

Insidious changes



by
Keld Jensen

Insidious changes

When I am on winter vacation in my home town in Denmark, I often choose to take a walk to Randrup Mark via the small road Seefeldtslundsvej. Randrup Mark is place just south of my hometown Sønder Kongerslev in East Himmerland.

It is a walk of about five kilometres. I walk out of one end of my home town and come back to the town by another route. It is an excellent way to take exercise.

But it is also a way through parts of my life. This stroll is telling me how changes in the landscape creep in everywhere. In the past, the agriculture was dominant. Virtually all people supported themselves by agriculture as farmers or in business associated with agriculture. Today, the fields are still used for agriculture, but the properties are abandoned and have long been home to townsmen who, I think, for the vast majority find their work in the big city northward.

I was a child in the 1950s and 1960s. Agriculture was also at that time changing, but small farmers continued to do well, and several of these farms along the road was home to some of my friends in the school and in the football club. Some of their parents came to retire from work before the bottom fell out of the economy of these farms. Others had a number of years tried to find gainful employment after they the whole life had struggled to make both ends meet in the economy. It has been a hard blow to many. In the class society even the smallest farmer was regarded as having a higher standing than even high-paid workers.

There are many echoes of my childhood along the road. The old transformer is still here. A lot of older agriculture machinery is still here, but they are pushed aside in a corner of the abandoned farms, as a kind of unnecessary waste just waiting to be removed.

But there are also a lot of new things that I find hard to get used to. These things work for me as alien to what once were the homes of small farmers. Now there are no longer cows in the fields. Instead I see a lot of horses, and there is also one that has deer as domestic animals.

Some houses are modernized. Where there used to be a pig house, there is now a garage for the family's two large cars. Most have tried to stick to the style of the houses, but modern materials have obviously been used. For me it is like seeing a poster of a painting by Claude Monet, when once seen the original.

I try to capture the different ages and the development in my photos, but when I come home from yet another walk, I learn once again that it is usually the remnants of the past landscape, as my subconsciousness wanted to capture.



January 2013



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January 2011



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