s, and Finland’s forest museums, with an overview of a museum’s history, aim, and collections (Halberg 2004, *Lapin metsämuseo* 1972, *Lapin metsämuseo 25 vuotta* 1987, Larsson *et al.* 1986, *Pielisen museon Savotaranta* 1977, *Pielisen museo 50 vuotta* 1998, Rännäli 2002, Serup 1996, *Silvanum* 1962). In Finland, the newspaper *Savotta* closely followed the establishing of Lapland’s Forest Museum and the newspaper *Lieksan lehti* the establishing of the forest work department at the Pielinen Museum. It has been a challenge to find information about these museums, as there is a lack of published or archive sources describing the early history and ideas behind these organizations. I have received help, tacit knowledge, and unpublished material concerning these museums from my colleagues in Nordic forest museums and my fellow researchers in the area of museological forest history. As a forest museum professional, the collections manager at Lusto – The Finnish Forest Museum, I am part of my research subject as well, not of

forest culture but rather of forest museum culture. My own position gives me a particular viewpoint and an interest in this subject, as I am involved in the same museum processes which started in Finland half a century ago and are continuing today.

SAVING THE PAST FOR THE FUTURE

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The 1940s–60s in Nordic forestry was an epoch of many new, fundamental developments, such as mechanizing, educating, professionalizing, and reorganizing. Uneducated lumberjacks as

Fig. 1. Forest work and transportation started to change after WWII. In 1964 in Eastern Finland, old-fashioned and modern horse powers met each other on the same logging site. Photo: Pentti Väänänen, Pentti Väänänen's collection, Lusto – The Finnish Forest Museum.



24 forest workers, axes and handsaws as tools for felling, horses and waterways as means for transporting, as well as log cabins for living in, all started to change. Lumberjacks, either homeless men wandering from one logging site to another or local smallholders in need of extra earnings, were gradually replaced by educated and full-time forest workers. There was no longer only need for brawn to use handsaws but skill in using chainsaws. Horses were replaced by tractors and floating logs downriver by trucks. The signs of the transition appeared at the latest in the 1950s. In the 1960s, change was already at full speed (see Ager 1992:7–9, Embertsén 1992:46–49, Hjelm 1992:57, Rosander 1992:29, Halberg 1993:323, 342, Halberg 2004:26, Paaskoski 2008:45–50, Pakkanen & Leikola 2011: 146–152). Compared to Finland, Sweden, and Norway, Denmark was not a country of intensive forestry. Still, Denmark's traditional multiple use of its forests encountered a more efficient industrial use, as the production of coniferous wood doubled after the war. The first forestry schools were opened at the end of the 1940s. Tractors were introduced after the war and chainsaws during the 1950s. The inspiration for development and change came from Sweden and the USA (Fritzbøger 2001:242–248, 365, Landert 2005:8–10).

As forest work started to change in a most visible and real way, it soon awoke concerns about losing a way of life for so many ordinary people and even for whole nations. It is noticeable, at least in Finland and Sweden, that of all forestry professionals and employees forest workers have been the most noticed, both in research and amongst the public. Meanwhile, more educated professionals, like foresters and forestry officers, have been left aside even though there were similar changes to

their work as well. The disappearing lumberjack culture was a concern for all forestry professionals and employees (Paaskoski 2008:147–148, see Aronsson 2012: 7).

The 1950s seem to have resulted in a new esteem for forest workers in the Nordic countries (Ager 1992:7, Hjelm 1992:57, Snellman 1996:235–246, Halberg 2004:26). In post-war Finland, lumberjacks became popular objects in literature, films, and art. The need to rescue and preserve history and traditions in a changing society was also a typical ethnological and museological viewpoint of the time. In ethnology, interest, documentation, and research, were directed to disappearing cultural phenomena in general, and even to disappearing lumberjacks and traditional forest work. Large oral history projects, like *Lumberjacks (Jätkäät)* in the 1960s, were a great success. The first ethnological studies concerning forest work were also written at this time (see Snellman 1996:16). The same interest saw the building of several lumberjack monuments in the 1950s–60s. But, according to the Lappish newspaper *Savotta* in 1962 “[the statues] are only symbols of forest work; they show only a hint of the hardness and versatility of forest work, but about the forest itself they say nothing” (*Savotta* 15/1962, see also Snellman 1996:235–240, *Lieksan lehti* 27 November 1970).

ESTABLISHING THE NORDIC FOREST MUSEUMS

The first seriously planned and realized forest museum in the Nordic countries was the Danish Museum of Hunting and Forestry (*Dansk Jagt- og Skovbrugsmuseum*), established in 1942, in Hørsholm, Sjælland. There were

several background factors to the project. The beginning of the 20th century in Denmark witnessed an increasing and varied interest in nature, which in turn led to a debate between forest conservationists and forest users. The establishment of the museum was part of this topical discussion and propaganda concerning forestry and hunting issues directed at the public. The Danish Forest Association together with other organizations, like the Danish Hunting Society, first arranged a succession of exhibitions about forestry and forest-related themes before WWII; the idea of a hunting and forestry museum was presented as well. One initiative, which eventually led to a museum project, came, from amongst others, from doctor Carl Syrach-Larsen, who was head of the Hørsholm state arboretum. Several hunting, forestry, and forest-related organizations took part in planning and establishing the museum, situated in the park of Hørsholm Castle. According to Helle Serup, the museum was meant both to educate the public about forest issues and to collect and preserve items for historical and educational purposes (Serup 1996:18, 22, 34–49, 76, 113, Baagøe 2012).

The establishment of the Danish museum was followed by a project in Norway a decade later. The Glomdal museum in Southern Østerdalen, in Hedmark county, had started to collect and exhibit forest work as part of local cultural history. The museum had plans to concentrate even more on forest history and become a specialized museum. These ideas led to the arranging of a national forestry exhibition by the authorities and forestry organizations in 1953. The exhibition presented material about the mechanization and modern technology of forestry, forest workers in the past and the present, hunting

and fishing, and the importance of forestry as a livelihood. The successful project was seen to bring people and organizations together, and to give future hope for the whole forestry sector (Halberg 2004:26–34).

During the exhibition project, forestry officer Einar Stoltenberg and forestry director Alf Langsæter came up with the idea of establishing a museum: The Norwegian Forestry Museum (*Norsk Skogbrukmuseum, Norsk Skogmuseum*) was founded in 1954 as an independent national forestry museum by several forestry, fishing, and hunting associations. It was, at first, an outdoor museum, but a modern museum building was constructed in the 1970s.

The Norwegian exhibition of 1953 was visited by Swedish guests from Gävle. They found the historical department superior to any other part of the exhibition: “Now we shall travel home and realize these ideas in Sweden,” promised the delegation (Halberg 2004:31–32). The plans for a forest museum were made by a provincial forestry officer Eric Persson, who saw the importance of educating the public about forestry issues, and as a result *Silvanum* – “The Museum of the Forest” – was opened in Gävle in 1961. The museum, surrounded by an arboretum, included modern interactive exhibitions, but it did not have an active collecting policy or large collections. The exhibitions concentrated on modern forestry, but also included a section on forest history (*Silvanum* 1962, Larsson *et al.* 1986).

Finland was the last Nordic country to take a serious stance on both preserving forest history and presenting forest culture in a forest museum. As the Finnish Hunters’ Association had already started to collect museum items in the 1930s, hunting was not

26 included in the forest museum (*Lieksan lehti* 27 November 1970, *Savotta* 23/1962). A lack of a proper forest museum had already been noticed decades earlier in Finland. The first two projects were started in the 1960s and influenced by the Nordic examples:

There are nowadays three forest museums in Sweden. In Norway, as far as it is known, at least one. None in Finland. There has been much talk about a forest museum. Nothing has been done. This issue has remained between the wall and the wallpaper like a bedbug (*Savotta* 8/1963, *Savotta* 22/1963, see *Lapin metsämuseo* 1972, 23).

Lapland's Forest Museum Association was

founded in Rovaniemi in 1962. The main initiators were a farmer, Oskari Klemetti, and the rural municipality of Rovaniemi. Almost all the central posts in the association were given to forestry professionals, and forestry organizations became the main funders. For example, forest councillor Jarl Sundquist became the head of the working and collecting committees, and the head of the forest department in the company Kemi, Mauri Melamies, led the association during the period 1964–87. The association sought to open a museum focusing on Lappish forest work, floating logs downriver, and forest workers. Additionally, they wanted to raise public interest in forests and forest history by

Fig. 2. A hut from Koivu, a Lappish village, was used for accommodating timber floaters in 1904–61. It was the first building in the outdoor museum area of Lapland's Forest Museum in 1967. Photo: Lapland's Forest Museum.





Fig. 3. The outdoor forest work department Savotaranta was opened in 1970 at the Pielinen Museum. Photo: Ilmari Karvonen, Pielinen Museum.

exhibiting, researching, publishing, and arranging seminars and excursions. Lapland's Forest Museum (*Lapin metsämuseo*) was opened in 1968. The original plans included a museum building, an outdoor museum, and an arboretum. Only the outdoor museum was realized and the collection mostly concentrated on forest work and floating logs. The development of the museum, however, continued, and the collections were extended from the 1960s onwards (*Savotta* 1962–68, *Lapin metsämuseo* 1972:23–28, *Lapin metsämuseo 25 vuotta* 1987:38–49, Rännäli 2002).

The Pielinen Museum (*Pielisen museo*), a local museum in Northern Karelia, Lieksa, was founded by a local teacher Onni E.

Koponen in 1948. In 1955, another enthusiast, Ilmari Karvonen, a forestry officer and head of the forest department at a local sawmill, became the chairman of the museum board. He was especially interested in forest history and wrote about it regularly in the local newspaper. In the 1960s, Karvonen presented the idea of a Savotaranta forest museum as a distinct outdoor museum department. Savotaranta, planned in the end of the 1960s and opened in 1970, introduced buildings and equipment related to logging and floating; the collection was extended later in the 1970s. Savotaranta became a brand of the Pielinen Museum, which was then seen, in addition to Lapland's Forest Museum, as one of the most important forest museums in

28 Finland, of national significance (*Lieksan lehti* 1969–70, *Pielisen museon Savotaranta* 1977, *Pielisen museo 50 vuotta* 1998).

The Nordic forest museums, more or less, followed each others' ideas in developing their activities. Forestry professionals planning new museums were well acquainted with the Nordic forest historical context and almost competed with neighboring countries in founding forest museums. International cooperation was familiar to them in everyday forestry and this enabled a sharing of ideas. Social interaction was the most effective way to spread historical and museological viewpoints in the Nordic countries. For example, Silvanum followed some of the ideas of the Norwegian forest exhibition and Lapland's Forest Museum considered Silvanum and the Norwegian Forestry Museum as good examples of forest museums. The Danish Museum of Hunting and Forestry was, however, seldom mentioned in Finland (see *Savotta* 11/1962, *Savotta* 23/1962, *Lapin metsämuseo* 1972:29–33).

PERSPECTIVES ON MUSEALIZATION

Ways of understanding forest history and the tasks of a forest museum were more or less defined in the projects described above. What was collected and presented, and what kinds of meanings were given to the collections tell us about the musealization process carried out in Nordic forest museums in the 1940s–60s.

The mission of the Danish Museum of Hunting and Forestry was in 1942 seen as preserving old items as a national collection, serving as a professional museum of hunting and forestry, and enlightening the public about general issues concerning nature and its utilization (Serup 1996:102). Even though

the Norwegian Forestry Museum in 1956 emphasized forest history when stating that “the aim of the museum is to collect, preserve and exhibit items and buildings which illuminate the history of forestry, hunting and fishing and offer real material for research and education” (Matheson 1979: 293), its background was also in a demand to make forestry more generally known.

Silvanum in Sweden partly shared the same purposes of focusing on the past and the present, but stressed the idea of exhibiting modern forestry more than other museums. Silvanum wished to increase understanding of and interest in Swedish forestry, put the achievements of science into practice, provide information about forests, and maintain an arboretum as living material. It was Eric Persson who became fascinated by the idea of “a living forest museum” and was able to realize his dream in Silvanum (*Silvanum* 1962, Larsson *et al.* 1986:6–7). The founders considered arboretums important parts of their forest museums.

Lapland's Forest Museum Association had formulated its task as “to collect and preserve the past of forests and work done in forests as well as buildings, equipment, items, information, and photographs concerning the work and life of forest workers, to preserve forest culture and to raise interest towards forests, their past and special nature” (*Savotta* 33/1966). In the 1960s, it included old buildings related to logging and floating, a towing boat, a forest locomotive, several hundred items, and 600 photographs. The association planned to present forestry and forest issues more widely later. Of all the Nordic forest museums, Lapland's Forest Museum most clearly emphasized its duty to transfer the cultural heritage to future

generations (*Savotta* 7/1964, *Lapin metsämuseo* 1972:4).

The aim is to build old-fashioned logging buildings, logging huts, saunas, and horse stables in suitable places to tell younger generations what circumstances were like when their fathers and grandfathers went to logging sites (*Savotta* 22/1963).

They wanted to rescue not only single items and buildings but forestry as a whole:

...descriptions of life at the very beginning of the forest work epoch, how the work was done that time, and what was related to it, how was eating and purchasing food supplies arranged, what were traffic and other communications like, what was done in the evenings in logging huts, etc. It seems to raise plenty of questions. The old vocabulary of forest work should be saved, as chainsaws and tractors are creating their own vocabularies and the old one will soon be forgotten (see *Savotta* 3/1963, *Savotta* 7/1964).

Photographs were seen to be extremely significant in this sense: The whole story of work could be told much better by pictures, actively collected in the 1960s (*Savotta* 1965–67). It is notable that many of the museums were outdoor museums as it was envisioned as being the best way to present forestry as a whole, especially in terms of outdoor forest work history. This was also the point in Pielinen Museum's Savotaranta which presented all its forest history intentionally in its outdoor museum buildings and constructions. In 1970, the year the forest history department opened, several logging cabins, saunas, storehouses, and other logging-site buildings and constructions had been moved to the museum area. An exhibition of photographs and items was shown in one of the

cabins. The aim of the forest museum was to preserve the disappearing forest culture and to describe the typical development of local forest work and logging sites (*Lieksan lehti* 14 August 1970, 27 November 1970).

There were both similarities and differences in the Nordic forest museums' concepts. Despite cooperation in the 1940s–60s, Nordic forest museums had two different ways to develop their idea of a museum. The museum could be seen as giving hope for the future in the form of an exhibition of modern developing forestry. And, if modern forestry was to be exhibited, it had to be done with modern exhibition techniques as well – as was the case in Silvanum. One could ask, already in the 1960s, whether this kind of “museum of the forest” was a museum at all or a trade show department of the Swedish forest industry. Silvanum was not always considered a “real museum” as it did not concentrate on preserving the past but on exhibiting modern forestry, directed more to forestry professionals than to an ordinary audience (*Lapin metsämuseo* 1972:7, 32–33). Another possibility was to concentrate on the past – on saving it by collecting and exhibiting old items and photographs in a traditional way. The Finns chose mostly this way even though they agreed on the importance of planning special exhibitions on modern forestry. These viewpoints could also be combined, as was done in Denmark and Norway.

RECOLLECTING AND RECONSTRUCTING THE PAST

“A hunger violin to a museum – more than 200 000 chainsaws imported”, was a headline in *Savotta* in 1965. The article was not discussing the Lappish museum project, but

30 the import of new equipment. Chainsaws were replacing “hunger violins”, that is bow saws, widely used in logging before the first chainsaws. In the lumberjacks’ oral tradition, a bow saw was a violin, played to earn one’s daily bread to fill hungry stomachs. The article focused, however, on the same aspect that was often pointed out when considering Lapland’s Forest Museum, namely, comparing old and new (*Savotta* 14/1965). This comparison in the newspaper was most visible – even if not always intentional – through the 1960s as the headlines, articles, and advertisements reported on the great structural and social changes taking place in Lapland’s forestry. Innovations in forestry had parallels in the museum collections. During the decade there was an ever-increasing number of chainsaws, museum items, and unemployed people in Lapland, as “Lapland’s Forest Museum was founded during a period of turbulent development in the 1960s, when the nature of working in the forests and along the floating routes changed because of mechanizing” (see *Savotta* 1962–69, *Savotta* 20/1968).

In museums, comparing old and new could be used for reconstructing the past or telling the history and development of forestry in a sensible way. Comparisons were used in all the Nordic forest museums. Looking backwards and forwards, comparing the past and the present, even the future, was a way to present both viewpoints in Nordic forest museums: to save the disappearing culture by collecting old items, buildings, photographs, and information for a museum and to support the positive future development of forestry.

The old times of forest work and floating logs were seen to be primitive whilst the present was shown as a period of technological

progress. This lesson had to be illustrated in museums before modernization destroyed all evidence of it (*Savotta* 22/1963, 7/1964). Rescuing old items in Lapland had become a great concern as they were not only threatened by the changes in forestry; the Lapland war of 1944–45 had already destroyed a great deal of buildings and items (*Savotta* 8/1963, 22/1963, 7/1964, *Lapin metsämuseo* 1972:11, 33, *Lapin metsämuseo 25 vuotta* 1987:38). As forestry was changing radically, the old times came to be seen differently:

It is interesting to follow in the photographs the story of how wood was supplied decades ago and how lumberjacks lived at that time. It’s fun to compare it with a modern picture of logging with many machines and other modern equipment (*Savotta* 13/1966, see also *Savotta* 16/1966).

Forest work has developed so much that not many of the museum items of Savotaranta are seen being used by forest workers any more. Machines have replaced old forest work (*Lieksan lehti* 14 August 1970).

At least in Finland it was strongly felt that this was the last chance to establish a museum as both the old material culture and people with their own experiences were rapidly disappearing (*Savotta* 17–18/1962). As the Danish and Norwegian museums had already been founded in the 1940s–50s, this disappearance of the old forestry culture was not as strong a motive for establishing more museums as it was in Finland.

Creating cultural heritage in a musealization process means selecting the details of the past to be preserved. According to Stefan Bohman, museum professionals or other actors identify certain objects, transfer them to a museum, and make them parts of the cultural heritage



Fig. 4. Lapland's Forest Museum Association arranged in 1965–66 a photograph collecting competition for the museum. The winner photograph from the 1930s was considered special as it so well showed everyday life in a logging hut: a female cook in her very modest working and living environment. Photo: Veikko Moilanen, Lapland's Forest Museum.

by symbolizing and giving meanings to them (Bohman 2003:16–18, Meijer-van Mensch & van Mensch 2011:18–19). The objects have their “second representation” in museums after their first representation in real life (Vilkuna 2007:180–182). In museum collections, there is a recollection or a reconstruction of the past, not the past itself, as was even noticed in Lieksa: “In a traditional sense, there is no more old forest work or logging sites. Its memory, however, has been well preserved in Savotaranta of Pielinen Museum” (*Lieksan lehti* 14 August 1970).

One of the background ideologies was the ethos of hard work in forests, saved in the form of the collected tools and photographs, and connected to the welfare of each nation (f.

ex. *Savotta* 7/1964). It could be presented to younger generations by describing the development of and advances in forestry and by seeing old-fashioned manual work compared with modern technical improvements. It was also a question of honor – honoring the men who had not been honored earlier. On the 10th anniversary of the Lapland's Forest Museum Association in 1972, Finland's Minister of Education stated that “the activity of the museum has to be seen as writing the history of work and workers” (*Lapin metsämuseo* 1972:3). In this sense, Lapland's Forest Museum shared the common Nordic idea of concentrating on collecting, preserving, and presenting the history of work, working equipment, and workers. The

32 reconstructed past was perceived as a past of hard but honorable work.

In one article in *Savotta* in 1963 the author writes:

In this province, several generations have already toiled in the forests. A modern man, a man with a chainsaw, a mechanical windlass, and a tractor, doesn't always think how tough it used to be to get one's daily bread for those men who were logging with primitive tools and transporting and floating, with primitive equipment, the national treasure of this province from the wilderness to the seashore, where the wood of this province turned into money (*Savotta* 22/1963).

In his opening speech at Savotaranta in 1970, Ilmari Karvonen for his part spoke – with plenty of nostalgia in his voice:

Old forest work has faced a silent death. It lived here in the silence of the wilderness for one hundred years. In logging sites one could hear nothing else but ravens' croaking, handsaws' silent hissing, the soft blows of axes, whirs of falling trees, the jingling bells of sledges, and, in springtime, the clatter of the logs in a river as they race each other towards a lower course. Our Savotaranta has been built in memory of this old forest work and to show respect to old forest workers (*Lieksan lehti* 18 August 1970).

FOREST MUSEUM MEN AS HERITAGE MAKERS

When recollecting, or collecting, the past is formed into something more stable and comprehensible. Museum objects can be seen as collective metaphorical souvenirs from the past, and, as such, they formulate the past and guide us to remember some particular parts of it (see Fejös 2004:11–12). The physical objects contain emotions as they are actual pieces of evidence; they have the power of “the actual

object” (Pearce 1994:25). The people responsible for choosing the objects that are to be collected and recollected have, in turn, the power to reconstruct the past. It is quite rare, however, to identify the individuals who have wielded this power. Instead, cultural heritage and museum collections are often seen as mostly objective and self-evident.

In Nordic forest museum projects, aspects of modern forestry and a belief in the future were combined with more traditional and museological viewpoints, especially by forestry professionals. The importance of forest history for modern forestry was noticed for example in an international forestry context in 1963 when The Global Network for Forest Science Cooperation established a forest history department and issued a statement which argued that researching and knowing forest history formed a crucial base for developing forestry and forest sciences both nationally and internationally (Makkonen 1982). To collect museum objects and draw the whole picture of the past, both responsibility and cooperation were needed, as was emphasized, for example, in Finland (*Savotta* 22/1963, *Lieksan lehti* 18 August 1970). Finance and other aid for museum projects was received from forestry organizations in all the Nordic countries.

Museum projects were usually strongly personified in the form of forestry officers, who took the central role and benefited from their own professional networks in the projects. For example, Carl Syrach-Larsen (1898–1979) in Denmark, Einar Stoltenberg (1890–1965), and Alf Langsæter (1897–1986) in Norway, Eric Persson (1896–1961) in Sweden, Jarl Sundquist (1897–1967), Mauri Melamies (1916–2008), and Ilmari Karvonen (1897–1994) in Finland were all university-

educated forestry officers who dedicated themselves to forest history and museums. Their motive was to preserve the history of their own professional sector.

These forest museum men were all middle-aged or elderly when they took on the initiative in establishing a museum. According to Maurice Halbwachs, looking backwards and becoming interested in the past is related to one's age. The young are actively living the present, but as people grow old they start to recollect their past (Davies 1979:64, Halbwachs 1992:48). Both nostalgia and future perspectives have been considered as a middle-class ability (Frykman & Löfgren 1994:39). In the forest history context, lumberjacks were likely to be concerned with the demise of their own culture (Snellman 1996:24–25), but they were not likely to have an active role in saving the past. The forest museum men had a high level of education and social positions, with a middle-class ability to consider the past for its intrinsic value and cultural sense. They were also involved in planning and leading the forestry sector, able to foresee the future, and driven by belief in further developments.

As these initiators were not primarily museum professionals, but forestry professionals dealing with documenting an epoch of their own career in forestry, they strongly shared the viewpoints of insiders with personal experience. Their musealization process – what was identified as important, transferred to museums and made parts of the cultural heritage by giving it meanings – was certainly affected by their own views and experiences as forestry professionals. These viewpoints ensured somewhat nostalgic attitude to what was collected, preserved, and exhibited. According to Helle Serup, for example, there

was a need to “preserve old artifacts and the nostalgia of forestry” in Denmark, besides introducing forestry to the public (Serup 1996:47). This nostalgia was also evident in Norway, as Paul Tage Halberg has mentioned, when comparing old and new in an exhibition in 1953 (Halberg 2004:31).

According to Fred Davies, “the remembered past is [...] filtered, selected, arranged, constructed, and reconstructed from collective experience” (Davies 1979:116). The objects selected for museums were parts of the collective experience and memory of these forestry professionals and their generation, which was acquainted with bow saw, sledges, and the hard work of lumberjacks. In a museum objects became collective symbols strengthening the identity of the generations. “The bow saw generation” created their own nostalgic sentiment and conserved it as a reconstructed past in a museum (Davies 1979:31, 115–116, 122–123, see Boym 2001:41, Vilkuna 2007:177, Aronsson 2012:9).

Svetlana Boym has defined two kinds of nostalgia depending on their relationship to the past. Reflective nostalgia is to feel a longing and loss, to be incurably “home-sick”. In restorative nostalgia the lost “home” is rebuilt and the memory gaps are filled with evidence. The concept of restorative nostalgia becomes interesting when considering the musealization process defined above, as it aims at almost exactly the same goal: recollecting and reconstructing the past. According to Boym, restorative nostalgics do not consider themselves to be nostalgic as they are really seeking for the truth, the real past and not just a feeling of it. Restorative nostalgics believe that the past can be valuable for the present (Boym 2001:41–49, Vilkko 2007:15).

Both nostalgic and musealization processes often coincide with periods of great social transition, as was the case with post-war Nordic forestry. Nostalgia is often felt when experiencing the passing of time as it can help people to adapt to rapid changes and, in a way, to legitimize the change. If nostalgia is seen to build continuities between the past and the present, museums do the same as they try to explain historical development and to understand the future with the help of the past (Davies 1979:11–12, 33, 49, 71, Smeds 1992:242, Johannisson 2001:147–148). It was a common idea amongst Nordic forest museums that the past, the present and the future could supplement and benefit each other. Even when exhibiting the present and looking to the future of forestry, as was done in Norway in 1953 and in Sweden in 1961 onwards, the story of the past was told as well. Although concentrating on the past, as the forest museum men did in Finland in the 1960s, there was a need to tell this story to future generations. Considering both the past and the future was meant to stress the importance of developing forestry further. Boym's statement about nostalgia, "fantasies of the past determined by needs of the present have a direct impact on realities of the future", could as well be said of previously mentioned forestry museums (Boym 2001:xvi).

Nostalgia is seldom talked about when considering a musealization process, but Karin Johannisson has asked whether museums as preservers of the physical evidence of the past are scientific institutions or places of longing and nostalgia. Nostalgia is included in all collecting and preserving (Johannisson 2001:137, 149). It is certainly one of the background forces that, consciously or unconsciously, affect the process of making

heritage. If museums are seen not only as scientific institutions but also as places of nostalgia, they become sites of memory (Nora 1996, Johannisson 2001:153–154) as the single objects in museum collections are allowed to symbolize the whole past. Objects can as well be sites of memory or even technologies of memory as they help to produce recollection and understanding. In a way, authenticity is not in the objects but in people's relationship with these objects (Koivunen 2007:142, Vilkkö 2007:18). In oral history of Finnish forestry officers, one of the most recollected eras was their practice period in logging and floating logs during their student days. These golden days as "real lumberjacks" were warmly mentioned later on during their academic careers (Paaskoski 2008:228–233). The old-time logging sites and log-floating routes were part of the past that was to be preserved, but could they also be parts of the forestry officers' lost youth with a nostalgic feeling of togetherness, stability, and freedom? (see Johannisson 2001:142)

Museums create reconstructions and representations of the past. Museum objects, as real as they are, are pieces of the past selected to symbolize entities, isolated in museums, and given particular cultural meanings. Despite employing scientific principles, museums can never be entirely objective, and museum projects can never convey absolute truths. Instead, the documented, preserved and presented past refers to the past but is inevitably a reconstruction created by individual museum actors, museum professionals, or enthusiasts, with their own viewpoints and conscious or unconscious motives. The musealization process is really a circle (Bohman 2003:19) – selecting and giving meanings to objects affect the way people identify with and symbolize museum objects in

the future. The early forest museum advocates not only preserved the past of Nordic forestry and defined *forest culture*, in single objects for future generations, but also created *forest museum culture*, or ways of seeing forest culture and its relations to certain types of objects and activities that are still apparent today in these museums. In this process, the bow saw – along with a few other forestry tools – became an established teller of an emblematic story of hard but honorable forest work.

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